

# Spotlight

FROM London to Bombay through the over-land route and, that too, on a solitary motor ride, is an exciting dream for many of us. Petite and pretty Katherine Campman, an American girl who has performed the feat, is very casual about the grandeur of her achievement.

Miss Campman, who completed the solo effort in exactly one year, is a Fulbright Scholar studying linguistics at the Oxford University. Seeing her, one will wonder how so much energy and determination is packed up in her fragile-looking body which enabled her to stand the rigours of climate and dodge many a tight corner during the journey which took her to three continents.

Katherine told me that her car behaved very well during the entire trip except when it broke down in a snow-storm in Iran. "That was the most exciting incident I faced and I thought I will be frozen to death", she said, recalling the five hours she spent amidst miles and miles of nothing but snow.

It all happened when she set out from Baghdad one fine morning, hoping to reach Teheran before nightfall. But as soon as she crossed the Iranian border, she knew that there was a fault in the machine—a Volkswagon—which needed attention. At that time she was in the heart of a



Ride through strange lands.

desert area, with bare sand reaching out to as far as the eye can see.

Fear clutched her heart when the lengthening shadows of approaching night brought with it a snow-storm. "I gave up all hope of living as I was sure I will be frozen to death" she remarked. A kind fate, however, smiled on her as a group of Bedouins—a nomadic people with a fantastic outfit—made its appearance on the scene.

At first the tribe looked on the white woman with suspicion but when they found that she was at their mercy, they allowed her to camp with them. After being with them for three days, she set out on her onward journey.

Miss Campman said that her stay in Russia was pleasant "as the people are very nice". But one has to have a guide always "and one may not like to stay there long."

With Miss Campman, a childhood urge blossomed into a desire to see the world and its people "and that is why I decided to set out on a motor car". She said that she spent very little money as mostly she had been camping out and cooking herself at many places.

Asked about her experiences in this country, she said "I have stayed here longer than in any other country"—a remark which is intended to convey the fact that she liked this country better than many she had visited.

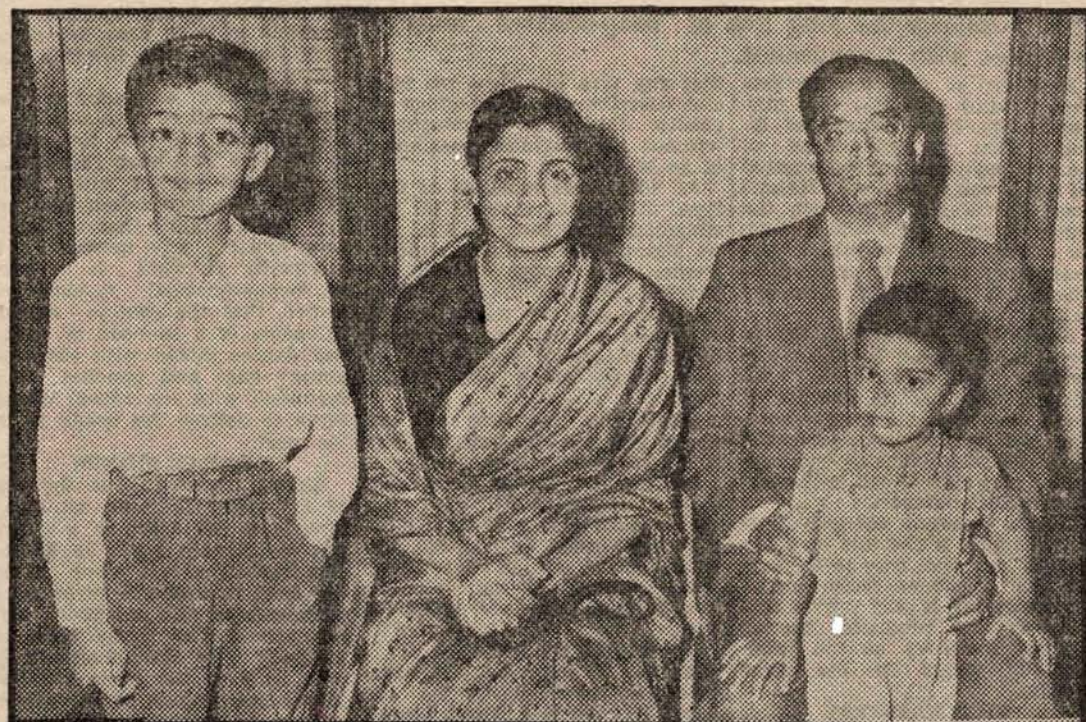
Miss Campman found a good deal of anti-Western feeling throughout the Middle East. Asked as to why it is so when America had given them a lot of aid, she replied: "Probably they don't give us credit for the benevolence we have."

After a few more days' stay in the city, she proposes to motor down South to Madras and Ceylon before returning to England. That will be about 31,000 miles of solitary motor ride across three continents and 15 countries.

## INDIAN DIPLOMAT

**SHRI P. R. S. MANI**, Counsellor at the Indian Embassy in Bonn, who has just ended a three-year assignment in Germany was happy to meet Bombay journalists because he was one of the fraternity before he joined Government service.

