

# The Economic Weekly

A Journal of Current Economic and Political Affairs

SIXTEENTH YEAR OF PUBLICATION

January 11, 1964

Volume XVI No 2

Price 50 Naye Paise

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## Bhubaneshwar

WHAT lends significance to the Bhubaneshwar session is not the self-balancing feat performed by the Congress, remarkable though it was, but the unmistakable manner in which it showed up to Pandit Nehru his next step. It was Pandit Nehru's health which caused far greater concern to those who had assembled for the plenary session than the future of socialism in the country. Today the most difficult decision of his life faces Pandit Nehru himself, the heroic one, calling for the utmost courage, to step aside and not let things just be, but to guide the destiny of the country without attaching himself to the burden of office which his stooping shoulders can no longer bear. A grateful nation owes it to itself to give him the rest which Pandit Nehru has earned so well and so richly deserves.

The self-balancing feat brings out the strength and the weakness of the Congress Party more sharply than anything else had done in the recent past. Never perhaps were so many amendments tabled against an official resolution, such clamant demands made by so many for pushing the country forward towards socialism. But none of these amendments except one was finally moved and that one found 'no supporter! The leader who has come to symbolise the left arid had tabled a full-length draft to substitute the official resolution was in the same camp with the others who withdrew. Nor did he find enough support among the 494 members of the AICC who voted to win a seat on the Working Committee. It was the members nominated by the out-going working committee who were elected —all the seven of them.

The official resolution was passed without any amendment whatsoever. But there was a gesture, a concession to those who wanted the Congress to move faster to socialism, the achievement of which is now incorporated in the Congress Constitution. The concession was in the form of a promise from Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri, that the Parliamentary Board would be expanded to seven from five and it will be made responsible for implementation of the party programme. He conveyed the assurance that the High Command would take effective steps to see that the programme was duly implemented and, if necessary, a Party Commission would be appointed to review the progress of implementation and its report would be brought before the AICC for discussion.

It is a self-perpetuating, self-elective system that, the Congress Working Committee has evolved and perfected. Of the seven names which it had put up for election to the new Working Committee — though this was criticised as unfairly influencing the choice of the AICC members -all were elected. While those who had contested this election without the blessing of the Working Committee were all defeated. Of the seven elected, all but one could be labelled as leftist, while among the defeated, one was Malaviyaji who has earned the reputation of leading the left revolt and the other was Shri S N Misra of the Ginger Group and, therefore, left; but the rest were rights.

Would it then be correct to say that the resultant forces still point to the dead centre? Perhaps not. The indications are that the right is definitely out but the left has 'not quite moved in, while Presided Kamaraj firmly stands at the centre.

### THE ECONOMIC WEEKLY

65, Apollo Street, Bombay-1.

Grams : ECONWEEK

Telephone : 253406

Annual Subscription : Rs 24

Foreign 50s or \$ 7