RANDOM THOUGHTS

VOL. I

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(VOL. I)

Issued by

THE COMMUNITY PROJECTS ADMINISTRATION

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

May 1956

PREFACE

This publication "Random Thoughts", Vol. I, is a continuation of the abridged edition published under the same name last year of the extracts from the monthly letters of the Administrator, Community Projects Administration. Since the publication of the abridged edition, C.P.A. has received requests from a large number of recipients of that volume for publication of the full texts of the letters in a handy form for use of the project officials at all levels. The present publication is intended to meet that demand.

In presenting the letters no attempt has been made to edit them nor any portions have been left out. The letters complete up to the end of 1955 have been published chronologically. Most of the letters were written from New Delhi and therefore, to avoid repetition, the place of issue has not been mentioned. In those cases where the letters were written from places other than New Delhi, they have been indicated.

For facility of reference, two indices have been provided. One index is in the traditional way pointing to the various details of the subjects touched in the letters while another, a shorter index, draws attention to the observations made on the more important aspects of the programme. It is hoped that the reader will find both the indices helpful.

These letters constitute, so to say, the loud thinking on the part of the Administrator with his colleagues in the field. The observations made in the letter should not, therefore, be construed as official directions for action although as guidance they are most useful.

Community Projects Administration

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PREFACE TO THE ABRIDGED EDITION

The Community Projects Programme began on a pilot scale in India on October 2, 1952. Since then the programme has been expanded and at present it covers nearly 1/5th of the total rural population of India. Nearly a lakh of villages of India have now come under the orbit of the National Extension Service with which the Community Programme originally started has been integrated.

The programme which is essentially a people's movement of self-help functions in the field all over India, but behind this, there has to be an organisation comprehending the people, the government servants and the people's representatives. Although the Government servants work in the programme in the role of friends, and guides of the people, providing them the initiative and assistance, wherever needed, this role is significant particularly in the context of the tremendous coverage aimed at.

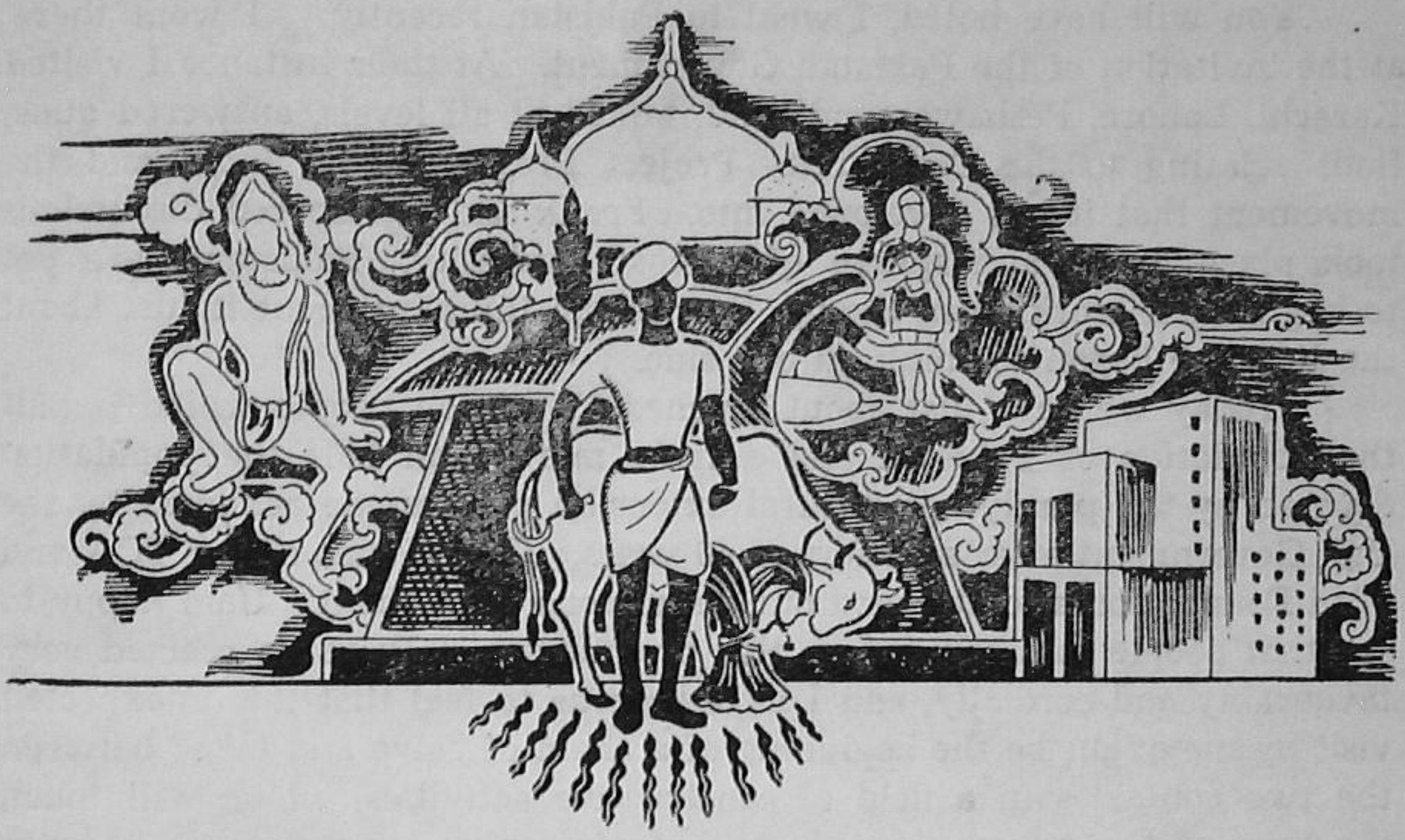
With the declaration in our Constitution that India's objective is the establishment of a Welfare State, the administration, until recently geared to the exigencies of law and order and collection of revenues, has to be totally reoriented to serve the requirements of a Welfare State. In the administration of the Community Projects and the National Extension Service, the need for reorientation of attitude and approach is the very essence of the programme. The programme, which is aimed to reach "unto this last man", is something basically revolutionary and is without precedent either in character or magnitude anywhere in the world.

The Central guidance and control for the programme is provided by the Planning Commission through the Community Projects Administration headed by the Administrator. The Administrator has to direct the movement on an all-India basis and co-ordinate the programme through the Development Commissioners of the State Governments who are senior officials at the State level responsible for the working of the Five Year Plan and the Community Programme as a whole. This guidance and co-ordination are provided on the spot through visits to the project areas, and in various other forms, e.g., seminars, conferences, meetings, etc., and correspondence. In addition, the Administrator sends a monthly letter which is of the nature of a personal note to the Development Commissioners

concentrating attention on the problems that have arisen in the field in course of his visit to the project areas.

This pamphlet attempts to put in one place, in a handy form, some of the more important points from the monthly letters of the Administrator as a chronicle of thoughts representing an organic process in the evolution of the programme. Every attempt has been made to present the extracts in their proper context and it is hoped that the publication would be of help to the field officers in their day-to-day problems.

May 1955



I

January 1, 1954

New Year Day. When it was nearing 12 last night, for a split second, an idea struck me as to what I would wish for myself in the New Year. A spontaneous response was that Providence, if there be any, may make the most effective use of me in the cause of India to which I owe my all. I wanted in the same sequence to have a wish for you also as fellow voyager on the common ship. I found that I could wish nothing better for you either. May I, therefore, say "A Happy New Year to you, to your friends and comrades in turn — a Year of fruitful activity which can usher in the joy of achievement to serve posterity in the manner our forefathers wished us all, slogged and sweated for it."

Personal Contact

I will ask your forgiveness for my inability to continue my promised monthly correspondence with you. I would not plead want of time because there is always time when we wish to do something earnestly enough. For some reasons I lost my initiative. Perhaps, it is my own fault. I realise I only deprived myself of a vital contact without which I cannot function, without which my work to which I try to give all I can, ceases to have any meaning. Therefore, the New Year has given me fresh stimulus and has compelled me to renew this personal contact with you regardless of whether you welcome it or you consider it an imposition. Therefore, let me warn you, this messenger is going to be a monthly routine hereafter and it will knock at your door, open or closed.

You will have noted, I went to Pakistan recently. I went there at the invitation of the Pakistan Government. At their instance I visited Karachi, Lahore, Peshawar and Thal, talked at all levels, answered questions relating to the Community Project Programme in India and the movement that it has developed into. Frank and unreserved discussions took place in an atmosphere of utmost cordiality. Pakistanis are yet to begin their work, even though they began thinking about it just about the time we began to think on our side.

Today we have just about touched 37 million people which is half the population of Pakistan and a little more than half the population covered by the purely agricultural extension programme achieved by the U.S. Government after an effort of 40 years. Our friends of the TCA and Ford Foundation also attended our discussions throughout. I am happy to say that people that counted on this programme in Pakistan reacted very favourably and cordially, and I have reasons to feel that this unexpected visit by me might be the beginning of a chain of "give and take" between the two countries in a field of constructive activities, which will touch the lives of the common people with far-reaching repercussions in spite of the mounting differences between the two countries today.

Foreign Interest

It will be of interest to you to know that immediately following my visit a small delegation of workers connected with the *proposed* Community Project Programme (they call it Village-Aid Administration) headed by Ch. Ali Akbar, Minister for Education in Punjab, Pakistan, has come over to Punjab (India) for visiting our Extension Training Centres and some of the Project areas. They are still in India and will be going back in a few days. When their programme begins it is expected that these visits will be mutual and will be of greater frequency. While differences go on mounting on many sides, this new line of activity on our side may very well serve as the healing touch visualized by our Prime Minister. Let us see what happens.

United Nations are sponsoring a delegation of workers in the field of village reconstruction to visit India for a three months' orientation some time about the end of this year from Ceylon, Indonesia, Burma and the Philippines. All this shows that our prestige is rising abroad because of our concentrated effort on economic reconstruction and the modest success that we are meeting. Our programme touches the fundamental chord of life as it concerns the masses who are normally forgotten in the hum-drum of life's articulate activities. Therefore, the extent to which we can carry our movement forward, we raise the flag of India in the esteem of our people and others abroad. We also help those, who do not know or are apt to forget our number, what we did once, and what we still are capable of. I offer you my cordial felicitations on the contribution we all have tried to make with our sweat to the common pool of our reputation abroad.

Information and Publicity

I have been touring, as you will have noted, almost beyond human limits. I do so because I suffer from an incurable fever of hope that I may add a little to your strength when I meet you, and am with you and your friends and comrades in the field. I am beginning to feel, however, that I would soon prove redundant to this programme unless you help me to be of greater use. To me the CPA have no justification whatsoever to exist, except in the matter of supplies, quick sanctioning of budgets and advancing of requisite finances, provision of facilities for training and the pooling of the experiences of all States. The CPA have no fifth function and certainly of all people I should have neither the right nor the desire to hold on unless I can render these four services to a standard of which you and I can both be proud. Somehow I have a feeling that you are not making sufficient demands on us under the first three heads. We should be able to do tremendously more than we have been doing. As for the fourth, we receive very little news of things happening in States which I can pass on to others. Yet as I travel along every day I come across efforts and achievements, howsoever modest they are, which can be of considerable inspirational value to others. Books, pamphlets and posters are being published by States of which we do not receive regular copies here. Likewise dramas and songs are composed of which we are completely unaware. Certain procedures are evolved by States which are of advantage to them, which will be of equal advantage to others if only we know of them.

You will have noted that there is now a welcome change in the quality and the structure of the "Kurukshetra". I have given instructions to the effect that "Kurukshetra" be supplied regularly to all our training centres, to all important institutions in the country and to all workers in our programme up to the Block Development Officers, including the Collectors, and also to the Heads of Departments and Secretaries in States, besides the State Ministers. I do not know if these are being regularly received and if it is receiving the attention that it merits as "our own organ".

We are also publishing a lot of literature, or trying to. These are intended to be circulated to all our workers, including the Gram Sevaks. Here also I do not know if these are being regularly received at the other end. You will agree with me that if the Community Projects and National Extension Service are to constitute a national movement everyone working in it must know what is happening in every corner of the land, and no one should feel that he is functioning in isolation. I certainly need your active help in this matter.

We have been able to summarise by now the quarterly reports for quarter ending September 1953. This will mean a year of operation of the Community Project Programme launched on October 2, 1952. While the people's response is the most inspiring feature, somehow it appears that

the majority of us are failing to incur governmental expenditure to the level desired. In fact, the expenditure on the all-India front is hardly 20% of what we budgeted for. Partly, I know, it is due to the fact that during the initial period we had neither the staff, the equipment, nor the plans to go ahead on major schemes which alone could absorb expenditure in bulk; partly also it may be due to the fact that the sanctioning and procedural machineries have not yet been fully geared to the speed of operation. Yet, it will appear that we shall soon be reaching a danger point unless we make a drastic effort to get over these difficulties.

Expenditure-items of Shortfall

People in certain areas have already begun serious questioning as to whether the Government machinery really means to fulfil its own obligation or it wishes to continue getting the people only to do the digging, itself absorbing the bulk of the expenditure in the form of salaries and allowances. Such areas are few today. But these will spread unless we are vigilant. We do not propose to cut down staff expenditure. In fact, we wish to increase it. But the ratio of expenditure on staff has to be kept down as compared to the overall, and this can only be done if we can increase the tempo of the "work's" programme. We must do something about it and you will do me a personal favour if you can tell me what help, if any, I can render you from this end to assist you in this vital matter.

The items on which there is a conspicuous short-fall in expenditure are: Irrigation, Cottage Industries, Communications and Education.

In the field of Communications the people have done a tremendous lot already. Therefore, it is now for the Government to do their part of the programme.

Irrigation, I realise, requires detailed planning. By this time, I hope, you will have succeeded in doing something about it. If you are short of staff, you may let me know. I understand there is surplus staff in some of the States. I shall try to help.

In the field of Village Industries, we can certainly try the brick-kiln as an invariable feature, so also poultry. We can also try to strengthen the existing artisans by giving them advanced training and supplying them with improved tools. This can form the initial step. Others will, no doubt, follow in due course.

Education normally should present no problem.

I cannot help mentioning that I find that some of the States are not taking full advantage of the nucleus they can create for future townships which are vital to our development. While planning for the Block Headquarters, as we discussed during the First Development Commissioners' Conference held in Delhi, it was desirable to site the Cottage Industries Centre, the Hospital, the Veterinary Hospital, the High School, the Seed Store and Marketing Centre, Agricultural Farm, Poultry Breeding Farm, Block Headquarters Office, and the staff quarters, in one central place,

preferably near the Police Headquarters or Thana, so that the relics of the Police State could be sublimated through the establishment of all these fundamental welfare activities leading in gradual stages to the development of humming townships according to the economic and cultural growth of the surrounding rural areas. In many States I find that these centres are being located in fragments at different places. This militates against the concept of the concentric and radial movement we visualize under the programme. Urbanization has come to stay however much some of us may dislike it. Therefore, the obvious course is to plan for a healthy growth of urban areas. This we can do if we take advantage of the facilities offered by these programmes and plan these wisely.

Beginning of a conflagration

I cannot close this note without mentioning a little episode which I thought would be of significant interest to you. I tried to light a fire for the first time in the winter, last night. Because of the afternoon shower the logs had got thoroughly drenched. The servant gave up in despair at the look of the lumber. But I needed the fire and I was determined to have it. So we burnt some scraps of paper and collected a few chips of dry wood. We prepared the fireplace with a number of wet logs spaced over a small lump of the dried chips. The paper scraps were lighted. Soon the small chips caught the fire and later transmitted the warmth to the wet logs. In half an hour there was a glorious fire and it continued till late in the morning.

I know you must have had these experiences perhaps a thousand times or more. I could not help drawing an obvious parallel. One or two pieces of dry wood do not create a fire, but if these are combined with a big heap there certainly can start a conflagration. We seem to be busy

going through just about the same process. The isolated Community Projects which we started on October 2, 1952, were not enough to start the conflagration by themselves. But with the 500 blocks which are on fire today, and with the 1200 to 1500 into which they will expand in the course of the next two years, the area may be wide enough to burn the humidity of the rust and soot that clog the Government machinery of today, and start the conflagration which before long can dispel discourses and dissertations, the whys and hows of things, and the centrifugal motions into one of the inevitable single line movement. In brief, mere quality in small chips, is not enough. Quality has to combine with quantity so that quantity by its very weight can bring about a qualitative change. This is the inexorable logic. The conclusions seem inescapable. We seem destined to an expansion faster than we like. There are too many forces about. These will not let us sit down and consolidate. The gravitational force in the other direction is yet preponderant. It will wipe the movement off the scene if we do not move fast enough and effectively enough to make the movement felt.

Nothing has happened like this before and nothing like this will happen again — may be for many a generation. I am proud to be an infinitesimal cog in this giant motion. I know you will be also. I wish you cheers. I wish you could make greater use of me and my comrades at this end. Looking for your call.

II

February 5, 1954

More than a month has flown past since I wrote you last. I have visited a number of States meantime. While doing so I have tried, amongst other things, to find out the real reasons behind our inability to incur a reasonable expenditure out of the budget provision made. I have also endeavoured to ascertain to what extent activities and expenditure naturally flowing therefrom, have been speeded up during the quarter ending December 31. My enquiries reveal that while considerable progress has been registered in certain States, in certain others activities and the rate of expenditure are still continuing at the old level. The Prime Minister has been deeply concerned over this matter. You will have noted that the inability of the Government organization to incur expenditure out of funds budgeted from our limited resourccs has found even a place in the resolution passed at the recent session of Congress at Kalyani.

Budget Position

The Government of India have budgeted an expenditure of Rs. 107 crores for the Plan period to finance expenditure for Community Projects and National Extension Service. Out of this sum we have incurred only an expenditure of about Rs. 2 crores during the first year of operation. If the current rate of expenditure continues there is hardly any likelihood of our spending more than about 5 to 6 crores during the current year of operation. Meantime, large number of schemes, especially those relating to large-scale industries and multi-purpose projects, are being postponed for the next Five-Year Plan for want of funds. It is being argued, irrefutably, that if these schemes could be implemented, it would mean appreciable relief in the matter of unemployment and a significant contribution towards our permanent prosperity as a nation. You will appreciate how totally

wrong it will be on our part to block these funds and stop these from being diverted to other pressing objectives.

The question for immediate consideration, therefore, is whether we should reduce the provision of funds in all the projects, both Community Development Programme as also National Extension Service, or there are ways by which we can speed up the expenditure to the required level. You will agree with me, that needs of our villages are great and universal so far as these relate to the items of development visualized under our two programmes. In fact, even with the expenditure of the total amount provided we shall only be touching the fringe of the problem. This has been the view generally expressed in all quarters. Shall we be justified in cutting down these limited funds just because we cannot spend them? There will obviously be something fundamentally wrong with the basic structure of our administration if we cannot gear it up for the budgeted expenditure even after a period of one year and three months. The country as a whole showers its admiration for the working of the Community Projects in liberal measures. I am afraid, the Government organization sponsoring it will be subjected to an equally liberal measure of blame and contempt if we cannot rise to the occasion.

The Prime Minister has already initiated action at the central level to look into our administration. It will help him very materially, if I can let him have tangible suggestions which he can recommend for adoption by the Government machinery as a whole.

Community Projects Administration, as we discussed during the first Development Commissioners' Conference, was intended to serve as a pilot to indicate the lines on which our administration with its fundamental rules and procedures were to be adjusted for the Welfare State to which the country is pledged. I shall be deeply grateful if you can kindly make a study of the problems you have faced in the implementation of this programme, and send me your recommendations. I will then submit these to the Planning Commission, and I promise tangible results sooner than you imagine. I have now to place the following for your consideration and comments.

We wanted the budgeting of the NES blocks to be vested almost completely in the State Government. A letter has recently been issued accordingly, elucidating the position, vide No. CPA/554/53-(Bud) dated the 2nd February, 1954. So far as the CPA (Centre) is concerned, you will have noted that it will no longer be necessary for you in the normal working of this programme to refer the budget for approval by the C.P.A. This should remove one element of time lag in the implementation of the programme. Do you need any other help ?

Collectors in New Role

From my experiences in the working of the programme in some of the States I have visited recently, I am convinced that this programme,

at the rate at which it is expected to expand, can be adequately supervised only by the Collectors in the districts. Therefore, it will mean in practice that the Collectors instead of functioning merely as Deputy Commissioners in matters of law and order, and revenues will have to become, in addition, the Deputy Development Commissioners for the district. They will necessarily have to be vested with adequate powers for giving administrative approval and expenditure sanction accordingly. In other words, the powers that are now being exercised by Deputy Development Commissioners at the Headquarters will have to be delegated to the Collectors, if delays are to be eliminated and if the Collectors are to feel the full impact of responsibilities in respect of this programme. I may mention, incidentally, that a new designation for the Collector appropriate to the new situation is already receiving the attention of many State Governments. The alternatives that are being considered are more or less on the following lines :

(a) Administrator for the District.
(b) Deputy Development Commissioner.
(c) Chief District Officer.

I know it will be quite sometime before a final decision can be taken over this matter.

Collectors have been taking increasing interest in the programme. If they are to be part of the all-India movement, it is of the utmost importance that they receive all our literature, especially the "Kurukshetra". I shall be grateful if you can kindly let me have the names of the Collectors in your State, with their addresses, so that they may be included in our mailing list for all these publications.

We have been thinking for quite some time of bringing out another journal from the CPA, meant exclusively for the Gram Sevaks. "Kurukshetra" is tending to grow into a journal suited to a particular level of thinking and acting. Need, therefore, arose for a separate journal which could be the organ for the Gram Sevak — the key functionary in our scheme. We propose to call it "Gram Sevak" and publish it, in the first instance, in English, with the hope of having it done in regional languages when the number of Gram Sevaks working in the States reaches the minimum number justifying regional-language issues. The purpose of this journal will be to allow the Gram Sevaks to write their experiences and exchange these with their colleagues in other States. Of course, there will also be other articles of interest written by outsiders. This is intended to be a free publication, so far as the Gram Sevaks are concerned. I shall be grateful if you can let me have your views over the matter.

The English designation "VLW" has been causing uneasiness in many quarters. On the one hand, we are talking of removing barriers of castes amongst officials and non-officials. The word "Level", therefore, comes as a misnomer especially in the programme such as ours. While we have already accepted "Gram Sevak" as the Indian designation, it is

suggested that in English we may call him "VDW" instead of "VLW", VDW standing for Village Development Worker. I would invite your reaction to this proposal.

Visual Aid

About 70 audio-visual units and 20 audio-visual vans fitted with audio-visual equipment have been received and are now under despatch. It will also be of interest to you to know that I have been able to pick up about 40 documentaries and other films of the single reel type as the first instalment to serve as a nucleus film library in each State. This picking has been done by me personally along with other staff of the CPA and the Ministry of I&B. I&B Ministry have agreed, as a part of its integrated publicity programme for the Five-Year Plan, to supply us a set of these films for each State on a no-charge basis. I know you will welcome it. Action has already been initiated to produce the requisite number of prints and I hope, therefore, that the audio-visual unit which is under despatch and these films will be ready for use by you in a maximum of six weeks from now.

Our rural folks, used as they are to congregation around community activities, Bhajans, Kirtans, Kavi Darbars, Mushairas, etc., will find in the audio-visual aid we now propose to provide, a tremendous source of attraction. The films selected by us are of excellent quality and include topics from subject-matter to folk dances and folk music of all regions in India covering in-between the sculpture, architecture, paintings, temples, mosques and churches, and almost every feature that goes to constitute the composite country known as India. I am confident, when received, these films will be of material help to our Block Development Officers and other project staff, especially the Social Education Organizers.

Despite our best efforts we have still not been able to take a decision regarding the Mobile Health Van. The Demonstration Van we received from America proved to be too expensive, both in initial cost as also in maintenance. Meantime, the general feeling in many parts of the country has been that it is better to utilize an additional jeep with a trailer to provide for mobility of the Doctor and utilize the balance of the funds to establish small rural dispensaries which could be visited on a parapetetic basis by the Medical Officer-in-Charge of Mobile Health Services. The dispensary building could be located in or adjoining the Panchayat Ghar, especially at the Headquarters of the Gram Sevak, supported by the people's own contribution. The building of the dispensary-*cum*-community centre should not impose an undue burden on the project funds. The mid-wives or the village *dais* could be associated with these dispensaries. These could gradually be developed with compounders, in the first instance, and subsequently with the services of Health Visitors and Health Officers, depending on the growth of the rural resources. I am not in a

position to pass a definite opinion on this matter and would like to leave it for collective thinking.

Inter-State Seminars

We have already held one inter-State seminar of project staff at Batala. The second seminar is being held at Gandhigram for southern India, starting from yesterday, the 4th February. The third one will be held at Rajgir for the eastern region, beginning on the 25th of February. We propose to have two more seminars for the rest of the country, and thereafter hold a conference of Development Commissioners. The Development Commissioners' Conference this time is being tentatively proposed to be held in Kashmir. It will help the Kashmir Government in its programme of NES and Community Projects, and will also help us all physically as well as spiritually.

The next question that is exercising us is the question of holding statewise or regional seminars for the non-official members of the Project Advisory Committees. My tentative thinking is that we hold these seminars for a period of about five days in the Extension Training Centres. If the members of the Project Advisory Committees, especially the non-officials, are to play the role expected of them, it is of the utmost importance that they get a proper orientation in the programme such as we propose for our officials. I realise that it will impose a considerable expenditure in meeting the cost of transport and boarding for these large number of people. At the average rate of 15 non-officials per block we expect a total of about 6,000 members for the whole of India for the programme now under implementation. The question of funds, however, does not worry me very greatly, as we can find them from one source or the other. What I wish to find out, however, is how you react to the idea ? The subject for the seminar will be a condensation of the syllabus we have drawn up for the Block Development Officers, to which will be added the problems in the implementation of the programme as experienced by non-officials in the course of their association. Could you let me have your views ?

Training of Block Development Officers

I am happy to announce that we are practically set for beginning the first course of training for the Block Development Officers simultaneously at three regional centres with effect from the deadline date, namely April 1, 1954. You will, of course, receive official communications, allocating seats for your officers before the end of this month. I am extremely eager to ensure that the programme of training will constitute more or less a symposium on all that we know today of Community Development Programme in India. If this objective is to be attained, I have to seek your help as a natural corollary. In practical terms, it will mean that I shall have to call on you to take up a particular subject out of the list supplied with my letter No. CPA/109 (18)/53-PP/1 dated January 3, 1954, and give us a short chapter containing material which you would have liked to deliver to the trainees on the spot, if you were to take up this specific assignment for instructions. In this, I believe, you will be able to incorporate the combined experience and knowledge of the key project staff now engaged in the project areas. If you agree with my suggestion, I shall be grateful if you can indicate the subject which you would like to take up. I should like to have the chapter latest by the 15th of March, so that all these could be compiled and co-ordinated into a composite course covering the whole programme. I need hardly mention that on our side also we are taking similar action with our own specialists and others readily available in the Government of India. It is not unlikely that I shall have to call upon you, from time to time, depending on your convenience, to participate in practical instructions on the spot in the course of the training programmes. I am anxious to spare you subsequent headache on your own, and hence this call for the pooling of our total capital. I look forward to discussing the rationing of our resources for this purpose when we meet at the Development Commissioners' Conference in May.

In find that considerable difficulties are being experienced by many States in securing the services of women Social Education Organizers Women constiutte half the population. Environmental hygiene, child welfare, housing and recreational programme will depend to a vital degree on the extent to which we have been able to arouse the movement of women. Some active thinking has already been done at this end to organize special training for women workers for our programme at the village level. We hope the plan will be finalized soon. Meanwhile, if the problem of securing suitable persons as women Social Education Organizers cannot be solved in the normal way, may I request you to explore the possibility of utilizing women teachers of the Middle and High Schools ? Alternatively, I would like to know if you would welcome women Social Education Organizers with the requisite qualifications from other States. I know there are quite a number of daring women, whom I have come across in the course of my travel, who would be glad to brave the situation in other

States if they are welcome. I should like to know your reactions.

Student Camps

We are again trying to work up students camps on a large scale for work in Community Project and NES areas during the holidays. Some States are trying to organize this programme through village schooi teachers teaming with students of high and middle schools (approximately at the rate of one teacher for every five to ten students) going out in villages with a definite programme of social education, manual work on roads, drainage, etc. Money earmarked for the students camps was not fully utilized last year. Could we make a more earnest effort to enlist the participation of school teachers and students in our work this year? This will not only help our own programme but will also help the teachers and the students in respect of the programmes yet to come.

The quality of "Kurukshetra", I hope, you will agree, is improving progressively. The Republic Day issue, I felt, was a very good effort. While almost all the articles are good, I would specially invite your attention to the article titled "Retrospect and Prospect — A Critical Survey by A Friend and Strong Supporter of the Programme". I would also like to convey my gratitude to you for the co-operation which the editor of "Kurukshetra" is now receiving from the field.

Programme Administration

As you know, I am under obligation to submit a monthly factual report to P.M., indicating the progress in Community Project and National Extension Service areas. My report is based primarily on the monthly progress report we receive from the States. I take these reports at their face value, as I assume that these receive your personal and careful scrutiny before these are sent out to the CPA. I would request your continued co-operation in this matter, as I am extremely eager to avoid giving to Prime Minister any impression which is not based on realities.

I realise I have, perhaps, indulged far too much in dry subject-matter throughout this communication. Circumstances left me with no other choice this time. It has already been decreed that by the end of the second Five-Year Plan the country as a whole will be covered by National Extension Service. The programme and its implications have already begun to make my head reel. I know, it will do yours also. The Central Ministries in the Government of India are being asked by the Planning Commission to take up the active work of planning for the Second Five-Year period. The CPA at the Centre will likewise have to play its part drawing up programmes, both for National Extension Service as also for Community Development. The programme will mean a tremendous expansion of the facilities for training. Central Government will, no doubt, find its own share of the money in substantial measures to finance the training programme at all levels. I am mentioning this fact only to keep you informed

of development at this end, so that you may have a picture of the objective and plan your present and future accordingly.

I have been as loud in my own time in summary condemnation of the Government machine. Fortunately, however, I had the opportunity of associating myself closely on a vital and dynamic piece of work from the very dawn of our independence. I saw with my own eyes what this machine did in tackling the avalanche that started immediately after partition. I believe, there are few non-officials within the Government machine or without, who have had a more intimate understanding of the potency and the limitations of our present structure. I am convinced, as I am of the fact that the sun shall rise tomorrow morning, that this machine can deliver the goods if the masters are there. The masters are the people and their representatives. It has fallen to our lot to get the masters also oriented to the task ahead. I know we can do it. I know also it will mean a killing effort. We cannot afford to deny the call. Posterity will bless or curse us for the opportunity we had, which we utilized or lost. I know, we can rise to the occasion. We must, for the issues are survival or annihilation

With cordial greetings.

III

Camp : Khudabad,
District Aurangabad,
(Hyderabad-Dn.)
March 16, 1954

This letter reaches you much later than is to my liking. I am fully to blame again. This is precisely what happens when one postpones till the last moment what one desires most.

I intended to send this letter out on the 6th. On the forenoon of the same day I was pronounced to be on the verge of a nervous breakdown, and was ordered complete rest lying in bed for a minimum of one week. I could not write. In fact I could hardly think, let alone speak.

Two days of rest, however, did me a world of good. I left for a long grinding programme in the Hyderabad State on the 9th morning and have been on the mad rush from morning till midnight ever since. I feel a lot better and happier. I find that I am perfectly at home with the rural people, chatting and working with them. But my trouble begins when I dash against the dead walls trying to move things fast enough to your liking and mine. One gets relief when one can locate a scape-goat. I can find no one for this purpose. Generally every one is working hard with the best of intentions. I cannot accuse others if they are not big enough in stature, or are divorced from realities. The environment and past habits make them so. We have besides the jig-saw puzzle of what goes by the name of Fundamental Rules. What can one do ? I feel baffled.

I have been receiving news lately of nervous breakdown in quite a number of our key employees in the field. This is a bad sign. It shows that we are reaching the limit of our resilience and that the past is beginning to prove far too much of a halter round the neck. We have to move fast because this is of top priority in our term of reference. We must do something to deal with the past, so that it does not pull us down before we complete the long route, yet ahead.

Bottlenecks

I have done a good bit of stocktaking and heart searching with my colleagues in the CPA. We are determined, as you are, to ease operations, and remove all avoidable bottlenecks. As a first step in this direction we have, therefore, taken the following measures :—

(a) The N.E.S. budget will no longer have to be approved by the CPA. It will be vested almost entirely in the State Government, vide our letter No. CPA/554/53-(Bud) dated the 2nd February, 1954.

(b) Relaxation more or less on the same line has been offered in respect of Community Development Block, vide our letter No. CPA/564/53-(Bud) dated the 11th March, 1954.

(c) Complete authority for purchase of essential equipment and supplies has been vested in the State Governments, vide our letter No. CPA/S/3(26)/53 dated the 16th March, 1954. The CPA, of course, will always be ready to assist you in whatever way it can in the matter of equipment or controlled supplies such as cement, coal, iron and steel, and in the allotment of wagons. The Central Ministries concerned have been giving us full co-operation. I can count on its continuance.

My studies during recent weeks reveal that our project work cannot move smoothly even after all these relaxations, unless the State Governments ensure the following essential and unavoidable pre-requisites :

(a) Full delegation of powers, financial as well as technical, to the Development Commissioners as recommended by us from time to time.

(b) Vesting of full responsibility for the programme, both C.D.P. and N.E.S., to the Collectors of districts, with corresponding delegation of powers for administrative approval, technical and expenditure sanction.

(c) Complete integration of the various development departments around the Development Commissioners, Collectors and Block Development Officers, vide my letter No. PS/CP-938 dated the 8th October, 1953, to the Chief Secretaries of States.

(d) Preparation of a Project budget for each Block by the Development Commissioners with the help of the Heads of Departments at State Headquarters, the Collectors, the District Development Department Heads, Block Officers, and Block Advisory Committee Members and its approval through the State Development Committee within a maximum of six months following inauguration. The responsibility for giving sanctions to individual schemes within the overall budget will necessarily vest thereafter in the Development Commissioners, the Collectors and the Block Development Officers subject to the prescribed limits of financial powers appropriate to the respective levels. This procedure is being followed in one or two States with considerable success.

At the instance of P.M., the Chanda Committee has already begun making a study of our Rules and Procedures with a view to simplification. This should help eventually although it may take a little time. Meantime, I am arranging with the active support of the Finance Minister to obtain the services of a very senior and experienced Finance Officer who, together with some representatives of the CPA, can make a sample study of the Rules and Procedures as apply to our Project areas. This study should begin sometime about the middle of April and end by about the end of May. I hope that as a result of this study, we shall be able to make further recommendations as to the simplification of our Rules and Procedures such as can conform to our terms of reference.

The supply position on imported equipment has begun to ease already. We have despatched a considerable number of jeeps, tractors, earth moving equipment, cinema projectors, etc., to all States. Substantial stocks of equipment are expected during the current two months. These

should ease your pains somewhat.

I find that, in certain CDP and NES areas in the country, work on social welfare for members of Backward and Scheduled Classes is proceeding independent of, and in isolation from, the Project administration. This is very unsatisfactory. We discussed the question with the Commissioner for Backward Classes. We have arrived at an understanding according to which the work for the Backward Classes will be integrated with the CDP and NES administration. In other words, for the purpose of our programme, the Backward Classes Department in a State will be treated as another department such as Agriculture, Animal Husbandry, etc., and be co-ordinated by the Development Commissioners accordingly. In this

connection, you may refer to CPA letter No. CPA/62/53 dated the 10th March, 1954.

With immediate effect, we are increasing the circulation of "Kurukshetra" to 10,000. We are also increasing its size from the standard 32 to 48 pages. "Kurukshetra" is now going to the Collectors. We are also arranging to send you 20 extra copies of the issue so that you may personally hand over one copy each to the individual Heads of Departments at the State Headquarters. The journal is also going to the Project and Block Development Officers. We have plans to include, in the future, Heads of Departments at the Districts, technical specialists at the Blocks, and non-official members of Project Advisory Committees. This may take some time. The Editor "Kurukshetra" will, no doubt, get in touch with you before long for particulars of persons covered under these different categories.

Maternity and Child Welfare

Ministry of Health have sent out recently a communication to State Governments recommending the establishment of Maternity and Child Welfare Centres preferably in NES areas. The idea is to appoint a Lady Health Visitor with 4 midwives through whom we can give pre-and post-natal aid to expectant mothers and ensure better care of our neglected children. A copy of this communication has already been sent to you separately by the CPA (vide our letter No. CPA/12(3)/54-PP dated the 9th March, 1954). I shall be grateful if you can kindly take this matter up with the Health Department in your State and ensure the early utilization of the offer made by the Ministry of Health. This should meet a long felt need and serve as forerunner of the full fledged health units at later stages.

I secured the promise of a large consignment of First-Aid Kits to be supplied gratis to our Gram Sevaks in Project areas, who have received their certificates from the St. John Ambulance. So far only a very small share of the equipment has been availed of. The bulk still remains. In the course of my tour programmes, I have seen extraordinarily good work being done by Gram Sevaks with the help of First-Aid Kits and medicines kept at their disposal by the Medical Department. This is also one sure way of establishing friendly contacts and consolidating public relations in villages. It seems rather odd to me that CPA should have to continue reminding State Governments to take advantage of this free gift which can serve such a vital need in our projects.

Certain States have introduced a system of issuing certificates of merit to deserving Gram Sevaks as incentives for good work. One State, namely Bombay, has gone even further and introduced the system of increments and promotions to Gram Sevaks who have earned 3 such certificates of merit. I would commend this procedure for your consideration.

Despite all efforts, it appears that the enrolment of Lady Social Education Organizers is still a challenge to our programme. One reason for our failure to attract workers, appears to be the scale of pay. Now that we have introduced B.A. or its equivalent as the basic qualification, the scale of pay that we may apply to the Social Education Organizers on the completion of their training, may be similar to what is given to B.T. teachers. Where lady workers are still difficult to locate in spite of these terms, we may try lady teachers or may even relax academic qualifications for the time being. Certain States have expressed their willingness to welcome lady Social Education Organizers from other States. I should be grateful if you could kindly pass on to me names of lady workers with the requisite qualifications who are prepared to work in our programme in States other than their own. I need your help as I find that our programme concerning women is suffering under serious disabilities in the absence of this key worker.

Fruits and Vegetables

As a result of concentrated drive from all quarters, the food problem in the country is approaching a solution at last. The problem that appears to be emerging anew is how to arrest the pronounced trend of declining agricultural prices. The answer seems to be the diversification of crops so that land used exclusively for raising food crops could be partially diverted for the growing of vegetables and fruits which are in woefully short supply, and which we must produce if our children are to grow into normal human beings instead of looking the models for ricket as they universally do today. We may also promote the growing of cattle fodder so as to increase the quality and quantity of our milk supply. There is room for substantially unlimited expansion here also.

Construction of village roads is a universal feature in our programme. I am not sure, however, that we are giving to the villagers the technical aid which we owe to them in the matter of aligning and building the roads with proper gredients and specifications. This is a matter that needs the earnest attention of project staff. Many of the roads which are now being constructed will never be taken over by the District Boards or the P.W.D. for the simple reason that the basic pre-requisites, though extremely simple, have not been complied with.

Non-official Participation in the Programme

We have so far had the participation in our project work from agencies like students, teachers and professors from schools and colleges, members of Rotary Clubs, Bharat Sevak Samaj and N.C.C. I have just discovered an innovation started in the State of Hyderabad, where policemen from the Reserve Force are being utilised for building of roads, doing sanitation and other works in villages covered under our programme. This appears to be a very healthy move and is bound, if carefully handled, to bridge the

mental reservation that still persists between the people and the people's servants.

Recently, Parliamentary Members of our Project Advisory Committees met me at Delhi. We exchanged ideas without reservations. The MPs appeared extremely eager to play their role as representatives of the people of project areas. They complained that they could do much more provided they received notice of Project and Block Advisory Committee meetings sufficiently in advance, and regular copies of Reports and Returns on our work in the respective project areas. They were very appreciative of the enthusiasm that has already been generated in project areas and the manner in which Government servants are discharging their assignments. They are aware of the grave deficits in Governmental expenditure and are eager to help the project staff and the Development Commissioner with the full weight of their influence if only they are kept in close touch with our progress, and with the difficulties we are experiencing. To me it appeared to be a very promising attitude, and I would commend that you may take advantage of the services of these representatives of our people who must come and play their part in this fateful programme, if they are to justify themselves. MPs and Members of State Legislatures have done sterling work in a number of project areas. There is no reason why we should not induce all of them to do likewise.

