

NEPAL

Panchayat Democracy

(In 1965-66)

A Progress Report

TODAY

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(In 1965 - 66)

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CONTENTS

Chapter 1. — Structure.

Chapter 2. — Rationale.

Chapter 3. — Achievements and Potentialities

I Participation in Nation Building

II Leadership Orientation

III Participation in Decision-Making

IV National integration

V The Infra-structure of Democracy

Chapter I

STRUCTURE

Panchayat Democracy in Nepal has four tiers. The Village Assembly and Town Panchayat are the lowest level of the Panchayat system. In the case of Town Panchayat there is a general body of voters within the Town area which elects the members of the Town Panchayat, and its function is limited to that extent only. Each Village unit with a minimum population of about 2,000 has a Village Assembly which is composed of all citizens over 21 years of age who reside within the Village limits. The Village is divided into nine wards. Each ward elects one member for the executive committee for a six-year term of office. The Chairman and the Vice-Chairman of the committee are elected by the Village Assembly. The Village Panchayat can employ a secretary. The Village Panchayat also elects one representative to the District Assembly. Since many villages have a population of less than 2,000 there is usually more than one village in the Village Panchayat.

Localities with a population of more than 10,000 are organised as Town Panchayats. A Town which meets the minimum requirement of population has a Town Panchayat of nine members, elected for a six-year term of office. The number of members in a Town Panchayat varies according to the size and population of the Town. The Town Panchayat elects from among its members a Chairman and Vice-Chairman. The number of members in any Town Panchayat, can in no case exceed 33. There are currently 3696 Village Panchayats and 14 Town Panchayats in Nepal.

The next tier is the District Assembly. There are 75 Districts in Nepal. Each has an average of about 50 Village Panchayats with a range from two Village Panchayats in Manang District to 126 in Rautahat District. Within the District each Village Panchayat elects one of its members, and each Town Panchayat elects one third of its members to the District Assembly. These members of the District Assembly elect among themselves one Chairman, one Vice-Chairman and nine members which constitute an executive committee, namely the District Panchayat.

The Zonal Assembly is composed of all District Panchayat members, i. e., the 11 members of each different District Panchayats within the Zone. The Zonal Assembly also includes representatives of the class organisations. The class organisations, an integral part of the Panchayat system, are five in number: the Nepal Peasant Organisation, the Nepal Youth Organisation, the Nepal Women's organisation, the Nepal Labour Organisation and the Nepal ex-Servicemen's Organisation. Representatives of these Organisations are nonvoting associate members of the Zonal

Assembly but they may participate fully in deliberations during meetings. There are 14 Zonal Assemblies in Nepal. The number of Districts in a zone vary from four to eight. As in the case of District Panchayats, members of the Zonal Assembly also elect one Chairman, one Vice-Chairman and nine members from among themselves for the zonal executive committee, called the Zonal Panchayat. The Zonal Panchayat must include one representative from each District within the zone.

The highest tier of the Panchayat system is the National Panchayat. There are 125 members in the National Panchayat. The Zonal Assemblies elect 90 members, each class organisation elects from two to four members for a total of 15, and four members are elected from graduate representatives *i.e*, *graduate of colleges or universities*. His Majesty the King has the authority to appoint 15 per cent of the total elected members or 16 members. There must be at least one representative from each District in the National Panchayat.

Chapter II

RATIONALE

The Panchayat system of democracy was not Nepal's first choice in democratic institutions. When the Rana Regime was ended in 1951, Nepal like other emergent countries turned gradually to that favourite form of liberal democracy, the parliamentary system. This indeed was the choice of the majority of popular leaders. But their choice was a biased one. Nearly all these leaders had spent most of their Life in India and they were strongly influenced by the Indian example. They failed to realise that Nepal unlike India, had neither a network of transport and communications, nor the long, hard years of political campaigning against a colonial power that had laid an infrastructure of political education amongst the masses. The number of educated people in Nepal ran hardly into four figures, nor was there a middle-class with an independent source of income of its own to bolster up a two-party system. And perhaps more importantly there was not that fundamental

consensus about the ends of society, which is so necessary to such a system.