He greeted me with the remark: "I was a representative of your paper in South East Asia and I am credited with scooping out one of the best stories of that time". He was referring to the offer made through him by the then Prime Minister of Indonesia, Dr. Sultan Sjahrir, to give India a large quantity of rice at a time when this country was experiencing acute scarcity of food. The story was first splashed in



Shri P. R. S. Mani with wife and children.

the "Free Press Journal" and later attracted banner headlines in other papers.

Soon after graduation, Shri Mani joined the Army and after the war became a newspaper scribe and joined the staff of the "Free Press." As a representative of that paper, he travelled extensively in South-East Asian countries.

In 1947 he joined the Foreign Service and became a Consul in Indonesia. During the next few years he served as our Consul in Manila and Shanghai until in 1953 he became Commissioner for India in Hongkong.

Later he was appointed as Indian Consul-General in Goa during the hectic days of satyagraha and the ill-fated Indian march to free that territory from Portuguese rule. "That was the most exciting assignment I ever had", remarked the youthful diplomat, with nostalgic longing in his eyes.

But he could not continue the "exciting assignment" for long as, with the closure of our mission there, he was transferred to Bonn. He finds Bonn an interesting place, with people "tremendously friendly" towards India.

"There is an anxiety to know more and more about India—not the old and ancient India—but the modern India that we are building up", he said. To illustrate the growing German interest in India, he cited a story. A railway gangman once rushed up to him and coming to know that he was an Indian, asked him about Prime Minister Nehru. "We want many Nehrus in the world for the sake of peace among peoples, the railway worker said.

Shri and Smt. Mani have picked up fluent German. "Of course, my wife knows more German than I do", he confessed to me. Shri and Smt. Mani, with their two kids, are now proposing to go on a two-months' leave before going to Delhi.

## TWO ARTISTS

**MEET** two comparatively unknown artists of Bombay who won acclaim and honour at a recent Tokyo exhibition. Shri V. S. Gaitonde and Shri R. S. Savant, who captured two glittering prizes at the exhibition, are dedicated artists who make a living by painting.

Shri V. S. Gaitonde (33) who hails from Goa, completed his studies at the J. J. School of Arts in Bombay and later became a teacher in the institution. Later, he discontinued his association with the institution and started on his own, devoting his entire time to art. "Sometimes I work even six months at a stretch at the easel and then take a holiday for two months" said the boyish-looking artist.

He confessed that he had never had a one-man show in Bombay because "people are getting indifferent to art exhibitions." The artist, who was knocking at the doors of popular recognition until his paintings were adjudged one of the best by Japanese art enthusiasts, said that life as an artist is "sometimes interesting, sometimes disappointing."

When asked as to why he does not take up any other profession, he helplessly replied "I am not good at anything else". Years of frustration has left a mark on his personality, making him rather bitter about the public response to and encouragement of art. His opinion that the public in Bombay are indifferent to art may be disputed, but, then, that is an opinion formed after years of frustrated efforts at recognition.

Shri R. V. Savant (27), however, is an artist whose enthusiasm has not been besmirched by bitterness. "I am trying to hold an exhibition of my paintings at New York in the near future" remarked the younger of the two artists who hails from Ratnagiri District.

He was a student of the J. J. School and passed from the institution in first class. The Bombay Art Society awarded him the first prize for one of his paintings in

an exhibition in 1954. He also organised a one-man show in 1956.

Shri Sawant, unlike Shri Gaitonde, has no objection to commercial art. He said that he has to complete some pictures before he puts on his exhibition in New York.

Shri Gaitonde was awarded the Fleischmann Prize and Shri Sawant the Stralem Prize—top prizes at the respective categories at the Tokyo exhibition. The exhibition was organised by the Japanese Peace Committee in collaboration with two newspapers.

## FULBRIGHT SCHOLAR

**G**RAVE enough to tackle the project of "religious influence and Gandhian principles in Indian political life", American Fulbright scholar Miss Francine Ruth Goldberg once did give a thought to becoming an air-hostess. She changed her mind and stuck on to her studies.

Assigned to the Lucknow University, Francine is "looking forward to seeing Lucknow." She finished her B.A. at the City College of New York in 1956—her hometown—and joined the John Hopkins College near Washington D.C. where she obtained her Master's Degree.

Naturally curious about India and her people, Francine fired more questions at me than I had the chance to question her.

"I haven't done much shopping nor do I want to do much as I have no baggage room. I suppose Lucknow will be as good a place as any other to do a spot of buying", she enquired.

Francine prefers to do a lot of walking and see the more crowded places of the city. An excellent way of knowing people. "My

but the food is delicious though spicy."

Tallish, Francine has what may safely be described as serious demeanour. Moody at times, she is apt to skim over subjects ranging from West Asia crisis to "buying a souvenir for the boy friend way back in the States."

She intends taking up social work when she goes back home. Already catching up with as much of Gandhian literature as possible, Francine hopes to see the more interesting tourist-interest places in India. The Taj, for instance.

Member of the batch of 12 Fulbright scholars, she will be staying in an Indian home in Lucknow and will do practically what the Indians do. Same as the rest of the batch.