Some of you have desired to circulate these monthly letters to the staff. So far as I am concerned, the letter is yours and so also is the choice as to whether it belongs to the W.P.B. or elsewhere.

I have received elaborate replies to my previous communications from many of you. The thinking done and the pains taken have been a source of inspiration to me. I offer my cordial gratitude.

Battle of the Spirit

I cannot close this letter without making a reference to the U.S.-Pak Pact. P.M. has already spoken in the Parliament and outside as to what India's attitude should be. There is no question whatsoever that this Pact has introduced a grave element in the free political development of Eastern countries. Obviously, India cannot afford, nor is it in its tradition, to compete with other countries in armaments. But we can concentrate every bit of our available energy in the rebuilding of our people. In this battle of the spirit we have perhaps the most vital role to play. This is also P.M.'s view. I do hope that our people in the field do appreciate what is at stake and what we can do, and must, for mere survival.

As implied at the beginning of this communication, I have been touring the project areas in the Hyderabad State. I have visited mostly NES blocks this time. I am happy to say that I have covered about 9 Blocks during the past 7 days with a fair degree of intensity. The work already done by the people, the enthusiasm that characterises the workers

at all levels from the Collector to the Gram Sevak, the surging spirit that reverberates through the eyes and muscles of tens of thousands of men, women and children whom I have had the occasion to meet, address and work with, during the past week have been an intoxicating experience.

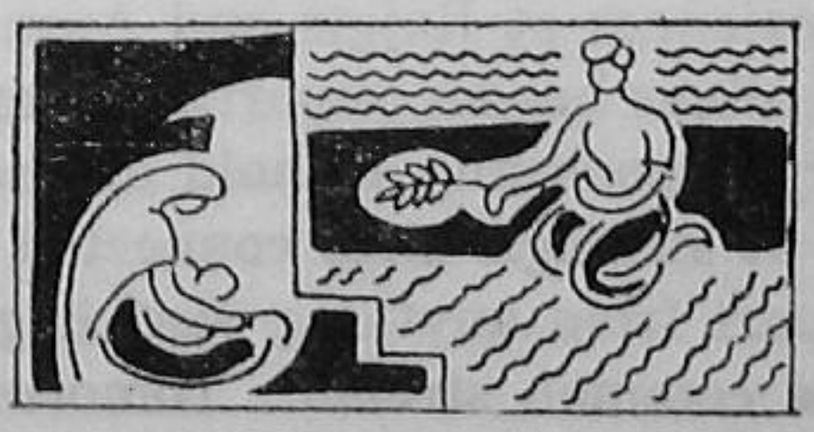
Faith Moves Mountains

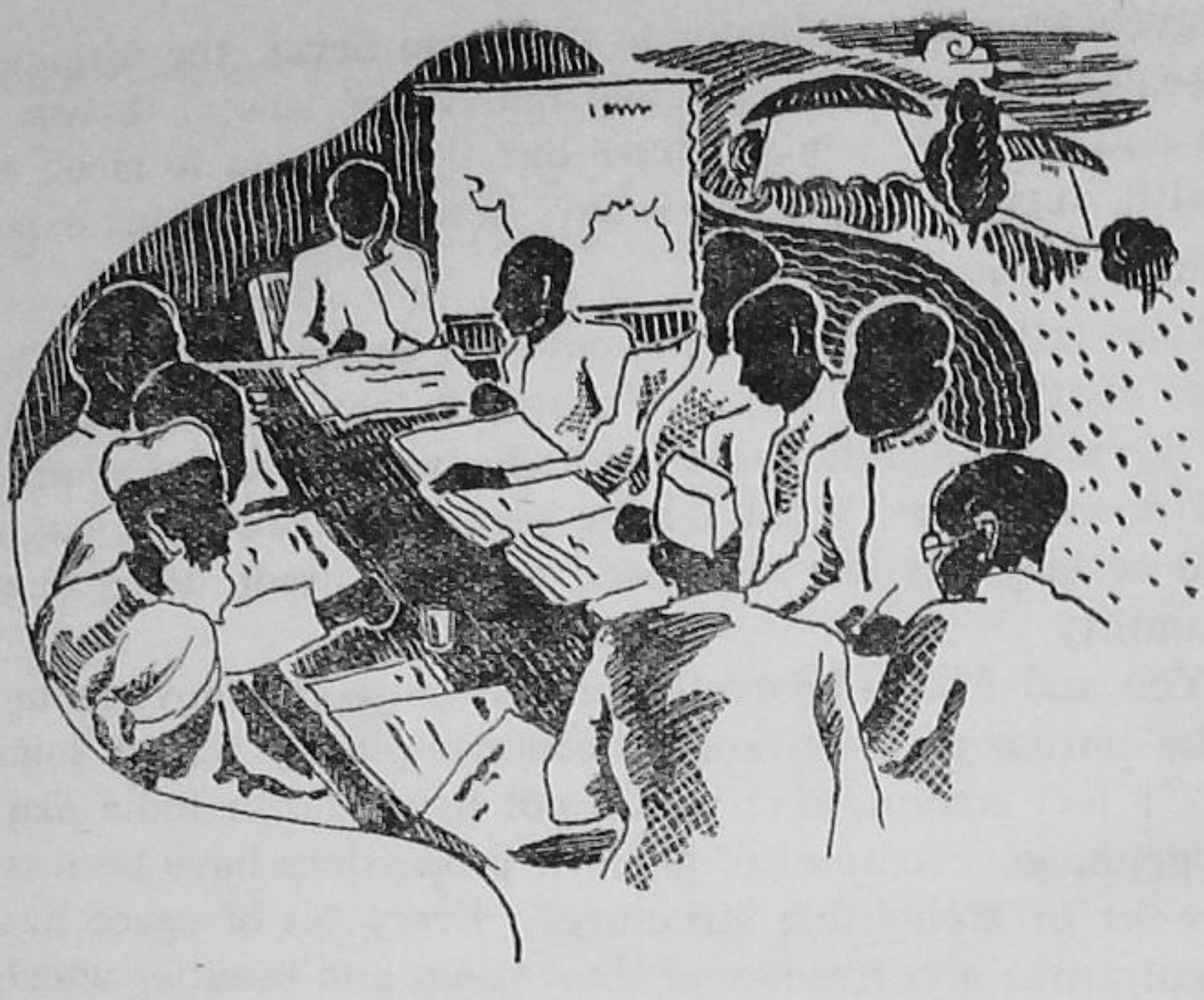
I am talking to you from above the caves of Ellora. This has been my first visit to this place. We have 2 NES blocks around the Ellora caves. I visited Ajanta yesterday. We would soon allot an NES Block around Ajanta also. What I have seen has made my blood dance with joy and ecstasy. It has also made my head droop down in utter shame and humility.

You and I have heard the phrase "faith can move mountains". We hear the phrase so often and so common-placely that it sounds as mere words. I feel convinced, I would not have known India had I not done this pilgrimage. Temples of gigantic proportions have been carved out of solid rocks in Monolithic structures. Every bit of space has been filled with sculptures and frescoes of dimensions and beauties which are a feast for the gods. How could such people exist? Such unbelievable madness?

Two thousand years and more are gone by. No traces of the tens of thousands who must have laboured for love for years, may be centuries. No traces of them save the blood and sweat, love and tears engraved in immortality for us, but to gaze and wonder. I cannot describe my feelings. How could men be so great? How can men be so small? It is a bewildering experience. It has set my head in a whirl. I get back immediately to the other scene — the hundreds, thousands and tens of thousands of men, women and children who sing, slog and wield their muscles in the burning sun and pouring rains at our behest. What heritage, what powers, what strength are ours crying only for a direction?

My friend, we hold the key to the future — the Indians of today. You and I hold the responsibility for the direction. I feel so small, so foolish for being able to do so little at a time so great, at a cross section of history, so poignant, yet so responsive to the touch if only we could rise. The procession of endless figures in the stones and the frescoes floats before my eyes. I also see the meadows below that beckon me to the men, women and children in their millions, their rags, in their shrunken stomachs ready to kill themselves if only we can rise to give them the direction. Shall we?





IV

April 15, 1954

One more month is past. It seems hardly a week. I do not know if time is flying past life or life flying past time. In any case, we live in an exciting age and it is thrilling to be so engaged as to be completely unaware of oneself, or, what goes around.

We have just completed the fourth inter-State seminar at Aurangabad. There were about 180 delegates which included, besides the regular project staff, a number of Collectors and Heads of Departments from the Hyderabad State. The conference was presided over by the Planning Minister for Hyderabad. The delegates had an opportunity of visiting Ellora and Ajanta. The feeling has been universal as I had anticipated, that it was an experience, and that without it one hardly would know the India to which we claim to belong.

The fifth and the last seminar will be held end of this month opposite to the snow-clad peak of Nanda Devi, at Almora. This will be followed by the seminar of Development Commissioners. We hope to send you the notice about the latter shortly.

Sites for Seminars

From our experiences at Rajgir and Aurangabad we are convinced that the site of the seminar has an important bearing on the seminar itself. We should take every opportunity to hold our seminars, whether district, State or regionwise, at strategic sites connected with the history and the culture of India. Apart from anything else, it goes a long way to weave us as fabrics into the common stream. Tomorrow can only be based on

today. But today has to be anchored to yesterday, if we are to avoid acting under suspended animation and the pitfall inevitably leading therefrom.

The programme of ours is expanding sufficiently to justify future seminars of project staff in particular, being held Statewise. This may mean that the next series of seminars on the inter-State level will be based on the Development Commissioners and the Collectors on one side, and the non-official members of Project Advisory Committees on the other. We propose to discuss this matter finally at the coming Development Commissioners' Seminar. I shall be grateful if you can kindly do some preliminary thinking over this matter.

Of all the subjects handled by us, the subject of "Social Education" still retains an element of the nebulous. An attempt is being made by the CPA to draw up a manual on social education with a view to concretising the assignment of this functionary. You may find it to your advantage to hold Statewise seminars of Social Education Organizers, to clarify thinking on the subject. This has already been done in one or two States, I understand, with considerable success..

Training of the Project Personnel

The B.D.O. Training Centres are coming off a wee bit off the target. I am sorry about it. Instead of these Centres starting on the 1st of April, the first course is starting at Nilokheri on the 15th April ; the second course at Hyderabad on the 1st of May, and the third course in Bihar on the 15th of May. The site for the Bihar Centre is still to be finalized. We propose to do it before the end of this month. Nilokheri Centre is all set for coming into action today. We have tried to design the course to be as realistic as we possibly could. You will have received the final syllabus from Vaghaiwalla. I need hardly repeat, I count on your critical assessments and recommendations for further improvement on our own thinking.

The training programme for health personnel started at Najafgarh, Poonamallee and Singur. These are being brought to the desired standard of performance. Your health personnel should look forward to a programme worth the time and money spent. I should request you to give it an earnest trial.

The next batch of workers that will have to be taken up for training will be the Extension Officers at the block level or supervisors, as they may be called. (They are called Group Level Workers in Uttar Pradesh). From our experiences in Uttar Pradesh and some other States, where the training of these workers has been rigorously attempted, we feel convinced that a three-months' orientation of this class of workers is a dire necessity. A scheme is already under consideration according to which a certain number of our Extension Training Centres will have a wing attached for this purpose.

I am trying hard to attract women to our project work. I shall let

you know the results in a few weeks. Meantime, may I suggest a few advance increments for women Social Education Organizers, or alternatively a slight relaxation in qualifications for the same scale of pay? This is being tried in certain States. The results, I gather, have been promising.

The Community Development Programme in its present form visualizes 12 Village Level Workers, of whom 10 are to be Gram Sevaks and 2 Gram Sevikas. The intention was to make a beginning with two women workers. If the scheme proves successful we may consider whether or not it is feasible to team up every Gram Sevak in a Community Development Programme with a corresponding Gram Sevika specially trained for work with women. Here, again, a scheme for the training of Gram Sevikas is already on the anvil. In certain projects excellent work is being done by Gram Sevikas who have been recruited from the Kasturba Trust. I recommend a trial on the same line in every project where Kasturba Trust workers may become available.

The greatest weakness of man appears to be himself. In a group picture there is hardly a man who does not look for his own likeness before others. Our villagers, whom we are out to rouse, are no exceptions. It seems, therefore, that photographs of people engaged in community work or of individuals earning a distinction will not only serve our own records but will also help in public relations within the project area itself. We can supply one camera for each block of Community Projects, which can be used by the Block Development Officer or by the Social Education Organizer. The cameras can be bought by the States locally. Alternatively these can be procured by us through the TCM. You may consider this question. Meantime, I am asking our Social Education Organizers' Training Centres to consider making photography an integral feature of the training programme. I suppose it is already being done to some extent.

Collectors are now being supplied with "Kurukshetra". I have also arranged to post all Collectors in India a complete set of our important literature on Community Projects and NES Programme. We have also sent a sufficient number of sets to the Development Commissioners for distribution to the Heads of Departments. I shall be grateful if you can kindly ask the Heads of Departments and the Collectors to glance through this material. It will certainly help.

You are aware of special awards announced by the President some time ago. These awards, viz., "Bharat Ratnam" and "Padma Vibhusan", are available to officials as well as non-officials. This is something for which there was a universal demand. Now that a beginning has been made I hope you will kindly ensure that workers in your projects, both officials as well as non-officials, get an opportunity to qualify for these awards.

Railway Concession for Voluntary Workers

Last year we moved the Railway Board to grant travel concessions

to persons undertaking voluntary work in Community Projects. The decision was communicated to you in CPA's letter No. CPA/146/(3)/53, dated the 1st May, 1953. All persons while travelling in parties of not less than ten for taking part in voluntary service on Community Projects are allowed the concession.

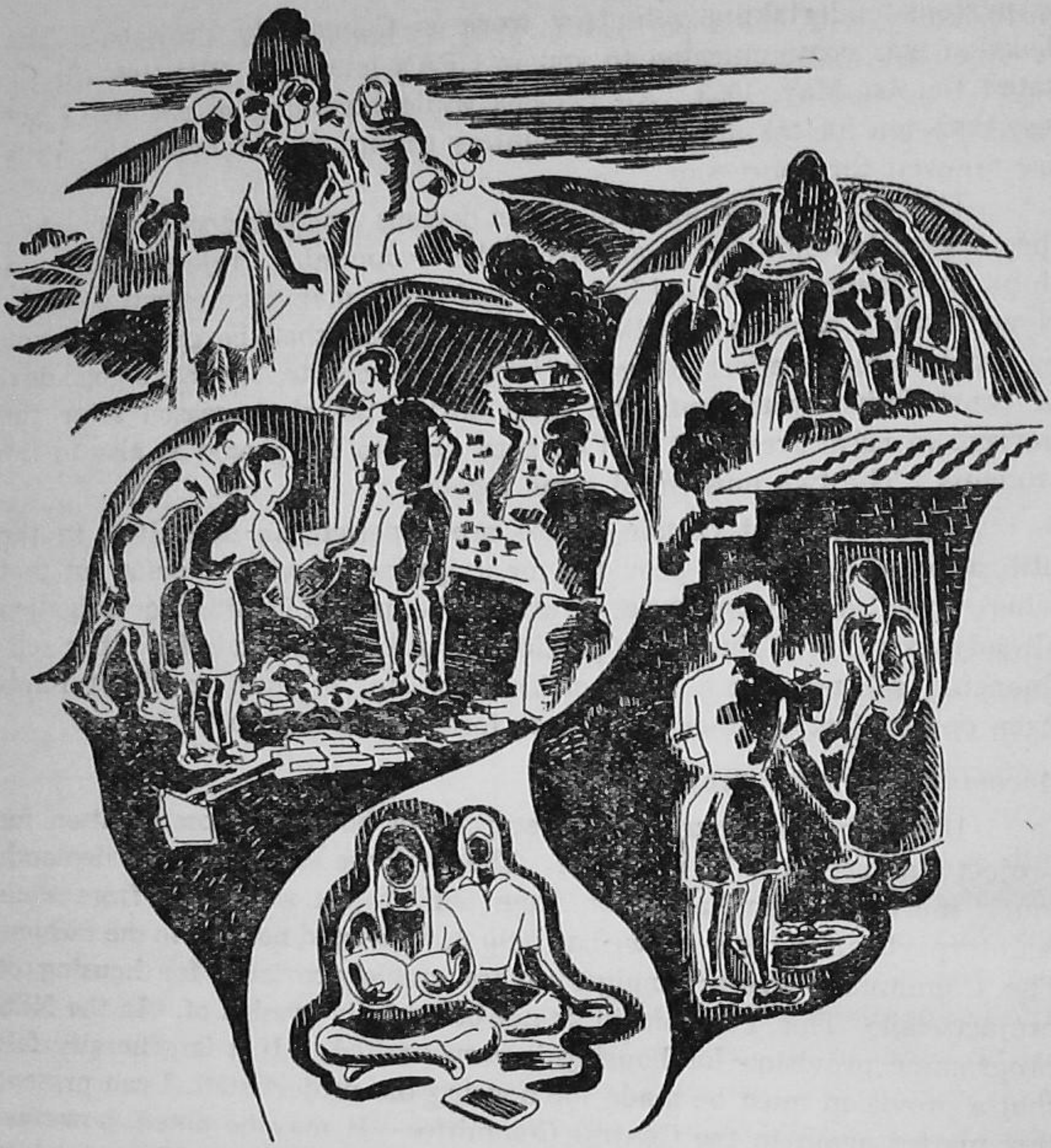
This concession is allowed also to persons (including students) when they travel *individually* to and from the Community Project Centres. I think this concession should be availed of to the maximum extent possible. Now that the summer vacation is approaching I shall be grateful if you will make another effort to give the widest publicity to it so that a good deal of constructive work could be done during the slack season after the harvest in rural areas. It will do good both to the people as also to the students. The two must need come together.

I am told that certain States are experiencing difficulties in the utilization of loan funds provided for irrigation. I wish to point out that where irrigation money cannot be utilized because of facilities for irrigation already existing, it should be possible to utilize the funds for other self-financing schemes, such as electrification, etc., or even to divert funds from one project to others subject to formal reference to CPA.

Accommodation for Project Staff

Hardship on account of the scarcity of housing accommodation for project staff seems to be universal. The work we are engaged in demands much more time and attention from our project staff than from their counterparts elsewhere. If we can help it, we should not add to the burden. The Community Project budget makes ample provision for housing of project staff. This, I am afraid, is not being fully availed of. In the NES programme provision for housing is very limited. If it is generally felt that a provision must be made for housing the project staff, I can present this matter again to the Central Committee. It may be noted, however, that housing is intended to be a self-financing scheme. Where project staff have to be provided with free accommodation because of previous or present conditions of service, the rental can legitimately be debited to the budget under "personnel". This, I suppose, is an accepted practice. If the problem is tackled this way, the avoidable hardship now suffered by the project staff should ease at an early date. Incidentally, even at the risk of repetition I may once again emphasize that it will be of great advantage now, and more so in the future, if the residential accommodation for the project staff and all the institutions connected with the block head-quarters can be located at strategic points with room for expansion in the future.

Jeeps in use in our programme, I fear, are not receiving the service and maintenance, and in certain cases the careful handling that they demand. Already in a year and a half, a number of jeeps appear to have been fairly worn out. I believe, every State now has a sufficient number



of jeeps to justify the establishment of special servicing facilities at some central place. I would commend this strongly for your consideration. I shall be glad to place at your service whatever assistance you may desire in connection with the establishment of these centres with the help of the manufacturers or their representatives in India.

"Kurukshetra", as you know, has acquired an international status. It is being carefully studied both within India as well as abroad. Therefore, it is of the utmost importance that statistical data relating to target accomplishment do justice to the States. Several cases have been brought to my attention where because of incorrect reporting many States have not received the credit that is legitimately theirs. I may particularly draw your attention to pages 41 to 46 of "Kurukshetra" March issue.

We have recently submitted a report to the Parliament on work under the Community Projects and National Extension Service. I feel

quite happy with the report, although I do not like the apologetic way in which we had to defend the shortfall in our expenditure. When it is time for the next report, I am sure we shall stand on much happier grounds. I would invite your comments on the report so that we may try to do better next time.

From all indications, it appears that expenditure has been speeded up substantially in a majority of the States. Therefore, the reports ending March 31, and especially those ending June, should take us round the corner. I am sending this information to you in advance, as I felt you would be interested in being kept informed of the trend of all-India movement.

NES Blocks : Conversion

The siting of NES Blocks seems to have created a lot of trouble for us all. Paragraph 3 of the note attached to our letter of the 29th April, 1953, (Blue Pamphlet), stated as follows :—

"It is proposed that the National Extension Service be organized in units of one or more Development Blocks so as to constitute a compact administrative charge under a Sub-Divisional Officer or a Sub-Collector. Normally, an administrative unit under a Sub-Divisional Officer will comprise 300 villages."

The point was again stressed in Goswami's letter to you on 14th January. I find, however, that, except for a few States, NES Blocks have been located singly spread all over the districts. The reasons underlying this may have been geographical, linguistic, political or others. Where also, for instance, the existing Firka Development Blocks in Madras and Andhra, or the conversion of the existing 15 pilot Projects into NES Blocks had to be taken into account, the scattering of the Blocks in different districts was no doubt inevitable. The scattering of the Blocks, however, has added to the difficulties of supervision. It has also prevented the *integration of all the Development staff* within the administrative unit which was one of the prime objectives of the scheme. Work in these blocks is still to develop its normal potential. This is not happening despite efforts of project staff. We should try to correct this handicap in the future allotment. I feel so strongly on the subject that I am prepared to go to the farthest end to assist you and your Minister in ensuring that this important recommendation of the Planning Commission is given effect to, despite the pulls in the opposite direction you may encounter from many quarters.

The new financial year is on. We have already begun thinking in terms of the allotment of fresh NES blocks, as also for the conversion of NES to CDP. You will have noted from the Press that we have already entered into an agreement with the TCM for the allotment of 150 CDP Blocks out of NES Blocks now in progress.

While you will receive very shortly an official communication on this subject, the present thinking leads to the following criteria for conver-

sion and for further allotment of NES Blocks:

(i) The extent to which existing Community Projects and NES Blocks have been staffed with *trained* personnel;

(ii) The contributions made by people in terms of self-help; and,

(iii) Government expenditure incurred on the programme.

I would like to draw your attention to letter No. CPA/101 (7)/54-PP, dated the 7th April, 1954, from Goswami, regarding the utilization of village school teachers for social education. As explained in the note, it is not at all the intention to turn every village school teacher, regardless of his age or inclinations, into a teacher for adults. What we propose is only to take up the younger elements out of the village school teachers, give them a foundation on village extension and make them the foci of village activities, as had been the case in olden times. This is already being done in several States with considerable success. I hope you will give this a trial.

Garland and Toran

If I may have your indulgence, I would like to touch on rather a delicate point. It is about the "Garland" and "Toran" business. In a number of project areas I find people wasting their otherwise good effort in creating gateways, buntings, etc. A lot of money is also wasted in buying garlands for honouring official visitors to the Community Projects. Sometime policemen are kept waiting far from their beats for the privilege of presenting a guard of honour. It is difficult to resist these overtures of people on the spot. Yet I find it highly embarrassing and in a way very demoralizing.

I hope you will agree with me that no man other than a son-in-law on the day of wedding, or one who has reached the level of the divine, has a right to receive garlands from people, much less to be received with band parties and all the rest that inevitably follow.

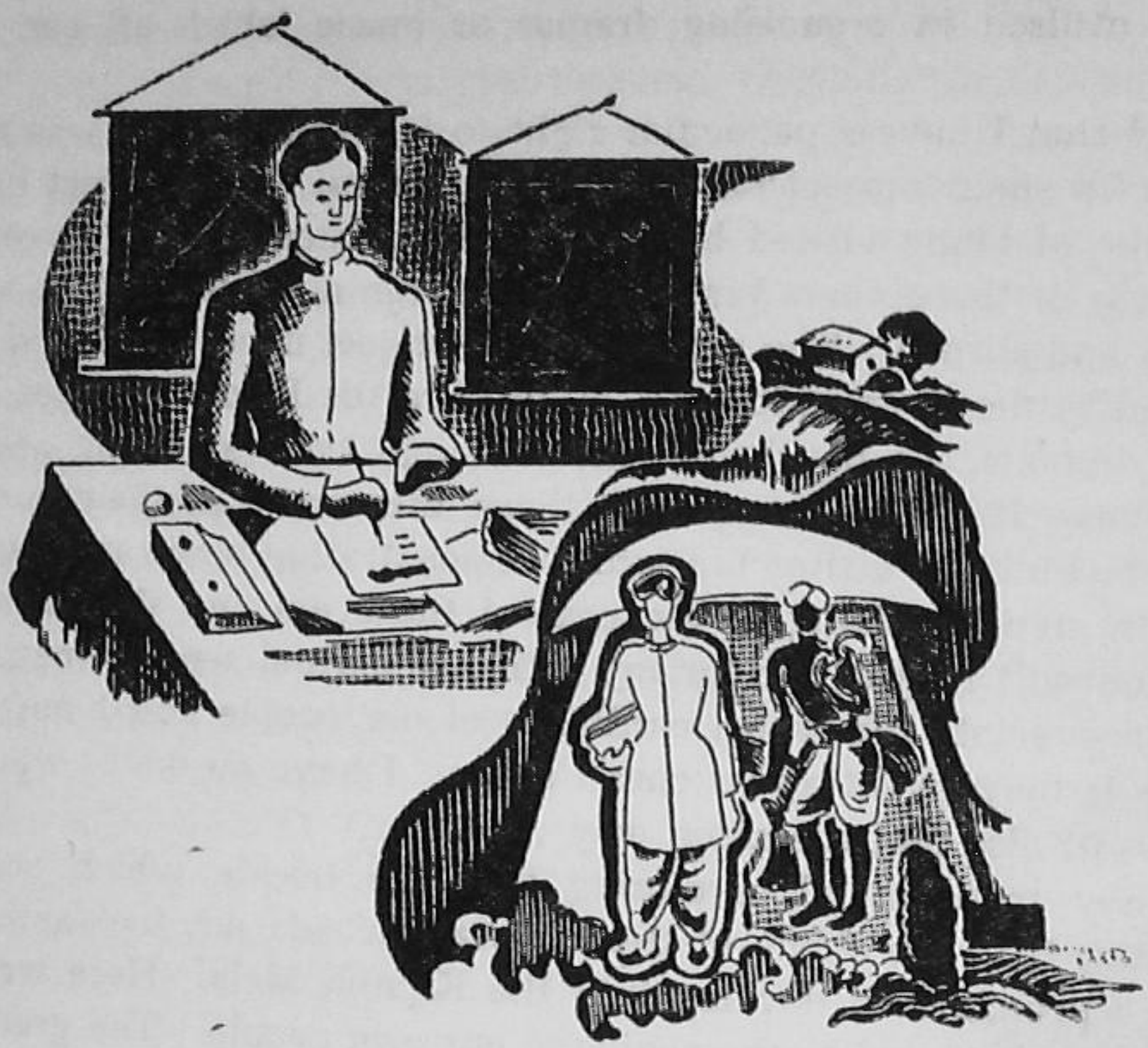
I do not know how these habits came into existence. I suppose, in a way these are the legacies of the feudal and colonial regime we have just left behind. It should be our endeavour at all costs to wean people away from these soul-killing practices. I know from personal experiences, our Ministers also find these highly embarrassing, although on the spot they feel as helpless as many of us do. In Community Project and NES areas in particular, I feel, we should make a special effort to see that people use their energy for doing work good for themselves, and get us to share in the same sacrament rather than tempting us to be the tin-gods as all of us in weaker moments are prone to imagine ourselves to be. There certainly are traditional ways of honouring a visitor through an old lady or a small girl presenting kum kum on the forehead or in other ways which can combine dignity with grace and yet be free from noisy demonstrations. The surplus energies of the village people can be

effectively utilised in organising dramas or music which all can share together.

I feel that I have a particular right to feel this way. I was myself in-charge of a small project for a number of years. That project had the good fortune of being visited by the Prime Minister himself three times in the course of three years besides a very large number of other visitors from India and abroad. The people in that project never presented a lone flower even to the Prime Minister. I am sure the Prime Minister valued the silent honour the people did him through their sweating arms and glowing eyes. If band parties were there, they came in their due place, not while receiving a visitor but while demonstrating how the school boys marched in step according to the beat of the drum and the tune of the bugle. You will forgive me for my rather abnormal sensitiveness to this point. I appreciate the warm cordiality of our people and I am anxious to honour it by preventing its cheap usage. I have no doubt whatsoever that you will also feel the same way.

I may mention while closing that the trickle which started at Amarkantak took the shape of the mighty Narbada not too far off. Our pilgrimage promises to develop into the Kumbh Mela. Here we are on familiar grounds suited to the genius of our own people. The great march is on inspite of the ominous rumblings abroad.

Cheers to you.



V

May 14, 1954

I pray, do not feel shocked at the manner in which I am addressing you. I cannot help being personal. I don't care what the prophets in the book of knowledge say so long as you are prepared to bear with me.

I have good news for you. We have received expenditure from 21 States out of 28. My advance forecast which I invariably make every quarter to check up whether or not I have my finger on the pulse of the movement, appears to have been borne out to the last figure despite the allowances we may have to make in some of the figures.

You will be glad to know that the expenditure accomplishment during the single quarter ending March 1954, which I forecast at 75% of the total during the preceding 5 quarters, has proved to be correct. I might have even erred appreciably on the right side. I will know when I receive the figures from the remaining 7 States.

There has been phenomenal progress in the majority of States during the quarter under review. There are some solitary exceptions. But I am not worried. This is an all-India movement. So even the late comers will invariably make up in the end. We can all rejoice over the fact that we are on the move at last, and that the stigma which is being hurled at us from every quarter will soon have been a nightmare of the past. I wish to convey my congratulations to you and more so to your other sweating colleagues at every nook and corner in the field. I am grateful for

the effort and the manner in which you have let us stand vindicated before the bar of history of which we have already grown a part.

Another good news. A large quantity of equipment has already been sent out to the States and a larger quantity is under clearance. These, when received at the State end, would complete the bulk of the indents received from the State Governments in the first year. From my experience I find that this equipment has already created a certain glut in a number of States. The best way to tackle this equipment would appear to be to entrust these to the appropriate departments in the State earmarked for use in Community Projects and NES areas. This will ensure better maintenance and much more effective control over use. For instance, tractors and earth-moving equipment should preferably be attached to the Tractor Organization in the State instead of being used under a separate organization working under the Community Projects. I would desire now to send you some of the observations during the month.

I wrote to you last time about the BDO Training Centres. The Nilokheri Centre is now at the noon-tide of its first course. Hyderabad Centre started on the 3rd, and the third Centre begins at Ranchi on the 15th. We are thinking seriously of carrying on two or three courses in rapid succession so as to cover up the back log. The coming monsoon months will allow us the opportunity to send our BDOs to these Training Centres with reasonable impunity.

A seminar was held at Bangalore last month of the Principals of the Extension Training Centres. I was sorry to miss it because of other heavy engagements. I understand, the seminar was a thumping success. You will, no doubt, receive soon the proceedings of the seminar. These Training Centres which started as the hives of new activities are now entering into a very crucial period when the spirit of adventure will have worn thin and can only be retained by special injections and innovations. I am asking my friend S.C. Roy of the Ministry of Food & Agriculture to send you the proceedings as early as possible, so that you may apply the necessary measures without avoidable delay.

Village Teachers and Rural Extension

Uttar Pradesh have taken up mass training of one teacher each out of their existing Middle Schools in "Rural Extension". The idea is to make the Middle Schools in the State the hives of rural activity wherein the training of progressive village farmers. I met a number who have gone back and settled in their villages. They are functioning as thing of a breath taking sight. I was moved more than I can express. The same thing I found happening in Bhopal State, although in a slightly different form. In this particular State they have even taken up teachers of Primary Schools and pupils will receive multi-purpose training in village work. I met about 1200 trainees during my recent tour of Uttar Pradesh. The stature and enthusiasm of the trainees were some-

ambassadors for our programme much more effectively than you and I would be ready to believe. Here is a golden opportunity to create village leadership at no cost to the Government, except a nominal one during the training period, and thereby fill a yawning gap in our villages. I am sure experiments in same or varied forms must be under way in many other States. The idea is pregnant with infallible potentialities. It is worth a trial. We cannot regret.

We have been trying to attract women workers still without any success. I continue my effort. Meantime, I have an alternative suggestion to offer. We must win the hearts of all our village women. There is no better way than beginning it with their Children. As things stand today, we have about seven crore children of school-going age, of whom about 3 crores are in schools. These together with the school teachers constitute a salvation army bigger than any the world has ever seen. It is the active work of a segment of this army that contributed so much to our independence from British rule. In the bigger and more thankless battle today we should be able to enlist this army as a whole at the behest of the nation. If the hearts of the children can be won the hearts of the mothers and, of course, also of the fathers will invariably follow. I have already seen it in action, especially, in some areas I visited in Bhopal State during this month.

Children, as you know, have no vested interests of their own. They are like the flowers ever anxious to give the smile. They do not sneer but in a playful way. They can be harnessed to the task. Here, again, we may give a trial even as an experimental measure, if you are not fully convinced. Once the upsurge has been created in the hearts of the slumbering villages, women leaders will come up out of the very elements of dust of which we are so diffident. Believe me, they will come out sooner than men. I have seen this happening already in certain limited areas. The pent up energy that is aching for a creative outlet will amaze us all.

Caution, Friend

"Leadership" training abroad is getting to be a mania in this country and, I am convinced, is beginning to do more harm than good to us. No one can learn something from abroad until he has learnt first the essence of what he can from his own home surroundings. The more I travel through this country the more appalled I feel at my unbelievable ignorance of what this country has yet to teach. We must encourage this leadership training to be had first from within. Only those, who have outgrown the confines of this land, should be allowed to go abroad for additional knowledge, or else such expeditions will take only the shape of a good time for a "gentleman-at-large" or at best an ill-digested knowledge from abroad, which has no room in our context, leading inevitably to frustration within the individual as also without. Some of the political parties in this country who draw their nourishment from abroad are a typical illustration of what

happens to people who wish to create a revolution without having gone through it within their ownselves. Incidentally, I am voicing here also the feeling of the Prime Minister. He has already expressed himself in unmistakable terms on this very issue.

I had the good fortune of participating in a Collectors' conference in Bombay a short while ago. I have also met many Collectors in the course of my continuous travel. Generally they are excellent people, aching as they are, to find an expression and to play their role in the building up of this land. One thing, however, emerges invariably from my discussions, that the Collector today with all the visitations upon him is the hardest worked individual of all executives of Government. If he is to play the role we expect of him, his hands must be strengthened through the provision of additional staff who can take away the routine load of administration. Now that the Planning Commission has already addressed the State Governments regarding the second Five-Year Plan and the necessity for drawing it up from the bottom on the regional pattern of districts, there is now a definite case to provide for some relief to the Collector. I am sure I should be able to persuade the Planning Commission to consider giving financial aid to the States in this matter. You may kindly give this matter a serious thought. We shall thrash this out at the forthcoming conference of Development Commissioners at Ootacamund. I shall do everything humanly possible thereafter to get the necessary action.

The time has come for the Development Commissioner in the State to have attached to him an officer belonging to, and nominated by, every associated development department in the State. He will be something of the nature of a Joint Director of Extension in every field. It may be that in certain cases the heads of departments themselves can play this role, whereas in certain others the men next or somewhere in between may play this role more effectively. This is again a matter which requires immediate attention. The fact that our programme hereafter is intended to be implemented through the departments, Development Commissioners acting only as the co-ordinator makes it all the more necessary that a special officer from every Department be designated to hold the responsibility for the respective field within the orbit of the Community Projects and National Extension Service areas. This way alone we can bring the emphasis and intensification we have long been looking for.

Role of Non-officials

Non-official members of the Project Advisory Committees have to be brought in to play their active role, if the mounting pressure on the Government machine is to be shared in the interest of the machine itself. We expect a lot from non-official members but, as a general rule, are not inclined to offer them the necessary facilities. It is obvious that if non-official members from far-flung areas in the projects are to participate and make

their contributions in the Committee meetings, they should be provided with necessary facilities for accommodation at the headquarters of the block and that their reasonable out-of-pocket expenses should be met from the project funds. This is not being practised, as a general rule. I would like you to consider this very seriously. Government servants attending the Committee meetings and the seminars at Government expense, while non-officials being asked to do so at their own, is a contradiction and leads to invariable illwill and bickerings. We should make some provision from the project funds for this purpose. The expenditure, if properly controlled, should not amount to overmuch.

I attended a conference of the Health Directors and Health Secretaries of States towards the end of last month. Our activities on the health side have been grossly in deficit. I posed the problem to the Directors and their Secretaries with all the force that I could command. They have gone back promising all help. But I could not escape the feeling, which was expressed not in a very solitary way, that the Development Commissioners in States are still functioning as the sovereign heads of their own departments, counting on the existing departments only for nominal co-operation. I pleaded vehemently "not guilty" on your behalf and I wish you to bear me out.

I would like you to refer to an insert "Empire versus Commonwealth" in the May issue of "Kurukshetra" on page 7. This is a matter that needs the attention of every one from the top down to the ground. We all have a dictator in each of us who wishes to be the sovereign monarch of an Empire. I suppose we derive it out of our origin from the "King of Kings"—the Lord of the Universe. Unfortunately, however, the 20th century is a bad age for horizontal sovereignty. No one resents sovereignty in the vertical direction as the vault of the sky is yet tall enough for the tallest. This, however, does not work in the horizontal direction. We may learn a lesson not merely from the plight of our friends like Dr. Malan in South Africa, Chiang-kai-Shek, Syngman Rhee and many others besides, but also from what is happening to the Empire builders of the subtle type, and the fiasco at Geneva now being staged, as a typical case and example.

This programme of ours, may I repeat, can only be delivered where the entire weight of the Government machine with all its departmental executives has been brought to bear on the programme. There is no other short cut except to the pit. I saw it happening in some places already and tried in my own way to help it. I seek your assistance in this matter. Let us keep the devil down. The devil is good, provided he is given a dog-tail. We can do it at all levels.

From my visit in the fields I have an impression that our reports and returns are imposing too serious a strain on the field staff. We have to do some solid thinking over this matter. Reports and forms are intended to serve as a barometer of our accomplishment and shortfall in the essence of our activities. Superfluous items and duplication of forms are not merely a sheer waste but a positive detraction from work. We must review the items and forms, so that a few typical items from the level of Gram Sevaks could, when summed up and correlated, be enough to provide the master chart for all administrative levels beginning with the Block Development Officers' office up to the Administrator's. I need your help in this matter and would like to thrash it out at the conference.

During the Second Development Commissioners' Conference the Posts and Telegraphs Department promised to give to us all co-operation for the starting of village Post Offices, as also offices for Telegraphs. I would like you to find out from the BDOs and PEOs to what extent these facilities are being availed of. I understand there are some difficulties about establishing Telegraph Offices inasmuch as some guaranteed payments from the projects are involved. I am taking this matter up with the Communication Ministry here, and shall let you know the outcome.

Cottage Industries : The Problem

Our cottage industries still remain as vague as they were in spite of the report of the International team. I am following it up at this end. I hope you are also doing so at yours. The appointment of the Joint Director of Extension on Cottage Industries authorised by the CPA would go a long way to help us in this direction. Besides, sure industries such as bricks, tiles, bee-keeping, etc., we may try to improve the standard of our village craftsmen through the method of the demonstration farm in agriculture. In other words, we may pick up the most progressive artisans from each field, provide for their training in improved techniques and use of improved implements. When they go back they should be able to raise the standard of our workmanship. This movement is long overdue. Pending a final decision on the broader aspect of the question, we certainly can extend our activities to this field as an interim measure.

Our office sent you a certain number of calendars (vide letter No. CPA/79/7/53-PP dated the 29th April) for distribution to prominent schools in Project Areas where the pictures could be taken out and framed for the walls of the common room and even of the class rooms, to add to

the atmosphere. I have done this in my own so that next time you come to my office you will find a few colours. In fact I am not sure if some streaks are not trickling into this very letter. We must remember that we are yet an aboriginal lot in India and, therefore, cannot function at our best without colours, howsoever "modern" we may play at.