To these fundamental contradictions between the socio-economic system and the political forms of liberal democracy we must add the irresponsible conduct of politicians during the decade between '51 and '60. Ministries did not succeed in enforcing steady and effective policies. Indiscipline, rivalry and eager office-seeking rent parties in splinters. Cabinets fell or changed with great frequency. And leaders swung from an abstract dogmatism at the cost of policy to a compromise of principles with the object of retaining office. This politicking went on in Kathmandu. The rest of Nepal cut-off from the capital was ignored. No party achieved a country-wide organisation reaching down to the peasant masses. As a result even the left-wing parties made electoral alliances with the local vested interests. This constant acrimonious and highly personalised struggle for power made a mockery of systematic planning and effective economic development. It thus hindered the very steps which would create an economic infrastructure for an egalitarian and progressive democracy. Thus like her sister under developed nations, Nepal was forced to recognise the failure of the experiment in Western forms. In December 1960 she turned resolutely from this glamorous but alien institution to a democracy of a native style in harmony with her socio-economic reality: Panchayat Democracy. How superficial parliamentary forms had been was shown by the fact that on the day parliament was suspended the citizens of Nepal lit lamps to celebrate the incident. For they hoped that now at last a stable government with effective policies would emerge.

The system of Village and Town Panchayats deciding their internal affairs is an old and familiar one. But the justification of Panchayat democracy does not lie in its vintage. It emerges essentially in its appropriateness to the material base. A democracy functioning merely at the level of the national legislature has no meaning to the villager. *A Sherpa in Namche is hardly liable to be excited by the question of whether a dam should be built in Morang or not. For the normal villager in Nepal the horizon is a limited one. His interests are circumscribed by his area and his kinship group.* The government must bring democracy or the question of choice home to the villager. *The quadriennial choice of a representative to a national legislature is inevitably a farce of democracy in such circumstances.* Thus the Panchayat tries to give the people primarily a say in local decision-making. The Villager is most interested in what happens in the Village. He wishes to decide in such questions as how much of his produce he can get himself, in whether the bridge over the river which he must constantly cross is built, in whether his children can have a local school. Unlike the parliamentary system the new order tries to give them this opportunity for participation in those decisions, which they are most interested in.

On the other hand the Panchayat system is aware that the avenues to democracy are not merely the obvious political ones. In a country where the vast majority of the people live off the land, a skewed structure of land-ownership spells a powerful gravitation of power towards the landed-groups. Thus if we were to rely simply on elected representation as it is now for decision-making, the

economic structure's bias would be bound to produce decisions in favour of the landed hierarchy. Thus a need for guidance and supervision especially in the question of national policies emerges. The exploited sections, the mass are unconscious and unable on their own to represent their interests. Thus the government must take on its shoulders the task of leading and guiding them in national policies. Nevertheless, on limited questions the local elected representatives are allowed to decide, so that an education in democratic procedures continues side by side.

This then is the situation, the government conscious of the retrograde socio-economic structure and its inevitable bias takes the lead in progressive policies to correct the faults of the material base. It sets out as it has in the land reform programme and the new legal code to awaken the masses and activate them under its leadership. The development plans, the changes in the social order are not disparate policies; they are part of an integrated programme appropriate to this stage of the journey towards a just society.

Similarly the decentralisation programme emerges again from a realization that with a centrifugal base the structure of decision-making cannot be centralised. This can only hamstring democracy by an inevitable inefficiency. But we do not conceive the programme of decentralisation on a superficially political basis. We realise that in this status oriented society those sections enjoying a monopoly of literacy and economic power have been predominant even in local-decision making. A mere hand over of power from a fairly efficient centre to such inefficient and biased local groups would achieve nothing. We are conscious that apart

from changes in the economic structure through development and distributive development a new leadership working in a dynamic perspective for the uplift of the exploited sections has to be created. To achieve this the reorientation of the existent leadership and the training of new sources of leadership are essential. Thus the present powers of the Panchayat in taxation, administration and original jurisdiction are essentially a beginning adapted to their present limited capacity.

