

MYRON WEINER, *The Politics of Scarcity—Public Pressure and Political Response in India*, Chicago, The University of Chicago Press, 1962, xix+251 p.

Prof. Weiner, well-known as one of the youngest and most brilliant American specialists on India, has made a special study of the political dynamics of India. The book under review is the result of his examination of the interest or pressure groups in India, and this follows his "Party Politics in India" which was published five years ago.

The major task which faces India today is the promotion of economic development while at the same time creating and maintaining a democratic political system. Moreover, since independence, the people, as in other developing countries, have rapidly expanded their aspirations and expectations, so that their leaders must make every effort to decrease "scarcity" and elevate the standard of living of the people as much as possible. There arises the very difficult problem of bridging the gap which as yet exists between these hopes and reality.

In India, the political party system is not yet fully developed, and the political parties do not necessarily reflect the interests or the will of the people. Especially in local politics, various well-organized groups representing special interests, rather than political parties, are really playing more important roles. The book deals with the various problems of these organized interests from two aspects: how these organized interests influence public policy or administration, and how the Government responds to their demands.

Prof. Weiner mentions five organized interests: community associations, trade unions, organized business, agrarian movements, and students. He gives "community" a very broad meaning, the interpretation of which is so often the source of argument in India's politics, and includes, besides the religious associations, tribal, caste, and linguistic and ethnic associations. "Provincialism, communism, and casteism" are attacked, using Nehru's own words, as obstacles to national unity and modernization. However, actually, whether it be the National Congress Party, Socialist Party, or Communist Party, it is necessary for political parties to make use of these communal groups or associate with them to varying degrees. Prof. Weiner reaches an interesting conclusion to this problem, viz. 1) the number of community associations "is likely to increase as the pace of social change increases," and 2) "the increase in such associations is likely to have a stabilizing effect." (p. 72)

As to the political function which the organized interests perform, the following noteworthy two items are pointed out by him: firstly, "though organized interests do have an impact on the formation of public policy in India, to a large extent this influence has been a negative one;" and secondly, "organized groups largely influence the administration than the formulation of policy." And their influence is most markedly exercised at the State administrative level (pp. 216-217). One of the most outstanding examples was the land reform which the National Congress Party tried to put into effect.

However, the Central Government's policy was emasculated at State level. In order to realize their objectives the interest groups very often resort to mass movements or sometimes to violence. Their leaders do not hesitate to use such effective weapons as civil disobedience or hartals rather than petitions or deputations, and have often succeeded in getting concessions from the Government. The most notorious defeat the Central Government suffered was when it tried to establish new units of State government on the basis of language, and backed down in the face of mass demonstrations. "Only when public order is endangered by a mass movement is the government willing to make a concession, not because they consider the demand legitimate, but because they then recognize the strength of the group making the demand and its capacity for destructiveness." (p. 201) Naturally the responsible government must be responsive to popular demands, but there is danger that the Indian Government may make too many concessions to the demands of various organized groups, in the present state of India. In Prof. Weiner's opinion, the danger to India's democracy is "in the breakdown of authority than in its concentrations." (p. 231) In order to modernize the country and carry out economic planning, the Indian Government must somehow control or restrain these demands.

Generally speaking, in underdeveloped countries, a great gap exists between aspirations and reality. Can this gap be narrowed by economic development? Prof. Weiner answers this question in the following way: "In the short run, economic growth can therefore be politically unstabilizing." (p. 238) India has now entered its third five-year programme period. There are still such problems as politics, social organization, and cultural values, to be solved in order to realize the plan. However, it is true to say that very few studies have been made in the field of political process and its relation to realization of the policy so far. Actually, the big problem India faces at the moment is "a great hiatus between law and reality, between what is willed by the national leadership and what is done at the local level, between the high ideals in New Delhi and the cynicism in the *mofussil* towns." (p. 239) In order to eliminate these gaps, it is important to study the political situations, especially at the level of local politics. In short, one lesson which could be derived from "The Politics of Scarcity" would be: in the long run, it is true that, unless there is economic stability, there is no political stability. But, where underdeveloped countries are concerned, unless there is, for the present, political stability or an effectively workable political system, it is very difficult to expect their economic development. (*Fukuo Noda*)

LEA E. WILLIAMS, *Overseas Chinese Nationalism: the Genesis of the Pan-Chinese Movement in Indonesia, 1900-1916*, Illinois, The Free Press, 1960, 235 p.

The author succeeds, in the book under review, in describing very con-