

who fell because he had aroused vast expectations and then could not deliver. Even before the expensive failure of the 1963 grain harvest, food was short in many Soviet cities and rural areas, while the 1962 price rises for meat and butter had aroused bitter discontent, especially among the poorest workers. Awareness of this moved Brezhnev and Kosygin to lift the ideologically-inspired Khrushchevian limitations on the private peasant gardens which, when given the chance, make such a huge contribution to the Soviet urban diet.

The key aspect of the contemporary Soviet scene, as Mr. Hindus rightly emphasizes, is the fact that Russia now has the most educated and sophisticated population in its history. Even the peasant is no longer yesterday's illiterate muzhik, satisfied to live little better than the animals he tended. His city cousins, especially the young people, are spiritual brothers of the urban industrial masses of the West, with the same appetites and with increasing awareness of how much their living standards lag behind those of "capitalism's exploited slaves."

Never, Mr. Hindus correctly reports, have Soviet appetites been as keen and insistent as now—"an appetite not only for better food, better clothes, better housing, better services, but for more privacy, for freer intercourse with the outside world and for a freer play of the individual mind. This is particularly manifest in the city, where the cultural and industrial revolution has stimulated not only higher tastes in material living, but a higher concept of the human personality."

The glaring contrast between the Kremlin's space achievements and its continuing efforts to keep its people's minds subservient is an even more central contradiction of today's Russia than the contrasts in the material sphere. Mr. Hindus is very much alive to the vast amount of Soviet indoctrination that still attempts to persuade the people that the "billionaires, the DuPonts, the Morgans, the Vanderbilts and the rest" keep the populace of the United States and the West enthralled.

Mr. Hindus ends his book on a note of hope. He raises the possibility of "a new palace revolution with or without blood which will bring to power a young and sophisticated leadership that will initiate a reformation along the lines of Yugoslavia's socialism." Presumably he means a leadership of the generation of Shelepin and Polyansky, but it is one of the few major weaknesses of his book that he does not discuss the personalities that might be involved in such an effort and the chances for their success. Meanwhile the tributes paid Brezhnev on his sixtieth birthday suggest retrogression in the short run, whatever the longer range prospects may be.

Hopeful Critic of Indian Politics

India and the Future of Asia, by Patwant Singh (Knopf. 264 pp. \$5.95), impatient with the Subcontinent's policy of nonalignment, suggests that the government join military pacts. K. Natwar-Singh's books include "The Legacy of Nehru" and "Tales from Modern India."

By K. NATWAR-SINGH

PATWANT SINGH has lively opinions on many topics, and he expresses them with vigor in this readable, provocative, and competently written book. Although his unbridled candor verges on the brash, it never offends. His is a point of view that is generally associated with what is called the "Right" in Indian political parlance. One may be out of sympathy with it but India permits such a position to be freely and fully expressed.

On page 7 Mr. Patwant Singh quotes Jawaharlal Nehru:

I would like you to think of this major adventure of India that is taking place today. Criticize it whenever there is any failure, whenever there is any falling off, whenever there is weakness. Criticism will be an incentive to better work. But try to understand and appreciate that something magnificent and colossal is happening in India.

Thereafter the author builds up a sustained attack on the foreign and domestic policies followed by India since 1947. Mr. Patwant Singh has little patience with nonalignment. He would have India produce the atom bomb and join military pacts. He is critical of the defense policy and not favorably disposed towards the Planning Commission. He is for giving full play to private enterprise. I think the corrective to this was supplied by Mr. J. K. Galbraith in a recent interview for the British Broadcasting Corporation in London. Speaking on free enterprise, he said: "What is needed is for all good friends of the free and uncontrolled and unmanaged market economy to take a ride back, say for seventy-five years, on H. G. Wells's time machine. They would see a world of no controls, no regulations of any kind, very low wages, very uncertain profits . . . and a great deal of unemployment. They would all be clamoring hideously within twenty-four hours for return tickets. And the businessman would be first of all."

No, developing countries cannot do without planning; but they could, of course, do with more efficient planning.

Nevertheless, Mr. Patwant Singh has argued his case well. He is informed and up to date, although some of his judgments and solutions that look attractive on paper would be difficult to sustain and implement in practice.

His concluding chapter reveals a modern mind, full of ideas—a rare specimen in the India of today—and that is why what Mr. Patwant Singh writes deserves attention, if not approval. He ends on a hopeful note: "If dated and doctrinaire thinking is defeating India's great purposes, impatience with such thinking has to be expressed; what is more it has to be severely criticized. That such criticism is possible in India augurs well for India. It augurs well for Asia too."

I think it was Dante who said that one final act of goodness could undo all the evils of a lifetime and permit one to enter the gates of heaven. The final chapter of *India and the Future of Asia* makes up for many of the author's earlier excesses.

Nijinsky in St. Moritz

By Samuel Hazo

"I am a madman with sense and my nerves are trained."

—from his *Diary*

ASK anyone. The cannibals are here and everywhere. They eat whole men alive, though not by mouth. Mouths savor pigfat, bullflank, chickenskin . . . Eyes are more ravenous. Insatiable, they steadily devour matadors, saviours, nudes or kings, like meat flung to piranhas. And human ears have fangs. They can reduce a man to powder just by listening.