Set on such a complex and arduous task, the Panchayat is conscious of the need to avoid factionalism and to expand consensus, so that the nation works as one towards its social goal. Friction and struggle are an uneconomic wastage of energy, that with our scarce resources we cannot afford. That is why we have rejected the multi-party system of political organisation. We organise instead on the basic assumption of society having harmonisable interests. Our class organisations unlike their communist counterparts do not achieve their aims by class struggle. As the demands and interest of a class require fulfilment, the system sets out to anticipate them. Thus in land reforms there was no campaign of demand by spontaneous popular elements. The government saw that such a movement was inevitable and itself lead the way before the consciousness of such interests could create a situation of antagonism. Class organisations thus become means of creating harmony not struggle. These class organisations pursue the aims of their sections, but they anticipate consciousness of contradictory interests by activating their sections to the achievement of their economic aims without an overt political struggle.

The picture of Panchayat democracy is a difficult one to paint. For it is essentially an unfolding democracy and an instance of socio-political planning. It does not visualise history as separate events, it comprehends it as a process of social change where the basic units of any society, men, have changing desires and interests. The aim of the political system is then one of continuous adjustment to the changes of society so that maximum social satisfaction emerges. In this process we feel that our own traditions of social organisation with its emphasis on the rural community has vital values. It provides the security of the neighbourhood nexus, the steadiness of strong religious faith and the contentment of family life. We wish our development to pursue a path which retains these traditional values. In effect we want to direct our socio-political change in such a way that by means of these hallowed institutions it minimise the social costs of economic development. This is the importance of the native brand in our democracy-both our modernisation and our traditionalism are selective.

In fine then we are aware that the expansion of the interests of the people is also a dynamic factor which changes with the process of development, as a variable of the degree of education, of levels of income, of the spread of transport and communication, of the growth of national integration and such other factors. Thus the degree of participation and representation must respond elastically in growing concentric circles, accomodating these changes at the various levels of village, district and nation as they grow. We would also need an objective evaluation of the rate of growth attained

vis-a-vis these targets. It would thus be a planned and coordinated exfoliation of democracy synchronised with social change. For ours is an evolutionary and pragmatic democracy that is communitarian in character.

Chapter III

ACHIEVEMENTS AND POTENTIALITIES

In the perspective of this outline of the aim and rationale of Panchayat democracy we can examine how far we have proceeded towards our objectives. It is worthwhile pointing out at this stage that His Majesty granted the Panchayat constitution in Dec. 16, 1962 and that the first session of the Rastriya Panchayat *the national legislature* began its sitting in April 18, 1963. Clearly then today in 1965--66 the system is still in its early phase. Thus when we gauge the achievements of the system upto now we consider them as clues pointing to its future potentialities rather than assess them as completed achievements. This then is the balance-sheet of an emergent system.

(1) Participation in Nation Building

One major aim of the Panchayat system is to maximise popular participation in those nation-building activities that concern and interest the rural masses the most. One major activity that is now emerging in this respect is

road-building. From Jumla a cutaway fastness in the Western Hills several miles of difficult terrain have been crossed by a jeepable fair-weather road towards Dailekh built by the effort of local Panchayats. From Pokhara another jeepable road is forging ahead to the Rapti Valley. As the Kodari-Kathmandu road is being built, the people of Sindhu-Palchok are already connecting it to their district headquarters, Chautara by a feeder road. In Dhankuta there is another fair-weather road. In Jhapa the Bhadrapur-Buddhebari road has emerged, Illam has constructed its own pipelines to the markets of Darjeeling on the other side of the Indian border and southwards to Jhapa. All along the East-West highway's alignment fairweather roads have sprung up.

