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BEVERIDGE REPORT

INDIAN PRESS COMMENT

First newspaper comments from India on the Beveridge Report have been received in London. The "Tribune" (pro-Congress) says:-

"It is difficult to imagine how far the scheme will be acceptable to the British ruling classes. Judgment respecting its practicability must wait until details are available. Prima facie, the scheme retains the fundamentals of the British capitalist order, in that it does not envisage nationalising the means of production; nor does it decree that production by private owners shall be undertaken without profit and only for service to the community. No radical replanning is shown of economic life as such.

"We do not know why it is being proclaimed so emphatically that the plan does not seek to imitate Moscow. It may not be an exact copy of the Soviet social security plan, but there is undoubtedly a Soviet smell about it".

/The Hindu

The Hindu Mahasabha comments as follows :-

"The Report constitutes an important document on the subject of post war reconstruction. It may be said to ensure the right to exist and the right to work and in the comprehensive treatment of the subject of social security it goes further than anything ever before attempted, except, perhaps, in the case of Russia. Its cardinal merit is its universal application. As no upper income limits are fixed, many who are unlikely to claim benefits under the scheme will nevertheless contribute premiums. An important part of the plan is the provision for free medical treatment for everyone and the proposal for setting up training centres for the unemployed. That the scheme will impose a considerable burden on employers is obvious, but the price they will pay is small compared with what they may gain through the elimination of the causes of social discontent."

The "Leader" (Moderato) says :-

"The Report is rightly acclaimed as a document which has placed before Britain ~~social policy~~ almost revolutionary in its character. One of the good things that it recommends is the abolition of the means test, which has proved both unsatisfactory and degrading. The scheme is modelled upon the New Zealand plan. The idea has gained a firm hold in Britain that society can escape responsibility for the economic well-being of the individuals composing it."

/The

The Hindustan "Standard" (Congress) points out that social insurance is no new experience for Britain, nor is the proposed programme entirely novel. If she took up social insurance somewhat later than Germany, she proved in the end to be more thoroughgoing and more earnest in the practical application of the idea.

The Beveridge scheme, the paper adds, does not contain any hint of concession to the workers in the way of co-partnership in industry. Social security can hardly be assured unless something is done to curb the profit motive.

According to Amrita Bazar Patrika (Nationalist) the scheme has been produced at the instance of Mr. Churchill because he saw the need of disarming the suspicions of workers in Britain as regards their post war situation. The paper asks who is to pay for the scheme and adds: "The present structure of the Empire will have to continue if the scheme is to succeed. Implicit in the Beveridge scheme is the continued bondage of India."

/The

The "Sind Observer" (Congress) comments as follows:-

"Britain will become the Socialist Paradise if the Scheme goes through. The existing structure of capitalistic Imperialism must be broadened and made tolerable for the people so that they shall not revolt after the War and make short work of it."

The paper concludes:-

"Schemes such as this cannot operate as long as there are master races and subject races; but the world must become a vast co-operative commonwealth."

The Eastern Times says that Sir William Beveridge has produced what is in effect a proposal for Britain's post-war New Order. This paper and other Indian-owned journals make strong comments on the Indian Government's apathy toward providing social security for "India's starving millions."

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MINISTRY OF INFORMATION