"Kurukshetra" and the CPA literature are causing me some trouble. Not very unoften I find that our Training Centres and our Block and Project Officers are without the "Kurukshetra" and the host of other literature which the CPA has sent out. At our end we have tried all we could to ensure correct despatches. But, yet obviously, there is something wrong somewhere. I should like to get at the root of the trouble. I should be grateful if you could kindly circularise to all the Training Centres and to all your Block and Project Headquarters to let us know whenever they fail to have these publications. You may ask them to write to me or to Secretary CPA personally. We shall see that there is action. I am sorry to give you this trouble. But this is unavoidable if we are all to be a part of the common movement. I shall depend on you and your staff to help me in this matter.

The Forthcoming Conference

I am extremely anxious that you help me in the following matters during the forthcoming conference at Ooty :

(i) You must tell us where we are failing and where we can do more. I know, we can yet do much more. I need this information from you minus all reservations. You will help me. This alone is my term of reference.

(ii) As you know, we are organizing an Exhibition from all States. This is going to be of very great help. I noticed, for instance, in the Punjab recently pictures, diagrams and materials produced which are far above the standard of what we have produced in the CPA and on which we have been patting ourselves so indulgently. I have no doubt whatsoever that materials such as posters, pamphlets, photographs, graphical charts, songs and dramas produced by all the States, when pooled together, would not CPA to shame. That is exactly how it should be. Government of India should not have a monopoly of all the wisdom. At best it can reflect a synthesis of the collective wisdom. I wish CPA to act only as the purveyor of that synthesis. You should help me in this matter. Some States I have visited I saw rigorously engaged in working for this purpose. If these materials have not reached us by the deadline date, you may do me the favour of carrying these in person with you or through your representative to Ooty.

(iii) We wish the MLAs and MPs to be drawn more actively into our programme. Therefore, I wish to take up the next series of seminars with this group of non-officials mixed, of course, with a suitable number of officials from appropriate levels. I propose to seek your advice in this

matter at the conference and would appreciate some active advance thinking.

(iv) To me administration in the present context must take the character of a continuing adventure. How can we achieve it ? We are so apt to get bored and stiff as soon as an activity takes a straight line form. It is the boredom resulting from the monotony of operations that drives one eventually to go about as the typical "gentleman-at-large" we meet so frequently at every corner. How can we prevent this individual from coming into being ?

The summer heat is on us. I wanted to take seven days off but succeeded in taking only three after several years. It has done me a world of good. In fact, it has given me a new fervour. In summer, as you know, we do not have the same resilience and yet the pressure of work is unremitting, in fact, growing every day. We must protect our staff. We must ensure that they get an opportunity to take a few days off during the hottest part of the summer for a respite whenever anyone appears to have approached the verge of endurance. We are an army. The soldiers must be protected if the battle is to be fought to the finish. It is our responsibility to see that every one in our charge is compelled in the interest of work as also his own not to overstrain himself. We wish to live — the last of us — till the last day of this century to give the finishing touch to the land that once was India, for the "New India" of our dream.

The Guardian Sentinel

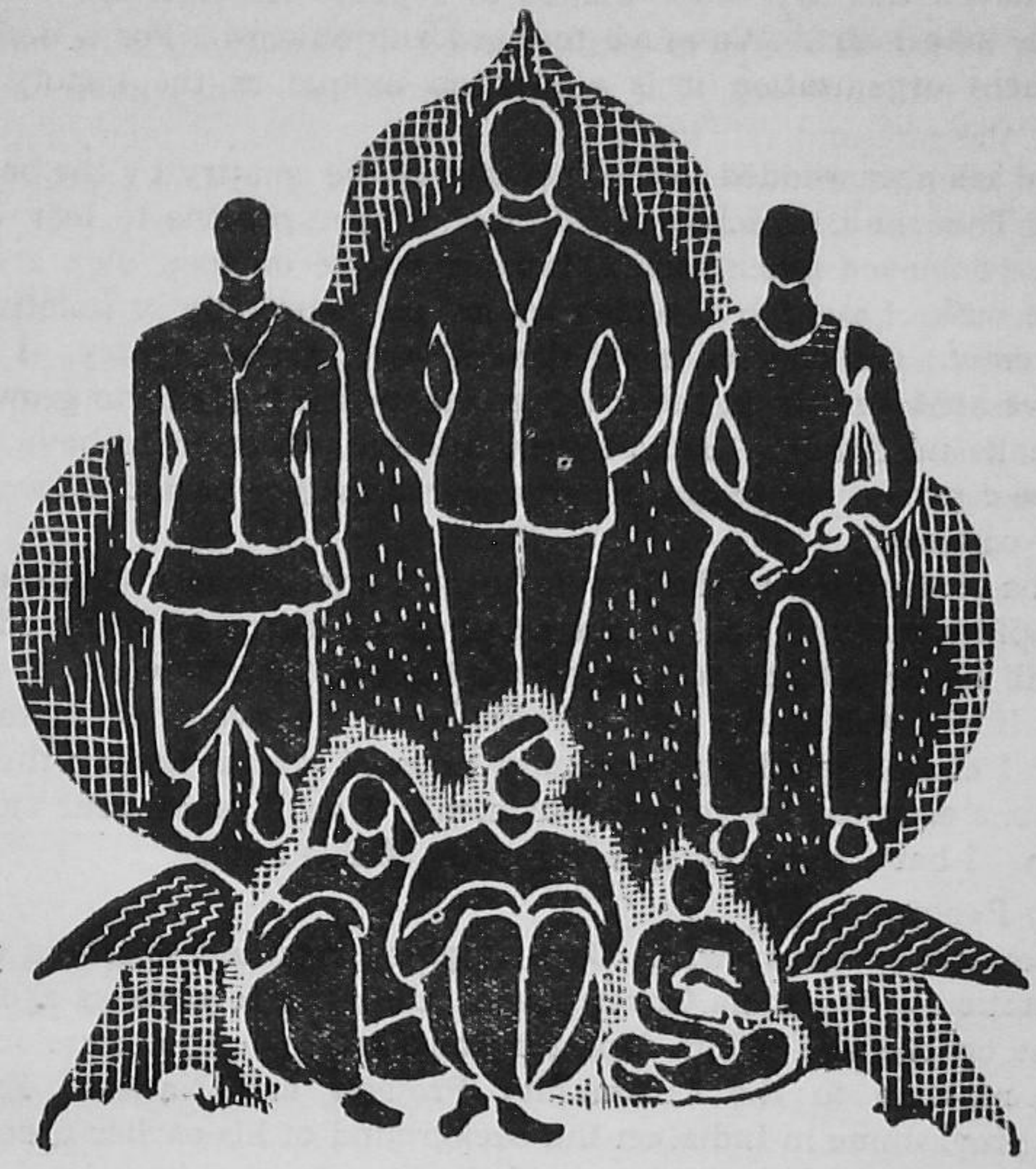
After the Almora seminar I was in the mountain alone. I slept as long as I could, and rest of the time which, incidentally, was little, I kept on looking at the silver crested mountains rising against the horizon and

spreading as far as the eyes could extend. These mountains have been standing for millenniums. The snow is perennial. They have been smiling over the rise and fall of Empires and the wiles of man in this sub-Continent over which the mountains stand as the guardian sentinel. India is safe so long as the mountains are. I do not see them vanishing even with the Hydrogen and Cobalt Bombs.

Standing before the mountains I could feel the pulse of Swami Vivekananda towards the end of the nineteenth century, facing the snow-line and shedding tears of blood for the dumb and mute of this land, in their millions. I could sense the rise in the heart-beat. I could feel the cheers he received in turn from the silent voice in the distance.

My friend, the voice is still alive. India is rising. She is on the move, faster than we can believe. The "Manzil" is yonder. We can, and must reach "Destination Man".

Till we meet at Ooty.



VI

June 16, 1954.

My dear Fellow Traveller,

So we met and we parted. But every parting is also the prelude to a new meeting. Therefore, we should begin to meet again. I do not know if we did realise that the Development Commissioners' Conference at Ooty had established a new landmark in our common movement and, of course, also in the history of "New India" now in the making.

There was a unity of purpose and understanding despite the diversity of our personalities and the regions we hail from and represent, which bewildered me and also many others who were watching from near and from far. It is said "Right questioning is half the answer". We seem to

have achieved this first stage almost to a point of perfection. We may, therefore, take heart. We move forward and onward. For a democratic Government organization it is a position unique in the history of the world.

We are now wedded to the coverage of the country by the beginning of 1961. This shall be achieved. In fact, I have reasons to fear (!) that it may be achieved much sooner, because people on their own are bound to do the bulk of our job at which we are now straining in isolation, once the movement has covered a substantial part of the country. I see the new movement already in the making, although it has still to grow before it can make itself felt. Between you and me, we seem to have touched the nerve centre of our people and discovered the key at last to awaken the sleeping colossus.

The proceedings of the Development Commissioners' Conference are being rapidly summed up. I have received assurance from my office that these will be despatched to you before the end of this week. I shall be grateful if you will kindly let me know, upon the receipt of this material, whether I can do anything personally to assist you in having the recommendations accepted by your Government. I shall be at your side to do all I can. I have plenty of time for a job of this nature.

Appleby Report

You are perhaps aware, Dean Appleby was here in India again at the invitation of the India Government. He left a few weeks ago. I saw him just on the eve of his departure and had a long discussion on his present reaction to the Community Projects and National Extension Service programme in India, on the background of his earlier observations on the subject which formed part of the now famous "Appleby Report". He was good enough to leave a brief note in confirmation of his discussions with me. This note has already been circulated by P.M. to the Chief Ministers as an enclosure to his Fortnightly letter, about 3 weeks ago.

For your reference, I am attaching to this letter a copy which, I am sure, you will find as reassuring as I have. Dean Appleby has paid us a very high tribute indeed, as I see, in contradicting his own earlier observations and applauding the phenomenal growth he has already seen in our movement. This, coming from a man of Dean Appleby's reputation, is a terrifying compliment. My anxiety, and I know it will be yours also, is how we can keep the 'Sacred Fire' alive and continue living worthy of the compliments we have received.

Dean Appleby has given expression to your fears and mine on the question of departmental co-ordination. I do hope you will be able to use this document in support of your effort to bring about the long looked-for consummation. Here, again, I wish to place my services unreservedly at your disposal for whatever I may prove to be worth. I have, I believe, established a personal notoriety with your Chief Minister, other Ministers and non-officials, as to my mad loyalty to but one cause today. It would be

a matter of personal satisfaction to me to be able to be of some use to you in this capacity.

I had informed you in my earlier communications that I had attended some meetings of Collectors and was happy to be able to make some little contribution towards the common understanding. I find from the Press that from time to time Collectors' conferences are being held by State Governments. I would like to mention that I should be happy to be able to attend every one of these conferences where I can add to your pleadings with the Collectors. I shall be grateful if you can keep on the look out and give me an opportunity to participate in these conferences by your side.

I understand that imported supplies to the value of Rs. 2 crore have already been despatched to State Governments ; about 25 lakhs are now in the docks getting ready to be despatched to consignees, and about 1.5 crores are in the process of being shipped, at one stage or the other. We are doing everything possible to speed up deliveries, also to persuade TCM to plead with their Principals in the U.S. to allow them to make purchases of imported equipment from local sources. I do not know if TCM will succeed. If they do, it will be of tremendous help to us. I will keep you posted with further progress in this direction.

Exhibition of Films.

I understand the bulk of the films, which were to be supplied as free samples for the States by the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting, has already been despatched to the State Governments. These films, as I informed you earlier, were picked by me personally out of the total stock available. The films are good. I would like to extend an invitation to you and the members of your family and friends to see these films whenever you find the leisure for it. You would like them.

Now that you have received a number of projectors, you will have to have a good stock of films to exhibit. If you could let me know the number of documentaries that you require, I might be able to place a bulk order with the I&B Ministry for the processing of this repeat stock. I would like to consolidate the all-India requirements, as it will ease the work of the Films Division in the I&B Ministry. Could you let me have your indents — say by about the end of July latest ? The fresh stock will have to be paid for out of the project funds, I presume, out of the allocation for Social Education. Each documentary, I understand, will cost about Rs. 100 for the ordinary and Rs. 350 for the coloured.

The Anniversary Issue of "Kurukshetra", which was published on the 2nd of October, 1953, has received appreciation from all over the world and has also been a source of consolidated information on the programme more than any of our other literature. The success of the first issue prompts us to consider a repeat Anniversary Issue on the 2nd of October, 1954, also The line which we should follow in the current year's issue will be finalised shortly in consultation with the Ministry of I&B, and you will shortly

receive a communication on the subject from the Editor, "Kurukshetra". I count on you for the same sterling co-operation as your organization offered last year.

Incidentally, the issue will have to include our overall performance upto June 30, amongst other items. Therefore, it will be of paramount importance to advise our Project and Block Development Officers to submit the overall data on accomplishment and other matters for the period ending June at an early date, so as to enable you to add to it your own contributions and any contributions that your Chief Minister or others may decide to make.

B.D.O. Training Centres

The three B.D.O. Training Centres are now in full action. The first course at Nilokheri has already been over and the second course has begun. The other Centres also will be in a similar shape. I am not, however, satisfied that everything that we can do is being done to make these courses as effective as we wish them to be. I am anxious to obtain the participation of the Heads of Departments of the State in which the Centre is located. Action has already been taken in this direction. Our own specialists attached to the CPA are also trying to make their contribution. We are also trying to get University Professors associated with the programme.

But I still have a lurking feeling in my mind that "Hamlet" is being staged without the "Prince of Denmark". We must have our Development Commissioners and some outstanding Project Officers from the participating States around the Training Centre to associate themselves with the programme of instructions. I am asking Krishan Chand to formulate a complete programme. He will, no doubt, get in touch with you. I shall be grateful if you will agree to make your prorata contribution.

I repeat, the Centre has no wisdom of its own barring the pooled wisdom of the States. If we were to run these Training Centres by ourselves it will perhaps be a little worse than what a single State can do on its own. I am anxious to ensure that we do not fall a prey to the customary megalomania but try instead to bring the combined strength of all the neighbouring States to bear on this programme and make it the sub-station for the pooled powers from all the generating centres.

Our I & B Ministry has brought out a new publication titled "INDIA 1954". I have only glanced through the volume. I have not yet had the opportunity to study it from cover to cover. It looks a very promising document and asuredly will serve as an encyclopaedia of information relating to our present developmental requirements. I would strongly recommend that the State Government maintain at least one copy for the Development Commissioner. I think you would like this document.

"Divine Discontent".

After the Development Commissioners' Conference at Ooty I found

that one or two persons were dissatisfied with their own work as compared to the work in other States. While I know that "Divine discontent" is the prime source of power, I feel that unhappiness on this account has no justification. I will elucidate myself by a simple example. Last night I was sleeping in the open alone. The sky was overcast with heavy clouds. A dust-storm started blowing. I could see that it was pushing the clouds away and there would be no rains and, therefore, the heat wave would continue. Yet, it occurred to me immediately that the clouds could not disappear nowhere. They must condense and pour down in some area. Strangely enough in half an hour or so, cold wind began to blow from somewhere which must have received the showers. I had the benefit of the good fortune of my neighbour. Incidentally the rains did come in the end towards the early hours of the morning.

The lesson that I draw from this once again is that India is an integral whole and even if some States have done better than the others, the relatively backward are bound to get the effect of the relatively forward. In fact, I already see a visible movement forward in the areas so far remaining backward. In the end it should all level up so that the community of India can live as a whole, all States and all groups receiving nourishment from the hands of the common Mother. I shall be grateful if you can bring this aspect to the attention of those who may feel occasional frustration over being excelled by others.

As you will have noted from my tour programme, I am going out again on a marathon trip — this time to the South. Somehow the South has become a lure for me. Being without a home, without a State, without a future and without any culture whatsoever, I am always on the look out for the traces of real India. Somehow the people in the South, their great temples and great simplicity of life have always drawn me in that direction.

I am visiting the Travancore-Cochin State this time and am spending a good bit of time. The people of this State are remarkable for their industry, cleanliness and sparkling intelligence, and yet this is perhaps the most problem-ridden State in India today. Our programme which began in spite of terrific handicaps, made some initial headway in that State. But because of political difficulties subsequently, the programme is not moving as speedily as it should. I may even need your collective help in giving this State a real push up or, may be, this may not be necessary at all. I will tell you more about it later.

Large number of visitors from abroad have begun already to crowd in to see our programme and other programmes under the Five-Year Plan. Towards the end of the year a delegation is coming from Burma, Indonesia, Ceylon and the Philippines, to spend a month to acquaint themselves with the implementation of the Community Projects Programme. This means that our movement has already become a part of the world movement, India playing the major role.

In the Comity of Nations, we already see the newly rising star and her voice being listened to with respect, if not reverence. This is the historical role which is India's own. She can play it only so long as the home front is united enough in the climb upwards. We are the vanguard of that climbing expedition — a lesson which we and our co-workers must never lose sight of.

With cheers to your other colleagues rolling in the dusts and sands.

FROM COMMUNITY PROJECTS TO EXTENSION SERVICE

Extracts from the Report of Mr. Dean Appleby

Most of what I said in my Report of a year ago about Community Projects is now wholly irrelevant. The essential difficulties in the Community Projects have been overcome, and the general success of the programme speaks for itself. It has been expanded more rapidly than had been expected, and is already, much ahead of schedule, in course of translation into a national extension programme. The principal problems now are those involved in that translation and its consequences.

These new problems may be divided into two general, inter-related phases, focussing in one phase on field administration and in the other phase on the ministries in the States and in the Centre.

The principal issue in the field is between functional specialization and Governmental co-ordination and integration ; with this the related issue of "extension method *versus* the police method" is intertwined.

The theory of functional specialization cannot be very fully applied in the field in any foreseeable future. The difficulties of transport — physical movement of persons — are such that specialists available and capable of being available in the next decade or two could not in fact establish the necessary close dealing with individual villagers. Even if they could, the cost would be prohibitive. Further, the degree of specialization conceived of in this theory is too conventional to be appropriate; village level workers do not need *expertise* as it is usually conceived of, and this is relatively true at lower supervisory levels. The great need is for a sufficient number of flexible jacks-of-all-trades skilled in human relations. The issue of method is more difficult. It is true that extension methods are sharply at odds with traditional methods of the police and tax-gatherers. Ideally, the village-level workers should have responsibility only for the diverse activities of developmental character — agriculture, health, education, housing, small industry, family life, etc. Whether or not a complete separation of these functions from the function of tax-gathering is feasible I am uncertain. A kind of consolidation of them at the first supervisory level I am inclined to think unobjectionable, especially if "kind of consolidation" is taken as meaning consolidation associated with concentration of supervision of development work in a principal assistant to the supervisor, with the needed co-ordination being effected by the supervisor. At the same time, efforts to modify the manner and spirit in which police and tax-gathering functions are carried on and supervised will be obligatory, for in general I can see no escape from the necessity of relying on the collectors' organizations for co-ordination.

Acceptance of, and effective working of the kind of field organisation that seems to be necessary, is the prime need of the programme ministries. They need to dilute their natural inclinations to conceive of specialization in terms of the background of high-level personnel. They need to develop skill in co-operative administration, for nothing else is possible; and they will be inclined to feel that they are being highly co-operative when their efforts are still too "communal" in their own specialized preoccupations. They need to be organized much more pointedly toward decision-making and leadership stimulation and delegation. They need to elevate the extension function to a place of first importance in their responsibilities. At the same time, they need to apply the extension method to their own administration, relying less on periodic pronouncements and dicta and more on eliciting the imagination and zeal of many others.

I said in my Report that ministries in Delhi are inclined to treat action-programme administration as a matter of having annual or semi-annual conferences with appropriate state secretaries. I think this is still much too true. And the feasible remedy here is not taking over *in toto* consolidated responsibility for single aspects of the extension function. The pattern requires emphasis on action in a highly complex organizational system.

The tendency to exaggerate specialization values tends to discount the importance of the functions of other ministries and to impatience over the injections of other programmatic interests as well as to impatience over general co-ordinating functions and responsibilities. It leads to unrealistic insistence on separating personnel and functional performances from each other. All this adds up to unco-operativeness and inflexibility. Yet it is coupled with too little actual stimulation going from the Centre to the states and, probably to a lesser extent, too little support and stimulation in state ministries in respect of field personnel and activity. There is, in other words, a lingering preoccupation with old activities and old ways of working, and an insufficient reorientation to the really revolutionary commitment to a national extension service.

The new orientation requires fixing special responsibility for extension in persons of stature and decisiveness at points in the respective ministries where there is action-mindedness, capacity to make decisions and the habit and ability of delegating. The extension function in village industries is novel enough, and the Ministry of Commerce and Industry now so organized and administered as to lead to the belief that in this one Ministry in Delhi the new needs will be rather quickly met. The extent of responsibility being of greatest dimensions in the case of the Ministry of Agriculture, realization of the problem is well advanced in key spots there, but the actual internal arrangements that are necessary have yet to be achieved. The Ministries of Education and Health are so thoroughly "staff agencies" historically, so little charged with direct action responsibilities in the past and consequently so little given to administration in terms more meaningful than holding conferences and issuing statements, that a great deal is waiting to be done in them.

The extension programme, holding out the possibility of enlisting greatly extended efforts on the part of 80% of the people of India, is peculiarly hopeful and important, and at the same time peculiarly exacting of the highest administrative abilities and arrangements. It should have corresponding attention.

VII

My dear Comrade,

July 15, 1954.

After months of burning heat the monsoon seems to have broken at last. The air is cooler and the world looks green all round. I feel happy with the thought that with this condition, spread as it is throughout the country, the strain of work for all our workers will have eased somewhat.

Yet as I say this, I realise that the season from now till October will be something fraught with serious risk on the digestive system of all field workers who have perforce to eat and drink frequently in all sorts of places. One has to guard oneself particularly against water-borne diseases during this period. This applies with special emphasis to rural areas in which the activities of our field workers are chiefly confined. As a general rule, our workers may insist on drinking only boiled water. It will also have its educational value with village people.

We have now received from practically all over India quarterly reports on NES for period ending 31st March. Our analysis reveals that barring a limited number of States activities on this programme are still far from the target. This is rather a disquietening feature. I have no doubt whatsoever that you are taking necessary steps to correct the situation. This brings us to the ever recurring question "Have we tried to move faster than our resources, and if so what is the corrective ?"

We were supposed last year to allot only 180 Blocks. We ended in alloting 257. To these had to be added the 55 CDP Blocks and the un-operated Blocks as on October 2, 1953, brought forward out of 1952 allotment. It occurs to me, therefore, that we have perhaps tried to bite a little more than what we could chew. If this is so, we shall obviously have to go slow on our expansion programme for the current year. In any case, as we exceeded our quota in 1953, we shall compulsorily have to make a corresponding deduction out of the quota of 270 Blocks which we expected to allot this year. This should help. What may be necessary even thereafter is to spread the allotment for the current year in successive stages according to the trained staff available and the consolidation achieved in Blocks under current operation. This may mean a partial sacrifice of our sentiments regarding the inaugural day — October 2nd.

We are shortly placing the matter for consideration by the Central Committee. It will help me materially if you can kindly let me have your views on these observations.

We are now making arrangements for establishing the Headquarters of the NES Blocks through permanent buildings, as provided for in the NES budget. This demands a very careful survey of the region if the proposed Block Headquarters under the NES is to continue serving as the nerve Centre of the Block for all times, as the District Headquarter does

for the district. As a permanent solution of this problem some States, such as Madhya Pradesh, have already taken up a fresh delimitation of blocks for the State as a whole. I would like to commend the same procedure to other States also.

It may be argued that with the Boundary Commission standing as the "Democles sword" it may mean wasted effort in parts of the territory for many States. My only answer to this will be that "What is one man's loss will be another man's gain". As far as India as a whole is concerned, the sum total of the effort remains the same.

I have been impressed with visual maps of project areas which I have seen in quite a number of projects I have visited in the country during recent months. A visual map of the Block indicating existing facilities and those that are planned to be established under the NES or the CDP programme, helps, as no other medium, to keep the project staff constantly rivetted to the targets as also to an overall picture of the block which normally gets lost in the rush of isolated efforts. A map such as this can also become a significant centre of attraction and education for village folks who can see the programme in action on a front wider than their own village.

As a logical corollary you will find that this system is bound to travel down the line up to the village level where the Village Panchayat would like to have a map in the Panchayat Ghar, indicating the same features as are included in the Block map. I would strongly commend this for your consideration.

I find that even now there is a feeling in many areas not merely amongst villagers but even in our staff that the Community Projects and the National Extension Service are an American programme, if not wholly at least preponderantly, financed by the U.S. Government. This has to be corrected. National Extension Service programme has nothing to do whatsoever with TCM. As for the Community Projects, the total financial aid ranges between 6 to 8%. Even this we are finding difficult to absorb because of the conditions attached to the purchase of stores and equipment. As for technical assistance, your knowledge is as good as mine. Therefore, you can make your own assessment.

Village Industries

I know your difficulties regarding Village Industries. I also feel guilty that I have so far been able to contribute mighty little in this direction. However, it looks as though we shall soon be able to begin something really serious. I am working closely on the Ministry of Commerce & Industry to expedite the preliminary arrangements. You may kindly refer to D.O. No. CPA/CI&C/60/54-PP, dated the 10th July, from U.L. Goswami, and take necessary action. It is happy augury that the All-India Khadi and Village Industries Board have at last agreed to work hand-in-hand with

us. Let us not be found wanting. They can help, and are eager to do their part. We shall do whatever we can, from this end.

In this connection, I would refer you to our letter No. CPA/CI&C/19(Genl)/52-53, dated the 3rd April, 1954, regarding the appointment of Joint Directors of Industries (Extension) and two Technical Experts from the funds allocated under Cottage Industries in the Community Project Budget. It is of top priority that these functionaries be put in position before we can even begin a move forward. For the post of Joint Director what, I believe, you require is a man with administrative ability and general acquaintance with problems of small-scale industries, technical knowledge not being essential. We are thinking of organising a course of orientation for this officer in collaboration with the Ministry of Commerce & Industry and other agencies working with them in the field.

The inadequacy, both quantitative and qualitative of technical personnel, particularly in the field of Agriculture and Animal Husbandry, threatens to be one of the major obstacles in the way of expansion programme we now envisage. In Goswami's letter No. CPA/16(13)/54-PP, dated the 14th July, you will find a note indicating the latest all-India position regarding the availability of personnel under these categories. This matter will have to be examined State-wise and plans for strengthening of existing training institutes or establishing new ones will have to be formulated in the near future. When these proposals are received from

State Government, I propose taking them up with the Planning Commission and the Ministry of Food & Agriculture. I anticipate no serious difficulty in the way of suitable financial assistance towards this programme.

Women, Potential Source of Power

We are taking some steps which may help us to attract more women Social Education Organizers. I shall let you know about it soon. Meantime, I have a feeling that it may not be desirable for us to insist on a B.A. degree for women Social Education Organizers. She may be a good Intermediate. But her training may include, besides the 5 months normal course, an additional course of supplementary instructions in home economics, village crafts and child welfare. This question is under review and we shall pose our final thinking on the subject to you not too long from now.

One matter that strikes me as something which may make it easier for women Social Education Organizers to work with us, will be the provision of a male attendant who can accompany them in their tour of villages. Judging conditions as they exist in the majority of our villages in India and also the average reaction that some village folks may have towards a lone educated young woman in their midst, a male attendant seems not only unavoidable but an imperative safeguard. I shall be grateful if you will think this matter over and try this suggestion out in practice.

Social education does not work as a mere literacy programme even for men, much less will it for women. Yet our women are a potential source of power which can do wonders once aroused. The most desirable nucleus for women's Community Centre I find is a Craft Centre for women where they can learn embroidery, sewing, spinning, weaving, basket-making, niwar making, condiments, confectioneries, etc., besides work in child welfare and recreational programme covering bhajans, dances and other forms of music. I find that women can attend these centres for about 3 hours a day. It is, therefore, not necessary to have a full-time functionary to be in-charge of these Community Centres. You may take up a woman school teacher or a progressive woman leader of the village, give her a short-term training and put her in charge of this Centre on an honorarium such as we have recommended for village school teachers in charge of Social Education for men, namely Rs. 15 to Rs. 20, a month. I have seen it work, and well.

Students — the Untapped Resources:

When I was a little boy, I remember what I could do along with others of my age, and actually did in my village under the upsurge of the nationalist Congress movement. It worked the same way in thousands of other villages. If I am dead sure of one factor it is that the school-going children of today can be made to do even more than they did in the days of the liberation movement. At the present time the Government

with its full might is behind the movement ; so are the parents. There is no fear of lathi charge. Instead there may even be *laddoos* and ovation from the elders.

Children of the village schools constitute a Titanic force which can do more than all other paid agencies combined, if only we can provide the requisite leadership. This also can be done easily if we can get on the right side of the village school teachers. The latter is crying to find an expression for himself, having lost his prime position of the friend and philosopher for the village as a whole. This is not a trial but a dead certainty. I would commend this to you. I have never found it failing in any place so far. Our Social Education Organizers must be made to energise this mighty reservoir.

Independence Day is just a month from now. The sentiments of the people as a whole will be afire on this occasion. We should take advantage of this situation and attract the people within our orbit towards a concerted community programme in which the project staff as a whole can participate and provide the necessary guidance and leadership. We had accepted this as one of the occasions for community activities. I hope you will kindly ask your staff to prepare themselves accordingly. It will pay high dividends.

You will have heard by now from the Editor, "Kurukshetra" regarding the Anniversary Issue for October 2, 1954. I shall be deeply grateful if you will kindly send him the necessary material as early as you can. I would prefer that the material arrives by the 31st July, if you could possibly manage. Kindly make it as rich and factual as you possibly can. We wish to make this issue the mirror of what we are in the year 1954.

Reports come to us from time to time indicating that in certain areas work is being done more through the regulatory influence of the Collector and other Revenue Officers than through the patient method of extension. This is quite likely to happen, and can only be avoided through continued vigilance.

The devil's temptation is always there to follow the short route in the matter of physical accomplishment. Unfortunately for us, we have been charged with the task of building for "Tomorrow". Therefore it will be suicide if we give in to the pressure of "Today". It will be worth your while to keep a careful vigil over this feature.

By and large I find that the Heads of Departments in the States are eager to play their part if only the initiative is taken on their behalf by the Community Projects organization in the first instance. Here, again, the temptation is very great to do the job oneself when one is rushed for time, and one feels that he can ill-afford the time for teaching or inspiring the other fellow. Unfortunately we cannot escape the responsibility for teaching and energising the other man. If the State as a whole is to be covered, no one man or one Department can ever be big enough for the giant task. Therefore, the sooner we invest the effort for teaching

the other man to come into the picutre, the better it is for all concerned and certainly easier it is for the programme itself.

The function of the Development Commissioner, as I see it developing, is the traditional *Guru* for others in the pure Indian concept. The *Guru* and the *Chelas* have always constituted a single brotherhood with no distinction in rank except in wisdom and in the source of inner strength. I fear this is what is expected of the Development Commissioner. I know it is tough, but there is no choice if the programme is to move.

You will have noted from the Press the efforts we are making on behalf of the Community Projects Administration to bring about full co-ordination of our work with that of the Central Ministries. You will be glad to know that P.M. also has given us a helping hand. He has addressed the Central Ministries through a recent circular, asking the Ministries to work for the same consummation. He has also written specially to the Chief Ministers.

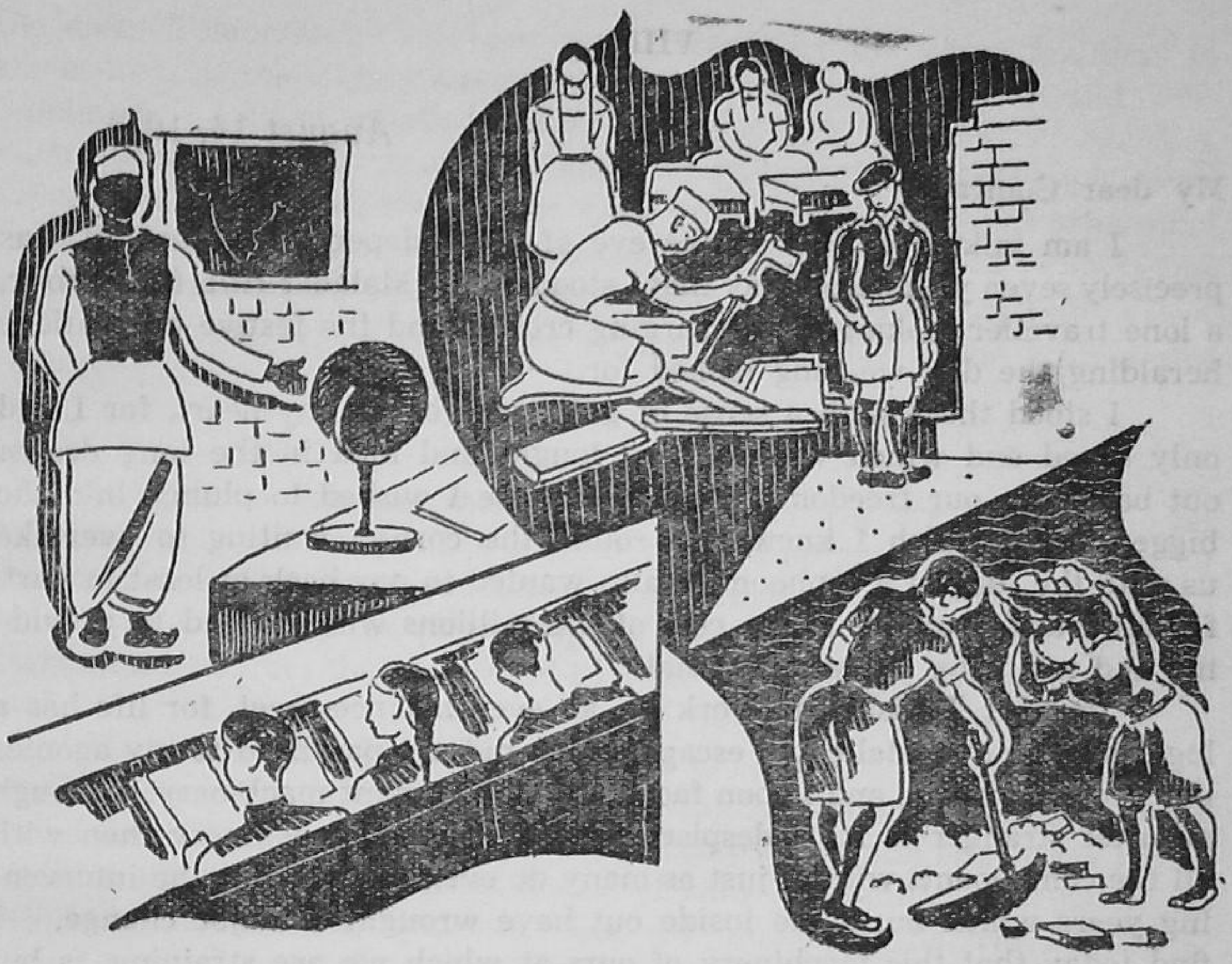
This should provide you the sanction you require, namely that the programme is now a single-line movement encompassing the will and resources of the Government as a whole. You will also have noted the emphasis P.M. has been laying on this programme and its revolutionary significance in his addresses throughout to urban as well as rural audiences.

My seven years' of experience in this Government machine tells me beyond contradiction that the ruling temper of the environment still is that a good man is a suspect and the gentleman-at-large can continue his merry-go-round without being questioned. Fortunately for us the NES and Community Development Programme is developing something like the Yogic exercise for the human system. This exercise, as you know, helps the healthy organs of the body in a way as no other exercise does, and yet if there is a failing somewhere, the system of exercise throws it out with a sharp vengeance in practically no time.

The NES and Community Project Programme will show up the good man against the poser. The working of our organization should be such as to encourage the good man to move forward and the undesirable to be corrected or weeded out. The programme has begun to do so already. We may give it a further deliberate push.

Easy to Die but Hard to Live for a Cause.

A strange phenomenon still continues to baffle me. A large number of Government servants still continue to feel sub-consciously that those who struggled against the British rulers have stolen a march over others who are today in Government service. I do not by any means belittle the enormous sacrifices that ushered in our independence. But what I do wish to emphasize, I believe rightly, is that the struggle today, without laurels and minus the universally acclaimed prize of martyrdom, which a Government servant has to maintain day in and day out, year after year in silent travail, is of a supreme character. The disciplined agony that



the 'worker' goes through in silence has no parallel and no price. It is easier to die, much harder to live for a cause.

I wonder if you are aware that in 3 years we are covering about double the population touched by the U.S. Extension Service which was built up over a period of 40 years. Extension in America touched only agriculture and a few other minor items associated with it. Whereas our movement has grown into a synthesis of all the values we prize in the culture that is India.

The world has already begun to wonder at us. We taught spirituality to others for a thousand years and more. We also can teach materialism and how the two can be fused together without one militating against the other. This had been achieved once. That was long long ago. This has to be done again for "Tomorrow", in the context of "Today". This is the objective of our movement as I understand it.

We are dashing ahead faster and surer than we imagine we are. You have only to touch your heart to find the confirmation. I do every moment. I could not live otherwise. You will also.

Cheers to you.

VIII

August 14, 1954.

My dear Comrade,

I am talking to you on the eve of the Independence Day. It was precisely seven years ago today that I stood on the Malabar Hills in Bombay, a lone traveller looking at the surging crowds and the festive decorations heralding the day we long looked for.

I stood there with a sense of guilt gnawing at my heart, for I had only dined and wined while others fought and bled in the long drawn out battle for our freedom. I cried, because I wished to plunge into the bigger battle which I knew was round the corner, waiting to overtake us with the fury of a typhoon. I also wanted to pay back at least in part, for all I tasted of life at the cost of the millions who slogged to provide me and my tribe the wherewithal.

In short, I wished to work for an even balance-sheet, for life has a logic which no mortal could escape. Men did not pay heed to my agonies but Providence did, and I soon faced the Government machinery, although an utter stranger to it. I despised the Government machinery then with all the components within, just as many do even today. But the intervening years which burnt me inside out have wrought a major change. I find today that this machinery of ours at which we are straining, is but a reflection of the country as a whole, in fact a much brighter one at that than we, who are so near, are ready yet to concede. I am convinced, there is no substitute for this machinery. We cannot possibly build a better structure, although there is room for substantial reinforcement at practically all levels.

Towards "Tomorrow"

Being more fortunately placed than many others, so far as the perspective of the country as a whole is concerned, I wish to have a glance at what has happened. I find, the country has moved an enormous distance. We are too near the events to feel the movement in our own pulse. All things are moving, and in this great movement I see the embryo of a colossus taking shape through your veins and mine and those of thousands of others who are slowly but steadily getting drawn into the orbit.

We read the history of India, going back to the days of distant antiquity. Believe me, never has this country stood so high ; never has it moved so sure of itself. We have a mighty future staring at us, a mightier one to transmit yet to the others. We may or may not need the world. The world needs us. This is the role India has played throughout.

If there is one thing I am certain of on this fateful day it is that destiny ordains India to play an epic role and that the little seed we sowed, and which is sprouting slowly but steadily, is to build the foundation for

the epic "Tomorrow". You can readily see why my own smallness in the context of the mighty events with which we are shaking, should overwhelm me. I know equally why you feel the way you do at times. Yet, when we take the plunge and let ourselves glide with the gushing current, Lo, we are as strong as the current itself. It seems life with its primordial force is pushing us from behind. Let us then look ahead and swim as fast as we can making sure that our movements are with the current.

With "Tomorrow" ahead let me now come back to the problems of "Today":

Problems of "To-day"

I wrote to you last month conveying my anxiety about the load we already had in hand. The current year's allotment will have reached you by now. This has been based on the most objective assessment we could make, of what is happening in the current programme and the maximum resources that you could harness to the service of this additional load.

Had I been free I would have liked to stop all allotment during the current year. But one cannot dam a moving stream without endangering the banks. Therefore, we had to make a compromise and offer some outlet reaching up to the marginal resilience. I know the political storms which will follow from many quarters. But we should not be worried. It is good, the fire has caught. It is also good we know, that it will be suicide if we give in to the temptation of "Today" at the expense of "Tomorrow". We do not wish the fire to dim down to a flicker and then inevitably to go out. This is precisely what will happen if we reach beyond ourselves. It has happened in the past. We are anxious to avoid the old stories repeating in this crucial context.

Caution is not a virtue with which I am particularly blessed. Nothing would have given me greater pleasure than to be able to put before the world a coverage staggering to the imagination. But when the picture involves the movement of life, which is an organic process, we have to weigh carefully every step we take, so that we may not have to retreat with a double pace which in our case may mean a complete shipwreck to the programme. I am but voicing your own unexpressed sentiments, if I may. I know what you may have to face at your end. I do hope you will succeed in providing the understanding and conviction.