Similarly bridges are another developmental feature where popular effort is emerging. The Dhanghadhi Panchayat raised 5 lakhs for the Mohana Bridge; the Jhapa Panchayat 4 lakhs for the Mechi Bridge. In '63-'64 alone in some 60 districts in Nepal 147 small bridge projects were undertaken by various Village Panchayats with the help of 50 percent or less in government grants for materials which could not be procured locally. Similarly air-strips for stol planes have been levelled by local effort in several parts of the country like Jumla, Dhorpatan, Tumling Tar ect.

This does not include some other minor activities in communications like the setting up of their own postal systems or cooperative post houses by Village Panchayats in affiliation with H. M. G. post offices or the running of their own bus services by other Panchayats or indeed the innumerable cases of maintenance and improvement of the

foot and pony tracks that are the normal mode of travel for the vast majority of Nepalese hillsmen. Thus the activities of the Panchayat in transport and communications form an impressive array. We need not exaggerate this. The lack of technical support at proper times has involved a deal of wastage in such projects. And we have not always been able to dovetail these various projects into the national plan so far. But a beginning has been made and a systematised use of voluntary labour in transport and communications synchronised with technical support and harmonised with the plan will be our objective in the next phase.

Another field of Panchayati effort is irrigation. For instance, in Syangja thousands of feet above sea-level a system of irrigation canals supplies the high terraces. In many places like Panchkhal the people annually dam the stream which crosses the valley so that it may irrigate their fields through the network of canals they have built. In '63-'64 with partial grant contributions 129 irrigation projects were reported from some 50 districts.

In social services with part grant funds 284 drinking water projects involving 8 lakhs or so were undertaken by Village Panchayats and 286 Panchayat Houses were built in '63-'64. Any one who walks the tracks, will see schools being built in many places along the road. Indeed there is not doubt that every Panchayat in Nepal has at least one primary school. The teachers in these schools, are often maintained by local contribution, partly by allocating rents from land, partly by direct payment of money and partly by providing free board and lodging. A few Village Panchayats have been able to launch free and compulsory educa-

tion. In fact perhaps the greatest upsurge of voluntary local effort has been in the field of education and transport.

Another programme mobilising resources has been the compulsory savings campaign lunched as a part of the land reform programme. Last year in 16 Districts this programme raised 8,85,986 maunds of (3,30,47,150 *kgm*) food grain valued at Rs. 3,46,287,000 in cash *at peak prices*. It has been expected that about 95 million will be raised including the additional 25 districts this year. This vast mobilisation is in addition to the funds for development which all districts raise. In some cases these funds reach as in the case of Saptari, Mahottari 1.3 million of rupees. In Jhapa the budgets of the Village Panchayats average 20 to 30 thousand Rupees and in Buddhabare, the new experimental land tax showed that a Village can raise nearly 3 lakhs (0.3 million.)

These then are the many and varied sources which the Panchayat can mobilize. It is in recognition of this and with the aim of giving this mobilisation high priority that the Panchayati sector has been separately categorised in the new Five Year Plan. There is no doubt that in this period we shall evolve from this beginning a more systematic mobilisation of the rich resources of popular effort that the Panchayat has made possible. We will succeed thus in turning the quiescent audience of the quadriennial drama of Parliamentary democracy into an active participant in nation building. For the Panchayat system allows the local areas to do what they wish, only helping and guiding them in their self-selected goals.

(ii) Leadership Orientation

We pointed out the vital need for reforming the present leadership in the light of the new order and for the creation of new cadres alongside this. In addition training for departmental employees who provide the administrative machinery to support the leaders is also required.

(a) *Institutional Training for Men:* The institutional training for men is conducted mostly in the Panchayat Training Institute at Rampur (Chitwan District) in the Terai region of southern Nepal. Pre-service and in-service training for employees of the ministry is provided there. In addition to this training, selected members of the Panchayats and some of the local leaders are brought to the Institute for higher level training. The training period varies from 15 days to 6 months according to the needs and categories of the participants in the training.