Why frown? What, my fellow sacrifice, could be more natural? Infants eat their mothers. Lovers relish lovers. I have been swallowed by Diaghilev, my wife, my daughter and the doctors. Unnatural? Then, everything's unnatural.

God's supper is Himself, and everyone is God. Deny it if you can before you say I'm mad. Don't look so damn insulted. The cannibals are here. I'm one. You're one.

Sweet Sixteen Turned Sour

The Dissent of Dominick Shapiro, by Bernard Kops (Coward-McCann, 208 pp. \$4.50), concerns a London drop-out whose rebellion takes the form of a refusal to do or accept anything. Samuel I. Bellman, professor of language arts at California State Polytechnic College, writes frequently on contemporary literature.

By SAMUEL I. BELLMAN

IN MARK HARRIS's amusing play about family in-fighting, *Friedman and Son* (1963), the embattled father wryly remarks: "In some families, needless to say, a certain coolness develops between father and son. Don't ask me to explain it." Bernard Kops's new novel, *The Dissent of Dominick Shapiro*, is another of the countless recent attempts to explain this coolness, place it within a present-day Jewish setting, and hint at a possible tentative solution. So many socioliterary variations have already been played on this theme by Kops's predecessors that there seems little to add to the familiar tragicomedy. But he manages somehow, by blurring sharp distinctions and emphasizing ambiguities of character, to force the reader to a new level of puzzled awareness of the implications of family strife.

The setting is Golders Green, a status-conscious Jewish area on the outskirts of London. At odds with everything and everybody in it is sixteen-year-old Dominick Shapiro, who never lets the reader forget his basic creed, "I dissent." When James Joyce's Stephen Dedalus announced his particular doctrine of denial, "Non serviam," there was philosophy, theology, sensitivity, a whole world of cultural values behind him. Kops's youthful rebel is more like Herman Melville's *Bartleby the Scrivener*: he simply does not choose to do anything or accept anything, and so he goes outside organized society. It is to the author's credit that he can make us understand Dominick's rejection of his world, while we are not given any reasonable or logical basis—involving adult standards—for that rejection.

Dominick's father, Lew Shapiro, is a middle-aged dress manufacturer always concerned with the next seasonal line. To Dominick he is "pathologically and sexually obsessed with making dresses and money." Although Lew is quite

well-to-do, he is warped by a psychology of fear, want, and uncertainty. Customary health is no sign that death can't strike all at once. Business success may simply foreshadow imminent collapse. A nice family counts for nothing unless all the members reflect clear and unmistakable credit on him. When a son like Dominick comes along and drops out of school to bum his way around London, Lew is hard hit, and shows it. Which is just what Dominick needs for inducement.

Lew's wife, Paula, is bright, kind-hearted, dedicated to stuffing her children with food, and an all-round wonderful wife and mother. One of the major ironies in the novel is that Dominick begins by not really disliking his parents. He is "even honest enough to admit that he might even love them." Why, he can't say; and though he has fought this love, there it remains. So Dominick, held in bondage to his parents, "hates them because he loves them." They give him problems by not being easily hatable. Dom's older brother Alex and married sister Sharon (and her husband and daughter) give him no such problems. Self-righteous and phoney, the three older relatives invite his open hostility; he detests his spoiled niece and deliberately frightens her.

What really severs Dom from his parents and almost everyone else in his family is a nightmarishly tasteless wed-

ding celebration. Unable to stand any more of the cloying food-and-sentiment that have reduced the Shapiro clan to the level of mindless hypocrites, Dom suddenly loses his cool. He leaps up on a table and blurts out a horrible family secret, which happens to be painfully well known to many present. There is a mob scene, he is roughly handled by his father and brother, and the dissent of Dominick Shapiro becomes implemented as he takes to the open road. No Holden Caulfield (despite the blurb on the book jacket), not even an honest picaresque hero, Dom is just a mixed-up kid who learns a very little about life on his brief travels, becomes seriously despondent, and has two humiliating brushes with the law. Then, in an ironic twist, he does an about-face and becomes his father's son with a vengeance.

THE merit of this low-keyed but highly readable book is that it deals sensitively and in an up-to-date manner with one of the profoundest problems to be found in the Hebrew Bible, the stubborn and rebellious son (see Deuteronomy 21: 18-21). Far from causing his Dominick to be given the ultimate punishment by the city elders, Lew, for all his infantile self-pity, suffers for the boy and does the best he can, knowing somehow that it won't do much good.

Every subtly worked out dramatic conflict between father and son is moving—Oedipus, Turgenev's *Fathers and Sons*, Lawrence's *Sons and Lovers*, Mannix's *An End to Fury*, etc.—and Kops's novel, for all its modest scope, is certainly no exception. At the end of the story Dom is in his bedroom, shooting a skyrocket out of his window. "All was not lost. You could defer the explosion. He would show them yet."



"And, gentlemen, the beauty of this deal is I don't want your souls. . . . Just a seat on your board and a stock option."