The Government of Bihar, I find, has followed closely on the heels of the third Development Commissioners' Conference and drawn up a graded scheme for mass training of all functionaries required for the current programme and the one round the corner for the Second Plan. It has been an admirable effort. Presumably you will also have been doing something on the same line. I would like you to complete the proposals and let me know if I can be of any help.

The field of animal husbandry is posing a problem practically for all States, as trained personnel in this particular field seems to be conspicuous by its universal absence. Because the normal course takes 4 to 5 years, Bihar Government has, as an interim measure, taken up a special programme for the training of Veterinary Supervisors. They have evolved a brief course on animal husbandry which will prepare the functionary to do reasonable justice to the bulk of the animal husbandry programme. The intention is that at a subsequent date the same functionary can be sent up to the college for completing the degree course when fully trained substitutes have been made available. I would commend you to get further particulars on this subject from the Bihar Government.

Administrative Intelligence

With the programme spreading out all over the country, I am finding it impossible to maintain physical contact with all the areas. Yet, I know it is futile to think of doing justice to this programme unless I have the feel of the movement in the beat of my own pulse. Further thinking on this line has led to the need of an Administrative Intelligence Section in the CPA. Based on the data we now receive from you, we hope to establish a quarter-to-quarter index on the progress of the movement in all the States. The technique is being studied with all the resources in Delhi today, both indigenous as well as foreign, and I have every reason to believe that we shall come to a final pattern soon.

What applies to the CPA at the Centre will apply with an equal, if not a greater, emphasis to the movement of this programme on the State front. It is no longer possible for the Development Commissioner or his Deputy to keep in touch with the movement on all spots through personal contacts. In fact, it would be a negation of all principles of administration even to attempt it. Therefore, it seems time that you begin setting up an Administrative Intelligence Section based on the same statistical reports which you send to us for our consumption.

The smooth working of the system will demand a combination of sound administrative judgement on one side, with statistical knowledge on the other. The appointment of a statistician will, therefore, appear to be the first step needed by you. I shall be glad to arrange for a month's special training to the statisticians in the working of the system, once we get our own machine moving on correct lines. I shall be grateful if you do some further thinking on the line and let me have your views.

We have completed two courses for the B.D.Os. The third course is already on. I am grateful to you for the co-operation you have given to the CPA in this vital matter. We are anxious to make the training of the B.D.Os as effective as possible. I am not yet satisfied that we are doing as much as we can or should. I shall, obviously, have to make a greater call on you than we have done hitherto. We shall, however,

endeavour to make our call on your resources as low as humanly possible.

Incidentally, we find that we need trainees with some experience in the field if they are to get the full benefit of the programme organized for the limited duration of their stay in the Training Centres. You may, therefore, try to avoid sending absolutely raw hands.

This business of Basic Education is causing us enormous difficulties. There seems to be no common understanding on this subject. There is a still greater dearth of the right type of teachers. The theory of imparting knowledge on all subjects through a leaf of grass or a thread of cotton picked at random is no doubt profound in an absolute sense, but even in the days of old we had only one Vashisht or Vishwamittar at a time. Therefore, we have to think of a system which is reproducible on a universal scale.

My suggestion is that, unless basic teachers of the right type are available, we make a beginning with the second best. Let us for instance add a plot of land to the school for practice in agriculture and one or two crafts which are common to the locality. So long as the teacher can do justice to these, we should be perfectly satisfied. It is much better to try something small which is practical than play with ideas which under present conditions can at best serve as show-windows.

"Kurukshetra" and "Gram Sevak"

Somehow I have a feeling that our journal "Kurukshetra" has not lately been keeping pace with the growth of our movement. It is getting heavy and perhaps a little doctrinaire. The Editor has been seized of the situation. He is making effort to develop it as the living document it was to be.

The first copy of the "Gram Sevak" will be out tomorrow. Here, again, I am not at all satisfied with the contents. No one from Delhi can really do justice to this journal. I count on the spontaneous response from the Gram Sevaks themselves. I shall be grateful for whatever you can do to stimulate the Gram Sevaks in your charge to use the journal as an open forum for exchange of their views with their colleagues throughout the land. In fact, this alone is the term of reference of this journal.

If properly availed of by the Gram Sevaks, the journal should provide a creative outlet for all pent-up doubts and questions. I do hope, the normal Government rules and regulations will not be allowed to thwart this consummation.

One hundred and fifty jeeps are now on the high seas. These will be in the docks before the end of the month. You may, therefore, expect the consignment to begin moving inland some time around the middle of next month. I am aware of the difficulties you had to face in the absence of this conveyance. We have done everything we could, to speed up delivery. You will forgive me for the unavoidable delay.

The Barber's Son learns his trade on a Fool's head

A friend of mine who was killed in the post-partition riots in 1947 was the author of this phrase. I am citing this to you as I am eager, as no doubt you also are, to avoid delicate pieces of equipment being handled by novices at our expense. I believe, I had already requested you to place tractors and earth-moving equipment under the charge of the department normally responsible for handling these in the State. We cannot set up a department of our own. It will be uneconomical, apart from being undesirable.

In the field of audio-visual aid, it appears we shall have to have a man who is a trained Radio Mechanic, whom we can give further training in the use of the cinema projector. It may be argued that the operation of the cinema projector is not a full-time occupation. My thinking is that the same functionary can be trained in photography and maintenance of radios, so that he can do incidental repairs to the radios which are being supplied to the villages and at the same time use the camera which you can purchase as a part of your equipment to take pictures of salient events in the project, for publicity and record purposes.

I am sorry I have not been able to complete this communication much less post it on the due date. I was caught unawares in a minor storm which I wished to clear up first. This letter should not wait. So I am sending it out as it stands. I hope to complete it next month. You will forgive.

P.S. I find from the Press that the "Chief Administrator of the Community Projects" has been included in the Independence Day Honours' list. It is no doubt intended to be a recognition of our programme. As for myself, I can conceive of no honour greater than the battle I have been authorised to fight on behalf of the farmer with the sanction of the Government as a whole behind.

IX

September 14, 1954.

Dear Comrade,

We have begun at last to step into the wider horizon. The Minister in charge of the Mass Education Programme in Burma (the equivalent of our programme in India) together with the Chief Executive Officer and other associates arrived here last week for a study of the Community Development Programme in India. The delegation had a long session with us, and thereafter proceeded to Nilokheri and other areas. You will, no doubt, have read about their movements together with their views and impressions of our work.

The South East Asian Delegation comprising representatives from Burma, Ceylon, Indonesia and the Philippines arrived here two days ago. We spent the whole day with them yesterday. They are proceeding on their field trip beginning tomorrow and will spend about a month studying the various aspects of our programme in different parts of the country. The delegation includes officials of a high calibre, who are intelligent as well as knowledgeable.

Our discussions with them, I may assure you, did not constitute a one-way traffic. The visitors had a lot to tell us of their experiences in their own programme at home. Yet it was clear that our programme was unique, in the sense that in size, tempo and character it had hardly a precedent in world history. I shall touch more on this at the close of this communication and would like to go straight into some of the questions of the hour.

Experiences of the working of this programme over two years confirm that the subject-matter specialists at the Block Headquarters, or the Extension Officers as you may call them, have to be given a two to three months' orientation in the programme partly to acquaint themselves with the multi-purpose yet integrated character of the programme and partly to be imbued with the requisite sense of urgency and action-mindedness as called for by the present dynamic situation.

This orientation programme for Block Level Specialists is especially indicated because of the rapid expansion of the programme which, as a matter of course, has already begun to encompass within its orbit the existing functionaries of the departments not few of whom would require radical transformation in outlook before they can fit into the context of our assignment.

A number of States who have tried this orientation for their Block Level Specialists are thoroughly satisfied with the results. I would therefore plead with you for giving this a trial, if you have not done so already. The Ministry of Agriculture is finalising a scheme according to which there will be seventeen special wings attached to our Extension Training Centres

so as to enable the States to undertake this training. I shall be grateful if you will kindly initiate preliminary action pending formal sanction from the Ministry of Agriculture.

Village Leaders

I had written to you earlier requesting you to try the Bhopal example of the short-term training programme for progressive village leaders. Our discussions with the South East Asian Delegation and my experiences in States in India where village leaders have been given this type of training, confirm that the ultimate success or failure of our programme will depend on the extent to which we have been able to generate leadership in the village for "Tomorrow", and that for this consummation the first effective pre-requisite is a short-term training of village leaders followed by annual camps of short periods. This is a matter that will have to begin getting attention if we are to leave lasting impressions behind. I would seek your indulgence, for a trial even in one Block if you cannot do so over a wider front. The results I assure you, will be astounding.

That the Extension Training Centres would have been a success during the first flush of the programme, no one doubted. The very novelty of the undertaking was a sufficient stimulus. However, there is a cynical proverb according to which "Love and religion remain rarely awake beyond the midnight hour". It seems, it applies with special poignancy to quite a few of our own undertakings. We find therefore that, not infrequently, the staff begin brooding over their present environment, prospects in the future and many like questions. Yet you and I know that the quality of our work will depend on the quality of our personnel, and the latter is determined strictly by the quality of our training staff and the fervour we succeed in maintaining in them.

From the seminar of the Principals of the Extension Training Centres during the early part of this year, certain decisions emerged which were calculated to give the much-needed stimulus to the staff and the trainees. I shall request you to refer back to these recommendations and see how best these can be implemented. Special innovations have to be tried from time to time, apart from these recommendations, if the dynamic character of the training centres is to be sustained till the end of the Second Five-Year Plan.

Seminars

In the course of a recent tour, I bumped across an intra-State seminar strictly on the lines of our recommendations at Ooty, which was being held at Extension Training Centre, Bhopal, for all employees of the Community Projects and National Extension Service programme. The seminar extended over a period of five days and I felt really touched by the extent to which class barriers looked to have broken down almost completely in all ranks of the services who participated in this seminar. What was

equally stirring was the freedom with which Gram Sevaks were ventilating their views about the work on the ground.

Presumably the intra-State seminars are being followed by other States also. These seminars are bound to yield rich dividends. Incidentally it would also be of considerable help to the CPA if you can let us have a brief report on the seminar with the experiences gained and difficulties encountered, so that we may try at our end to pool the wisdom of all the States for transmission back to all concerned, I would also be happy personally to try to participate in these seminars if you can give me notice sufficiently in advance.

You will have heard from the CPA regarding the inter-State seminars which we propose to begin with the first one at Mysore in the month of October. We are very eager this year to complete the round of seminars by the end of March or latest by beginning of April so as to enable the Development Commissioners' Conference to be held not later than the end of April or beginning of May.

As you are aware, the present series of inter-State seminars include the Collectors of Districts as the main targets. I do hope you will try to get as many Collectors to attend the seminars as you possibly can. There is no better way of acquainting the Collectors with the spirit of this programme.

One of the ways in which we can help the Principals of the Extension Training Centres and their trainees to remain fresh in spirit and outlook is by allowing the Principals to visit project areas, participate in discussions with the project staff and see the programme in action. This is how in the Western countries the engineering and professional staff of Universities remain alive to growing realities by joining work on the ground during the summer recess.

During the recent conference of the Principals and Directors at Delhi, we have decided as we discussed during Ooty Conference, that these officers will also try during the recess in between the courses, to visit project areas within their region, establish contact with their trainees on the ground and see the programme in action and participate in your seminars as and where possible. I shall be grateful if you will kindly give them the necessary facilities.

I have a complaint to make. The Social Education Organizers' training extends over a period of five months and the BDOs' over a period of six weeks. Every day of the training is precious. Even with this we find it difficult to do justice to the whole syllabus. It was revealed during the conference at Delhi that in the field of Social Education, trainees at times report to the Training Centre a full month after the commencement of the course. In the B.D.Os' Training Centre they report sometimes a fortnight after the commencement of the six weeks' programme. This is not only prejudicial to the interest of the trainees themselves but also confusing to

the training programme in the centre. We are very anxious to avoid this situation.

You will no doubt receive shortly the recommendations of the conference of the Principals and Directors of the Centres. I would be grateful if you could ensure timely recruitment of these trainees so as to enable them to report to the Training Centres on due dates.

Our staff in the field who have, not infrequently, to work in unaccustomed environment and against heavy odds are already hard put. We should try to ease their pains as much as we can. The NES budget provides for the establishment of new premises for office, stores, etc., in the form of grants-in-aid. There is also an optional loan provision of a lakh of rupees for housing. I would strongly recommend that immediately on the selection of the site following the allotment of a Block, the P.W.D. in the State may be asked to initiate the construction of the Block Headquarters, including office and residential accommodation for staff. The Block Development Officer, if in position, may try to get the work executed as far as possible through village people themselves instead of the customary urban absentee contractor agencies.

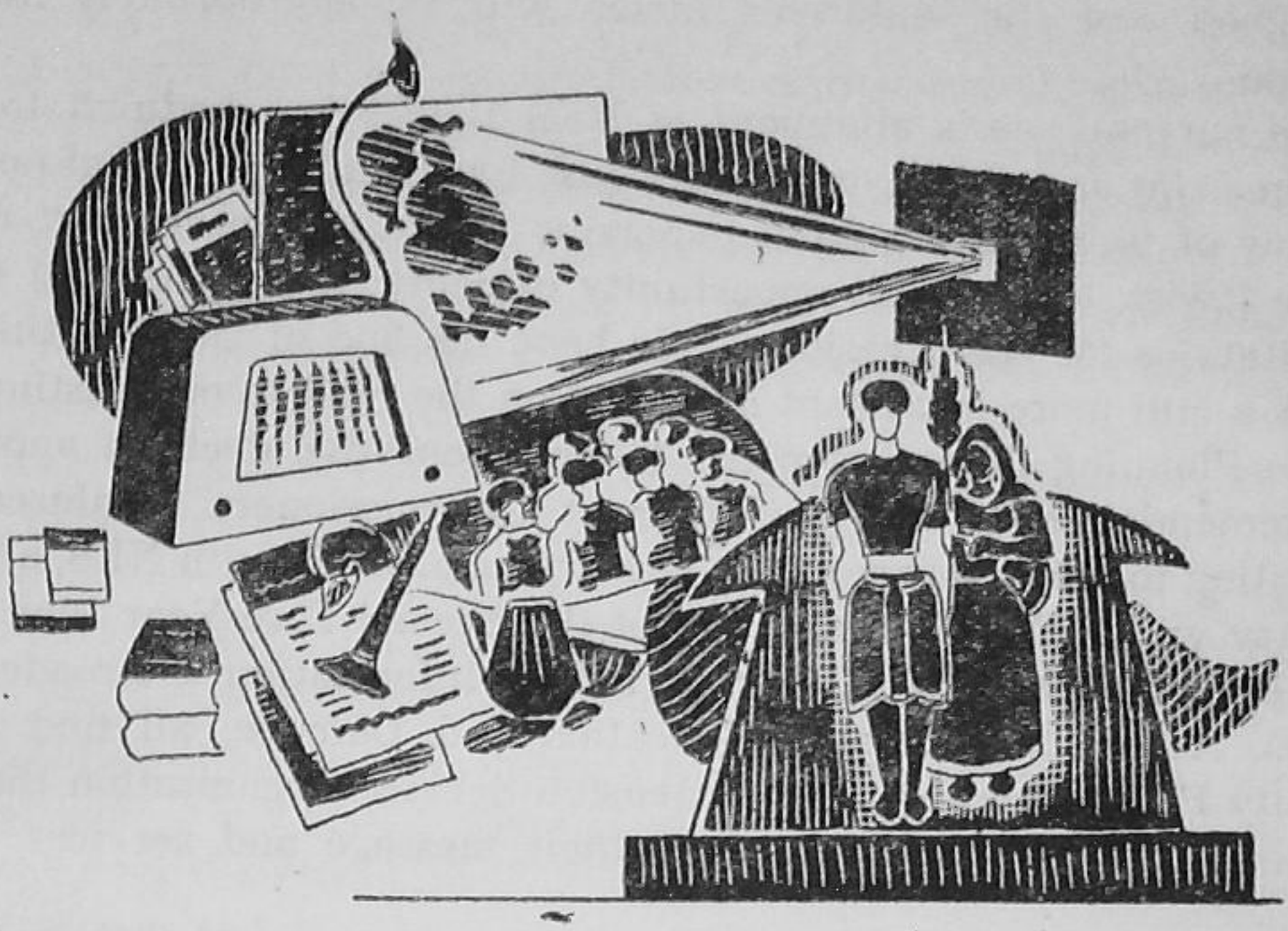
The Block Headquarters functioning at a virgin site in newly constructed premises designed to fit into the rural surroundings will have an atmosphere of its own which is bound to go a long way to ease the implementation of the programme. This has been tried out with evident success in many areas. It is worth a trial with you also if you are yet not convinced.

Information Centres

You will be happy to know that the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting have agreed to promote at the NES or CDP Block Headquarters an Information and Publicity Centre, if you can provide a suitable room to serve as a Community Centre together with the requisite furniture, and the staff to look after the same. You have the provision for a Community Centre, as also the furniture. The Social Education Organizer or some other member of the office staff can take charge of the Centre.

The Ministry of Information & Broadcasting will be happy to furnish you free of cost all the books, publications and periodicals issued by the Ministry. The value of these is likely to amount to about Rs. 1,000 and shall be a continuing source of interest both to the staff at the BHQ as also to the people in surrounding areas. I would like you to let me have a list of the Centres which you have ready, to receive the aid of the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting. I shall do the needful on hearing from you.

CPA has already published substantial quantity of literature. More are under print. These must be available at every Block Headquarter, especially in the Community Centre proposed in the foregoing paragraph. I am attaching to this a list of the CPA publications to-date and shall be



grateful if you can kindly ask your staff in the various projects to let us know if they require any supply of this literature. Needless to mention it will be free of cost.

You will have received Goswami's letter No. CPA/3/54/P, of date regarding conversion of NES to CDP Blocks which is to be considered in January 1955. I need hardly mention that I am eager that every State gets a prorata share of this conversion. I do hope you will kindly ask your staff to give a little push to the NES programme during the rest of the financial year so as to fulfil the minimum essential conditions. I may assure you, this minimum is within the reach of every single State in India, and I volunteer to serve you in whatever capacity you wish assisting you towards this consummation.

Children's Day

Children's Day (November 14) which incidentally is also the Prime Minister's birthday approaches fast. The people of your State have, under your leadership in past years, given an outstanding account of themselves in gifts to their children in the name of the Prime Minister. If you approve I should like the same to repeat for Children's Day this year also.

We have large number of Blocks of Community Project and National Extension Service. New Blocks are also coming into action on October 2nd. I am attaching to this, amended relevant extracts of the previous year's letter on the subject for your ready reference and shall be grateful if you can kindly issue timely instructions to the project staff so that they can have a chance to rival their own past records on this occasion.

I would also suggest that as an additional feature we may this year hold Children's Melas in every Block in which prizes and awards may be given to children out of the provision for Social Education. The season

will be good and the children's melas will fit appropriately into our programme.

The current year's allotment of NES Blocks is scheduled to come into action as far as possible on October 2nd. I am having a virtual non-stop programme of tour starting from tomorrow to the middle of next month. Therefore I wish to take this opportunity of conveying my cordial wishes and felicitations for the occasion. I do hope the 2nd of October this year will mark a still more important mile-post on the road to our destination.

The Planning Commission has taken a tentative decision approving the recommendation of the Development Commissioners' Conference at Ooty, relating to the coverage of the country as a whole with NES, and half the country with CDP Blocks by end of the Second Five-Year Plan.

The Ministries in the Centre, whether Information & Broadcasting, Industries, Agriculture, Health, Education and Defence, all find in the Community Project and National Extension Service Organisation the common channel for the transmission of their message and services to the people.

Forces of reaction and resistance are of course about in heavy dosage, but the forces of movement forward are in conspicuous preponderance. Meantime world forces are also making common cause with us. Nations who resent our independent outlook and action, as also those who are afraid or jealous of us, look up to us for the answer out of the riddle of "Today".

I do not wish to imply that Community Projects and National Extension Service by themselves will provide a panacea for all our ills. But I do claim, and I hope you share my faith in this, that this mighty river of action, the Brahmaputra, which is flowing as the channel for all its tributaries does hold the promise of the revolution long overdue, if she can be harnessed with intelligence and determination, just as she can also be a menace as the river so named, is proving in Assam, West Bengal, and East Pakistan today if allowed to work her way loosely down.

We have found the answer. Of course! It is working itself out. We are redundant for the mere movement forward. Yet we are vital. For, we alone can determine if it is to blossom in the "Destination Man" or end in the motley crowd to keep us on the eternal tenter-hooks. This is where we stand today, you and I, with your children and mine.

* * * *

Extracts from D.O. No. PS/CP-927, dated October 5, 1953, from Administrator, CPA, to the Development Commissioners of all State Governments.

1. Building of new primary schools for which land and buildings will be provided entirely free by village people, the Government providing only staff and equipment.
2. A minimum area of five acres of land as gift to a village school which could be used for training in agriculture of the pupils in

the primary classes, and which could incidentally also serve as a community land to provide the nucleus of a village development fund for all times in future. The land thus given, could be placed under the management of the Panchayats, the Gram Mangal Samitis, or Vikas Mandals or any other community institutions the Project Executive Officers may approve for the purpose.

3. Free gift of books and equipment for libraries amounting to a minimum value of Rs. 500.
4. Outdoor and indoor sports equipment such as swings, ladders, parallel bars, etc., and other sports materials amounting to a value of not less than Rs. 500 for each school.

I shall be grateful to you personally if you can accept this programme and let me have a list of the offers of gifts so as to reach me in my office in Delhi not later than the 12th of November, which I shall present to P.M. on behalf of you and the people you serve.

I shall also be grateful if you can let me have postcard size photographs, in duplicate, of the school buildings erected by the project people out of last year's gifts so as to reach me by the same date. I shall present one set of photographs in an album to the Prime Minister on the 14th of November. The other set will be retained in our office.

List of CPA Publications

1. Community Projects — A Draft Outline
2. Community Projects — A Road to New India (Pamphlet in 11 languages)
3. Community Projects — A Road to New India (Folder—in English and Hindi)
4. Community Projects — A Draft Handbook
5. Summary Record of 1st Development Commissioners' Conference
6. Palm Gur Industry
7. Manual for Village Level Workers (in English and Hindi)
8. Inaugural address by Shri V. T. Krishnamachari on the occasion of the inauguration of the Social Education Course (in English and Hindi)
9. Remarks by Shri V.T. Krishnamachari at the Second Development Commissioners' Conference from 16th to 19th April, 1953, (in English and Hindi)
10. Rural Development through self-help by Dr. K.N. Katju (in English, Hindi, Urdu)
11. Orientation and Training Course for Project Executive Officers at Nilokheri

12. Handmade paper industry
13. Latrines for improved methods of excreta disposal in villages
14. Report for 1952-53: Community Projects Administration
15. Organisation of a National Extension Service and Expansion of the Community Development Programme
16. National Extension Service and Community Development Programme (Administrative Organisation at the Block, Sub-Division, District and State levels)
17. Supplement to improved methods of excreta disposal with designs
18. Building for Tomorrow
19. Dehati Tatti (Hindi)
20. Summary Record of the Second Development Commissioners' Conference
21. Soil in Rural Development
22. Report for 1953-54: Community Projects Administration
23. Manual for Agriculture and Animal Husbandry
24. Manual for Irrigation
25. Guide to Conference Planning
26. Kurukshetra Pamphlets Series No. 1 — Brick Kiln Co-operatives
27. Kurukshetra Pamphlets Series No. 2—The Village "Ghani"

October 14, 1954.

Dear Comrade,

You know, the programme under the Community Projects initiated on October 2, 1952, has now crossed the two-year milepost. The programme under CDP and NES started on October 2, 1953, has by and large, completed the first year of operation. We have received quarterly reports for operation upto 30th June 1954. The data indicates that there has been improvement in expenditure as also physical accomplishment in the 1952 projects, although a lot more remains to be done if the norm is to be reached even on the basis of a 4-year operation.

Personal experiences in the field tend to indicate that with minor exceptions the bulk of the 1952 projects will succeed in accomplishing the expenditure of the complete budget provision, in certain cases even appreciably before the expiry of the 4-year period, provided the tempo of effort is not allowed to slacken and adequate delegation of powers continues flowing down the line. So far so good. I am sorry, however, I cannot say this in respect of the 1953-54 CDP and NES Blocks. Here the expenditure continues to strike an abnormaly low level compared even to the 1952 projects, during like periods.

Till about six months ago, it was believed that our low expenditure ratio in the Community Project Programme was attributable to the size of the budget provision, also to the delays in budget sanctions from Community Projects Administartion. With powers delegated to the State Government, CPA comes no longer into the picture for the sanctioning of the budget. Let us now look at the budget provision. It will be seen that the budget provision, especially on the NES side, is of a very low order. In fact this is the bone of contention in almost all States, and on which account there is a universal clamour both from the people as also from the State Government for allocation of more funds and for conversion of NES into Community Blocks.

In the circumstances, the low expenditure record on the NES side will tend to indicate that it is not money which is at fault but the machinery of Government, which is still to be geared to the demands of the changed context. What is needed more than anything else, perhaps, is adequate delegation of powers to the Collectors and the Block Development Officers and the energising especially of the Collectors to treat the programme as a priority assignment.

We are receiving applause universally on the revolutionary character of this programme and the manner of its forging forward. The only fly in the ointment seems to be the question of low expenditure. I am beginning to find it a little too embarrassing to continue on the defensive over this issue. No doubt, you wil feel the same way and will have taken

necessary steps to instil some fire into the NES programme also. I need hardly mention that I am always at your call for whatever I can do to assist you. My complaint is that I am receiving too little call from you. I wish you could make greater use of me, and our organisation in the Centre. Now to some random rationalisations, if I may.

"First Aid" Man

As I see it, the Gram Sevak is growing to be the "G.P." (General Practitioner) or the "First-Aid" man as we may choose to describe him, with the polyclinic functioning at the Block Headquarters where specialists of all kinds operate under the co-ordinated guidance of the Medical Superintendent, who is our Block Development Officer. To look at the functions of the Gram Sevak on this pattern has some advantage about it for, it allows the interpretation of the Gram Sevak in the eyes of all for what exactly he is or should be. If you like, you may give currency to the concept. I have reasons to believe that it will clear a lot of air which, not unoften, gets charged unduly because of controversies in the interpretation of functions between members of our staff.

If I am to succeed in assisting the Ministries in the Government of India on one hand, and the State Governments on the other, in obtaining necessary support and finance through the Planning Commission or other agencies in the establishment of institutions or facilities for training, I should have a clear picture of the staff in position in the field from quarter to quarter. The quarterly report includes compulsory provision for the incorporation of this information. I shall be grateful if you can kindly instruct your organisation to ensure that the information supplied be kept as up-to-date as humanly possible. It will help me to fight your battle more effectively than you may be ready to believe.

Next year which, incidentally, is the last year of operation under the present Five-Year Plan, is expected to cover an allotment of about 450 Blocks of National Extension Service, if the 25% coverage of the country which is the target, is to be realised. For obvious reasons, I do not wish to overload you with a heavy allotment in one single instalment. The present thinking, therefore, is that we make the allotment for next year in at least two instalments, so that you may find it easier to staff, and operate on, the programme as resources become available in stages.

The next allotment of NES, accordingly, is being proposed for some time in January 1955. The idea is that the period between the allotment and the end of the financial year will be utilised in attending to surveys and other preliminaries, formal operation with the full complement of staff being scheduled to begin on the 1st of April. The measure, incidentally, is also designed to meet the demands of States for additional allotment of NES Blocks which had to be postponed pending the availability of technical personnel. I am sending this information to you in advance, so as to enable you to plan your prgoramme accordingly.

I had written to you through this medium, several months ago, requesting you to consider the possibility of taking up the delimitation of NES Blocks in the State. I find that the Madhya Pradesh Government has already completed this work and are well on their way to siting the Headquarters of the Block so as to enable themselves to proceed ahead with the construction of the Block Headquarters' Office as well as residential accommodation immediately upon allotment. This is calculated to ease the avoidable difficulties, project staff otherwise encounter in the absence of residential and office accommodation in Blocks which are thrust upon them without any previous plan or preparation. Now that we know we are covering the country as a whole by end of the second Five-Year Plan, I would strongly recommend you to do the delimitation of Blocks and the siting of the Block Headquarters for your State as a whole also. It will help, Boundary Commission notwithstanding.

Village Schools

While we were children in village schools, we remember how we revelled acting the truant boys, the turbulent ones amongst us at any rate. When I analyse in retrospect today I find that this peculiar yearning in us was due as much to our fright of the school teacher as it was to the physical atmosphere of the school itself. We know, it is difficult to change the character of the teacher overnight, because in him we deal with an organic process which has laws of its own. In respect of the atmosphere of the school, however, we stand on a footing which is different altogether. For, new village schools can always be sited, scrupulously away from the village habitant, on spacious grounds overlooking the countryside all round.

The horizon has its eternal charm, more so in the life of youngsters in which it can play a fundamental role. We certainly can help in this basic development in a phenomenal way. In fact, I have already seen this happening in a number of projects, where children at play are a treat for the gods, in their own elements in the spacious school premises, overlooking the countryside fading out as a silhouette against the distant horizon. All that is involved is a taste and a decision. Villagers, once explained, will be ready to provide the land and other facilities, particularly because land away from the village naturally involves much less cost than within the village or adjoining. It will also facilitate the provision of land for practice in agriculture by school children, the crying need today.

Electricity, the invisible power from the heavens, is the herald of the new age. Wherever there is electricity in the villages, the outlook of the village in matters of roads, drains, latrines, housing, etc., undergoes an automatic transformation without much of a pressure from without. It is already an accepted policy of the Government that there will be progressive electrification of rural areas. Several of our projects in India

have already availed of money unutilisable for irrigation, on the provision for electricity to the villages. I would strongly commend this to you. The provision you already have under the overall project budget for the State should be enough for a beginning. If more money is needed, you may let me know so that I may take up the case of rural electrification as an all-India issu in Community Projects and NES areas for consideration by the Planning Commission. This is a vital cause worth championing.

If the Collectors are to act as the Deputy Development Commissioners for our programme in the districts, it is but natural that they should submit periodic reports on the progress of the programme to the Development Commissioner. One State, for instance Bombay, has initiated a fortnightly report from Collectors in respect of Community Projects and NES in the districts. The Bombay report calls for what has been achieved and what difficulties are being experienced in which Headquarters can be of help. It appears to be an extremely sound move. The fortnightly report is now being replaced by a monthly one. I cannot see how this programme in its present pace of expansion can receive adequate supervision from the Headquarters short of periodic personal reports from Collectors more or less on the line of reports from States now coming to the CPA.

Two-Way Traffic

I do not know if the Anniversary issue of "Kurukshetra" which came out on the 2nd of October 1954, has reached you by now. It has been a remarkable document. It has a soul of its own. There is personality and individuality pervading the document from cover to cover. Yet there is a clear common undertone. What a clear reflection of the diverse yet composite culture which is our common heritage! I thank you for your contribution.

Incidentally, you may refer to article "Programmes and Methods" by Carl C. Taylor. It is a remarkable analysis of the Community Development Programme, which it will be worth our while to commend for a study to all our staff. We have supplied you sufficient number of copies this time to enable you to distribute one copy each to your Project Officer, Block Development Officer and also, perhaps, to all your other subject-matter specialists at the Block Headquarters. I hope the journal will be distributed to all concerned. I cannot conceive of a document, for the present at any rate, that could reveal a clearer picture of what has happened in one year and nine months of the working of this programme.

We are very eager, particularly the Editor of "Kurukshetra", that we have a feature both in the "Newsletter" and in the "Kurukshetra" titled "News from the roots". This should have a touch of the aboriginal elements relating events in flesh and blood, if any, that are taking place on the ground which others in the distance have a

right to hear about. What these journals "Kurukshetra" and "Gram Sevak" are calculated to achieve towards the evolution of a common Indian citizenship I cannot describe at this stage. It will tell at the appropriate time. I only wonder if you can ask your Director of Publicity in the State to keep in closer touch than heretofore with the events on the ground, record these if possible in the form of a 'Newsletter' for the State, and mark a copy of the same for us in the CPA, so that the pooled news from the all-India front can find its honoured place under the appropriate heading in the journals run on behalf of the CPA.

Some States have already started "newsletter" on this style, for instance Bengal. Unfortunately for others, the Bengal journal is published in Bengali. Therefore, it is still outside the reach of others. Our hope, however, is that we shall be able to do the all-India pooling for universal consumption in turn, if each State can begin to record its own tales in the programme. The size of the programme, especially in Part "A" and Part "B" States, should make it easy and practical. Could you give this a trial? The expenditure whatever little should, I believe, be met out of the provision for 'Social Education'.

Extension Vis-A-Vis Regulation

This business of regulatory powers for Block Development Officers and Project Officers with the resulting clamour for integration with the Revenue Agency right down to the ground on the style of the Bombay experiment is gaining rapid currency. I owe you a word of caution.

We have no dogmatic or puristic views on 'Extension' or 'Regulation'. We have to accept our conditions in India without rosy glasses. We are yoked to methods of 'Extension'; yet it is clear, we do not belong to a religious order. The machinery of the Government continues to be there behind, and must be, to take care of organized criminals and people with aggressively anti-social propensities. So long as the Collectors and the S.D.Os are vested with the responsibilities of this programme, as they ought to be, regulatory powers will always remain within easy access. This cry at this stage for further integration to me therefore is utterly incomprehensible except as an illusive short cut.

'Extension', as we have discussed many a time in the past, is a form of education. I have yet not known a short-cut to education despite all the synthetic processes. The Bombay programme of integration was agreed to by us purely as an experiment. We have yet not seen, if accomplishment — physical and financial — is any criterion, that this integration has earned any spectacular dividends for the Bombay Government. We maintain an open mind. We hope and wish the Bombay Government the very best. But, for obvious reasons, we do not feel prepared to broadcast the seeds all over the country until the experimental farm has evolved the nuclear seeds, and the season and soil are ripe for the sowing.

In my letter last month I wrote to you about the Children's Day — Gifts to the Prime Minister. I shall be grateful if you can kindly let me have the material on the 10th November, instead of the 12th, so that our people may have due credit in the press on the 14th. This has not been possible in the past because of delayed arrival of messages from States.

The National Development Council meeting is going to be held, as you know, on the 9th and 10th November. I presume, you or your deputy will, perhaps, be accompanying your Chief Minister at this conference.

There are quite a number of issues concerning our programme on which I should like to consult you. Goswami has already written to you, *vide* his letter No. CPA|45|54|P, dated 9|11.10.54, requesting you to earmark a day specially for a conference with us. I do trust, it will be possible for you to meet this request.

Thirteen, the Unlucky Number

I have to send you a most unhappy news. The 2nd of October, 1954, was approaching. One of our dear comrades, M.M. Crishna, Development Commissioner, Himachal Pradesh, was travelling in his jeep towards dusk on the evening of September 30, approaching Nahan for the inauguration on October 2, of an NES Block near about. The jeep got stuck in the rapidly flowing water of a causeway over a treacherous mountain river. Crishna knew the water was rising and there would be no way of saving the jeep. He continued the struggle.

Without a warning came from the corner around, a torrent of water sweeping away the jeep and the occupant inside and smashing them both against heavy boulders about 400 yards away. The body was recovered next morning about 10 miles down the stream. I heard of the tragedy when I was in Kashmir. I met Crishna on the 28th September in my office. We drafted a tentative programme together for a joint visit to the Himachal Pradesh projects around the middle of October. He was to confirm the programme on the 1st. That is never to be.

I have lost in Crishna a rare friend and a dauntless fighter in the service of our cause. It is impossible to make up the loss. I have travelled with, and talked to him so often that his determined, yet smiling face is refusing to leave my mind. I continue looking for him. He has left us all a debtor behind.

XI

November 17, 1954.

Dear Comrade,

It was too short a meeting. I feel happy all the same because it gave me the opportunity to revive my sense of collective strength. I know also, you could not help feeling likewise. After the conclusion of the first day's meeting of the National Development Council, a friend came out and observed "Mr. Dey, I congratulate you". "Why ?" I asked. "On your Development Commissioners", he said. I explained that he could hardly have seen them at all. "I could feel them", he replied. Now to business.

"Key Village" Scheme

We have been hearing about "Key Village" scheme on cattle breeding and also been practising the same to varying degrees in different States. I was happy recently to come across "Key Village" schemes for poultry breeding also. This was in Punjab. The success of the pilot scheme seems to have encouraged the State to go forward and extend it to all projects and blocks. The supply of pedigree birds and eggs and the complete replacement of the existing stock eventually seem to be the primary feature of the scheme. I shall commend this to all States.

We know, human beings will never be all alike or equal. Inequalities will remain to provide continuing incentive to progress. Life, like the river, can obviously not move unless there is gradient on the soil through which it passes. If we accept this thesis, it will clearly mean that we have to produce quality and its extension in space. In practice this will imply the discovery of the most progressive group of people in a block area, and then getting them to produce the best demonstration conditions so that the particular village could act as the model equivalent of the demonstration form we use in the field of agriculture.

I know, what I have stated above is the first elementary principle in extension. I mention this all the same because I find that it is often times lost sight of under the craze for horizontal expansion.

Of course we do not desire, till we can find employment for all our people, to introduce highly mechanized equipment, such as tractors, bulldozers, scrapers, etc., except for special operations like reclamation of land, etc. Yet, as I find it, the demonstration of the work of heavy equipment in villages has tremendous potentialities for the revitalization of life now static in rural areas.

I was amazed, for instance, at the spirit of curious wonder I saw in the eyes of men, women and children who were watching the demonstration of a bulldozer and a scraper reconditioning a derelict tank in a Punjab

village, which in the course of a day produced almost as much work as the villagers have been used to doing in a year.

The shock of the impact I find is something terrific. If intellingently followed it can help materially in the social education of the static mind. You have only to try once to see for yourself, if you have not done so already.

"Physician Heal Thyself"

Our politicians, College Professors, School Teachers and our parents, all have been tireless in gospelling on the clean life and the good life till we find ourselves submerged in hell itself. Gospel has lost all sanctity. "Showing by doing" is what matters or else we should have all been God's own men and women what with the Upanishads and what with our text books and the sermons on the platform.

Our extension man should extend by doing what he preaches. Be it initiative, industry, integrity, fellow feeling, humility and all the other virtues, we unreservedly extol. "Example is better than percept" is the old adage which we may repeat to ourselves. As a start may we begin with sanitation in our Training Centres and in the villages ?

Because of combined effort we have succeeded in delivering the bulk of the First-Aid Kits. We have also finalized arrangements for the continuance of this concession for all qualified Gram Sevaks. Gram Sevaks, who are using the First-aid Kit, have invariably made a mark in the villages which they serve. The same applies to the use of First-Aid Kits for cattle.

Our village people, as you know, are in acute need of services in these two fields. The Gram Sevak can render this service if he receives adequate training. The First-Aid Kits for animal husbandry can be supplied at the cost of the project. First-aid Kit for men will be supplied by the CPA. Should not we avail of this for our Gram Sevaks ? For the size of the investment, it will pay more than anything else I know of.

Punjab and PEPSU have taken up consolidation of holdings on a large scale. Wherever consolidation has taken place, the farmers are happy ; so are the whole communities. Farmers are happy because they can take better care of land now in one holding. The communities are happy because consolidation has set apart well demarcated areas on strategic sites for community works, such as roads, schools, Panchayat Ghars, compost-pits, fuel forests, playgrounds, etc.

Consolidation of holding as an answer to the problem of fragmentation is a universally approved programme for the country as a whole. Could not we make a beginning in the CDP and NES areas ? It is worth trying.

Workers in urban areas are united enough to make themselves felt on powers that are. What they gain through their unity is achieved in-

variably at the cost of the farmers who are the primary producers and who, as we know, account for more than 90% of the national production.

Bombay State are introducing Farmers' Unions in all the projects. We may try the same in other States. The organization of the Farmers' Unions will also help in the fostering of Panchayats, Co-operatives and recreational movements. It is being tried sporadically. What is needed is a universal push to the movement.

Inter-State Visits By Project Staff And Farmers

We have been hearing farm youth exchange between America and other States including India, as also what is called leadership training for the unceasing stream of Government staff proceeding overseas. In our enthusiasm to rush abroad we do not seem to take sufficient advantage of what exists on the home front. In this our projects in various States have as much to offer by way of common knowledge as the places of pilgrimage and archaeological importance have to offer in the field of our culture.