(b) *Field Training for Men:* The field training is organised and conducted by the Panchayat Training Officers, located at the zonal level, and Panchayat Training Assistants who are located in the Districts. Training is organised in small groups to make it effective and to solve some of the problems of logistics. Training courses of 10 to 15 days duration are given to the members to the Village Panchayats, to the interested and active local leaders, and to Village Panchayat Secretaries. Training "Camps" consist of representatives from two or more neighbouring Village Panchayats and are held in one of the Panchayats.

The objectives of organizing such training camps is to impart skills in handling local Government affairs efficiently and effectively and so to make more effective

use of local resources for development. Field personnel of technical ministries are encouraged to assist in conducting the training.

(c) *Institutional Training for Women:* Institutional training for women is given at the Women's Affairs Training Institute at Jawalakhel, Kathmandu. Pre-service and in-service training is given to the women employees, who serve as Gram Sevikas in various Districts and conduct training sessions for Village women leaders. Institutional training is also given to local women leaders selected by members of the Women's Class Organization. The duration of this training varies from 50 to 90 days according to the need and type.

The objective of the institutional training for workers and local leaders is to impart skill in domestic affairs and to stimulate in them an awareness of the changing role of women in the Nepalese rural community.

(d) *Field Training for Women:* In each of the 75 Districts two women Workers either have been or will be assigned. They conduct the field training for the local women leaders with the help and cooperation of the Women's Organization in the District.

(e) *Publications:* Orientation is further pursued by publications, Radio programmes and seminars and conferences. Publications serve as one of the communication media. The ministry publishes the fortnightly bulletin "Panchayat News." The highlights of work done by the Panchayats are given in this paper. Articles and speeches of distinguished people are also published. This paper has

helped the Panchayats to understand better their duties and responsibilities as well as get information on Development activities in other parts of the country.

(f) *Conferences or Seminars*: The ministry organises two kinds of conferences and seminars, one exclusively for ministerial employees and the other for elected local Government officials. These conferences and seminars have helped the ministry in bringing about amendments of Panchayat acts, in developing more effective working procedures, and in creating a better understanding of the processes of development. Moreover, these conferences and seminars have provided opportunities for an useful exchange of ideas and the development of closer understanding and sympathetic feelings towards each other.

In almost all the 75 districts the District Panchayats have organised seminars of all the members at least once a year. Reports indicate that more than 80 percent of the members attend these seminars which have given opportunities to the members to exchange ideas, especially on the Panchayat system. Three annual District Panchayat Development conferences of all the Chairmen and Secretaries of the District Panchayats have been held. These conferences have been instrumental in helping to effect certain amendments in the Panchayat laws, acts, and working procedures as well as to create a better understanding of the processes of development. As a result of these conferences some additional powers such as renewal of radio and gun licences, issuing permits for faggot, poles, and logs for thatched house building have been vested in Panchayats. In the field training programme the Panchayat

Training Officers and Panchayat Training Assistants are conducting effective training for the Village Panchayat members, Village Panchayat secretaries and local leaders in 54 districts. The target for the current Fiscal Year, 1965-1966, is to train 7,000 people.

(g) *Panchayat Cadre Training Programme*: Social legislation is not enough to stabilise and support a system. It needs a dedicated well-organised group of active and ideologically cohesive adherents. In the absence of an active outside influence we cannot expect a community or tribe that has lived for centuries in isolated existence to become politically conscious and endowed with a national perspective overnight. They have to understand the genesis and ideology and indeed the system itself in simple, practical terms. They have further to be told what is expected of them, the ultimate objectives of the system and, also, how to achieve it. But, this can not happen by letting nature take its own course. To achieve this we need a dedicated band of active and inspired cadres, who will work at the grass root level. Such a well-trained, disciplined and conscious group of Panchayati cadres besides serving as the steel-frame of the Panchayat polity would also function as an effective *via media* to keep the government and the people posted with each other's aspirations and limitations.

Taking into considerations the need and urgency of such a well-knit, politically trained group of cadres, His Majesty's Government has started a new programme. This programme envisages providing at least one intensively trained cadre per village panchayat by the end of the Five Year Plan. Since it may not be possible to handle

all the students from all over Nepal at one Institute, it is planned to run three centres at Chandragadi, Nepalgunj and Narayani respectively. Whereas the institute at Chandragadi has already gone into operation, the institute at Nepalgunj and in the Narayani Zone will start functioning only in the year 1966-67 and 1967-68 respectively.

The tenure of this training programme is six months. Since the basic idea of the entire programme is to produce well-informed and active Panchayat cadres priority in the syllabus is given to the political orientation. Besides this basic knowledge of planning at the local level, of public finance, of co-operative societies, of marketing, of first aid, of rudimentary engineering and of improved farming would also be imparted to the trainees so that it may enable them, when they complete the course, to be of the utmost assistance to the village folk. Also, under this programme maximum emphasis has been laid on the organisation of symposiums, seminars, field works and on social services in the surrounding village panchayats.

(iii) Participation in Decision-Making

Up to 1963-'64 the government due to its scarce resources carried out an inevitably limited programme of administrative support to the Panchayats. The staff working under the District Panchayat was appointed and assigned to the District by the Panchayat Ministry and by other technical ministries and departments. The districts were empowered, however, to hire additional personnel from their own funds. Some Panchayat Ministry employees worked at the Village Panchayat level, designated as Panchayat Development Workers. Each was assigned five

to six village Panchayats, where they worked as guides, consultants and supervisors in local government and developmental activities. On matters of local development they were links between Village Panchayats and the District Panchayat.

Administrative grants were provided by the ministry of Panchayat for meeting the costs of salaries and other administrative contingencies. The ministry also allocated funds to the District Panchayats to aid village self-help developmental projects; this allocation of funds was called Development grants. The District Panchayats also receive money for other departmental personnel and their programme. The District Panchayats prepare a development budget out of grant funds and obtain approval of the District Assemblies. The District Panchayats spend the money according to the instructions of the concerned departments.

Even under this system in some districts a very few Village Panchayats maintain fairly clear and comprehensible budgets. But firstly these were the exceptions and secondly and naturally the allocation of funds did not often optimise resources as even vestigial ideas of planning were lacking at the village level. However, with the decentralisation plan the objective is to create a functioning and highly efficient district and village administration with large-scale delegation of powers to the appropriate levels. This will provide the support for creating a popular but systematic plan right from the village and district level.

In a country like Nepal, where the population in the countryside has always looked up to the central govern-

ment for initiative and guidance, a radical shift from centralisation to decentralisation will only create confusion and deadlock. It has to be gradual, well-planned and must actively correspond to the willingness, ability and competence of the local communities to shoulder their responsibilities in the business of development. Keeping in view these inherent problems it has been decided to carry out decentralisation in three phases i. e., preliminary, transitory and permanent.

The basic objective of the programme at the 'preliminary stage will largely be confined to readjustment of administrative control over established functions of government. The first step to be taken in this phase is the abolition of the office of Bada Hakim. Till now though there are 75 development districts there had been only 35 administrative units. Under the present arrangement each district would have its own administrative unit. The Chief District Officer (C.D.O.) would be the overall administrator of the district. Besides, he would also serve as the secretary to the District Panchayat. Regarding those activities that fall within the jurisdiction of the District Panchayat the Chief District Officer will be directly accountable to the latter. But in some matters of regular administration like law and order and some other local departments, like the customs, Mal, and in national projects, he will be responsible to the centre.

The next phase called 'transitory' is not spelled out so much as phase as a catch-all category, to allow for the divergence, that arise from previously originated programmes like land reform and the varying degrees of progress

in departmental organisation at the district level before entering the permanent phase. All efforts in this phase will be concentrated on laying the ground-work for permanent decentralisation. At this stage district panchayat will be entrusted to undertake district oriented developmental activities. Besides, all the district level employees of the Central government will be brought under the district Panchayat. Also, all communications from the centre to its district branches will be channelised through the office of the Chief District Officer.