The projects, both NES as also CDP, should have ample provision, especially under the Head of 'Social Education' to pay for *intra-State* visit by Government staff and farmers for purposes of extending common knowledge. It will be of advantage to take this up on a larger scale than has been the case hitherto. It will also help in bringing about a wider outlook as against the "Frog-in-the-well" mentality which still persists in the rural areas in particular.

The CPA is now considering a scheme of inter-State visit by project staff and village people on a sufficient scale to serve as an incentive for good work by Government staff as also the village people, while at the same time promoting the spirit of Indian citizenship in a progressively increasing number of people. I am having this question examined earnestly and shall be grateful if you can kindly let me have the following information as early as you can :

(i) Places of pilgrimage (all religions) and of archaeological importance you have in your own State with the names of the nearest rail or road head.

(ii) CDP projects or NES blocks worth a special visit by representatives from other States, indicating special features with reference to which the visit is considered worthwhile.

Gram Sevaks with Higher Qualifications : Ex-Servicemen

While in the initial stages of our work any overture from the side of Government was a net addition to village amenities, time is approaching fast when our stock of generalities will get dry, calling for more specific and detailed knowledge, if the extension movement is not to suffer a standstill. While I know that the permanent answer will eventually lie in the establishment of regular Research and Extension Centres at all

levels, it occurs to me that we shall stand in progressively greater need of more qualified personnel in the body of Gram Sevaks.

I find from my experiences in the field that Gram Sevaks with higher qualifications, especially in the field of agriculture, are proving much more effective, by and large, than people with the standard qualifications. We have already recommended advance increments for Gram Sevaks with higher qualifications. I have reasons to believe, particularly in the light of future developments, that it will pay us to make a special effort to attract Gram Sevaks with higher qualifications.

Gram Sevaks selected out of ex-Servicemen with experience in agriculture are generally proving more effective than the freshers. Here again is a field which may be explored further by every State.

Road Building — One Step Forward

There are enthusiasts amongst us who still persist in believing that they can tar or cement-concrete all village roads. Knowing as we do that in a Development Block consisting of about 100 villages we shall have between 150 to 250 miles of roads to deal with, when the communications have been fully developed, it will be clear that the provision in the Community Development Programme will hardly suffice even for the culverts and bridges needed for the total road length.

The obvious course, therefore, is to try taking only one step forward under the programme, which will stand more or less as follows :—

(i) Where no roads exist, katcha road will be initiated.

(ii) Where katcha road exists pucca culverts will be provided together with some soiling, wherever feasible.

(iii) Katcha road with soling will be provided with a layer of metal with water macadam.

(iv) The water macadam road, where exists, will be tarred, if possible.

We hope posterity will take care of coal-tarring and concreting the total road length.

National Song

The National Song sung in villages continues more or less as a parody. There are records of the National Song which can be furnished to all Community Centres, if needs be, under the Head of "Social Education" covered in the programme. The Social Education Organizer should specially make it a point to propagate correct singing of the song, wherever it is attempted. We are asking the Social Education Organizers Training Centres to take up the singing of National Song in the correct way as a part of the regular curriculum.

The recommendations of the Third Development Commissioners' Conference have already come out in the form of a printed book. I shall be grateful if you can kindly let your Government approve and give effect

to these recommendations at an early date. It will solve many of your problems and those of others along the line forward. I mention the printed issue, because I find that printed word still continues to rule our conduct generally.

We are trying to produce a Draft Manual on Administrative Intelligence based on our knowledge acquired to-date. It will take a couple of months before this reaches you. Meantime, you have already had the statistical statements based on the new method we discussed during the brief Development Commissioners' Conference in Delhi on the 12th forenoon.

Fixation of target for every worker is no doubt a very worthy objective. But it involves many practical difficulties. It is on this account that we had to resort to the rule of the 'average' and count on the assumption that fundamentally majority of human beings are neutral and would like to do their best if they can get visible credit for what they do, and can see unmistakably where they are short. This is precisely what the new series of statements are expected to achieve.

The system will serve its purpose only if State Governments can introduce the same in respect of the Blocks, the Block Officers do the same in terms of the Gram Sevaks, the Gram Sevaks repeat in terms of the villages within his jurisdiction, and the village Sarpanch do the same in terms of the families.

I have no doubt whatsoever that the new system, howsoever imperfect it is today, is pregnant with great potentialities, as far as simplification of administrative control is concerned, if introduced all along the line up to the village level. As you might have surmised, I have personally taken a tremendous degree of pains in putting the system to my use and I will commend it strongly for a trial in your hands.

Flowers — Our Aboriginal Heritage

Our village people are still fond of colours and fresh flowers. They do not understand artificial decorations. Everything to them has a meaning so long as it is raw in nature. It is perhaps here that lies the difference between our sophisticated town folks and the son of nature we meet in the countryside. A comparsion between our lifeless urban sisters moving round the shopping areas with paints and varnishes on the face, and the village maidens with sandal paste marks on the face and fresh flowers on the hair looking like sylvan fairies, will clear my idea further.

The beauty in the villages has disappeared because of our acute poverty and distress all round. We are trying to improve the economic level. But this is not enough. We have also to improve the tone of the surroundings. It costs very little to supply flower seeds to the village people, particularly to the women, with request that every house grows a few flower plants near the balcony or in the courtyard. The idea will spread much faster than the wildest of our imagination. It is so because flowers

are so natural to our aboriginal character. Can't we do something about it ? It costs next to nothing in terms both of money and effort. Let us have some colours in the drab existence all round.

We have just brought out the latest pamphlet on Community Development and National Extension Service. I am sending you separately by today's mail a copy for your perusal. This has been the product of team work on the part of all concerned in the CPA. I have personally spent more than 20 hours in its production. I hope you would like it.

On the new objective of a socialistic State for India in the future, as defined by Prime Minister during the meeting of the N.D.C., and his commendation in the same connection of the Community Development Programme as something to which he attaches the greatest importance because it is basically revolutionary, it becomes doubly incumbent for those connected with the programme to ensure that the character of the programme is interpreted and transmitted in its proper setting.

The new pamphlet it appears, as though, was designed for the purpose in anticipation. It has been brought absolutely up-to-date. We shall try a better job next time. Those engaged in the Community Project programme all along the line represent daily or monthly rated workers. It was but appropriate that the role of the herald for the new gospel should have fallen to the charge of this organization. We can do the job.

With kind regards.

XII

December 30, 1954.

Dear Comrade,

The messenger is late in arriving this time. I am sorry, although I must confess it was partly deliberate as I wanted to send this on the eve of the New Year. With the future sharply defined and the definition endorsed by the Parliament, the New Year promises to open a new chapter for the "Tomorrow" that is taking shape out of "Today". I wanted to greet you on the boundary line.

Community Projects and National Extension Service, which at one time were looked at, at best, as local development schemes of sort, even by the staunchest of believers amongst us, promise to acquire a new significance, namely to serve as the vehicle not merely for the extension programme limited to fields such as agriculture, animal husbandry, public health, education, etc., but also for wider activities, viz., rural credit, village small-scale and decentralized industries, rural electrification, rural science, rural housing, etc., such as are bound to constitute the basic elements of the next plan if the new objective of the "Socialistic pattern of society" is even to be attempted on the ground.

As the Second Plan begins to take shape, our organization will have to begin taking a progressively bigger load. Therefore, I see no respite or relief for anyone. On the contrary, I see a continuing intensification of effort. Since the programme is no longer a short-term feature, we have to plan conserving ourselves carefully to assure that the staff engaged at all levels do have relief in the form of holidays and vacation. The human machine cannot be driven indefinitely without revolt with a vengeance. I am perhaps, one of the worst criminals in this matter. Inter-project visits by project staff within the State should bring some relief, while at the same time serve to equalise experiences between different areas.

We hope to take up not long from now a centrally sponsored scheme, enabling the staff as also select villagers associated with the programme, to visit different parts of the country on a holiday-cum-education in Indian citizenship. You will hear from me soon if I can push the proposal through.

Now to the random thoughts :

Village Singer

I find that experienced singers, who are artistes in their line, can do much more in extending our ideas to the unsophisticated village people through native songs and bhajans specially composed for the programme in which our people are natural masters, than the chalk and black-board instructions for other forms of lectures and demonstrations which we can

offer through our project staff. I do not mean to deprecate the latter but rather emphasize the need for combining the indigenous with the imported technique in a happy synthesis.

I have seen this technique in action most effectively in Uttar Pradesh and the Punjab. I believe, it is also being tried in Bihar and Orissa and may be in other States also. I commend this to all States. We may employ artistes of this tribe — a set for a district or a group of districts — out of the funds for "Social Education". The result should be worth much more than the investment. The technique is our own and is rooted in our blood. It cannot fail, if the selection of the artistes can be made carefully so as to ensure that the individuals concerned represent the real type who find their home in their own art. You are far too familiar with the type to need any further description from my side.

Gram Sevikas

Problem of women in rural areas still presents the most formidable hurdle in the programme. It will be quite sometime before conditions will be ripe to make it possible for educated women to work in rural areas with understanding and mental ease. Women Social Education Organizers are still not available in sufficient number. I do not expect any significant change in the position in the near future. But women's programme cannot wait till our educated women are able to proceed to the villages. We have to do the best in the existing situation.

My suggestion, therefore, is that where women Social Education Organizers are not forthcoming, we may make a beginning with one or two Gram Sevikas more or less of the type represented by the Kasturba Trust Workers. These Gram Sevikas may make a beginning with Women's Centres in a limited number of villages based round child welfare, home crafts such as embroidery, spinning, weaving, tailoring, bhajans and kirtans, sports and indoor games, etc. Women must be brought out in the open so that they can have a chance to work together as a community. I do not see how we can make even a beginning with our programme of child welfare, dietetics, village sanitation and hygiene unless we make women the main purveyor of the movement.

Wherever I go I find an upsurge in the women aching for an outlet. There is also a desire on the part of men folks to co-operate in the process. We should make a beginning, howsoever elementary it may be. A woman, who has been able to earn an anna with her own labour, is a transformed human being. There will always be one or two progressive women in a village. They may not be progressive from the urban point of view but relatively speaking, they will be forward enough for our purpose to be the nucleus of a movement for the rest of the village women. This will be facilitated enormously if the Gram Sevikas in lieu of the Lady Social Education Organizer where the latter is not available, can be brought

into the picture. The Gram Sevikaś can function under the general supervision of the Social Education Organizer.

In a number of States I find "Social Day" a regular feature in the projects. This is usually a moving Exhibition of all activities under the programme, which is held once a month but travels from village to village as a mark of distinction to the village which has done the best work under the programme. All staff of the projects and, at times, even the District Departments participate in the Exhibition along with the village people especially the school children. This appears to be an inexpensive incentive to villages as also a hundred per cent effective medium for the extension of our ideas about the projects.

I do not know if I conveyed to you the movement that Uttar Pradesh started sometime ago of converting all their Middle Schools into Junior High Schools with extension based on agriculture as an integral feature of the curriculum. These schools have from 10 to 25 acres of land attached to the School as permanent farms to be worked by the school and the village people for the benefit of the School.

It would appear that Uttar Pradesh has struck one more innovation. It is the Inter-College in rural areas. These Colleges include the High School and the Intermediate classes and are sited in typical rural areas and supported mostly by the village people around, with nominal or no help from Government. The College usually has its own farm besides village crafts such as fit into the requirements of surrounding areas. Uttar Pradesh Government, I believe, are taking steps to integrate the craft instructions in these Colleges with the programme for village industries visualized in the Community Project Programme.

Dudhahari Baba

While touring the project areas of Uttar Pradesh, I came across a rural Inter-College built entirely through the efforts of a Sadhu known as the "Dudhahari Baba", who lives purely on milk. I saw similarly a metalled hill-road under construction in Madhya Bharat, based on the effort of a Sadhu, who has created a ferment of constructive endeavour by village people in the whole region around.

This leads me to wonder whether we cannot expand the principle of extension to encompass some section of the million and more Sadhus, who are now struggling in the quest of the "Next World". I come, not infrequently, across Sadhus who are prepared to play their part in building the "New World" here and now. I do not, of course, mean that we should employ Sadhus as employees in our projects, but certainly the example of the Dudhahari Baba and the Sadhu in Madhya Bharat can be emulated elsewhere. I hold no strong views on this subject and am offering you my experiences for what these are worth.

I had thought that village roads constituted the most significant part of our mass movement with the muscles. It seems, however, that

our people, vital as they are in action as well as imagination, have already begun to strike new lines. Paving of village lanes, pucca village drains and installation of smokeless *Chulla* in the kitchen have acquired the shape of a mass movement in project areas in the Punjab and the western part of Uttar Pradesh. The movement is gathering rapid momentum and has grown to be a sacrament in the eyes of the villagers. The shape of some of the villages has undergone such a drastic change that you or I would any day prefer to live in these improved villages instead of our slum and gutter-shop infested towns in many a District Headquarter. I would strongly commend this movement if it has not been taken up already in your State. It will strike deeper than even the road building programme.

Rural-Cum-Urban Township

I may assure you, not to speak of the Woman Social Education Organizer, it will be impossible even to retain permanently the Block Development Officer or the Extension Officers, unless we build up the Block Headquarters with reasonable facilities for housing accommodation, health, education and communications. The NES budget provides Rs. 5,000, as grants-in-aid for the building of the Block Headquarters office, apart from transport and other office equipment, fixtures and

furniture. We have also offered to provide a loan up to a lakh of rupees to build up staff housing. The Community Project budget provides additional amenities for the Block Headquarters.

The Block Headquarters, wherever built with an eye to the future, is growing to be the hub of a new life, providing a meeting ground for the surrounding areas. This is how we visualize the growth of a rural-cum-urban township co-existing with the villages based on a reciprocal traffic in the surpluses between the rural and urban sectors, and radiating the message of life as it should develop today.

Unfortunately, the amenities offered are not being availed of universally and opportunities are being missed of filling a vital gap in our rural areas. At the same time, staff members are being subjected to avoidable hardships in day-to-day living, which is bound to recoil on the programme sooner or later. I shall be grateful if you can kindly give this matter your immediate and earnest attention.

One of the reasons, which is making it difficult in places to establish the Block Headquarters, is the lack of demarcation or an unpractical demarcation of Block boundaries. Apart from the Block Headquarters, these features affect even the coverage under the programme.

Now that NES has been accepted as a permanent feature of administration and is intended to cover the country by the end of the Second Five-Year Plan, we should make a bid for the demarcation of Block boundaries in the State as a whole. It has already been taken up by some States.

Not infrequently villages are presented to visitors by Government staff working in the projects. This, I feel, is utterly wrong. Villages belong to the village people. If we have been able to arouse the village, the first sign of it should be evident in new village leadership. It becomes incumbent, therefore, that the village leaders receive the visitors to the village, the Government staff remaining, as far as possible, in the background.

Visitors should not be a burden on the village community. What is worse, I find that not infrequently visitors to villages are entertained by village leaders, who necessarily represent only the well-to-do section of the community. This practice, I fear, is not in the interest of the programme, as it is bound to leave the poorer section of the community with a compulsory feeling of inferiority. The village as a whole must provide an entertainment to the visitor, if such entertainments are considered absolutely unavoidable. The Panchayat leader may act as the host, but he should do so on behalf, and at the expense, of the whole community.

From all indications the demand on overseers in particular, will be still greater during the Second Five-Year Plan. It will be necessary to take up the expansion of training facilities for overseers in existing institutions or in new institutions without a moment's delay. An overseer school is relatively inexpensive. The class can also be attached to

Technical Schools or Polytechnics. This is a matter to which we have to give immediate attention, if our works programme is not to meet the same fate as we are experiencing now. I have no doubt whatsover that if the State Governments can formulate a concerted scheme for the creation of facilities for the training of overseers, some Central assistance will be forthcoming. I shall try to help in whatever way I can.

Our School Children

Uttar Pradesh Government will appear to have started a universal movement for disciplined recreational programme for school children under properly trained physical and recreational instructors. The movement is catching like wild fire. It is in fact a sight for the gods to see school children in their uniforms, drilling, playing, singing, dancing, gardening and working in community works. It is to be seen to be believed.

I think I had mentioned sometime ago about road building and other reconstructional activities in villages which were based on the initiative of the school children. School children represent an untapped reservoir which needs being harnessed. These children will certainly give a much better account of themselves, flexible as they still are in muscles, mind and spirit. They deserve a "New Deal" in our hands with resources such as we possess today.

School children in a majority of schools I visit, show acute signs of malnutrition resulting from lack of milk, vegetables and fruits in the diet. The problem of increased milk production will take time. Vegetables and fruits, however, should be a different matter. In fact, with the present trend of declining prices for foodgrains, the production of vegetables may mean a welcome shift in agriculture. Some States have done extraordinarily well in the promotion of vegetable and fruit cultivation. Other States are badly behind. This is a programme that can be taken in hand with very little effort and investment. Once a start is made, there is very little further that needs be done.

We have already had three Inter-State Seminars at Mysore, Pachmarhi and Panna. The fourth seminar will be held at Bhubaneswar shortly. The fifth and the sixth are scheduled to be completed by the end of March. We shall go in, as usual, for the Development Commissioners' Conference. The seminars this year from all accounts are a distinct improvement over the standard of discussions and experiences represented last year. This is from outside observers. It indicates that we are growing in our experiences and that the movement is gaining in vitality.

A number of States have also initiated intra-State seminars of Collectors and related project staff. These seminars are proving of great value, inasmuch as they are bringing about unity of understanding and the raising of the level of thinking of the "Last man". Democracy means a major middle class. These seminars, therefore, will appear to be serving the

purpose very well indeed, inasmuch as they are lifting the level and expanding the range of the average citizen including the Government staff.

In continuation of these Inter-State and Intra-State seminars, conferences of Block Officers with Village-level Workers seem to have grown already a regular feature all round. I also understand that the training of Village Leaders in Shibirs or Camps is also going on alongside. Madhya Bharat, Rajasthan and Bhopal, I understand, are going about it in a very big way. I hope, this will be tried in all States before the winter is over.

Village Leaders Training

We are trying to produce through the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting at the Centre, a lot of material to help in the Extension programme. You will soon hear from Shri R.K. Chatterjee, the Deputy Principal Information Officer attached to us, who is looking after these entire requirements through the various media in the I & B Ministry. The material will generally be in the form of manuals, pamphlets, posters, films, film-strips, etc., dealing with the general programme as also the individual subjects covered under the programme. I shall need your help in the production of films, as I am anxious to incorporate the best features of all facets of the programme pooled from different areas in the country such as can represent in final shape the optimum that India is doing in today's circumstances. Shri R.K. Chatterjee will get in touch with you not long from now for help, and I do hope you will give him information as to what material he can collect from your side, and the facilities for filming, photographing and collecting the features concerned.

This letter has already grown long. I do not wish to tax you, if I can help it. I am writing these lines from my office in the Rashtrapati Bhavan. Opposite my window at a not very great distance stands the Qutab Minar. I also see the remnants of ancient Capitals in this great city of lost Empires. The weather in Delhi has been biting cold during the past few days. But it is invigorating. A lot of coal is burning in the fireplace to keep the room warm so as to enable me to work at full speed.

More than fifteen days of the month I spend in the villages. I meet tens of thousands of full-hearted village people who, to my mind, represent the finest of human material we could ever find anywhere. But alas, there is a big gulf yet that separates the conditions of living in the villages from those that obtain in the Capital here or in the States. These Capitals with all the amenities that many of us have the opportunities to enjoy for a good part of the time, are borne primarily on the lone shoulders of the millions who slog in the countryside and yet are prepared to do our behest to any length, with a smile.

We do not wish to pull the standards down and yet if the gulf that separates the tower from the dwarf is not bridged rapidly enough for the context in which we live, there will be trouble ahead which no power can avoid, much less resist. We are on a long pilgrimage. The route already

covered is not too insignificant. The route yet ahead looks frightening in length. But others promise to join us soon to share our burden. What can I wish you on the eve of the New Year but that your muscles and mind will continue forging ahead with the heart throbbing with the excitement of this adventure. We are planting an orchard for posterity. How could it be done without the initial investment? Some people had to do it. Why not we — the gardeners as also the investors? I pray, may you be strong enough for the burden.

Cheers.

P.S. The Principal of the B.D.O. Training Centre at Hyderabad is sending you at my instance a tablet inscribed with the famous quotation from the Prime Minister as a motto for the mantelpiece such as I hold in my office.

XIII

February 9, 1955.

Dear Comrade,

There is one thing of which I am certain. The age of "Dying for the Motherland" is over. Instead, the age is on in which one has to "Live for the Motherland" so that she can grow fuller and richer. The Community Project Programme, if it visualizes anything at all, does mean fuller life as much for the individual as for the community as a whole. This, however, cannot be brought about, if the agency working for the attainment of this objective has itself to forget the art of living in the process.

I have been prompted to write this to you as I discovered unhappily that some of us are working on the programme far too indiscreetly, so far as our personal health is concerned. A mutual friend, who is running the Community Project Programme in a State, otherwise in the full flush of youth, hale and hearty, has suddenly been taken ill and ordered a month of enforced rest. I am not worried about the individual case. I know it has been diagnosed in time and is receiving adequate attention. But the symptom is something we must take serious note of, if we are to pilot the programme through to the shores which are yet far off.

Working in close touch as I do with the Prime Minister and seeing the crowded hours of work he has been putting in, without respite for years now, I come to the inevitable conclusion that it is not work that

breaks a person down. It is worry that does. Dedication to an assignment is good. But attachment is fatal. Dedication has an element of innate detachment which protects the one dedicated, from all after-effects of the travail involved. Attachment is something that corrodes the attached, invisibly within. The distinction is fundamental. Therefore, the practice is hard, for it involves the art of self-realisation. True, as human beings, we are all fallible. Yet, we all have a right to wisdom. Life can be made an art as against the lunacy it is. I should plead, may we make a deliberate effort in that direction ?

Apart from the spiritual exercise involved, I should commend once again an enforced vacation from one's work carefully planned out for every single worker connected with our programme. I am insisting on every one in the CPA to plan for a month's vacation during the current year. I am desperately earnest to ensure that this is availed of by all. I hope others on the wider horizon will try to follow the same practice. Some time, eleven hours prove to be much more effective than the twelve hours. This is my plea for a year with eleven months of work as against twelve.

Now from the abstract to the rugged.

Role of Women and Children

By now I am fully convinced, it is not going to be easy for us to procure the requisite number cf women Social Education Organisers, howsoever we may relent on our exacting specifications. Yet, wherever I go, I find women staring at us from the distance in increasing numbers. Mute and dumb, they ache to take the plunge to make their contribution for the reconstruction of life.

As I see the women at work in the fields, at the well, in the kitchen and in the dung heap, the silent travail bears living testimony to the fact that we owe our culture, whatever remains, to women alone. Could we leave them behind and still expect to go ahead through the efforts of a handful of men with the hunter's instinct, so fiercely alive still in us ? We have to find the answer.

I have discussed this matter at considerable length with many of my friends in the field, and I find that the only course open to us is to make a beginning with the women school teachers of the right outlook wherever we can find them or appoint them afresh to take charge of the girl students in a Middle School or, if needs be, even in the Primary School, who can initiate the movement with the school girls acting the pioneers in their own homes with their mothers and sisters and then with their neighbours.

The idea is being worked out in greater details in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, and you will hear from us again soon. The idea has nothing new about it. There are schools and women teachers of the kind I have just described already in action in our own programme. Wherever tried, the result has been amazing. It can still more be so when we can give these women teachers a short course in the multi-purpose pro-

gramme of extension in the field of women. As I indicated already, you will hear in greater details from CPA soon. Meantime, this is being conveyed only to enable you to do some preliminary thinking.

I had written to you sometime ago recommending the utilisation of school children for extension programme in the villages inhabited by them. The movement has begun to grow. Wherever the children have been allowed to take the initiative under our projects, the results have been astounding. New songs, new dramas and new philosophy are in the process of evolution, which will amaze the stalwarts of sceptics. I would like you to give it a trial. The old pots are saturated with old ideas. It is difficult to vintage the new wine in them. Children, however, are a different proposition. Here we work on virgin ground. They will mould into whatever shape the environment directs. They can be immeasurably more effective as the honorary Gram Sevaks under the auspices of our programme. Do give this a trial. I am prepared to take all the blame if the programme fails.

Melas in Villages

India is a country of Melas, the Kumbh Mela being the supreme climax. Our people are not prepared to learn the lessons of extension singly. We must use the natural form which is our tradition. Melas have been tried in our programme with incredible success. The job today is to organise it on scientific lines, incorporating not merely the recreational programme which has been our heritage but the entire programme covered under the Community Project and NES schemes. I have seen the countryside already on fire wherever this traditional nature's medium is being tried. It must spread. You cannot find a better medium for the spread of social education.

The Melas described in the foregoing paragraph will perforce grow to be an integral feature of our programme. I also know that the Melas cannot be complete without the inevitable distribution of prizes for performances of exceptional character in all fields. My suggestion is that prizes may be offered not in cash but in kind in the form of daily necessities which are now beyond the resources of the village families, but can be manufactured locally through local artisans and craftsmen. If we can tie these two together, we shall with one stroke promote healthy competition in all fields based on individuals, groups and communities, and at the same time provide protection and a ready market, howsoever limited it may be, to the local artisans whom we wish to build up into better producers to contribute to the fuller life of the community and to absorb, incidentally, the increased purchasing power resulting from the increased agricultural production such as we are beginning today to be afraid of.

Krishan Chand has already written to you on the excellent work being done by the school and college boys in the various Social Service Camps organised by the Auxiliary Cadet Corps. The emphasis on social service

and dignity of labour as a part of the countrywide national youth movement is today the key to the building of the life of our community. These Camps are beginning to reverse the one-way traffic, bringing the youth nearer to the villages. It would be of great help to the movement as a whole if you could give a lead to the projects staff by asking them to take a more positive interest in this programme which is now being developed with the disciplined thoroughness such as our Defence Services alone could bring about. The Defence Ministry have functioned virtually alone. They need your support and mine.

Punctuality for Village Meetings

Our people in the villages, thanks to our programme and the impact of other associated influences, are no longer the patient and passive audience they used to be in olden times. Strict punctuality in the organisation of the timings for meetings has to be a byword with us, if we are not to suffer unduly in the eyes of these simple innocent folks. The national loss, if we count the man-hours lost in waiting for visitors to address a meeting will not be an insignificant figure, if we add it up for the country as a whole. The Community Projects Organisation should not add to the countrywide malady.

In electrometrical science they have a new machine known as a shock-therapy apparatus, which is used for treatment of chronic mental and psychic maladjustments. It is an integral part of the equipment in our modern institutes for the treatment of the insane. This is more or less the modern substitute for the hot cudgel-beating and other techniques used by our indigenous *Mullahs* and others for treatment of hysteria and other like ailments.

The minds of some of our village folks steeped in centuries of inertia and resignation will take long to develop new habits of thinking. At times all of us, both officials as well as non-officials, tend to lose our patience and feel prone to the use of regulatory methods to get village people, as we say, to work for themselves. I have something much more agreeable than the regulatory method to commend to you. I have found that the use of a bulldozer or a scraper acts as a shock-therapy albeit pleasanter, so far as the psychic part of the village people is concerned.

Almost adjoining every village in India, we have ill-shaped pools of water as a standing source of dirt, filth and infection. These pools, obviously, were created to raise the level of the homestead in the villages. It is difficult to fill these up. Therefore, the obvious course is to give them a proper shape. The work involved is of such a volume that village people on their own are not likely to be able to complete this job by themselves. Here comes the use of our earth-moving equipment, which we can supply under your regular indents against the dollar allotment.

Earth-moving equipment can do short-shift in a day of a year's work of the villagers, and yet villagers can do a lot on their own working along-

side the machine, dressing the banks of the pool, so as to give the shape of a well-planned tank serving not merely as a bathing pool for the animals of the village but perhaps also as a fishery, if not also as an additional source of irrigation to the adjoining land. This is being tried in some areas with eminent success.

I have the assurance of the Communication Minister of all help for postal, telegraphic and telephonic facilities in our projects. I believe, you will have already heard on the subject from the CPA. I shall be grateful if you can ask your block staff to avail of the facilities offered by the Ministry of Communication.

I had written to you sometime back, attaching a list of books by Gandhiji published by the Navajivan Trust. I have since heard from the Prime Minister. He is equally eager that our community projects, which are a fulfilment of the dream Gandhiji lived for, should have the living thoughts of Gandhiji ready at hand in the Block Headquarters also further down the line to the extent possible.

Project Visit by Headquarters Staff

We complain, no doubt with justification, that other Government departments do not feel as warmly towards our programme as we do ourselves. I discovered recently to my dismay that very few in the Government of India had a direct acquaintance with our programme. In fact, a large number of workers even in the CPA had no touch with the ground much less any direct knowledge of what the programme was like. We have already initiated a week-end programme of visits by staff of the CPA as also of other Ministries with their family members, to visit project areas by rotation. We find it extremely fruitful. I would commend the same for your staff as also for the key staff of the other Departments at the State Headquarters. The investment made will pay high dividends not merely for our own programme but even for the programme of the respective departments.

Artificial insemination is making rapid strides. Unfortunately, little is being done to promote the cultivation of fodder appropriate to the new breed. The indigenous cattle population will appear somehow to carry on even on the sand, the air and the water. But the new test-tube baby princes we are bringing into being will need relatively princely handling, so far as fodder is concerned. If this is not done, we shall end worse than where we began. This is a matter that needs immediate attention.

The one single item that can reduce the chronic eye trouble in our village people and the tears from our sisters in the kitchens, is the smokeless *Magan Chulla* which has by now been developed to a reasonable standard of perfection. Shri G. Venkatachalapathy, Director of Rural Welfare, Madras, has under him a Training Centre of Kalupatty (Madras),

which specializes in the making of these *Magan Chullas*. Shri Venkatachalapathy should be able to furnish you complete specifications, including the help of a trained artisan from his institution to your State and demonstrate the production of this useful accessory to our kitchens. More than 10% of our public health problem, I believe, can be solved by the introduction of *Magan Chulla* alone. Could you give it a trial ?

I am sending you under registered cover separately a draft manual on rural housing brought out by our Ministry of Works, Housing and Supply. You will find it attractive and useful. Incidentally, you will also find therein the specifications of the *Magan Chulla* in full details.

Quarters for the Gram Sevaks in the villages where they reside, has been the universal bone of contention. I find that the Orissa Government have succeeded in getting the village people to construct a large number of quarters for the Gram Sevaks at a cost of about Rs. 750 from the Government, which provides accommodation and comfort equivalent to an accommodation worth about Rs. 2,500 under normal Government agencies. You may obtain further particulars from Shri B. Mukerji, ICS, Development Commissioner, Orissa.

Bihar Government have been using Graduate Engineers from the South as Engineering Assistants on a grade somewhere in between that of an Overseer and a regular Engineer. They have been able to get the services of an appreciable number of young Engineers and they appear to be doing first class work despite language difficulties. After all, the language of an Engineer is what he can do on the ground. If you are short of Overseers you may try the Bihar experiment in your State also. We are producing a sufficient number of Graduate Engineers in the country today to provide us the surplus number we need to function on our programme.

Central Organization for Mechanized Equipment

High priced mechanized equipment are at times a pitiable sight where they function in isolation as independent equipment attached to a project. We are plunging more and more into delicate specialized mechanical equipment which will require skilled supervision and regular maintenance. In the very nature of such equipment, these services can be efficient where the collective equipment can constitute a basic minimum economic unit such as can justify the specialised overhead staff.

I would strongly recommend that all equipment under operation with us in the programme may be vested in centralized units organized at the Headquarters of the State attached to appropriate departments, but earmarked for use in Community Projects and National Extension Service areas. The sooner this is done the better will be the chances of our getting near about the full value of the expensive equipment we now have in hand.

I gather that barbed wire fencing costs about Rs. 25 for an acre, the barbed wires are fixed. Uttar Pradesh projects are trying out controlled provided the village people supply the labour and the poles on which the barbed wire pasture-land--cum-village forests. If properly organized, this should be a fairly inexpensive proposition but should add considerably to fodder for cattle and fuel for the village, at a later stage.

Development Commissioners' Visit to Delhi

I find that Development Commissioners do come to Delhi from time to time in connection with the Five-Year Plan or other matters. It will be of help to all concerned if a copy of such tour programmes could be marked for the CPA, as a routine measure.

This letter is getting lengthy. I should close. Yet I cannot help the temptation of indulging in some heart-searching with you before I do so. Government servants of today, I find, fall prey from time to time to a sense of frustration which inevitably springs from a feeling that even when they are virtually killing themselves to the complete obliteration of all attachment to personal life or luxuries, they not only receive no appreciation but at times even meet avoidable obstruction on the programme so vitally national. They tend at times to cry out : "Our political leaders claim to have brought freedom to the Motherland and to hold the monopoly of her reconstruction. Let them do the worrying and the Hara-Kiri involved. If we are to be branded as the mercenaries, very well, we shall do the day's task and resort to sleep undisturbed for the rest of the time which is ours."

Being rather fortunately placed, inasmuch as I have an opportunity to function with all from the highest in the Government down to the obscure villager, I can understand the situation with much greater sympathy than many others can. The only answer I have to a situation like this is that the Government servant of today apart from being the disciplined member of a corps of workers maintained by the public, is also a citizen of India. He or she is also the father or mother of the citizens of tomorrow for whom all of us are engaged today in building the orchard. This country is not the private preserve of any individual or group. Our political leaders have done more than their due share in extricating the Motherland from the shackles of a foreign ruler with little loss in blood or possessions worth a mention. That our political leaders today, the bulk of them in spite of a generation and more of sweating jail life and cudgel beating, are still engaged in burning midnight oil and themselves in the process, is a sad commentary on the younger generation, which should by now have taken up the major share of the burden upon itself.

By a strange and almost unprecedented combination of circumstances, the Government servants of "Today" representing the cream of the nation's human resources, have been entrusted with the elemental task

of laying the scaffolding for the mansion of New India which had to be, if freedom was to have meaning; and this the Government servant of "Today" is asked to do with no sacrifice in income or status, present or the future. All that "Tomorrow" demands is that more than "Sixteen Annas" be given for the "Rupee" received, so that the balance can go to build up the depleted balance in the Treasury, and that the Government servants of "Today" do rise also to be the citizens of India who can scoff at the wayside pin-pricks without attaching an exaggerated value to them.

A thousand years from today our great-great-grandchildren will read the history of India as we did the history of the days of Ashoka. They would certainly like to know what the citizens of "Today" and particularly the Government servants who were playing such a historic role, were thinking and worrying about at this fateful cross-section of history. Our feelings will be reflected on the pages for what they really were worth. In spite of all that man does, the Kings and the Emperors, the pomp and the grandeur that accompanied these ephemeral regimes, there will be historians who will know how to dissect the truth from the vaults of the past. I have one little ambition. I should not like to apear a vulture before posterity. I know, you would not either.

XIV

March 9, 1955.

Dear Comrade,

Time flies ; and how it does. I find that a month is already past since I wrote you last. I am going out again. As I was not likely to be free to enjoy this communion with you till the end of this month, I am seizing this opportunity.

It has been brought home to me, and I recognize it with all humility, that there was an element of intellectual dishonesty in my recommending an eleven-month year to all my friends and associates while I myself am perhaps about the worst criminal in the neglect of the body.

To appease my conscience, I had decided to spend three days in silent reflection on where we stand today, at Rajgir (in Bihar) within the visible distance of Gridhrakut, the hill top where Gautam Buddha dreamt of the world to be, after his enlightenment 2,500 years ago. Thoughts, which are fundamental, never die. I thought, therefore, that I might try the chance of catching at some if I could pluck them from the air, which still continues dashing against the cave seclusion wherein this Greatest son of India lived and preached for full six years.

But intention is one thing and implementation another. The village people of Rajgir NES Block caught me in their grip. I could, therefore, escape hardly for half a day in all. I realized for the first time how sleepy I was. I felt I could sleep for days after these seven and a half years of restless grind since the day of our Independence. Well, I will try it again.

A Dip into the Deep

Rajgir is a place with hardly a parallel in this land. There are radioactive hot-water springs with also sparkling cold-water springs alongside. These continue flowing for thousands of years, giving physical and mental nourishment to thousands for whom it is a place of pilgrimage throughout the year. It is the same water and the same place wherein Gautam Buddha used to have his daily ablutions. The same water flows. Gautam Buddha, who struggled to have eternal release from life, lives, while the procession of man which struggles to avoid death passes on and fades out.

The palace of King Bimbisara and Ajatashatru, his son, is also there. King Bimbisara used to go to the Master for his daily lessons. The track of the chariot wheel is engraved deeply on solid stones. There is also the cell in which King Bimbisara was imprisoned by his son Ajatashatru. The old King made only one appeal to his son, that he should be able to see the Gridhrakut cave from within the cell. This was granted.

Not far from this, is the high wrestling ground. There Bhimsen of Mahabharata fame had his twenty-one days' wrestling bout with King

Jarasandh. The small valley surrounded by stone-faced hills is pregnant with history. The particles of dust are charged with the surging current of life, and behind it all stands Gridhrakut. The Prince of Princes, who shunned the world of appearances in quest of Real, found and transmitted it to the fellow citizens of his time and to posterity for all times.

In the same trip to Bihar I was at Muzaffarpur. By a mere accident I passed by the statue of "Khudiram", a young boy of 16, who at the infant stage of our national movement had the courage single-handed to throw a bomb at a British officer, whom he believed to be the enemy of the people. Despite all pressure, the boy did not relent. He walked to the gallows, it is said, with a smile which did not miss his lips even when he was no more.

I looked at the youngster now standing immortal. He looked so like my own son who is just about that age. I pondered within to discover what message he had. "I chose to die so that others could live", he seemed to whisper.

Prime Minister in his recent address to the Indian Chambers of Commerce, conveyed that the country was afire with a sense of adventure and progressive fulfilment. It was due, he said, primarily to three factors :

(i) Self-sufficiency in food ;
(ii) Our foreign relations ; and
(iii) Impact on the countryside of the Community Development Programme.

He explained that there was nothing spectacular about the Community Development Programme. In fact, an organic development and an element of the spectacular are concepts which are mutually exclusive. Prime Minister added that the programme was working a silent revolution, because it was bringing a qualitative change in the masses of our people.

People's projects with Government participation

I have been touring our projects without respite and so, I know, have many of you. I do not wish to be complacent. But I do feel that by and large it has been a good job done so far. Even the NES and CDP programme of 1953-54 series is beginning to look up at last. Therefore, while I offer to you and myself congratulations on the journey till now, I am just beginning to wonder if we are not approaching a stage especially in regard to the 1952-53 projects, where the *"GOVERNMENT PROJECTS WITH PEOPLE'S PARTICIPATION* should begin to change now into the *PEOPLE'S PROJECTS WITH GOVERNMENT PARTICIPATION.*

What is after-all the aim of the Community Development Programme ? In essence, as I see it and you may correct me if I am wrong, it is a programme to carry the conviction to ourselves and to the large masses

of our people especially in the countryside, that they are today the "Rulers" of India and not the "Ruled" as they have been for centuries ; that it is time they begin to take possession of the real estates of which they are the owners and make use of the Government agency for the limited finance and the technical and administrative assistance that the agency is capable of offering.

The new awareness will begin to be there, if the transformation is taking place. If it is, the compost pits, fertilizers, the roads and the community centres and the host of other physical items of development will be taken care of as a silent and spontaneous routine. Whereas if this qualitative change is not taking place, we shall have achieved nothing more than what contractors, even imported from abroad, would have done on this programme.

Could we then look at the programme with a little sense of detachment and find out for our own satisfaction to what extent we are travelling in the right direction as against the mad rush for statistics as the main objective ? I maintain, and I do so without any reservation whatsoever, that the qualitative transformation if it is taking place at all will take care of the material changes needed ; but not vice-versa. Perhaps it is here wherein lies the fundamental difference between the character of our programme and that of the programme in totalitarian countries.

We arrive necessarily again at the middle-way, the point of synthesis, where religions, thoughts, men from saint to the devil, animals, microbes and vegetation could co-exist as they did at one time in this great land of ours. True, "Co-existence" degraded at last into "Co-exploitation" and our descent down the abyss began immediately thereafter. But we are on the ascent again. It is so, because we have seen the utter falsity and futility of our ways ; because we are working perhaps unconsciously, once again for the new synthesis, along the Ganges flowing from the Mother spring. Are we clear about the role ? And are we aware of what is at stake ?

Forgive me, if I have talked nonsense. My Greetings to you on this day of "Holi".