In the final or permanent phase, district Panchayats will enjoy nearly all powers with regard to matters in the district except in the maintenance of law and order. But the policy formulation of the district Panchayat would be within the technical limits, spelled out by the C.D.O. or his technicians.

As it is not possible for the Central Government to concentrate simultaneously on every zone, district, and village, with equal emphasis to all, attention will be focused first upon selected districts. Only one district is declared in the permanent phase in the first year of the Plan. Experience and lessons drawn from this experiment will be of immense help to inform and speed up the implementation of the programme in other districts. This process will continue until all districts have moved gradually to the permanent phase.

(iv) National Integration

The new programmes thus launched are also aimed at national awakening and integration. The numerous elections, the meetings of the Gram Panchayats and the

Gram Sabha, the decisions on questions of daily life and their palpable results in however small a way are bringing a large mass, who have remained completely aloof from the political sphere into the pulse-beat-of national life. The number of elected representatives alone are about 35,000.

In the field of national integration perhaps the most significant activity is that of land reform. The hard, intensive campaigning by the government machinery under the Land Reform Officers, by the Panchayati workers mobilised from ward to ward in each village, this unheralded reach of the government into the nooks and corners on that question which concerns the present the most is creating a new and widespread consciousness. People to whom the government official's uniform was an object of fear are beginning to find a new identification with this government, which exhorts and leads them to keep a just share of the produce of their daily toil. This interlinked awakening spreading from village to village and connecting them is a most significant chapter in the emotional unification of Nepal.

Roads, voluntary labour, national programmes are thus slowly knitting together the nation. People, who had hardly heard of Kathmandu let alone cared about it, begin now to feel that if they can now do the right things they can get aid and interest from the centre.

The Panchayat is aware that the process of development is not in itself automatically unificatory, it opens avenues of contact. But a point of contact is both a point of friction and a point of harmony. Thus the policies of education, of social reform, the cultural policies have all

to be carefully shaped, so that integration becomes the soul of modernisation. But this is exactly the plan, this stream of development will also weave into it, the several and separate threads of this diverse and disparate country and become the stream of national integration.

(v) **The Infra-structure of Democracy**

Panchayat democracy visualises social and economic reforms as the precondition to political liberty. There can be no meaning to fair competition, when a illiterate peasant who has to work night and day for his living is required to compete with an educated rich man, who has plenty of leisure. Nor is political liberty of any vast consequence to a man facing starvation.

Thus the developmental plans are outposts in the moving frontier of broadening democracy. With the completion of the three year plan a solid base for development has been created in the shape of an organisational structure as well as in physical achievements. We indicated in an earlier part the nature of the popularisation of plan activity and the mobilisation of local effort. By the next five year plan the eastern sector of the East-West Highway will be complete and at Pokhara and up to Kathmandu two vital North-South connections will take place raising the economic potential of these areas immensely. Education will be extended even more widely, but at this phase greater attention will be paid to quality and content, formulating an unified ideology of participative effort.

Land Reform will bring security of tenancy to the larger part of Nepal. Along with this a systematic development of agricultural resources replying mainly on coope-

rative effort will raise the production of agriculture. Thus the lot of the rural masses will be improved, and with the benefits that accrue, their participative effort will also amplify. Land Reform will remove the major injustices in the distribution of income and the grosser disparities of ownership. In this way society's ill in the sector where the vast majority of Nepal live, in rural areas will be gradually cured. This will create greater harmony in society and the nation unhampered by glaring social contradictions will be able to move as one to its goal of an exploitationless society.

With the spread of education transport and communications, the new legal code's doctrine of social equality will be translated into the daily way of life of the people. And the stratas of society will become less disparate and mould into unity'

It is in pace with these developments in the social and economic sphere- as people are freed from social shackles and assured a sufficiently nutritious diet- that political liberty will ripen from the slogan of a few into the desire of the many. And as the state is conscious of the need to give ideological content to modernisation, it will create a correct adjustment at each stage of economic growth between the ideals of political liberty and the crying of the duty of development. In this way it will evolve a democracy securely planned and strongly underpinned by a socio-economic infrastructure.