XV

April 17, 1955.

Dear Comrade,

The six Regional Inter-State Seminars are over. We are getting ready for the climax of the Development Commissioners' Conference. The Conference has been scheduled for a period of three days. But there is just a possibility that it will extend by a day. I do hope you will kindly come prepared accordingly.

This is the Fourth Conference since we met first at Delhi in May, 1952, which will mean we are completing three exact years of acquaintance with each other, quest and travail together. We shall have covered sufficient ground by now, to enable ourselves to take stock of what is behind and what is to be ahead. I would like now to plunge straight ; unburdening myself of some of the points which I have in mind.

Intra-State Seminars

Intra-State Seminars have now grown common in almost all States. It is being taken up as an integral feature of the programme. Bombay State have gone even further. They have arranged Regional Seminars Intra-State, which are being attended to by all functionaries from the Collectors down to the Block Officers including, I presume, Block Specialists as well. My experiene with the Inter-State and Intra-State Seminars confirms that the participation of non-officials in these Seminars helps materially in bringing a popular touch to our deliberations, and, what is more, in educating non-officials in the implications of running a programme such as ours I would commend this to you for universal adoption.

I wrote to you last month, indicating that the stage will appear to have arrived where we should begin to think of ways and means by which we can bring about a smooth transformation of the present "Government projects with people's participation" to one of the "People's projects with Government participation." You will readily agree that unless this is achieved we shall have done very little on which we could claim the fundamental credit which is being showered on us liberally at home and abroad.

Prime Minister has been equally concerned over this matter. He is eager, as we are, to bring this consummation about. While there are a number of well planned steps that will have to be taken, if this is to be brought about, the most important one will appear to be a delegation of powers to village bodies even at the risk of some portion of the money being not as well spent as we feel it could be under full Government auspices.

I discussed this matter with Finance Minister. He feels that this risk should be taken and he asked me to find out from you during the forthcoming Development Commissioners' Conference as to the fields in

which delegation of these powers could be made to these village bodies based on your experiences during the past two years and a half. I would request you to do some thinking on this line, so that we may arrive at some decisions when we meet at Simla.

Kisan Melas

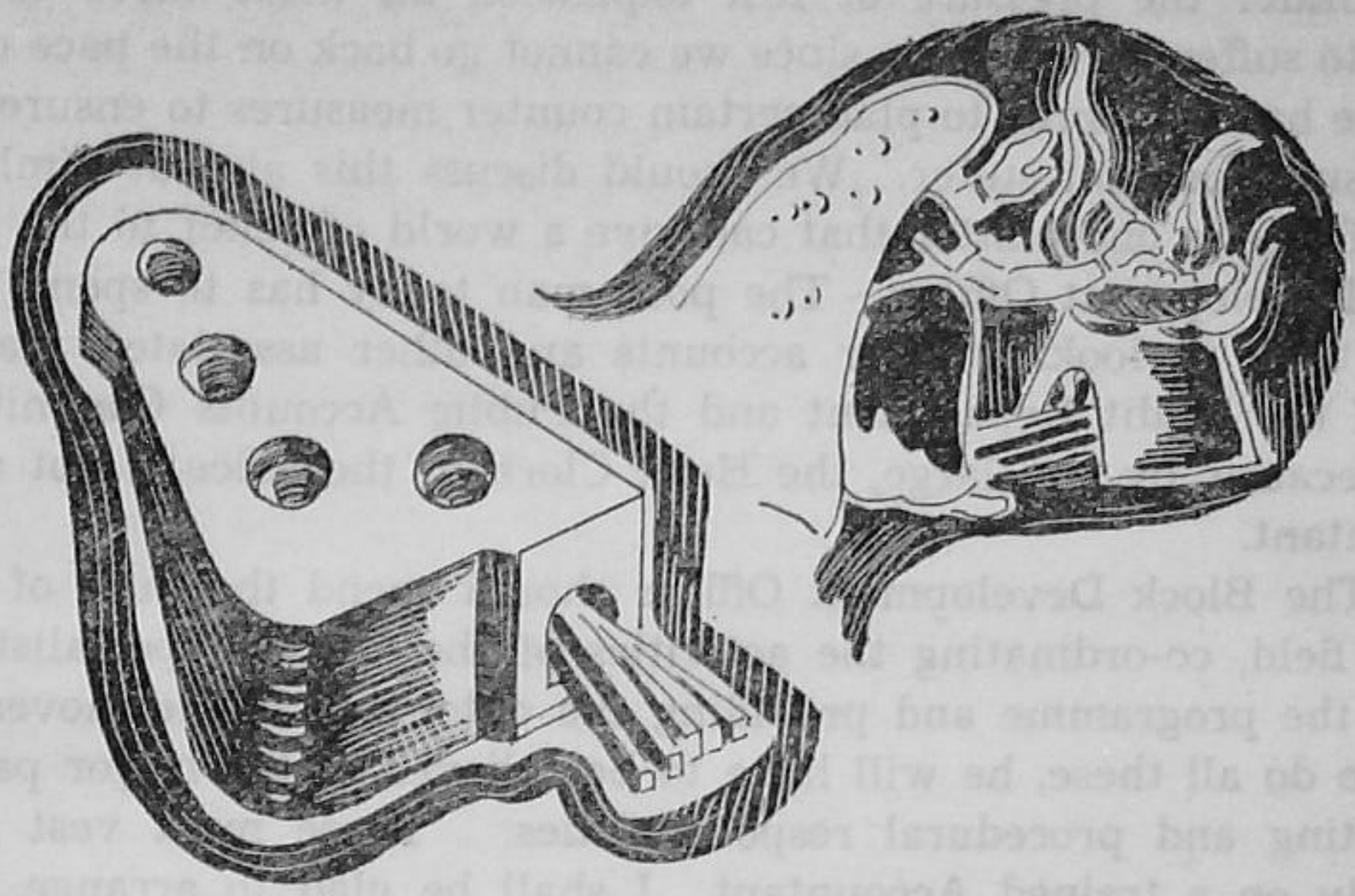
One of the most effective means by which we can bring about intelligent participation of village leaders in particular and village people in general, is through the organization of Shibirs and Training Camps extending from 3 weeks to 6 weeks for village leaders as also village women and through the organization of village leaders' seminars from 3 days to one week combined with Kisan Melas running alongside. All these activities are going on in different States with results much more than our expectations, which all go to confirm the innate vitality and the native wisdom of your simple folks in the villages. I am sending you separately a paper on this subject relating to Bhopal produced by the Programme Evaluation Organization, which you will find of interest.

While a good deal has been done we have so far acted in this field more or less in an *ad hoc* fashion. The time, we feel, has arrived to institutionalise the system. The Ford Foundation have been good enough to promise adequate financial help to the sponsoring of a programme of what we may call in-service training for both officials as well as non-officials and for Inter-State visits by project staff, the village people and their leaders. I shall have more concrete proposals on this behalf ready for discussion with you when we meet at Simla. I shall be grateful if you will kindly do some preliminary thinking on it meantime.

Competition is conducive to greater individual efficiency, we all are aware. Yet individualistic competition has also been the root-cause of most of the ills we suffer from today. True, healthy competition is the very spice on which life can sustain and prosper. My suggestion, however, is that instead of competition between individuals we may try deliberately to promote competition between villages, at least so far as it relates to our own programme. This should bring about what we desire and yet not disturb the community outlook on which we have staked our future. As a logical corollary this will lead to healthy competition between Blocks, Districts and then beween States and finally, I have no doubt, between different countries. To me it looks the only sound course open.

In our enthusiasm to extend the benefit of the Community Projects to as large a population as possible we went so far in certain States as to cover four to five times the normal population target under the projects. The projects will soon be approaching the close of their tenure and will have to be prepared to revert to the pattern of staffing as visualized under the NES programme.

It is time, therefore, that those of us who fall in this category begin to review the whole matter, so that the NES units of administration after



the project period, will have the normal population coverage, namely between sixty to a hundred thousand as the outside limit. To have a bigger population will mean defeat of the intensive coverage of welfare services which we aim at by bringing the Government specialists nearer to the people.

In-Service Training

Not to speak of the Second Five-Year Plan, even our present programme demands the production of five to six thousand Village Level Workers a year. We had 34 Extension Training Centres a good many of which were double-shift units. We have added 8 more Centres recently. Twenty-one new Centres are in the process. Yet I find from the report of trainees on roll, that the capacity of these Centres is not being fully availed of. In fact, taking the picture of India as a whole, we seem to be hardly utilizing 70 per cent of the existing capacity.

The same holds good for the SEO and the BDO Training Centres where in spite of the provision for full enrolment, State Governments for some reason or the other do not find themselves able to take full advantage of the quota allotted to them. Our need for trained workers is desperate. We should do something to make full use of the facilities we have established.

For better or worse we are now committed to the coverage of the country as a whole by the end of the Second Five-Year Plan. With the best of efforts in the world we cannot help making some compromise in the quality of trainees as also training. Yet, the quality of our programme is contingent strictly on three factors:

(i) The quality of training.

(ii) The maintenance of the crusader's zeal in the workers.

(iii) The quality and intensity of supervision.

Under the pressure of fast expansion all these three factors are bound to suffer. Therefore, since we cannot go back on the pace of expansion, we have perforce to plan certain counter measures to ensure that the end result does not suffer. We should discuss this also at Simla.

There is one matter that can give a world of relief to the hard put Block Development Officer. The poor man today has to spend the bulk of his time in looking after accounts and other associated matters for fear of the Audit Department and the Public Accounts Committee. It is so because, by and large, the Head Clerk of the office is not a trained Accountant.

The Block Development Officer should spend the bulk of his time in the field, co-ordinating the activities of the various specialists, supervising the programme and providing the detonator to the movement. If he is to do all these, he will have to be relieved of the major part of his accounting and procedural responsibilities. These must vest fitly and squarely on a trained Accountant. I shall be glad to arrange with the Auditor-General for the training of Accountants for project work in every State under the direction of the Accountant-General.

You will be glad to know that the Auditor-General, Shri A.K. Chanda, has agreed to my request to participate in the Development Commissioners' Conference throughout. I shall be grateful if you will study your needs for the training of Accountants, so that we may come to some decision during the Conference.

We have now a fully qualified man in Dr. Subash Dhar, to develop the Planning & Progress Section in the CPA. He has sent out a few days ago a "Draft Manual on Administrative Intelligence". Our own system at the Headquarters is being put in shape. We are eager that we provide as much help as we can, to repeat the system at the State Headquarters. Subash Dhar has conveyed to you our willingness to undertake a programme of short-term training of Statistical Officers who can run the Administrative Intelligence Section on your behalf. This is also a matter which I would like to finalize when we meet at Simla.

You know fully well how drab and dull life is in our villages today. With the setting of the sun many a village in the countryside appear totally dead except for the occasional howls of jackals and barking stray dogs. Community Centres certainly go some way to break the lull. But I find that the use of Petromax Lamps makes all the difference between a dingy dark corner and a place of cheer which attracts and invites. This is being introduced in a good number of Community Centres. My plea is for the universalization of the process.

I am on the *Magan Chulla* again. I have seen such wonderful changes following in the home and especially in the kitchen as a chain reaction from this one simple innovation that I cannot help making almost a fetish of this one item. You have now the full specifications of the *Magan Chulla* in the Housing Manual. Col. Barkat Narain is arranging

further to send you sufficient copies of reprints which you can circulate to all concerned. I cannot think today of a single item which, at an expense of not more than ten rupees in the most expensive corners of India, can do greater good around, than a *Magan Chulla.* Could we give this a trial ? I cannot plead with you more strongly and more confidently for any other item.

Seasonal Planning of Programme.

The Budget Manual gives, I believe, about 150 to 200 items which can be multiplied easily to a thousand, representing activities that should be considered for inclusion in a Community Development Programme. The list is so formidable that the biggest of mind will get confused over it all. The moral is clear. We may have all the items in the background, but we should take up only a limited number adequate to the circumstances of the season. In other words, we may do seasonal planning of our programme. Are we following this in practice ?

I am attaching to this a progress report from Bihar on the Five-Year Plan. It is a neat document and I know you will find it of interest not merely with reference to the Community Project Programme but for the Five-Year Plan as a whole. My particular purpose in sending this to you is to indicate how the Bihar Government have made a substantial provision in their plan for setting up Demonstration Farms in Agriculture and allied subjects in each one of their NES Headquarters. Their planning has been equally thorough in the matter of NES Headquarters with adequate housing for staff in advance of the beginning of operation, the same principle applying to the field of training both subject-matter as also extension.

NEFA and the Naga Hills

I was, as you know, in NEFA and in many other areas of Assam during the middle of last month. It is really remarkable how people hailing from so many different areas, and especially Overseers and Engineers from remote Travancore-Cochin and Madras, are functioning as a team with a crusader's zeal on the implementation of this common programme in the midst of people who are a world all their own.

This programme of ours, believe me friends, is really working a convulsion. The turbulent Nagas who boycotted the programme in the Naga Hills for a full year to start with, because they would have nothing to do with the India Government until they were granted Independence, are now on this programme in their full fervour. It is a treat to see the Naga in action. He has the features of the God in the Greek mythology, and the Naga women in features, complexion and activity will put the most dynamic of our cinema stars into pale insignificance. This is nature in the raw. The programme also is responding likewise.

The greatest danger that faces this programme is the risk of stagnation setting in. It holds good as much in the Training Centre as in the field. Man is at his best when he is a creator. A creator is a free man subject only to limitations imposed by his own enlightened conscience. The moral is clear. If we accept the thesis, delegations of powers, both financial and otherwise, will have to travel all along the line right up to the lowest functionary. It will also have to travel parallel at the non-official level. The man is at his best when free to err. To run the risk of committing an error and accounting for it, is the first prerogative of

the free man. Are we sure, that we are making a calculated effort to see that this is put to practice ?

A number of Russian friends visited the Nilokheri Training Centres as also the project around. They have also visited several other areas in different States. Their instinctive reaction to which they gave free expression was : "This is precisely what had happened in the countryside after we had our revolution, with the only difference that you are doing the same in a different way." This has been widely reported in the Press. We could not have had a higher compliment. I thought you would be interested in how others look at us.

Bandung Conference : The Gate To The Wider Horizon

You know the number of Delegations from Near and Far Eastern countries which have been visiting us for a study of our programme. We have already received demands for training of workers from neighbouring countries, also for sending our representatives to participate in seminars abroad.

I do not know, but I have a pre-sentiment that the most important contribution apart from endorsing the Panchsila that the Bandung Conference will make, will be an economic co-operation programme between all these under-developed countries in the Near and Far East which have been other people's burden for centuries. If economic co-operation is to be brought about, I cannot think of another programme for building the people for democracy from the roots up. So, the wider horizon we have been talking about may be on us much sooner than we had feared or hoped for.

It will mean, if I am right in my premonition, that the Indian programme of Community Development will take the shape of a new mission such as India alone has been used to offering to others. Our own burden is trying enough. The new burden that threatens to come will almost be killing. Yet, there is no room for an island continent. Therefore we all, especially the under-developed countries, will have to sink or swim together. We must prepare and see that our house is the model that others wish it to be and that we are in a fit condition to take up the mission beyond our borders.

Till we meet.

P.S. After I wrote the above, I chanced across an editorial this morning which has been issued by the "Sunday Standard". The editorial, a copy of which I attach for your reading, I find highly flattering in the sense that this is the very concept which, I believe, we have been advocating as our objective through the Community Project Programme, so far as the Government organization is concerned.

PUBLIC SERVICES

THE Indian Civil Service was once known as the steel frame of British rule. It is one of the minor miracles of modern times that, by and large, the same service has distinguished itself as a loyal prop of free India.

This was not achieved without a certain amount of misgiving and misunderstanding. Voices were raised in the first flush of Independence to make a clean sweep of the former henchmen of foreign imperialism.

It was the farsighted statesmanship of the late Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, which resisted this impetuous demand and helped to integrate the services into the fabric of Indian democracy.

PATRIOTISM, as the Sardar well knew, was no substitute for administrative experience. It has been the fashion in modern times to talk of the "New Despotism" and to run down bureaucracy. But the day-to-day running of the Government has necessarily to be left to the services.

Even Communist countries have realised this and are content to utilise the former administrative machinery for their own ends. In India the civil servant was essentially a victim of circumstances. His association with foreign rule was fortuitous.

A civil servant, too, can be as much a patriot as the other fellow even though he is bound with red tape. He is, above all, a citizen and his weal and woe are not different from those of the common mass of the people.

* * * *

The recent debate in the Lok Sabha on the grants for the Home Ministry has helped in clarifying the relations between the civil servants and the public. Pandit Govind Ballabh Pant, on whom the mantle of Sardar Patel has fallen, spoke in accents reminiscent of his great predecessor in office.

"There is no room", observed the Home Minister, "for any difference or distinction between people, ministers and public servants in this land now. Public servants are our colleagues, and I count upon their comradeship."

The civil servants being a limb of the Government are pledged to usher in the Welfare State. They must do it not merely in a mechanical spirit but consider themselves part of a co-operative enterprise. They must develop emotional concord with the people at large.

* * * *

The "carping criticism" of the services, to which Pandit Pant referred, must give way to a better understanding of the role they have to play. They may be a legacy of foreign rule, but they are now our comrades in nation-building.

Not merely the public at large but the Ministers, too, sometimes misconceive the role of the services and treat them with scant respect. They fail to realise that their best policies would be abortive if there were no public servants to execute them efficiently.

The British civil service, from which our own is derived, is a worthy model for us in India. That service as such has neither policy nor politics. Its duty is to serve loyally the Government of the day and keep the wheels of administration moving smoothly. Its political impartiality is as unquestioned as its moral integrity, and these twin ideals must be followed unswervingly in India, too, if we have to make a success of democracy.

XVI

May 31, 1955.

Dear Comrade,

The mercury is on the rise. Soon it will reach the peak. The nights are still pleasant but these will change also. Other parts of India, I fear, are worse. I, therefore, share your agonies over the grind in these exacting conditions.

It has been my experience over the past thirty years that the best antidote to this weather is fresh and cool lemon water as much as one can have. It is a good cleanser as also a prophylactic. There is no dearth of lemons in the countryside. I would like you to try this out and advise your associates likewise.

Incidentally, I have decided to produce a manual on "Keeping Fit". I shall try to do the basic writing myself and have it edited by the most dynamic minds living in the country today.

The Conference at Simla

As I look at the Conference at Simla in retrospect, I feel amazed at the maturity that has come over this organization throughout, in the short span of two years and a half. It only goes to prove that lessons on a job, done with honesty of purpose, are infinitely more significant than theories learnt from books or handed down by scholars from within closed walls. Yet, while the experience is one of high gratification it is also one which presages a certain danger ahead. I am somewhat worried about the singular lack of heat and controversies throughout the Conference. I am worried because learning is a continuous process and learning if it is worth the name, should mean realisation, individual to each one. Although the base may be common, experiences should vary in details and do so widely from region to region.

The question that poses is whether with progressive maturity we are also not aging physically. The latter, you will agree, is dangerous, for a thinking mind should be beyond time and space. There is danger in conformity. Conformity to fundamentals is, of course, basic to any organised programme such as ours. But there are extremes which one has to steer clear of. The Indian way is the middle way. I do hope we are keeping watch.

The recommendations of the Development Commissioners' Conference have already been issued by the CPA. The recommendations incorporate a lot of material. I do hope you will try to implement these recommendations as early as you can. This one measure will ease your burden more than you are ready to believe now. If there is any further help you require from our side you have only to give us an indication.

Administrator as "Village Guide"

I was most agreeably surprised to see the excited publicity over rather my casual offer during the Conference to act as a Gram Sevak for a short period in some part of India. Of course, I was serious about it and I will do so definitely before I meet you for the next Conference. But my surprise is over the character of the reaction that this casual offer has aroused in the press, in the people and in our workers in particular.

All these indicate if I am correct in my interpretation of the situation, that there is a universal desire to see the end of these age-long walls of caste and privileges which we built artificially into the fabric of our static

society. I could hardly imgaine that the desire to see these artificial walls pulled down, so as to bring all to a common level, could be so universal.

For obvious reasons, I would be most foolish to ask you to leave your work, unbearably heavy as it should be already, and indulge in the "De-casteing" campaign. What you may do however, which I know you are already alive to, is to make a deliberate effort to expand the "Brotherhood" campaign which we have launched already unconsciously through our regional and intra-State seminars.

If the Collector, the Block Development Officer, the Extension Officers and the Village Level Workers can meet about once or so in a month in a discussion group or in monthly meetings such as we have, it will go a long way to speed up the implementation of our programme both in matter and spirit. I know it is being done. I am only pleading for wider application.

The Conference at Simla finalized the criteria for the assessment of people's participation. I shall be deeply grateful if you will kindly instruct your Block Development Officers to bring their statements on people's participation revised on the new basis in the report for period ending June 1955. It is necessary and but fair that the report from all States which are now open to the wide world for scrutiny should be based on a common denominator.

We have done some thinking on the coming Anniversary Issue of "Kurukshetra". We wish to make this number quite different from what the Anniversary Issues have been heretofore. You will shortly receive a request on this behalf from the Editor, "Kurukshetra". I do hope you will help.

Incidentally, we are hoping to bring out on the 15th August, 1955, a compendium of "Kurukshetra" which will include selected articles so far published in the "Kurukshetra" since it began three years ago. This is intended to be the first step of a running commentary on our programme to be used as a reference book by our existing workers, and as a text-book by the coming ones in the future. I know you will welcome it.

I had written to you last year about "India 1954", a publication brought out by the Central Ministry of Information & Broadcasting. You will have seen and used it no doubt. The Ministry has brought out now a revised version of the same publication titled "India 1955".

"India 1955", you will find, is a veritable encyclopaedia which should prove a useful companion to you. I am taking the opportunity of mailing you a copy separately with the compliments of the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting, especially of the Secretary, and the Director of the Publications Division. Extra copies, if you require, you may have on payment from the Publications Division. You will note that the publication has been priced at a figure which is almost a "give-away".

I had the opportunity of attending, although for a very brief period, a Conference which has just concluded after three days in Delhi of the

States' Secretaries and Heads of Departments of Agriculture and allied subjects, under the auspices of the Ministry of Agriculture. Here again I had the same experience of maturity, seriousness and realism.

I had the feeling of a fellow traveller and I rejoiced. The Ministry drew out an agenda which also was very exhaustive and covered practically everything that you and I would have liked the Agriculture Department to include as their contribution to the common programme. Here again I am arranging to send you separately a copy of the printed agenda just as a matter of interest.

Ramakrishna Mission.

You know the activities of the Ramakrishna Mission and the undiluted spirit of the missionary that still continues to dominate these activities. We have, for the past three years, been making efforts to associate this organization with our programme. These will appear to have begun to succeed at last. The Mission has agreed to run a Social Education Organizers' Training Centre for our programme adjoining the Belur Math. They are also prepared to recompile the sayings, anecdotes and stories from Ramakrishna and Vivekananda in forms such as can be supplied at nominal cost to all our workers, village libraries, community centres etc.

We are carrying on now the negotiations on this behalf with the Mission and hope to finalise things shortly. I have not known, a Mission in India or abroad which is guided by a more dynamic spirit of the universal brotherhood of man, and the divinity of all life that exists. I am passing this information in advance as I thought you would rejoice with me over the prospect of the joint pilgrimage to the mighty ocean.

I had only hinted at the Simla Conference of the aid I was expecting from the Ford Foundation for the in-service training programme. I have now received the offer. The programme will demand a suitable officer in every State, whom incidentally we shall undertake to give a short-term training on the basic programme on the all-India plane. You will receive the offer from us not long from now.

All of us emphasized at Simla the need for statutory people's organs at the level of the village in particular. As I told you, I have never been convinced more than I am today that success or failure of our programme *eventually* will be judged only by one factor — by the extent to which we have been able to transform the "Government programme with people's participation" to one of "People's programme with Government participation". The key to this change-over lies in the creation of statutory village bodies which can be trained to take over initiative from the Government before the expiry of the programme.

To help the development in this direction we again require someone at the State level, of a calibre such as can organise mass awakening of people, old and young, to the new obligations and the rights that accrue

from adequate discharge of these. Here again we have received an offer from the Ford Foundation which is being worked out in detail. You should hear from us before long.

I am sorry to say that not unoften I find that the Block Development Officers and especially the Social Education Organizers sent out for training are persons who have been recruited totally against themselves. You will agree that the first pre-requisite to a successful assignment is willingness on the part of the worker. This is a matter in which I need your active help.

The Collar and Rangila Tie

You know, the countrywide response that we have received to our programme is due not to an insignificant degree to the willingness on the part of Government functionaries to identify themselves with the simple folks in the villages. An important feature that has helped in bridging the gulf between the people and the Government is the simplicity of dress that project workers have taken on themselves.

The collar and the "rangila" tie are features of a dead past which have grown to be museum pieces even in the last seat of reaction in the Capital. The tie and the collar have certainly no place in the villages. Obviously we can force nobody in this matter, but I presume there is already a directive issued by Prime Minister on this behalf. You may do well to bring this to the notice of anyone who still clings on to the dead past.

We propose the next series of inter-State Seminars to begin from the month of October. The sites of the seminars will be announced shortly. According to our present thinking we wish these seminars to be built up from the ground. In other words, problems would be thrown up from the blocks to the regional intra-State, from the latter to the Central intra-State, from the intra-State, to regional inter-State and from thereon to the Development Commissioners' Conference.

This way there will be evolutionary growth of our thinking and corresponding increase in the realistic assessment of our problems and achievement, the Development Commissioners' Conference constituting the climax of it all. The planning on the inter-State seminars by the CPA will be done in such a way as can enable States to plan their seminars from the Block upwards without undue dislocation of their work. I shall be gratefull if you will begin planning accordingly.

Pre-Inauguration Programme.

We are proposing to make the allotment of the next series of NES Blocks (to be inaugurated from the 2nd October) within the next 15 days or so. It has been suggested, and I welcome the idea, that before a programme is formally launched in an area we may use the preliminary period of three months during which surveys are conducted, to take people of the

prospective block out in batches to a neighbouring project for demonstration as to what exactly is happening under this programme. We may for instance select between two to five representatives from a village in batches of about 30.

Now that there is hardly an area in the country which is farther than 50 miles from the next project a programme such as I am suggesting could be managed at a cost of thousand rupees or so. This can be met as a part of the preliminary expenses, or adjusted against the budget of "Social Education". I have reasons to believe that this visual demonstration of work in a project under operation will save months of subsequent effort by our staff and should result in considerable increase in the tempo of activities especially participation, when the programme formally begins. I would like you to try this out in the next series of NES Blocks which you propose to inaugurate on the 2nd of October.

We have been talking about inter-project, inter-State and international visits by our project staff. We have now received the offers. These are being processed with Finance. We are also engaged in doing some serious thinking as to the basis on which people are to be chosen for this travel.

Incidentally, it looks as though I shall have to go out on a short assignment on Community Development to an adjoining country, may be within the next few days. I shall let you know more about it shortly. I mention this here only to indicate that the wider horizon beyond the shores of India which I have been foreseeing seems to be approaching us faster than we had ourselves imagined.

Before this financial year is out I have no doubt whatsoever that we shall receive many more delegations from abroad and we may also have to send a number of delegations of our own to adjoining countries for exchange of experiences in this infectious programme. We shall also have to take up as I see it clearly, the training of workers of all levels belonging to other lands. We must be prepared.

Human — Too Human

When I was at Agra about three months ago, the Superintendent of the Gardens for the district got me to plant a sapling in the spacious garden compound adjoining the Circuit House there. I was shocked at myself during my next stay in the Circuit House at Agra, when I discovered myself looking unconsciously for the sapling I had planted. Human vanity I know was like a dog which, when indulged, wishes to take possession of one and sit on one's shoulder. I have been continuously engaged during the past few years in flogging this Pariah dog within. I thought I had it fairly under control. You can imagine my dismay at the discovery I have related above.

Well, I know I will continue struggling with the devil within. But the moral I draw is clear, that human vanity is perhaps the last to leave

a person. If this is so we should try to make the best of a bad job. Should we not get this inauguration, opening and foundation—laying of buildings, institutions, and the host of other activities conducted under the Community Project Programme, done by representatives of people whom we are out to promote to be the real leaders ?

Leaders are not born. They are made ; very carefully so. I am afraid in this programme of ours far too much of the kudos is being appropriated by the Government agencies. I am perhaps the worst criminal as despite my protestations I am always involved by my valued friends and associates in foundation-laying, inauguration, and what not.

I wish to assure you I have no desire for cheap immortality. I know, my friends and associates who are slogging under the dust and sun in this great programme all deserve to feel the same way. Incidentally, this will also be a step in the direction of the "Self-effacement" programme. Shall we then make a common deal that we would look for the immortality of the mortals and not be in between ?

XVII

June 9, 1955.

Dear Friend and Comrade,

I am rushing this in a desperate hurry. I promised in my last letter to let you have further details about my programme abroad. So here it is.

By the time this reaches you, I shall be several thousand miles away from the shores of India, talking on Community Development Programme in the State of Indonesia. I leave tomorrow morning, the 10th, and shall be back with you on the 9th of August. The first visit is for a period of two months, and it is likely that it will have to be followed later by several short visits. I have taken this assignment on behalf of the United Nations. It is also not unlikely that some of our other friends in India may also be called upon to render help. It will all, of course, depend on circumstances obtaining there and the way the programme develops.

What is certain, however, is that the movement in India has already ceased to be a mere Indian programme. It will perforce have to grow to be a part of a global mission to which we, as a nation, would be expected to contribute our quota according to the pooled genius of our own people. We, who are too near to the event, apparently are not yet in a position to assess the movement in its overall potentiality. Throughout our history we have been talking of fundamentals attracting fundamentals. It seems clear that we did strike a fundamental chord with our movement in India and that it is finding sympathetic response not only in countries alike ours but even in others which are totally different. May be, and why may be, it seems certain, the world is on its way to the discovery of a new root for democracy. I am saying all this because it will help ease at least partially the enormous strain to which this whole organization has been subject during the past three years, if we can look at ourselves as part of a cosmic movement.

May I assure you that if I agreed to undertake this assignment in Indonesia it was not in the capacity of an individual. In fact, I have ceased to be one for many a year now, and I know no one engaged in our programme from the ground to the Headquarters who is an individual any longer much less what he or she was at the start of the conflagration. I go out, therefore, to a seemingly new land with the combined strength of you all, and I know I can draw upon you mentally and spiritually. This is all that counts. Physical energy is an incidental feature which one can muster as much as one desires, if the other two elements are there at the back.

Now coming back to our programme :

The Programme Today

We have just summed up the activities over India as a whole for quarter ending March 31, 1955. The cyclostyled material will reach you shortly. You will feel heartened, as I do abundantly on the eve of my

journey abroad, that we have, by and large, done a thorough job of which we can all be proud. The Community Development Programme 1952-53, 1953-54 and National Extension Service 1953-54, are all forging ahead almost with the tempo of a typhoon. I rejoice in it and would like to take this opportunity of conveying my congratulations to all our co-workers slogging by your side. There is nothing to worry. We have only to keep up the present tempo of the movement and ensure that no one in any corner falls a prey to short cuts which can lead only to the pit. There are two or three things I should like to commend to your special attention. One is Administrative Intelligence.

I have asked my office to get in touch with you soon to finalize the arrangements for a short-term training of one officer from each State centrally at Delhi. Administrative Intelligence system has to be developed at the State Headquarters in the same way as we have in the CPA, if the Development Commissioner with his organization is not to be over-powered by this sheer weight of the programme which can no longer be controlled merely on the basis of physical supervision in the field.

You will shortly receive a formal communication from Goswami regarding in-service training for our workers, progamme for village leaders and the training of non-official membes of Poject Advisoy Committees alongside official workers in our intra-State and regional seminars.

I am sending along with this a copy of the "Guide for Village Workers" just brought out by the Indian Council of Agricultural Research. I am sure, it will gladden your heart as it has mine. It is an excellent publication. You may even think of sending your congratulations to the ICAR direct. We have arranged for sufficient copies to be made available to all Blocks in India to permit every Village Level Worker to have a copy of this invaluable document.

I do not wish to tax you any more, especially in view of my previous letter which was posted only about ten days ago. I would only make one request before I close. You should try to organize a programme of vacation for all workers before the summer is over. This is apart from the inter-project and inter-State visits by Staff and others which are being finalized as a centrally sponsored programme referred to in my last letter.

I shall try to write you again middle of July. Forgive me if I fail. I shall look forward to taking up a hurricane tour programme in all States immediately following my return from Indonesia. I shall miss you physically.

With all good wishes and cheers to you.

XVIII

DJAKARTA,
July 25, 1955.

Dear Friend and Comrade,

It is now a little six weeks we have been out of touch with each other. Yet I know it is not quite so. I have been feeling throughout the impact of your mind on mine, and the expanding tempo of our work in India on every fibre of my being, even though I have been busy exploring this new land to discover the pulsation of her soul.

I promised in my last communication that I would meet my monthly engagement with you and would say hallo! to you from wherever I was. Though belated, I do so now. I send these lines to you from Djakarta, the capital of Indonesia. It is a city of more than 2 million people. The exact population is not known as there has been no census in the country since 1930. Djakarta is more or less an international settlement with a population representing all countries of the world. The city was designed presumably to be a replica of Amsterdam by the Ex-Dutch rulers. It has many handsome features and so also many others to the contrary, and is like any other international city in the world.

You can readily see, Djakarta is not quite Indonesia. I had all the same to make an effort to see Indonesia from high up through dispersed offices of the multitude of Ministries and Departments. It was almost an

exhaustive job, as there are very few people here who understand English, and it is a painful experience, to say the least, to have to conduct vital conversation through an interpreter. Somehow, I completed the series of discussions at breakneck speed in the course of about a fortnight. I had then to see the country from where it really belongs.

The next step, therefore, was a hurricane tour along the length and breadth of this largest island chain in the world scattered on the high seas, involving long flights by air across in the most freakish of weather. The programme is over by now. In 22 days, I have travelled a little over 8,000 kilometres by air, more than 4,000 kilometres by road of all standards and specifications and several hundred kilometres by rail. I have visited 11 out of the 12 provinces of Indonesia, and discoursed on the Indian programme and exchanged views on the proposed programme in Indonesia with the entire cross-section of people from the Governors of provinces down to the village people.

Indonesia and Indonesians

Indonesia is by far one of the richest countries in the world inhabited by large masses of simple people more or less like our own. The country has a land area about half that of India, and a population about 1/5th of India's. This, however, does not give the full picture, for the land here is extraordinary in fertility. The rich tropical vegetation, the flora and fauna, the volcanoes continuing to cast molten fire out of the womb of the mother earth to serve as a natural fertiliser are a pleasing sight. Indeed, the land is so rich that I have been telling my friends here that I dare not place my stick on the ground for fear lest I have to leave it behind as a full grown tree with newly sprouted leaves. Scratch the soil a few feet—lo—you discover diamond, gold or minerals of one kind or the other. Indeed the country is a veritable fairy land for any one determined to exert even moderately for a living.

The people of Indonesia are a remarkable race. Despite my extensive travel I have yet to come across two Indonesians flinging harsh words at each other not to speak of blows. The people will not even talk loud to each other. Their character is a definition of elemental decency. The women of Indonesia are handsome and hardworking to the extreme. The care-free equality they enjoy in life has filled me with pride even as an Indian. The spirit of co-operation that permeates every fibre of the life of these remarkably 'catholic' people is a trait which is to be seen to be believed. I have yet not come across a stranger who would not return a smile for a smile. Since I do not know the language of the people nor have the time for it, smile and signs are the only language which I can apply for the daily needs of life. The smile has never failed. I find it difficult to express adequately the ungrudging co-operation I have received from one and all slogging day in and day out by my side without Sundays, without half Fridays, despite the heavy levy from the equatorial weather.

I am now back to the Headquarters again. I have seen Indonesia. I have begun fainty to feel her in my pulse. In fact I am feeling so much at home that I find myself conversing unconsciously to people here in my characteristic Hindi. You can readily see that I am approaching the danger point. If I stay here much longer, I would find it difficult to get back. So I am getting ready to pack my bundles of rags and sum up the scraps of impressions I have gathered thus far and then formulate on the basis of these rich, but sketchy glimpses of this land of immense diversities, a programme of community development, such as will suit the genius of her people.

The assignment is tough, for the Indian programme has made a deep impression on the minds of people here. They already share in common a good deal of the cultural heritage of India, and value India as a land of great thoughts and great people. In the present state of my nerves, after the grinding unremitting toil, you can imagine the sense of anxious humility under which I am grappling with my own thoughts. Yet, I know, I am not alone in this quest for an answer to the needs of the hour faced by Indonesia. I came here, if I chose to do so at all, because I was confident I could harness the combined will, thought and might of all my friends and comrades-in-arms. I have been struggling, therefore, since my return from tour to summon all my strength to have you by my side, despite the visible distance, so that I could voice those whom we serve jointly — the inarticulate ocean of humanity which has no caste, creed nor nationality save what a scheming few assign to them for their own ends.

The framework of the programme is ready by now. The Indian Ambassador has been kind enough to loan the services of two of his stenographers to shorten my travail. I am just about ready to plunge in one final effort to pour myself out.

In 14 days I shall be back in your midst in India. For 23 years I have not been away from the shores of India. It was necessary particularly after the grind of the past eight years since our Independence, August 15, 1947, that I should get out and have a look at her from the distance. I go to the seashore here and touch the water; I know, through the blue surface spread out beyond the seemingly infinite distance, that I am touching the shores of India. I can see Kanya Kumari tapering out of the mainland and meeting the Arabian Sea, the Bay of Bengal and the Indian Ocean, a confluence which has always charmed me. I can feel the poem that arose out of the depth of the Ocean and spread out to the mighty heights and lengths of the Himalayas. My friends, we live in a great land, with a great mission, in a great New World, rising slowly and steadily yonder.

With cheers and affectionate greetings to you and yours

P.S. This letter is being sent to my office for processing and despatch to you. It will have to reach you unsigned. You will understand and forgive.

XIX

August 27, 1955.

Dear Friend and Comrade,

Here I am, back again to the Laboratory! Soon after I mailed my last letter to you from Djakarta on the 25th July, I got down with one supreme effort to pour myself out on your behalf and mine. What came out, does not seem to be very unworthy of us. I submitted to the Indonesian Government on the festive day — 30th July, 1955, — a complete scheme under the title *Gotong Royong or Alang Alang* embodied in about 74 closely typed pages. I discussed this scheme with officials as well as non-officials. The scheme from all indications, especially from the response of the Press, will appear to have struck a warm chord in the heart of Indonesia.

As I had perhaps indicated to you already, Indonesia stands in need of a programme of Community Development perhaps even more urgently than we do in India. That they will take up the programme, I have no doubt about. It is only a matter of time. Indonesia have recently had a new Cabinet. They will have next month, their first elections since independence. The new Cabinet after election should come into being about the end of September or beginning of October. The programme will receive its final sanction only thereafter. It is expected meantime, that the present Government will sponsor a delegation for study tour on Community Development Programme of India, Burma, Ceylon and Pakistan. My recommendation includes a visit by the delegation for a period of ten days in each of the latter States and two months in India. The first month in India will be designed more or less to give the delegation an idea of the Community Development Programme in various parts of the country. The second month would be devoted to a specialised study of the various aspects of the programme by the respective members of the delegation. I would, for obvious reasons, like to cover under this head the very best features of our programme in all States. It is intended that when the delegation returns it will have had a fairly intensive orientation in all the implications of the programme.

The Planning Bureau in Indonesia will send you direct in the not too distant future a copy of the scheme I had submitted to the Indonesian Government. I am also taking steps, meanwhile, to get copies cyclostyled in my office, which I should be able to mail to you about the end of the current week. You will, no doubt, find the document interesting reading. It should also give you a little diversion from your own exacting occupation.

I have always held the view that no one can help someone else without helping oneself in the process. Therefore, while trying to study conditions in Indonesia and making recommendations for a programme

based on our experiences in India, I also had the opportunity of learning quite a lot from that great country. While there are many features in Indonesia which can easily engage a person for years, if one wishes to study them deeply, I would confine myself here only to the enumeration of four cardinal features in the Indonesian people which, I believe, will be an object lesson to us all in India. I would next get straight down to our own assignment here.

The Cardinal Features of the Indonesian People

(i) There is complete equality between men and women in that country. Women are seen in every field of activity — from agriculture to medicine, and yet they have not lost the elegance and grace of womanhood, which are said to be the first casualty in the exercise of freedom by women. The happy blending that Indonesia has achieved in this sphere is something worth really marvelling at.

(ii) Co-operation is the rule of life in the masses of her people. *Gotong Royong* which means 'mutual help' is an Indonesian heritage.

(iii) There is complete absence of caste or gradation of people in the structure of Indonesian society. It was indeed a remarkable experience for me to see youngsters, who have just entered service as mere office Assistants, dash into the office of the highest Government official and further into the office of the President, Vice-President, and Prime Minister totally free of any trace of mental reservations. Indonesia has given me almost a slap in the face in our class and level consciousness within the Government as also without.

(iv) The acquisitive instinct is conspicuous by its absence in the masses of the Indonesian people.

You can readily see how far ahead the people of Indonesia are in many of the crucial features which we have been struggling to establish as the objective of our Community Development Programme. In other words, Indonesia will begin her programme from landmarks which we aim to establish only in the remote future.

New Obligations on the Wider Horizon

Our programme has been doing undoubted good to the masses of our people and perhaps even more so to ourselves who are engaged in this endeavour. What is of much greater importance, however, is that our brothers and sisters in allied countries in the Near, Far and Middle East, have already begun to look up to India as a beacon for their own development on similar lines. I have had, since my return, the visit of a Minister from Burma who seems equally eager to start a community development programme for the Burmese people. In fact, we have even received an invitation in this connection. A delegation came recently from Thailand, headed by an exceptionally brilliant officer. Thailand is also eager to sponsor the same programme. The same holds good for Iran. We are

having the visit shortly of the Deputy Prime Minister of Egypt, who will study especially the Community Development Programme in India, and I have reasons to believe that the programme will be taken up in Egypt also.

Obviously, India is neither equipped nor competent to provide direct facilities for a programme of this nature in other countries. In fact, we should congratulate ourselves if we can rise in stature adequate to the needs of the programme which we now visualize for our Second Five-Year Plan. Yet, you will agree, there is no room for an island on land. In this atomic age, artificial barriers are beaking down at a rate faster than we can keep pace with. The oceans and seas have already lost their significance. I marvel at the thought that I can round the world quicker today than I can travel to my maternal uncle's house only a few miles away from my own, now in East Pakistan. India cannot sit pretty with her own programme. She will not be allowed to. On the other hand, we have a tremendous lot to learn from others also. It no doubt hurts our vanity to feel this way, but the rugged truth is that the Almighty has endowed no nation with a monopoly to all the wisdom.

The way we can be of help to our neighbours and can also learn most effectively from them, would be to undertake the training of the key staff for these countries. For obvious reasons, it will not be desirable for the Centre to run a special Training Centre for this purpose. We would like instead to distribute trainees from abroad to our various existing institutions, so that there can be uniform participation in this new mission. The course then we need adopt, obviously, is to pick up at least one Training Centre in a State and make it a model as best as the State resources can make it, and repeat the same course for the Projects as well.

Study Team Across Projects

You will have heard from CPA regarding the study tour of officials and non-officials as a measure of in-service training under the new scheme sponsored by the CPA. This programme will come in operation not too long from now. The purpose of the programme is firstly to give the members of the study team a little respite from their own immediate occupation, but what is more important, to provide them with glimpses of accomplishment and the special features of other projects and other States which can be duplicated in their own. In other words, we are following the technique which can help equalise the experiences and accomplishment between all States in India.

If this programme is to be effective, it will be of the utmost importance for each State to take stock of the special features of its own programme and let CPA know in detail about it, so that the CPA can draw up an intelligent programme of study by different Study Teams in different subjects. This would also be of help in our programme of study tour by foreign delegations. I shall be deeply grateful if you will kindly

examine the subject in the light of requirements I have set out in the foregoing paragraphs, and let me have a reply at a very early date.

We have been telling ourselves repeatedly that if there is an enemy of this programme, it is the sense of complacency and the stagnation it is bound to result in. Yet we know, even the most dynamic of activities

begin to get stereotyped and lose their vital force, unless they are re-energized through artificial stimulation. Here, I believe, we can draw a lesson from our own traditions.

It is common feature in Indian life to have ceremonies and festivities at regular intervals throughout the year. From the moment a child is conceived till he dies, every stage of his life is studded with functions imposed by traditions. If our Community Development Programme is not to stagnate in spite of ourselves, it will appear highly important that we introduce a similar series of ceremonials as an integral part of the programme. The ceremonies can take the shape of celebration of the four or five national days, seminars, village camps, in fact anything we can think of, such as can introduce an element of excitement and change in the routine monotony of day to day work. This matter is already receiving the earnest attention in many States. I cannot emphasize too strongly the need for its universalization.

You will, no doubt, have read with interest the series of three thought-provoking articles that appeared in the "Kurukshetra" sometime ago, from the pen of Dr. Carl Taylor. Dr. Carl Taylor is one of the oldest savants in the field of 'Extension'. In fact, he is inseparable from his profession as a Specialist in 'Extension'. Dr. Taylor is here amongst us for a year as a Consultant in the office of the Ford Foundation. I am anxious to make full use of his ripe experience in the field and to ensure that every State has a share in it.

Dr. Taylor will, accordingly, be participating in the Inter-State Seminars organized by CPA and the Intra-State Seminars organized by States who wish to have his services. He will also be happy to visit our Training Centres and projects and discuss with the staff as well as trainees on the problems and potentialities of our programme.

Our programme has spread far both in depth and space. Dr. Taylor will be glad to travel about 15 days a month during the 12 months at his disposal. I do hope you will be able to take full advantage of him. He can be contacted either through the CPA or the Ford Foundation in Delhi.

Integration and the Withering State

You are aware of the arguments for and against a combination of functions, regulatory and developmental, in the same functionary below the Sub-divisional level. These have been summarised in Goswamis article on "The Structure of Development Administration" published in the Indian Journal of Public Administration (April — June, 1955). In this connection, I am wondering whether some of us are not inclined to underrate the importance of bringing the Local Bodies at village, taluqa and district levels into the development work in NES and Community Project areas at a fairly early date. It is obvious that some time or the other these Local Bodies will have to be made fully responsible for this work and the development functionaries, both technical and administrative, at the village,

the block and may be even district levels will have to work under the direction and guidance of these Bodies.

This will raise numerous administrative and other problems which will have to be solved as we go along ; but whatever the nature of these problems may be, there is no getting away from the fact that it would be impossible, in the long run, to have two parallel systems of administration in the sphere of development, one controlled by these Local Bodies and the other by the State Government through their District and Subordinate Officers. In the context of this ultimate picture, which will get clearer as we get along, we have to consider whether integration is not a retrograde step. It would appear that when this devolution of powers and responsibilities with regard to development upon Local Bodies comes about, the Government agency functioning directly under the State Governments at the block and lower levels will be confined to their regulatory functions only. It would seem unwise to make this transition to popular development administration difficult by resorting to the device of integration.

It may be argued by optimists that in a Welfare State the regulatory functions of Government should wither away totally. We all wish for this consummation. But the fact remains that human beings are what they are and unless there is a major biological change, the creator of man does not seem unduly eager to divest himself of his present occupation. Regulatory functions, therefore, will have to continue so long as there is need of a Government. In a Welfare State these should be reduced to the barest minimum and be administered with as great a degree of objectivity as the level of Development permits. I have chosen to place this loud thinking before you, for I thought you have a right to share my misgivings over easy short-cuts.

I have had two sessions recently with the Planning Committee of the Congress in the Parliament. The consensus of feeling is that the non-official members of Project Advisory Committees are not being encouraged to play their part in the programme. It may be argued on the other side, I realise, that had the non-official members been deep in their interest in the programme no force on earth could have prevented their active participation. Standing in between the two extremes as I am, I am anxious as I have always been, to find a way out by which we can bring about closer participation in our work by non-officials.

Parliament Members are away to Delhi for a major part of the year. A good deal of the sense of dissatisfaction which exists, I believe, can be avoided if we regularize the meetings of Block and Project Advisory Committees, hold them for instance, once every month or at least every two months, introduce agenda for the meetings with the same degree of thoroughness as we apply to the agenda for our seminars, make it a regular practice in these meetings to review the working of the programme and formulate plans for the next period till the Project Advisory Committees meet again. Notice for the Project Advisory Committee

meetings sufficiently in advance and the issue of the proceedings of the meetings as a matter of routine to all members of the Project and Block Advisory Committees should, I believe, serve to discharge the governmental responsibility on this behalf, to a major extent.

We in the CPA have fairly intimate knowledge of the movement of the programme physically. But we know very little of the functioning of these Project Advisory Committees. I shall invite your earnest attention to this matter. Apart from the fact that the training of our masters is an important part of our responsibility under this programme, it will also be a good gesture in public relations if we can ensure that, so far as the Government organization is concerned, every opportunity has been given to non-official members of Project Advisory Committees to participate in the programme and to keep themselves abreast of the happenings.

One of the ways in which meetings of Project Advisory Committees can be made more lively and effective will be to encourage village people also to participate in the meetings as observers. Government organization if it is playing its part correctly, and I know it is, need have no reservation as regards the placing of its cards on the table. For carrying out business in a businesslike way, number may appear to be a liability because of the cross-discussions that it invariably leads to. But then our job is "Extension" which primarily is education of the minds of the people who are to be the arbiter of their ultimate destiny. I find from personal knowledge, that in many areas the practice is being followed with considerable advantage to the programme. I have never known any evil emanating from wider participation of people in meetings of Project Advisory Committees.

There is unemployment especially of the educated middle-class, I know, in all States. The resistance to the employment of personnel belonging to other States is, therefore, easy to understand. Yet, there are

cases where technical jobs are being held up in certain States for want of technical personnel and yet these States are unwilling to utilize trained technical personnel even for short periods from States which are surplus in such personnel. With the progressive industrialisation of the country, I know, this parochial atmosphere will gradually die out. But I thought our organization in particular was to act the forerunner in the direction of the new dispensation.

Personnel for the Second Plan

Money is, no doubt, of very great importance. The Community Development Programme, however, has clearly proved that this coveted commodity is by no means the most important for the implementation of a people's programme. The most important commodity indoubtedly is trained personnel. For better or worse, we have undertaken for the Second Five-Year Plan an expansion programme which will strain the margin of our endurance. If we are to steer clear of avoidable hardship, we shall have to make elaborate plans for personnel of all types not merely for the Community Development Programme but for the State's Plan as a whole. Some States have already done this planning to a high standard of precision. Training is one field in which from the Prime Minister down to the lowest functionary, all are of one mind. It will not hurt us a bit even to over-plan on technical man-power. Certainly a technically qualified person can stand a much better chance of earning a livelihood than a graduate in the humanities! As I have written to you in the past, you can count on me for all help I can render in supporting the States schemes for technical education.

During the period of the First Plan, we have achieved substantial results in many fields, especially in the field of agriculture, education, communications, and allied fields. There are however vital gaps in the programme which if unbridged, will leave us at best at the half-way house to our destination. The fields in which special emphasis will be indicated in the Second Plan are, broadly speaking, as follows:—

(i) Social Education for Women.
(ii) Village Industries.
(iii) Co-operation.

You are aware of the steps that have already been taken for a dynamic programme of Village Industries as also for the training of personnel in the field of Co-operation. In the field of Women, however, a special effort will be indicated, as women workers are still slow in coming forward for work in rural areas. I had an incidental discussion on this matter with the Chairman of the Social Welfare Board. She claims that she has about 800 women under training in the various Kasturba Centres. It will be worth our while to study how woman trainees are attracted by these Centres and not by the ones run by the CPA or by the States in their home economics wings.

You will have heard from the CPA by now regarding the new series of Inter-State Regional Seminars which begins from September. At the present stage of the programme it is the Collectors and the Heads of Departments who at the administrative and supervisory levels will have the greatest influence on the further movement of the programme. We know also that good intentions are not enough. Training of our mind in the various facets of the programme is fundamental, if consistent progress is to be maintained. We are anxious, therefore, that Collectors and Heads of Departments will all have opportunities to participate in these regional Seminars. It is difficult for all Heads of Departments and Collectors of a State to participate in one seminar at the same time. It is on this account that we have proposed the innovation of distributing them in batches to a number of seminars. I hope this proposal will meet with your approval and that you will encourage the wider participation desired.

This recurring flood menace in India is beginning to be the rule rather than an exception. However, nothing in nature is an unmixed blessing or an unmixed evil. The flood does deposit vital silt to serve as manure for crops over many a year to come and also wipes out mud-houses and temporary shelters beyond redemption, thereby compelling the owners and the administration to think afresh on reconstruction on basis of permanency and adequacy to modern needs. After his recent tour of flood affected areas Prime Minister wanted me particularly to ensure that village houses and villages which are to be reconstructed based on loans and subsidies from States and Centre, might be re-desgined for siting on higher elevations, and for modern needs, so that out of the ravages of the deluge, life could spring afresh in new surroundings better fitted for the "Tomorrow", we are out to usher in.

Expansion Programme

I deferred mailing this letter to you pending the fateful meeting of the Central Committee on the programme of expansion, yesterday. The meeting has now taken place and the proposal submitted by the CPA in its entirety has been provisionally accepted. Our programme forms a part of the overall Five-Year Plan. Therefore, for obvious reasons, it will have to be confirmed by the National Development Council, when it meets to finalise the draft plan as a whole. In view of the recommendations made by the Council in its last session, I do not anticipate any appreciable change in the programme. You will, no doubt, hear from the CPA formally on the subject not very long from now. I am sending this message to you in advance, as I felt that you needed this information in view of the confusion that has raged over this issue for some time.

Before I close may I tell you that now that the uncertainties are over and we have a clear mandate for the future, I shall be free to undertake the hurricane programme I promised before I left for Indonesia, so as to be by your side in the field to which I belong. I must confess, life

has been a hard one. Yet I know, it will have no meaning unless it is a ground of battle between the opposites.

"Yesterday", we know, is already behind. "Tomorrow" is in the process of being. Those of us who are in the transition of "Today" need have no fears or illusions concerning the phantoms of "Yesterday." Life is on our side. We plunge in, so that "Tomorrow" may not be long in waiting.

Cheers.

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September 25, 1955.

Dear Comrade,

Delhi has been going through a continuous downpour, most unexpected at this time of the year, since day before yesterday. One does not really understand what is happening to the meteorological conditions all over the world.

I returned last evening from Srinagar (Kashmir) after having attended the Intra-State Seminar of Project workers in that State. This Seminar, although the first of its kind in Kashmir, was really an eye-opener to me as regards the technical talents and understanding that exist in the technical departments and the fund of commonsense possessed by our workers on the ground including the VLWs. The question that disturbs me most is how this enormous reservoir manages to fail reflecting on the ground as effectively as it does on the platform. Anyway this will need further study and 1 willI place at your disposal whatever Iight 1 can gather.

I am rushing to send this letter out to you today as I am going out again tomorrow morning on a tour first to the South, and then to the East ending at the inter-State seminar at Darjeeling and then back to Delhi. If this letter does not go today I will miss the month and incidentally the vital contact with you on which alone I can carry on the grind despite its heavy toll. This is a discipline to which I am determined to adhere cost what it may, and hence this hurried letter.

To come straight to the cullings from the common pool during the month.

Intra-State Block and Village Seminars

The effectiveness of seminar as a medium for dissemination of knowledge, and as a leveller of castes has by now been acknowledged universally. Almost all States are conducting seminars more or less on the line we initiated the programme two years back. The Government organisation, with very good justification, has a tendency to develop stereotypes. Stereotype is a desirable feature in an administration charged with maintenance functions. Our programme for many a year yet to come will continue to be an uphill climb. A youthful approach to the whole programme is therefore of the very essence.

We are trying as far as the inter-State seminars are concerned to introduce innovations so as to retain the viability we aim at. But we all function within dead walls and are logically subject to their deadening touch. If viability is to be promoted at all levels from the field to the headquarters, the two-way traffic will have to be a regular feature. Intra-State Seminars are the most convenient media through which all staff

functioning at the headquarters can rejuvenate themselves. I am anxious that CPA staff including myself have opportunities to the extent possible to participate in these Intra-State Seminars. We need no special invitation for this purpose. All we ask is a regular posting of your programme. We shall invite ourselves to the common refreshment. There need be no formality between members of a family.

I find that by and large Block Advisory Committee meetings and village seminars are held at the Block Headquarters. I realise that there are obvious advantages in holding these meetings and seminars this way. Yet on balance the advantages of holding these meetings and seminars preferably in the open air, in villages which have distinguished themselves by work of an outstanding character, are very much greater. I would request you to examine this suggestion. Incidentally, this has been tried out successfully in quite a number of places.

"Chabutara" Around Trees

In my childhood I used to see the women of my village travelling individually or in groups to an ancient tree in the village for offering prayers on festive days or on special occasions. My mother was one of them. While my mother died in the village of her own choice, I knew she was a very much happier person than many others who live and die in the artificial surroundings of our cities and towns. Throughout India trees are considered the proverbial abodes of God. If God is, it seems logical that He should be nearer His own creation than one such a temple which is at best a second-hand.

There is something fascinating about an ancient tree with its outstretched roots in the ground and branches in the air. It stands like a patriarch for the village as a whole and will appear by all tests to be more suited for shelter to the village folks in their community gatherings than anything that man can conceive or contrive. Whenever I have been caught in a mental conflict which I could not easily resolve I have sought the shelter of an adjoining ancient tree. It has had an incredibly soothing effect on me. You may try this out for yourself. When you find yourself torn asunder with conflicts over fundamentals, the shadow of the tree or the open star-lit sky will never fail to serve as a balm to your aching soul.

Rather than community centres, I would every time vote for a series of "chabutaras" around the common trees in the village. All that these require will be a few stones, or bricks from the nearby debris and a quantity of earth from some unsightly mounds. Villagers instinctively will gather round to participate in the mahotsav. How I wish, you would give this a trial ?

November 14 approaches again. I can think of no better programme than what we have followed in past years. I would particularly invite your attention to para 12 of my Monthly Letter No. 9/54, dated September 14, 1954, which I am appending for your ready reference. I do trust and hope that our people will give an even better account than in the past. I shall be grateful if you will kindly issue instructions to your staff accordingly.

CPA Literature for Project Staff

I am far from satisfied with the tempo or the quality of the production of literature from the CPA. We are trying continually to improve on the past. Yet it is a matter of rather serious concern and regrets to me that our project staff for whom this literature is meant do not by and large care to take the pains of giving these even a first reading. I have to appeal to you to devise special measures by which you can induce project staff to take a little more active interest in the piles of information we are trying to produce for them from the CPA.

A number of State Governments either on their own or through the Training Centres or their selected projects are producing journals reflect-

ing the progress of the movement in the State. As is the case with the CPA, "Kurukshetra", the monthly organ of the Community Development Programme, claims to be nothing more nor less than a moutpiece of the whole movement. If this is to be real "Kurukshetra" must have the opportunity of pooling the experiences of the States. I should request you accordingly to enlist the Editor, "Kurukshetra", as a free subscriber to your journals.

Divorced from a living touch with the ground, "Kurukshetra" as a journal will have the natural tendency to grow abstract and pedantic in its content. What we need, to avoid these intellectual trends, will be living stories from projects. If you can persuade your State Publicity Department and also the project staff to send to the Editor, "Kurukshetra", anecdotes from the process of the implementation of the programme, the Editor, "Kurukshetra", I am sure, will be happy to touch up the form and the langugae according to his requirements. I hope you will help.

Ours is a country, as Prime Minister has mentioned repeatedly, which distinguishes itself by upholding the noblest of ideals while doing the least for their realisation. Laying of foundation-stones for new undertakings in the villages and towns is a common sight but it happens not unoften that little is done after the ceremonial inauguration. The Community Projects Organisation do not wish to fall a prey to this common malady. The best way to do this would be to introduce a procedure which will prevent ceremonial inauguration except on the occasion of the finalisation of a project. At least I am determined personally not to be a party to any inauguration at conception, whatever the project.

Social Education in our Programme

I find from an examination of the expenditure on our projects that expenditure under the heads of "Projects Headquarters" and "Social Education" in particular are tending even to overshoot the provision. I shall deal with the "Project Headquarters" some other time. For the present I wish to confine myself only to the item of Social Education. My study reveals that there is a general tendency to spend funds under Social Education for the construction of panchayat ghars, community centres, expensive children's parks, radio sets, etc. It will need no special effort to realise that even if we spend the entire project funds for these purposes the full needs cannot be met. While Government funds will have justification for being used substantially on subsidies towards drinking-water supplies and essential culverts, etc., in a village, in the field of Social Education, the funds should be used literally and purely as catalysts.

These should for instance, cover promotion of village libraries, establishment and running of information and community centres at Block Headquarters, programme of indoor and outdoor recreation, accessories

for adult education and provision for village leaders' training camps and seminars. Financing of buildings with funds from Social Education will appear to be an extravagance and an abuse of this limited provision.

In the very nature of things there will have to be transfers of project staff at periodic intervals. These, however, should be confined to projects as far as possible, and the limits of the interval should be about two years on the low side and three on the high side except where a transfer has to be effected because of unsatisfactory operation. I realise that what I am suggesting here is elementary commonsense. I have taken the risk all the same of repeating it because I find that not unoften project staff in certain States are treated almost as rolling stones. The projects suffer necessarily to the inevitable irritation and annoyance of people.

"Torans" and "Garlands"

I am sorry to broach this unpleasant subject again. I am convinced beyond a shadow of doubt that this is a feature which is fraught with

potentialities for unalloyed evil. True, our village people traditionally rise *en masse* to erect gateways and for offering garlands to august visitors. We know also, that they are traditionally used equally to filth, inactivity and litigation. Tradition necessarily has no absolute virtue. It is part of our Social Education programme to wean them over from the latter. It is equally incumbent to wean them from the former.

As I have mentioned in the past I have felt grossly embarrassed personally to be greeted by villagers through the gateways and procession of garlands. I do not wish to embarrass you and your staff. So far as I am concerned I shall try scrupulously to avoid in future visits to villages in which our project staff fail to persuade the people to greet me in the "new way". I shall be very happy to participate physically with village people in community works, rather than be received through drumbeats which I find both ridiculous and demoralising. I shall be grateful if I can count on your co-operation in this matter. I know, you will feel happy if you can get the village people receive visitors in the new way through works for the community which will call for an effort quite different both in character and volume.

I do hope you will have received and had a chance to go through the scheme I submitted to Indonesia. Could you at your convenience let me have your amendments or criticisms if you have any to offer? I promised to the Indonesian Government as also to the United Nations that I would make available to them the combined commentaries from all my colleagues in the States.

The Wider Horizon

The last onslaught of the monsoon I referred to at the beginning of this letter will I presume presage the advent of the winter. This is good. But it has also something frightening about it as I find that the influx of visitors to our projects both from within and without is increasing at a pace which is rather trying. The Deputy Prime Minister of Egypt as you are aware visited India recently. He saw a community project and spent nearly two hours and a half with me in the office. I gather that the Egyptian Government are keen to initiate a community development programme. In fact it is not likely to be long before some one from our side is called upon to visit Egypt in this connection.

U.L. Goswami, Secretary, CPA, is proceeding to Iran by the middle of next month at the special invitation of the Iran Government. I also understand through the United Nations Representative for the South Eastern Region that there is a proposal of several delegations coming to India during the winter months representing almost all the Middle and the Far East countries. These delegations will travel extensively, participate in our seminars, conferences and camps. India in other words is intended to be the training ground in the new sense for workers in like projects from all the neighbouring countries.

It is no doubt highly flattering to see all this interest generated by our programme. I am faced simultaneously with my own theory — namely that "something for nothing is a myth". The praises showered on us naturally impose on us a new obligation. So far, we have been concerned with our own people but the frontier seems to be expanding fast in this rapidly shrinking universe. I have naturally to recall my request to you to ensure that there is concentration at least in one training centre and one project in your State which can serve as centres of radiation not only for the projects in your State but also for others in other States, and what is more for the guests who will be pouring in to take their bath in the new Ganga that we have succeeded in unleashing from the reservoir hidden heretofore.

If India is playing not too insignificant a role as a neutral ground between warring nations, she will also have to serve likewise in the field of development for nations which are groping for a way out of the jig-saw puzzle of the traditional laws of economics.

Be it in the field of politics, economics, physics or culture, we have to function as an integral whole. We are tending to do so already. The Community Development Programme has unleashed a giant force hitherto unsuspected. Could we harness it with a little more calculation and determination ?

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Extract of Para 12 of Administrator's Monthly Letter No. 9/54, dated September 14, 1954.

Children's Day

Children's Day (November 14) which incidentally is also the Prime Minister's birthday approaches fast. The people of your State have, under your leadership in past years, given an outstanding account of themselves in gifts to their children in the name of the Prime Minister. If you approve I should like the same to repeat for Children's Day this year also.

We have large number of Blocks of Community Project and National Extension Service. New Blocks are also coming into action on October 2nd. I am attaching to this, amended relevant extracts of the previous year's letter on the subject for your ready reference and shall be grateful if you can kindly issue timely instructions to the project staff so that they can have a chance to rival their own past records on this occasion.

I would also suggest that as an additional feature we may this year hold children's melas in every Block in which prizes and awards may be given to children out of the provision for Social Education. The season will be good and the children's melas will fit appropriately into our programme.

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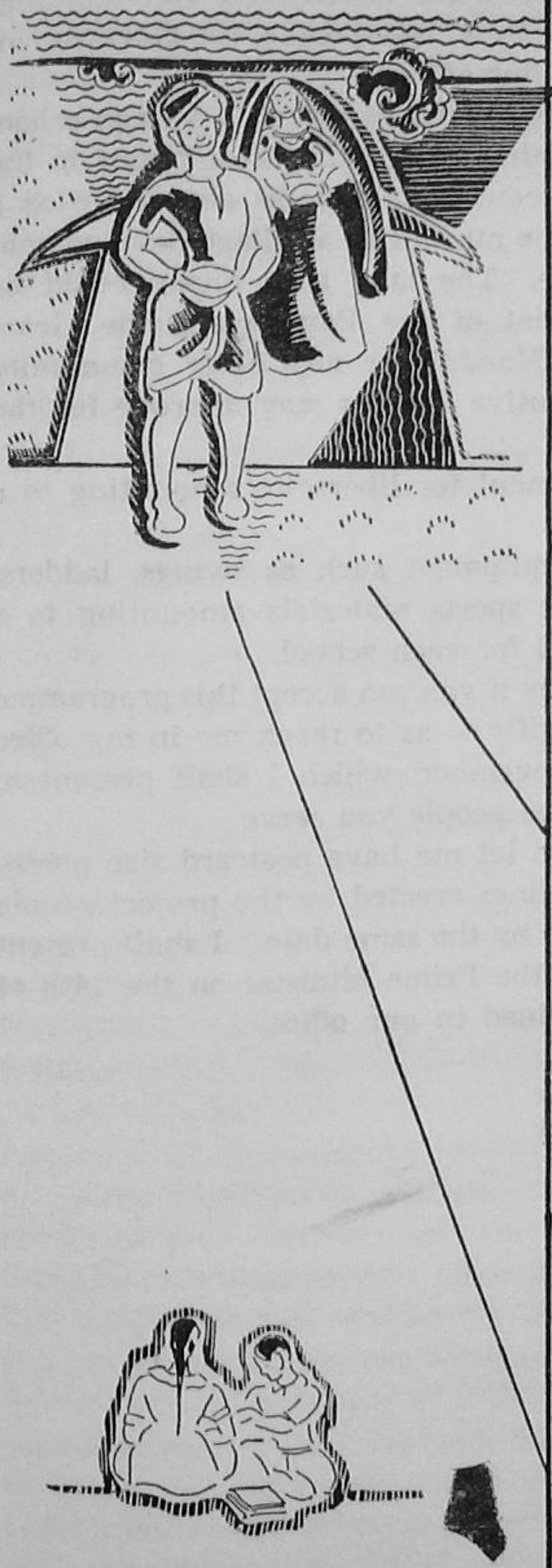
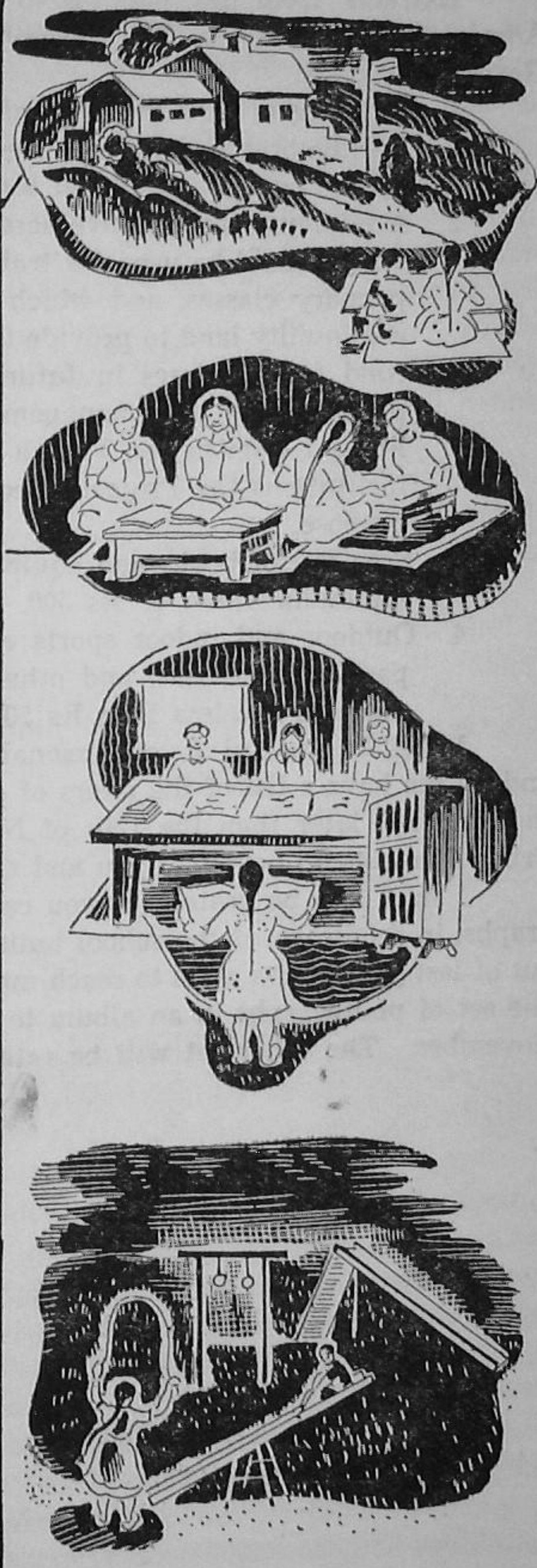




Extracts from D.O.No. PS/CP-927, dated October 5, 1953, from Administrator, CPA, to the Development Commissioners of all State Governments.

1. Building of new primary schools for which land and buildings will be provided entirely free by village people, the Government providing only staff and equipment.
2. A minimum area of five acres of land as gift to a village school which could be used for training in agriculture of pupils in the primary classes, and which could incidentally also serve as a community land to provide the nucleus of a village development fund for all times in future. The land thus given, could be placed under the management of the Panchayats, the Gram Mangal Samitis, or Vikash Mandals or any other community institutions the Project Executive Officers may approve for the purpose.
3. Free gift of books and equipment for liberaries amounting to a minimum value of Rs 500.
4. Outdoor and indoor sports equipment such as swings, ladders, parallel bars, etc., and other sports materials amounting to a value of not less than Rs 500 for each school.

I shall be grateful to you personally if you can accept this programme and let me have a list of the offers of gifts so as to reach me in my office in Delhi not later than the 12th of November, which I shall present to Prime Minister on behalf of you and the people you serve.

I shall also be grateful if you can let me have postcard size photographs, in duplicate, of the school buildings erected by the project people out of last year's gifts so as to reach me by the same date. I shall present one set of photographs in an album to the Prime Minister on the 14th of November. The other set will be retained in our office.

XXI

October 28, 1955.

Dear Comrade,

Our great forefathers not only dug tanks for drinking water and irrigation, built great temples to serve as a balm to the aching soul but they also left messages behind to serve as clear land-marks at every stage of life to follow. One of these land-marks was "One should retire to the forest when one is above 50."

Unfortunately, through the reckless depredations of man, real forests are extremely few and far between. The greed of man more than the quest of life, has prompted him to permeate the obscurest of regions. The quiet South Sea island to serve the lotus-eater or for the search of the absolute therefore no longer avails. We have perforce to fall back on the jungle world of man and see if we can turn it into a garden if not for today, at least for tomorrow. The effort certainly promises to be a more secure investment than the pile of zeros on the bank ledger in this increasingly unsettled world.

Nature seems for sometime to have been almost at her worst in this country. The havoc done to ripening crops, to homes and community works even in our own projects is just heart-rending. Yet the fortitude with which people in their millions are bearing with their hardship is something that fills one with joy and hope for the future.

The *S.R.C.* Report will act in certain ways as a spanner in the smooth administration even of our own work during the coming months in a number of States. Many a friend of ours have been foreshadowing an upheaval following this report. The fact that the controversies have led to not a single incident worth mentioning, and the quiet and friendly atmosphere in which parties to many a dispute are discussing their differences around the table, are all a proof that we are developing a most unsuspected maturity as a nation. This portends all to the good so far as the future is concerned.

The Planning Commission will soon be out with the Draft Second Five-Year Plan. So far as we are concerned. the objective has been clearly defined — full coverage of the country by National Extension Service and at least 40 per cent by Community Development Programme. The volume of work involved is something that has already begun to make my head reel. The fact that during the Second Plan we shall have to concentrate on village industries, co-operation and women's programme virtually with the same emphasis as we applied to agriculture during the First Plan, adds further to my anxiety.

Meantime, I find that our Development Commissioners with their Deputies as also the Collectors and Project Officers are already showing creeping signs of fatigue. I feel somewhat of a criminal for not being

able to ease your burden. I do all I can bear physically but this can hardly make a difference. The programme today is an all-purpose, all-party and all-people one. It can proceed only to the extent that these agencies have been involved in it. The burden of the programme admits of no easier answer. Short-cuts are palliatives. They used to serve a bygone age. They cannot serve the purpose of the post-1947 India. I do hope I shall be able to do some loud thinking on this subject in my next letter to you. Incidentally, I propose to make the next letter more or less a report to you of the Community Projects Administrator on the programme to-date.

I should now like to tell you about some of the points that struck me during the month. If you could attend to these I know it should ease somewhat the travail of our journey to the ultimate destination.

Block Headquarters

During the Second Plan village industries, co-operation and women's activities will have to receive primary emphasis. Village industries and co-operation by their very nature will imply organisaton of centralised storage and marketing apart from processing and training facilities. All this means that the Block Headquarters will tend gradually to grow to be the nuclear townships which we had discussed at as early as the first Development Commissioners' Conference in May 1952.

State Governments, by and large, are taking steps for the creation of these new Block Headquarters. I would like to make the following further recommendations in this connection:

(i) The site for the Block Headquarters must be chosen on a high level overlooking the countryside around. Wherever possible, these should be sited centrally in respect of the Block area as a whole and outside crowded areas, regardless of political considerations.

(ii) The site should be such as can admit of subsequent expansion in space according to the inevitable growth of activities. A potential area of at least 50 acres of land if not more should be the unit of choice, if we are to avoid the repetition of slum conditions or duplication of sites at a later stage.

(iii) Regardless of the inconvenience to the staff, new Block Headquarters should be constructed after the project begins and not before. There is something fundamentally creative in building on virgin ground. This has its inevitable psychological effect on all staff, with corresponding reflection on activities outside the Block Headquarters. The benefit to the programme as a whole and even to the staff eventually, is worth much more than the initial hardship involved in temporary or makeshift accommodation.

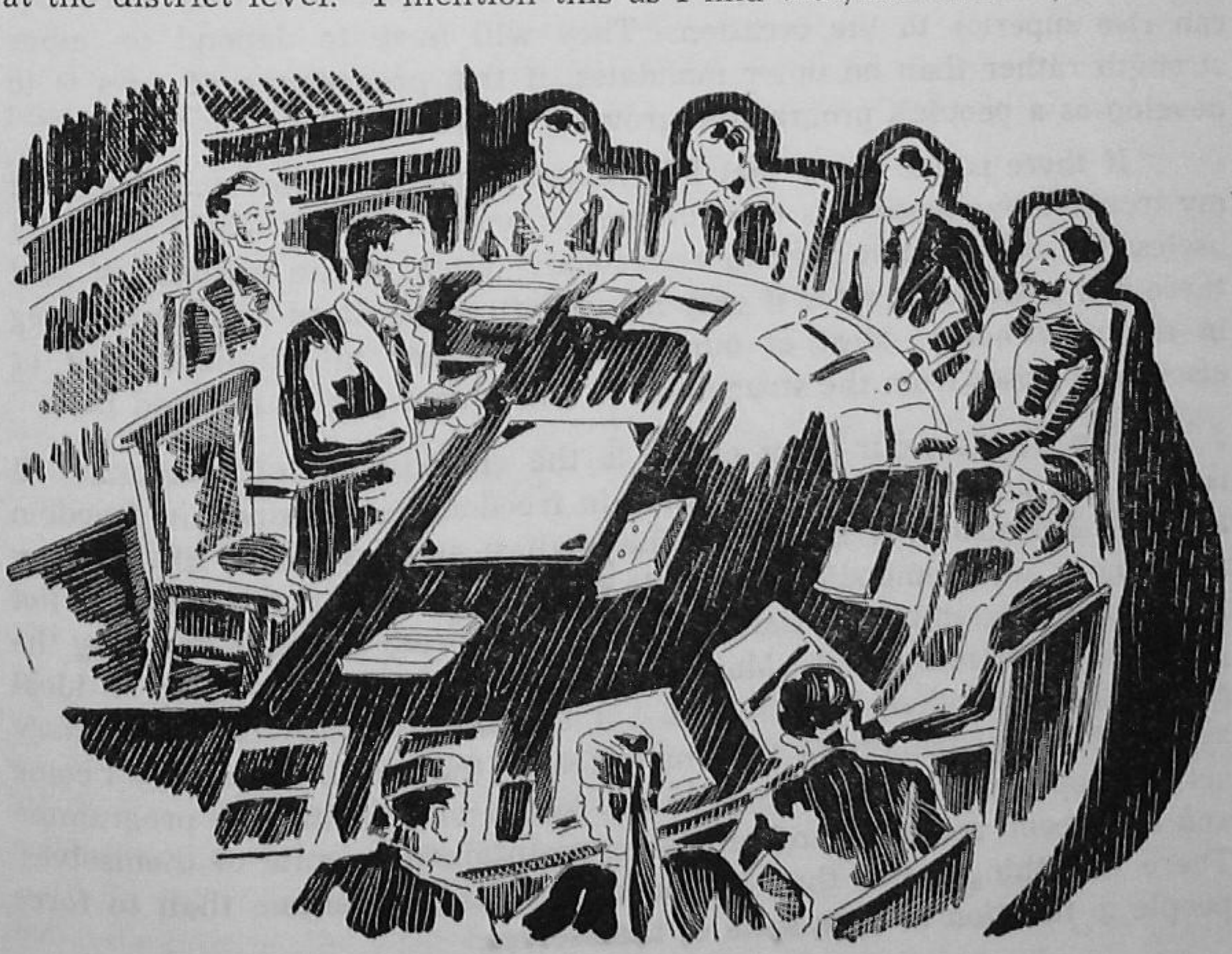
Considerable difficulties are experienced in the implementation of the programme when B.D.Os and S.E.Os have to go out for training after the programme begins. This should be avoided at all costs. The alternative is that the B.D.Os and S.E.Os should be selected sufficiently in advance

of the project. They should be placed as attaches to adjoining Blocks for pre-training experiences. This may mean slight addition in the cost of personnel but it is well worth the investment. Many a State have already been following the above procedure to their advantage.

Some Development Commissioners have made it a practice when on a visit to a district to call a single-day conference of all District Heads of Departments together with the staff belonging to the NES and CDP Blocks. This has yielded commendable results.

If the District Development staff is to share the burden of the Collectors and the Project and Block Development Officers it is but natural that the district staff must receive indoctrination in the philosophy as also the physics of the programme. While periodical district seminars under the chairmanship of the Collector are intended to go some way to bring this about, it is of the utmost importance that for enduring results other methods be added. The literature on the programme issued by the CPA and the State Governments should be of considerable help in this direction if sufficient quantity of literature can be made available for distribution to disrict officers by Collecors.

I am issuing instructions in the CPA to ensure that in future Collectors are supplied with adequate quantity of this literature. I do hope Collectors in their turn will give instructions to their office to ensure that this literature is distributed timely to the Heads of Departments at the district level. I mention this as I find that, not unoften, literature



received in the offices both at the district and block headquarters are relegated to the corner of these offices.

Collector as the District Administrator

While it is quite clear that District Heads of Departments axiomatically will act only to the extent they are inspired by their Heads of Departments at the State Headquarters, even then it will help a good deal if the Collector as the multi-purpose head of the District Administration can act in practice as the District Administrator inspiring the district heads to play their part in this fast expanding programme.

I feel intrigued at times to discover the belief in some Collectors that they can function effectively only if the Heads of Departments are placed directly subordinate to them. I have never known or heard of any but purely temporal physical needs being achieved through the agencies of slaves. Freedom is indivisible. The difference between us in India and the totalitarian regimes lies in the fact that our entire programme of national reconstruction is based on democratic thinking and acting.

Democracy means complete freedom round the table. If the Collector is to be the district administrator as against the foreman in a totalitarian regime there has to be a clear understanding on this point. Collectors by and large are men with pronounced character and capabilities. By virtue of their position in the district and the innate qualities, they certainly can rise superior to the occasion. They will have to depend on inner strength rather than on outer mandates, if this programme of ours is to develop as a people's programme growing in freedom.

If there is one thing that I have learnt through the vicissitudes of my troubled existence it is that no man or woman in this world is totally useless for constructive human endeavour. Even in the lowliest of soul there is a potential creator if only he or she can be fitted as a square peg in a square hole. Most of our trouble whether in administration or elsewhere arises from the struggle to fit the square peg in a round hole.

The Creator, our seers claim, is the embodiment of freedom. It is said that this universe was created in freedom, is sustained in freedom and will end also in freedom. In the lowliest amongst us, if life has any meaning at all, is embodied a particle of that spark. If some one does not fit into our programme we should not follow the easy route of damning the person in a summary way. May be the person concerned will be an ideal choice in some other dispensation. I am emphasising this elementary aspect of administration for the simple reason that not infrequently I come across people who say that they do not feel at home with this programme and have been recruited and are being maintained in spite of themselves. There is nothing worse that we can do to this programme than to force people to function in it, in spite of themselves.

Project Advisory Committee

We continue being exercised over non-official participation in Project Advisory Committees. We do not know when we are likely to have the response we aim at. While the coming election may help, somehow it occurs to me that we have already arrived at a stage where we should begin thinking in terms of increasing association of representative Panchayat leaders as members of Project Advisory Committees and not confine these Committees merely to Parliament and Legislative Assembly members. State Governments have full discretion in this matter and I hope you will begin to exercise it to draw in non-officials from the grass roots, growing with this programme.

I am also wondering if Heads of all Departments at the district level, including the Superintendent of Police, are being made to play their part in these Committees. The Superintendent of Police although he has a regulatory function should be an equally welcome addition to the rank. We should try to ensure that law-abiding citizens do shed their fear of the Police. Participation of the Superintendent of Police in Project Advisory Committee's proceedings may strike a beginning in that direction.

In our interest to ensure in-service training for project staff we seem to have forgotten the equally vital need for in-service training to the staff of our Training Centres. I am writing this in advance to inform you that I have already begun negotiations with the Ford Foundation on one side and the Ministry of Agriculture on the other to initiate inter-State Seminars for training staff on the same pattern as we are carrying on for the staff of our projects.

"People's Participation" ?

The stage is all set for interchange of emphasis in the programme. You will soon hear from the CPA regarding the change in terminology of "People's Participation" and "Government Expenditure", in the Quarterly Report. We shall hereafter have to put "Government Expenditure" as "Government Contribution" and "People's Participation" as the "People's Expenditure" on the programme.

Large parts of our country are inhabited by people who have very little cash to contribute. In the ultimate analysis cash should have much less meaning in our context than contribution in community effort with the God given muscles. My plea, therefore, is that you kindly try to emphasise on the project staff that we should be more concerned about contribution in labour than in cash or kind. Surplus labour both in men and animals is said to be liability number one in India. Should we not jump at this as asset number one is our programme, if it is at all a programme of the people ?

In my intimate meetings with village people in our projects I find that villagers do not hesitate to come forward and openly admit before Collectors and Development Commissioners that there is no corruption

whatsoever in the projects but that peripheral corruption whether for drawing a loan from the Treasury or in other matters continue despite the sharpest of vigilance from Collectors and other senior officials. This is heartening so far as our projects are concerned but disconcerting as regards the rest.

Yet, there is no easy remedy for corruption at the low level of Government. Punishment certainly is not the answer. Officials at district level themselves claim that the remedy lies ultimately in community-conscious organisations of village people. To the extent possible it seems it will be a good idea especially in backward areas to entrust responsibility for payments, in and out, to people through people's organizations on one side and the project organisation on the other. In many a State the Block Development Officers have been given responsibilities for issuing *taccavi* to village people through their own organisations. It means additional work for our project staff but it is a worth-while investment.

Pulse and the Programme

There are two primary criteria by which we judge the success or otherwise of this programme — physical accomplishment and the identification of the people as the prime movers behind the programme. There is no regular yard-stick for measuring the people's identification in the programme. The heart, however, continues functioning as the sensitive galvanometer regardless of the artificial stimulation to which we have been subject now for ages. Between the highest and the lowliest of man, the human heart seems to provide an invisible link. I am touched virtually to the point of tears when I come across Government staff from the Collectors to the Village Level Workers merging in the village crowd in this common endeavour.

I feel equally hurt when I see Government staff doling out benefices to the "poor" village people from high-up. The latter phenomenon is happily on the decrease and I find invariably and all over India that it is those projects which shine most where the Government staff has lost its separate identity. The vertical growth of man and woman in the mass as also in the Government staff is something like a morning dip in the Ganga near Hardwar. The Government staff despite the heavy toll of work on them has a new sparkle in them. How can we spread this fire around, and how can we give a taste of it to those who wait and watch as sight-seers outside the arena of action?

Administrative Intelligence again

I mentioned physical accomplishment as one of the two criteria in the foregoing paragraph. Our programme has now reached a stage and dimension when we can no longer afford to have the programme looked after from the CPA Headquarters alone. This will be even more difficult as the programme expands in the coming years. It is of the utmost

importance, therefore, that State Governments besides implementing the programme begin to take a scientific interest to watch the progress of implementation. This brings me to the subject of Administrative Intelligence, one to which I have referred from time to time in these letters.

The subject was discussed at length at the Fourth Development Commissioners' Conference at Simla and certain specific recommendations had emerged. One of the recommendations related to the setting-up of Administrative Intelligence units at State Headquarters and the appointment of necessary staff for this purpose. We wanted to hold a seminar and arrange training facilities for the staff as soon as possible. We conveyed to the State Governments that they could recruit the staff as a part of the State Statistical Organisation which was being subsidised by the Centre. I am sorry to say that despite repeated requests a number of State Governments have yet not taken up the work with the result that we had to postpone twice, once in August and again this month, the proposed seminar on Administrative Intelligence.

I shall be grateful if you will kindly pay attention to the matter if you have not done so already and settle all pending action quickly, so that the seminar can be held before the end of the year. My anxiety on this matter, if you will forgive me, is more on your account than on mine.

CPA, the Service Organization

I have been making pleas that CPA as an organization would go out of employment unless we receive calls from States for assistance in the common programme. I find to my considerable anxiety that I am personally a virtual member of the unemployed unless I create work for myself on my own, which of course I have not so far failed to do. This is rather an unhappy portend, for I thought that with the mounting burden of work you have on your shoulder you will drive me to the point of being almost a "heart-case". I find, on the other hand, that my heart suffers more from loneliness than from work at your service in which I should rejoice. Can't you give us some more employment?

It is true forces are at work to weld India into a nation even more so than in the days of Great Asoka. But forces are there also to tear us asunder into individual sovereignties for which we all know there is little room in this rapidly shaping "One world" of today.

I wish you to believe me when I tell you frankly and honestly that we make no claim, at least in the CPA, to have any special wisdom of our own. We do claim, however, to be the mouthpiece of the whole movement as we watch its progress from Kutch to NEFA and Kanya Kumari to Kashmir. We may develop kinks of our own and when we do, we expect knock-out blows from you and will welcome them. But till you find reasons to administer this remedy we wish you to give us the credit for the honest effort we claim to make to pool the experiences of India as a

whole, and to make your contribution to the common programme in which we invite you to participate as both contributors and recipients.

You may wonder why I speak thus on an elementary subject. The provocation has been the unwillingness of one or two States to give us the benefit of the participation of their important staff especially Collectors in our regional seminars. I believe that no State in India howsoever well-placed can steal a march over the rest without being pulled eventually by the rest of the so-called backward States in India. We all stand or fall together. Stand we must, to fall we cannot afford. Hence my plea for all States to contribute their wisdom to the common pool.

Democracy : The New Pilgrimage

The battle in the world in all parts as we see it today is one between freedom on one side and "Controlled democracy" on the other. Controlled democracy is but a sugar-coating around the devil that never ceases to lurk from within, with the promise of the short-cut. Our programme in its impact on the ground has but one indicator. Are we more tolerant of the differing views of others, and are we prepared to bear with the other fellow till we convince him before we begin to damn him? In other words, how is democracy we profess for the masses reacting on us in our day to day conduct with fellow workers?

Do we have a clear understanding on this point? Are we transmitting it to the people who are working on this programme be they officials, non-official representatives or the people? Have we the mother's patience? Perhaps it is here that the technique of extension becomes both the means and the end to life in democracy to which we stand dedicated as a people. Do we see our programme in this vital role? Are we developing the mental honesty requisite to the heart-searching process?

Our people throughout the ages have been used to meeting at the sangams for the Kumbh Mela and other fairs. I have attended these fairs on a number of occasions and I find them an exhilarating experience. Man is at his best when he is a "Musafir". Here alone he senses the pristine freedom from which he emerges and to which he dissolves. This programme of ours, if properly guided, should grow to be an endless chain of Kumbh Melas starting from the family and ending in the wider horizon.

I had recently the opportunity of meeting a cross-section of 450 farmers from a project in Bombay State who hired a special train at their own cost for a pilgrimage across development projects in India. The joy in their face that I could sense was something of which the parallel can be seen only in a Kumbh Mela in the open. In the new context of today, the people, people's representatives, and the people's servants constitute the new Triveni. The new Triveni Sangam is growing round the corner. Could we give it a warmer welcome by organising Kisan Melas and the new "Tirath Yatra"?

I have had this morning a visit in my office from Dr. Hatta, Vice-President of the Republic of Indonesia with a full contingent of staff representing the various facets of the Indonesian Government. We discussed the Community Development Programme in full. The party is now going out on a visit to the various development projects in India. Indonesia, as I informed you earlier, would soon be launching a programme similar to our own. Another Delegation from Burma left my office only ten minutes back. The common line of thinking is being pursued in all the countries represented in this region. You will also have noted from the press of the increased interest that the United Nations is taking in the universal spread of this movement.

We have been a dead load on history during recent centuries. The burden from our shoulder having been off, the pages of history are beginning to take on a new look. From being dragged on as an appendage, it looks as though we are taking on a new role of pushing history itself this time.

The world we see around us, is getting closer and closer and increasingly indivisible and so we also begin to play our part in shaping the events not of today, but of the days, may be, many a century hence.

The very idea of death coming to life in the new atomic age and of us being entrusted with the role of the flag-bearers for the new "Tomorrow" is something breath-taking, maddening. Have I gone mad in writing you thus? Should I feel shy in pouring my heart out, as I feel its rhythm gushing towards you and to the ocean of India's humanity and the humanity of many a land, hitherto dead and obscure, and then shaking hands even beyond in the realm of the so-called over-developed?

Yes! I am proud of this madness. Tell me has a child ever been born since the first day of creation except out of madness supreme? How can we aspire to build and create over a past that is dead and frozen except with a giant dose of that primitive madness? I would plead with you to think this over. You may find that in a little dose of madness, if you can catch it, you have discovered the remedy you have been looking for to the crushing weight of fatigue that the pushing of history today involves. Forgive me for the indulgence. I have only been trying to share with you, not thoughts only but feelings also which are yours by right, as much as mine.

P.S. I am sending you separately a book containing house designs and layout plans for Model Villages in Uttar Pradesh with the compliments of the Development Commissioner, Uttar Pradesh. I do hope it will make some contribution to you as an aid to the reconstruction of the villages which constitute India.

XXII

December 10, 1955.

Dear Comrade,

I feel ashamed that I should have missed sending this to you in time. I have been touring almost continuously and the more I go out in the field the more I feel the need for its intensification. This, of course, should be no excuse. For, engagement is an engagement and should be met cost what it may. Yet I did not wish to face you in this one vital communion of the month with a fatigued mind. You should forgive.

We have now had two inter-State Seminars. The last one was at Bhoi, the Headquarters of a Block inhabited predominantly by tribal people around the road between Gauhati and Shillong. The people in the Block despite their chronic backwardness had given an outstanding account of themselves and we, therefore, chose to site the seminar there in their honour. It meant enormous difficulties to face for arranging accommodation and other facilities for 250 and odd people but our friend, Balachandran, with his band of devoted young workers did an outstanding job. I never missed the smile in them despite the heavy odds against them.

The seminar was a great success. The Chief Minister of Assam was good enough to introduce an innovation which added colour to the event. Almost all the Members of the State Legislature attended the inauguration of the seminar and the Leader of the Opposition followed with a talk on Community Projects immediately after the inaugural speech by the Chief Minister. The Chief Minister has made one further suggestion which can be profitably tried in all Inter-State and Intra-State Seminars wherever this is feasible. This is to invite the village people around, to participate in the inaugural session. It is sure to do good both to the seminar as also to the village people. We propose to follow this welcome advice.

The Seminar at Bhoi as also the one at Darjeeling has had a substantial number of Collectors and Heads of Departments. This is raising the level of the seminars considerably. But then these will have to be followed up by a regular series of intra-State seminars meant for Project staff and others, if all our workers are to be soaked in the spirit of the programme and are to receive the revitalisation through mutual inspiration. We have also concluded in Delhi a conference of the Principals and Directors of the B.D.O. and S.E.O. Training Centres and of others associated with this part of our programme. The S.E.O. has been the most misunderstood of all our functionaries. The reason for this has to be found as much in their training as in the understanding of their role in the programme by other staff especially the B.D.Os. and V.L.Ws. This conference has clarified the issue a great deal and a number of recommendations have been made which should promise better results in the future so far as the training is concerned. We shall send you shortly the minutes

of the conference. I shall be grateful if you can circulate these to all members of your staff. This certainly will help to achieve better understanding.

These seminars and conferences, I am fully aware, do not add very much to the total sum of knowledge. They do serve one vital purpose, however, namely to bring about a uniformity of understanding, and what I have mentioned earlier, a vitalisation of the mind through mutual inspiration if the seminars and conferences can be guided with a dynamic behind.

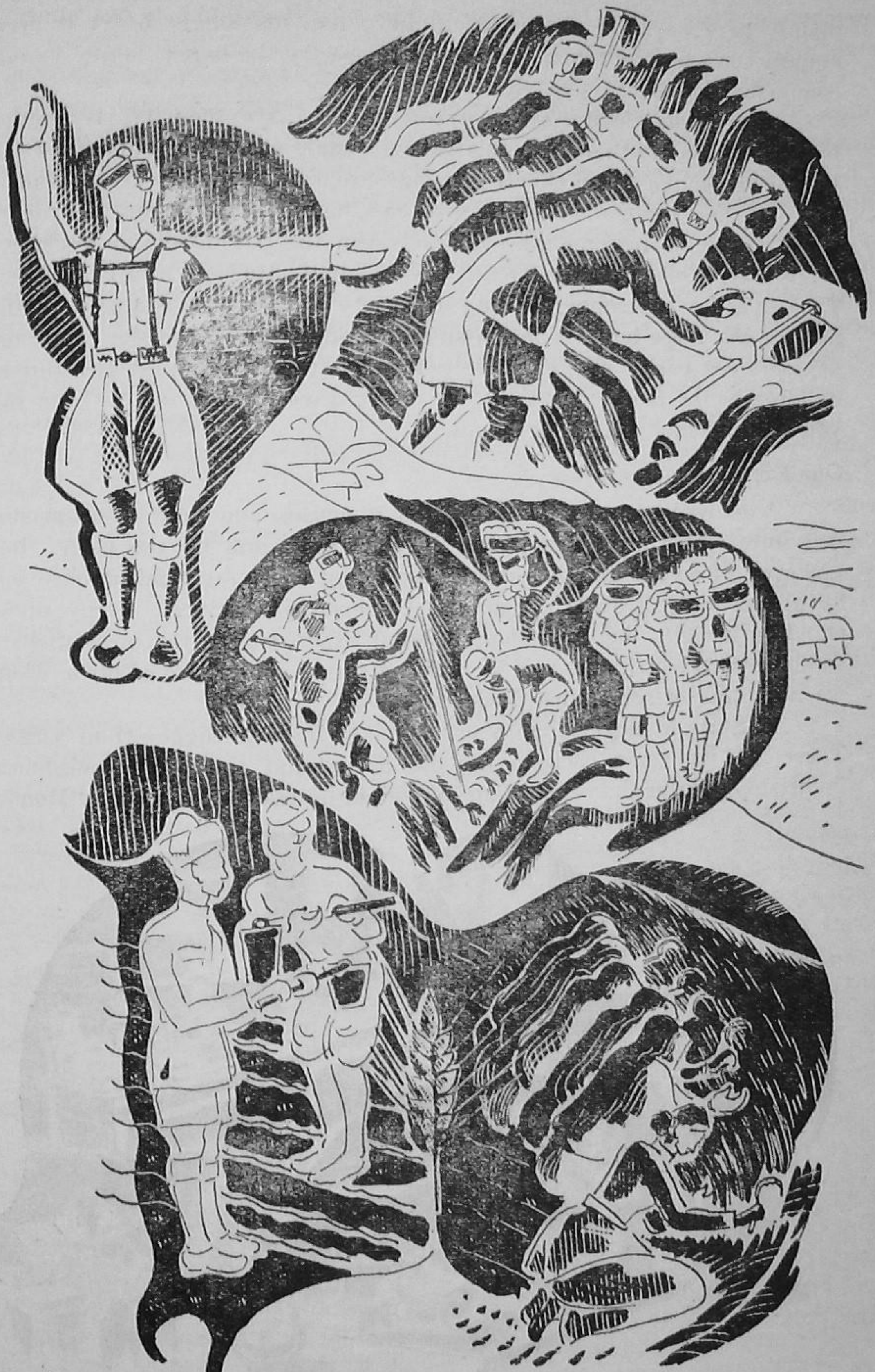
Many a State Government from information received by us here have begun their own series of intra-State seminars. Those States which have yet not finalised their plans may do so early. We know today of no better media for whipping the tired spirit than these seminars and inter-project and inter-State visits by staff.

I promised you in my last letter a report from Administrator, CPA, to his colleagues on the working of this programme. I have decided to postpone it to a later date as I wish to make it comprehensive enough to give you a complete picture. This needs some further data which I am collecting. I shall, therefore, come straight to the points I wanted to convey to you during the month.

Tribal to Lead Tribals

It is my good fortune to go across projects all over the country from year to year, and to watch their reaction on my own mind and heart with reference to the geography and the pulse of the people. In almost every State I find one or two projects forging far ahead of others. One such project I had the opportunity to see this time in Assam, which incidentally was my third visit to this area, is in the Garo Hills. The Project Officer is a tribal himself. The change in the geography as also in the people is something which will stagger all description. The place as I knew three years ago is now totally beyond recognition. I could feel here the rare phenomenon of a people's programme supported only with Government participation. The amount of work done by people is something really breath-taking. The reason for all this obviously lies in the fact that the tribal leader, the P.E.O. himself, is impelled by the sacred fire from within, and the same spirit has permeated all the people of the area. They work as a real community of which the project officer is an indistinguishable component.

I had mentioned to you in one of my earlier letters about the need for bringing the police nearer to our projects. I also mentioned to you, if I remember correctly, the oustanding work done by the police in the Hyderabad State in one village in every district under this programme. You have only to try it out to see what pulsation it can bring both to the spirit of the police as also to the discipline of the people. We as a people will appear to stand in need of both. Can't we join hands with the police ? The policeman in the present day is a pitiable sight in his solitary role



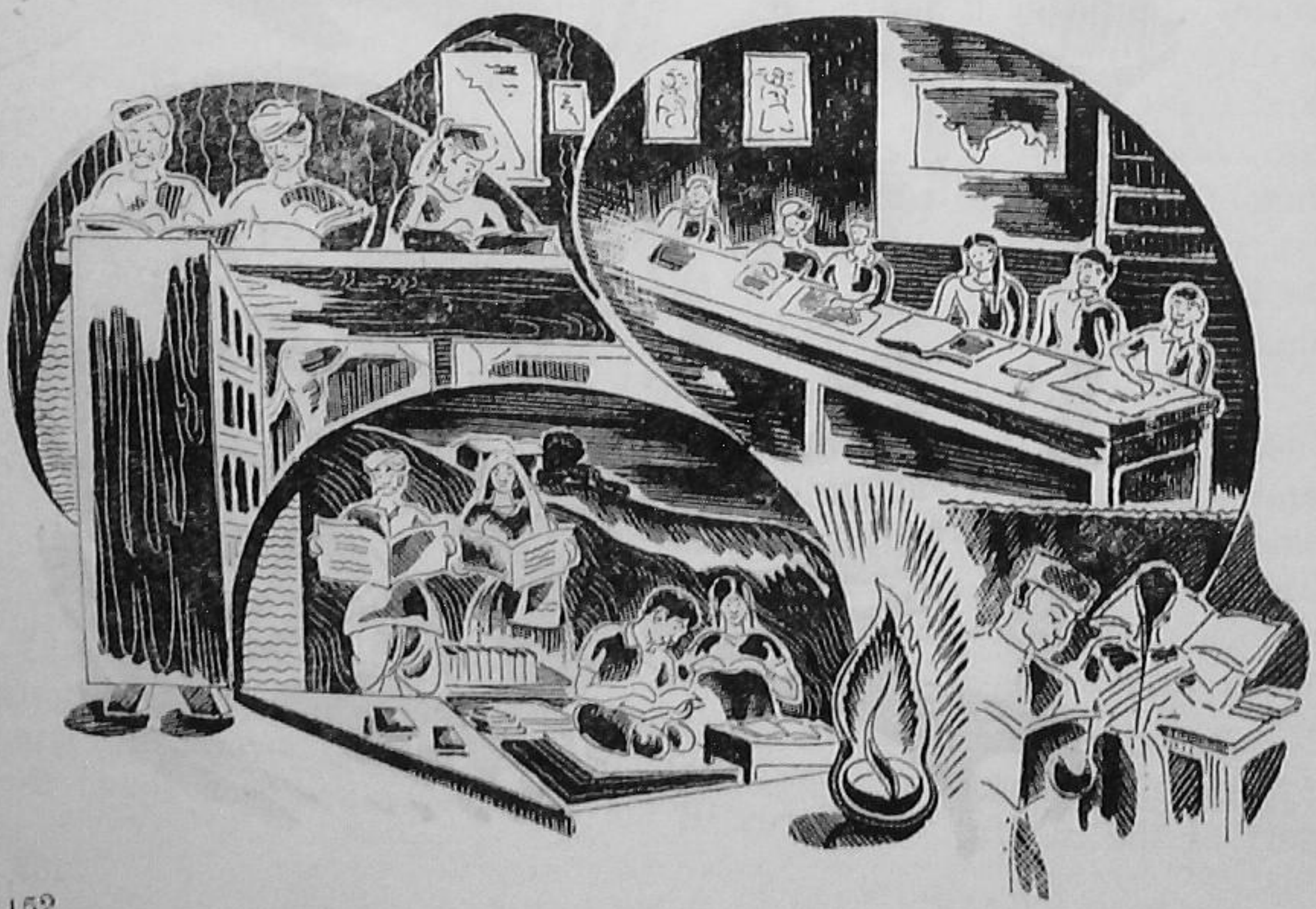
mainly of a negative character. Believe me, his lonely heart is crying equally for a human touch. Can't we at least try the experiment ? I cannot commend this more forcefully.

The Gram Sevika as a worker at large is a security risk both to herself as also to others. In this yet wild male society of ours if we wish the Gram Sevika to be effective in our programme, we have to place an army at her command. The army can be no better than the one of small children. In some places I have seen the Gram Sevika working as a pre-basic school teacher for nursery children attached to a basic school. This gives her a stronger footing in society as also a substantive occupation for say three hours a day in an institution from where she can extend her services easily and effectively through the medium of the nursery children or the mothers of the latter. Could we try this out ? I am sure, you will not find it an experiment.

Our Expanding Literature

You will appreciate what pains it causes you and us to produce literature which are being issued by your State and by the CPA. It is, however, of no use unless we can ensure that these are read at least once by all our project staff. In normal Government services, if my understanding is right, there are departmental examinations for promotions or confirmations which take care of such matters as one of the criteria. Could we not think of some such device?

A State is bigger than a project, and India is bigger than a State. Therefore, we come back to the old thesis that the pooled wisdom is invariably greater than that of an individual unless the latter is a "Monster



mind". Since this is usually not so, you must do something to ensure that everyone of us gets an opportunity to get out of the "Well" and have a touch of the wider horizon. I find in myself the natural gravitation of the tendency of assuming that I have little to learn from others. Yet I know, nothing is farther from the truth. So I continue struggling with this small fellow within, who is continually conspiring to elbow the others out. I am only pleading for an extension of my own struggle in all my co-workers.

Posters and pamphlets are being issued by CPA as also by ICAR in a very large number. These should not only be supplied to our project staff but also to village schools and village libraries. My experiences indicate that it is not happening so in all the States. Could you kindly ask your Block Officers to make greater demands on the CPA and ICAR with a view to a wider distribution of these so as to cover all schools and all village libraries?

A Ventilator of the Mind.

I understand, the first contingent of project staff for inter-State visits will start from here shortly. Others will follow in rapid succession. These project tours have a double purpose. They are intended to serve as ventilators for the mind as also for the equalisation of standards between different States so that the weakest link in the chain, to use the common phrase, could approximate the strongest one. I shall be grateful if you will kindly ensure that visiting teams do get the fullest opportunity of seeing the very best under the programme in your State and also of meeting you personally, if you can make it, before they leave your State.

I need hardly mention that we also expect that there will be similar series of inter-project visits by your staff within your own State based on a planned programme. This has already been taken up in several States and I am only pleading here for its universal application. This should also apply equally to non-officials. We must remember we can ignore the non-officials only at our peril. All the people combined with the people's servants are no substitute for the people's representatives. They have to be integrated if the growing pilgrimage to the Kumbh Mela is not to misfire in the old battle of Kurukshetra.

May I trouble you once again with the repetition, "The village belongs to the village people." The village must be presented by them and not by the project staff whoever may happen to be the visitor. Restoration of faith leading to self-confidence is all that is wanted in our villages. The giant now in slumber has a staggering potential. Nothing else will unlock the gate to this power-house. We must go even out of our way to see that we generate this key characteristic.

You will have read in the Press the lengthy debate on Community Projects, two days ago. The debate will be resumed towards the later part of the month. The crux of the controversy has been round the

ineffectiveness of the Project Advisory Committees. We function in a democracy under mandates from Parliament and State Legislatures as contrasted with mandates from a totalitarian Viceroy till yesterday. As I have mentioned above, we can ignore non-officials only at our peril. If this movement is to continue, and it must, we have to be earnest about vitalizing the activities of the Project Advisory Committees at the Block level and the Panchayats at the Village level. These bodies should be considered the primary source of initiative for the implementation of this programme, cost what it may.

Children's Day.

Children's Day is over. I presented the message duly to Prime Minister. While many a State have given distinctly better accounts than past years, the major States seem to be behind. I do hope we shall have equal warmth from all States, as I cannot conceive of differentials in warmth, so far as people are concerned regardless of the State to which they belong. The occasion of the Children's Day is being emphasised, because it gives an opportunity to the project staff to evoke the natural response of the people in channels of activities which are dear to them.

In my never-ending pilgrimage across the projects in India I have the opportunity of seeing the results of a lot of our physical activities such as schools, roads, wells, hospitals, compost pits, demonstration farms, etc. The rapidly moving kaleidoscope, however, results in blunting the eyes, but in compensation it strengthens the pulse. Instead of looking for things I have naturally begun to reach out for the pulse of people. To meet the people and be lost in them is like a dip in the cool crystal water of the Ganga at Hardwar on a sweltering summer morning. I come across the spectacle every day of Collectors, B.D.Os. and others rejoicing in this ceremonial bath in the sea of people under their charge. How can we make all our workers engaged in this programme develop this new taste? It is claimed that some people by temperament are not capable of being emotionally excited. Once again I face the dilemma as to how to explain this rapid rate of procreation of which we feel so universally proud as a nation. Is it that we feel shy to be excited in public? If so, is it not then a sign of fear and other complexes and should we not try some shock-therapy to cure ourselves of this chronic malady? Or am I trying to be too aboriginal in thinking? Is it wrong to feel this way? I do not know. Only I cannot see how else we can conquer this "mountain of inertia".

A short while ago, I had the opportunity to participate in a meeting along with the Chief Minister of a major State which was attended by people in their thousands in an interior village. With the meeting over, the crowd as is their wont rushed for blocking the passage. The P.E.O. stood up before the mike. With a quiet but firm voice, he asked the people to remain seated till the visitors have been able to depart without loss of time. There was pin-drop silence and the people acted with a

discipline which was a model in definition. I felt almost like crying with joy. Have all our project officers tasted the joy of being able to act thus the "Dadaji" of the crowd? Many other things should follow as a natural corollary then.

We are a country of 365 million born leaders. But the leader also needs training. The training consists of being a strict follower. In the agency of Government, this rule is at least appearing to be followed in practice. I am not sure, however, that we are doing enough to emphasise this aspect of the essential pre-requisite for leadership to the people we handle around.

Good Service to Good Politics

Our non-official friends who have done a generation or more of fighting with the foreign rulers, interspersed with services to the people in their distress wherever possible, have to be transformed from the old concept of "Good service" to one of "Good politics" in the Welfare State which we are out to build. The Government agency is expected to function typically in the spirit of a good missionary institution. The people's leaders have to provide good politics to the people, leaving the Government agency to take care of the service which was their responsibility heretofore. Politics has the familiar unhappy sting about it. The sting has to be taken out and politics has to be made a profession like any other. Have our project officers been educated for this new understanding of promoting good politics to motivate good people and their good servants? If this were so, the phrase "Oh! He is a politician" should have ceased to be.

While travelling recently from Calcutta to Delhi I had in the compartment a fellow passenger. He congratulated me on Community Projects having already been a great success. I asked him "What he meant by the word *success.*" I added, "If he meant return in physical terms for the expenditure incurred by the Government, he was, of course, right. For I have not known any investment of Government so far which has yielded the physical results that our programme has registered already. If, however, by success he meant that we have been able to educate the villager for the next election or the ones thereafter to cast his vote, the most precious commodity in a democracy, without fear or favour, then my answer was 'I do not know'."

I refer to this vote because once a citizen understands the full meaning of it, the question of the people's programme and the participation we look for, follows as a logical corollary. That the Government agency is merely a tool to serve the needs of free citizens will then begin to be a matter of elementary commonsense in the Welfare State of India we visualize for tomorrow.

The programme of Social Education was intended to provide the forum for educating the masses of our people in their obligations in a democracy and the rights as accrue therefrom. This forum has to be

protected from use in the name of the project for political purposes by whosoever concerned. As the next election approaches, the temptation for using this new all-purpose machinery of Government which has acquired the new meaning in the eyes of people, will be very great indeed. The project staff will owe it to themselves to safeguard the integrity of this programme from abuses of this character. Nothing could be farther from the mind of the leaders of our Government than the degradation of this great movement to a handy tool to promote individual chances for election. I say this from direct knowledge of the minds of those that matter and I have to request you to plan for a deliberate effort on the part of the staff to see that they are not partisans and that the project activities are confined to purposes of the project alone. If individual non-officials gain in stature in the eyes of people through their individual honest contributions towards the objectives of the programme, this of course need not be discouraged. But the clear line of demarcation should at all costs be maintained in the forum, between activities which relate to the people and those which are meant for political purposes.

Officials and the New Ideology

A Development Commissioner was expressing to me recently his great sense of satisfaction over the fact that a Government functionary, who started life with high ambitions, has at last found a creative outlet for himself in this programme which has no limits in depth or width. I have seen to my great comfort the same feeling reflected in hundreds of faces all round. This Government agency despite the atmosphere of contempt in which it began to function immediately after the dawn of our independence, did succeed in being guided to the establishment of order out of a chaos. It has also acquitted itself creditably in its endeavour to extend the beneficent phase of Government to the large masses of our people in the countryside. The programme that faces us in the context of today is one of rationalising the order that arose out of the chaos, and of imparting a voice rid of fear to the dumb and mute of centuries. Appreciable strides are already in evidence even in this direction. This programme of ours will be still-born if the servants of Government fail to train their masters in the art and rules of cricket in this, our growing democracy.

I happened to be invited to a reception to a foreign dignitary a short while ago in the heart of a project area. An officer in charge of a vital element in the programme was omitted from the table on the ground that he did not belong to the gazetted rank. I understand the need for a hierarchy in any organization too well to misunderstand the distinction between the gazetted and non-gazetted in the conduct of official business. I do not, however, understand this distinction carried to social levels.

I have had experience myself of receiving and entertaining distinguished guests of the highest order. I have been used to inviting

representatives of all sections of the people including, if I remember rightly, a representative of the barbers. I have not known the dignitaries losing dignity, or the hosts feeling other than elevated in being thus presented a community picture in a social gathering. I thought we were out to destroy this monster of castes which have corroded the vitals of the nation within. How can we do this if we continue acting the prey to this disease in the cream of India's mind which is reflected in the Government services?

Our friends, 16 strong from Indonesia, are already on the soil of India in line with the recommendation I had made to the Indonesian Government. They are studying projects in different parts of India and will go back in 2½ months as a prelude to the inauguration of a programme in their homeland. Similar teams are soon to follow from other States in the neighbouring regions. Two of our own officers are going under the auspices of the United Nations to assist the Indonesian Government in the initiation of the programme as recommended. This is bound to repeat for other lands also, along with training in India of their respective personnel. So the wider horizon is already on us long before we ourselves could get the opportunity to mature. You will readily see that this programme of ours has ceased to be purely Indian. Our doors and windows will have to be opened wide to these fast gales from other lands. We have to be prepared to give and receive. Maintenance of standard in the new context acquires a special importance of its own, as also the raising of the level of the average.

Three-hundred years ago if anybody in the world could be told that he could own a car, his own, to drive on cement concrete roads across continents, and radios, telephones, and domestic appliances run on electricity, he would have perhaps been burnt, in the stakes as practitioner of witchcraft. Yet the age of steam led to all these possibilities for a vast number of the people of this world. True, we were denied the benefits, as we rested content to act as the pack-ponies to carry the burden of history. But we are again on the eve of perhaps a still mightier revolution. The world conditions today are slightly different from what these were three centuries ago, and therefore the new knowledge not being the closed preserve of "the chosen", is equally accessible to us.

The complacent talk of our urbanites and even of some of our own project staff that the amenities provided through the paltry sum of Rs. 15 lakhs per C.D. Block under our programme is the last word on rural development, therefore, comes to me as a rude shock because of this ghost-ridden thinking. There is no reason why our villages of tomorrow should not have as a common feature concrete roads, air-conditioned houses with all amenities that can make life the dance of Natraja for all alike. But how are we to bring these dreams to reality if we still continue thinking in the language of the haunted money-lender counting in pies, not realising that he is only struggling against history as others did with us as a nation

three centuries back ? How can we charge the minds of our own workers with the message of the impending breath-taking revolution ? How can we convince the monopolists after pence, that pounds threaten to be in abundance for all to take in to our very fill, if only we can get together, rid of our night-mares and medieval thoughts, for the "Morrow" crying to be ushered ?

My friends, I know one thing is certain which no one can deny me or you. It is the soothing hand of death to give us rest from all this fever and this fight for the real out of the world of phantoms. When you and I are no more, I am sure, you and I would like to hear this to be said on the shores behind. "Those were men".

P.S. My office informs me that about 1,400 copies of this letter are now being issued in response to requests from different States. I also understand that part of this supply is intended for circulation to Collectors who have by now taken their rightful place in this programme. To ease your burden somewhat, and to expedite the receipt of this at its destination, I propose to send out unsigned copies of this letter to your Collectors, leaving your office to handle the rest of the people whom you wish to participate in this loud thinking. Since this is a purely personal document, not one of official instructions, I suppose you will welcome this direct despatch to the Collectors from my own office. I shall hold on the present set meant for the Collectors till the 22nd for any possible instructions from you to the contrary.

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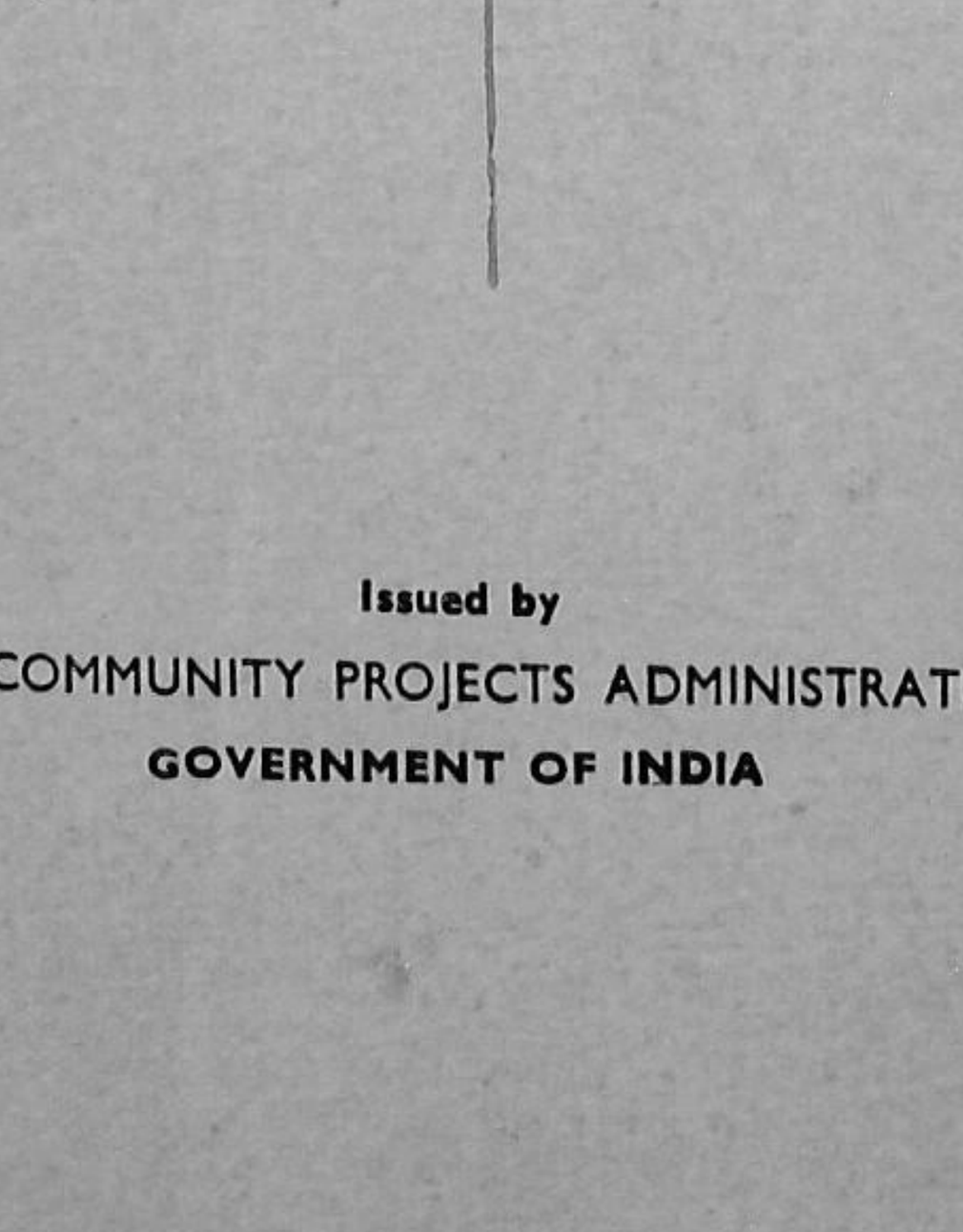
Printed at the Mufid-i-'Am Press, Delhi.



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