CHAPTER I

CHICKEN SOUP WITH BARLEY
The play *Chicken Soup With Barley* spans twenty years – 1936 to 1956. The play is about the life of the communist family, Sarah and Harry and their children, Ada and Ronnie. The play begins with the anti-fascist demonstrations in 1936 in London’s East End and ends with the Hungarian uprising in 1956. It explores the disintegration of political ideology as well as the disintegration of a family.

This particular play introduces Kahn’s family in the East end of London. Sarah is a small, fiery woman, aged 37 Jewish and of European origin. She is a warm person, lively and energetic. Harry Kahn is the husband of Sarah. He is weak but amicable. They have a daughter Ada and a son Ronnie. When the play begins Ada is a teenager, Ronnie is a small boy.

In the first act we find people singing revolutionary songs against the fascist. Most of the time in the play we find Sarah in the kitchen making tea and food thus giving importance to the title of the play. Harry Kahn is very much interested in books. They discuss the demonstration that is to take place. Sarah enquires about the timing of the march. At first Harry says that he does not know the timings when Sarah starts nagging him. In order to avoid her he reveals the timings of the march.

A young man by name Monty Blatt comes down to the house of Sarah. He is Jewish and belongs to the working class and he speaks cockney. Monty offers a parcel to Sarah containing some strudel sent by
his mother. Monty wishes Harry and speaks about the mobbed streets. At
the same time two young men Dave Simmonds and Prince Silver come
down. They are in their early twenties. Prince reveals that Dave Simmonds
was going to join the International Brigade and was leaving for Spain.
Sarah asks Dave about the plans and happenings in the streets.

Dave: It's like this. The party loud speaker vans have been out all morning — you heard them? The fascists are gathering at Royal Mint street near the bridge. They plan to march up to Aldgate, down commercial road to Salmon Lane in Lime house. You know Salmon Lane? — where they think they're going to hold a meeting. Then they plan to go on to Victoria park and hold another meeting (17). p

Fascists are going to held two meetings. They does not know why the fascists are holding two meetings. It costs so much of money. Fascists can go along the Highway by the docks but Mosley does not take the Highway as that is the back way. Sarah advises the boys not to get hurt. Earlier Fascists have thrown a seven year old girl through a glass window. So they do not want to fight. The boys wants to maintain discipline. They do not want to attack (or) do not want to throw bottles. It is a test for them. They plan to stop the fascists without creating any violence. Monty makes fun of them. Dave reveals his plans.
Dave: Comrades! You want to know what the plans are or you don’t want to know? Again. As we don’t know what’s going to happen we’re don this. Some of the workers are rallying at Royal Mint Street – so if the fascists want to go through the Highway they’ll have to fight for it.

(18) p

If fascists try to come up cable street, boys will meet some dockers and more barricades. If any fascist got through still cannot hold their meeting either in Salmon lane or Victoria Park square. From the morning there has been some of their comrades standing in those streets. Monty appreciates the plan.

Monty: Bloody wonderful, isn’t it? Makes you feel proud, eh Sarah? Every section of this working-class area that we’ve approached has responded. The dockers at Lime house have come out to the man. The lot! (19) p

While they are discussing they hear the sounds of the running feet and the voices shouting that “the fascists are assembling and the request to come out. Dave gives suggestions to Sarah, Monty and Prince to participate in the march. They are proud as every section of the working-class is responding against the fascist march.

Monty is to take some of the lads to the left flank of the cable street. Prince is organizing a team of cyclist messengers between the main points and head quarters. Sarah is to fancy herself as a nurse. And then go to
Aldgate, they have got a first-aid post there. Dave is to go round the streets at the last minute to call everyone out. Sarah plans to keep Ada and Ronnie at Hymies house. But Ada is just like Sarah, so she will be round the streets organizing the pioneers. Ronnie is like his father Harry. He throws all the things.

They discuss the war in Spain. Too many good comrades were lost in the war. To Dave war in Spain is not a game of cards and stresses more on brotherhood. He points out the differences between the fascists and the working class and says that the working class people know the purpose for which they are fighting.

Dave: The war in Spain is not a game of cards, Monty. You don’t pay in pennies when you lose. May they lose many more what kind of talk is that? Sometimes, Monty, I think you only enjoy the battle, and that one day you’ll forget the ideal. You hate too much. You can’t have brotherhood when you hate. There’s only one difference between them and us. We know what we’re fighting for. It’s almost an unfair battle (22). p

Dave feels sick at the thought of firing a rifle and questions himself “well, what sense can a man make of his life?” Monty is enjoying the battle by forgetting about the ideal. Harry foresees a big fascist war. Dave states
that time will come and people will be scared of each other and still think of fighting.

Dave: I know it's not time yet. I know that. I know there is still some fighting to be done. But it'll come. It will come, you know — when there'll be a sort of long pause, and people will just be frightened of each other and still think they have to fight. That'll be the time — But now — well, I feel like an old gardener who knows he won't live through to the spring to plant his seeds (23). p

On hearing the voice shouting frantically that the blackshirts are marching, all of them go to their corresponding places. Sarah rushes with a rolling pin. Harry moves to Gardiner's corner with a red flag having the symbols of hammer and sickle on it. Scene one ends with the enthusiastic voices of the people:

"They shall not pass, they shall not pass!"

Scene II opens with Hymie the brother of Sarah being hurt. He is a short round man with a homely appearance. Monty and Prince attends Hymie. Cissie the sister of Harry has gone out to get some first aid. Sarah dresses the wound and enquires about Harry. Harry is at the cable street waving the red flag and soon disappears to get sandwiches. Hymie informs that they were charged as they threw stones and bottles, one of the policeman surrendered them, it never happened earlier. Monty is sure of a
revolution. Hymie asserts that in every political movement there are just sight seeing people and cannot find true followers.

Hymie: I'm not so sure, Monty. We won today but the same taste doesn't stay long. Mosley was turned back at Aldgate pump and everyone shouted hurrah. But I wonder how many of the people at Gardiner's corner were just seers. You knew, in every political movement there are just sight seers (27).

Cissie the sister of Harry is of 33 years of age. She is a trade union organizer, precise in her manner, with dry sense of humour, brings ointment, lint bandage and plaster. Sarah puts bondage round Hymie's head. During the demonstration Cissie is holding a banner. Monty begins digging up the paving stones and pulls out the railing from a nearby church and stones from the gutter. Cissie explains that the place is swarming with policemen waiting for the opportunity. Sonny Becks tries to give a political speech. Monty and Prince admit to bring boys and girls to the next gathering for the sake of sally Oal:s, whose husband was killed in a tram-line. Sarah blames Cissie that they are responsible for Harry's actions and their mother is spoiling him, by feeding him. But Cissie condemns her words and leaves. Sarah pours all her hatred towards Cissie. Monty convinces Sarah and starts singing. Remembering about children Sarah leaves to fetch them from Hymie's house. Hymie shouts from behind, not to inform his wife Lottie about his wound. Hymie speaks about the food
consciousness of Sarah. If any one says that they are not hungry, Sarah starts singing the song: "As man is only human he must eat before he can think." From these lines we can understand the importance given to the food in the play through the character of Sarah by Wesker. Monty continues singing. Harry enters with excitement. Hymie informs that Sarah is looking for him and has gone to bring the children. Ada has been in the streets helping Harry and goes to look for Dave. Ada comes in and enquires about her mother and sees that all the pioneers are safe. Harry says that if a young person can understand socialism, then he can recognize life and future.

Harry: Comrades! And we didn't force her to be in the pioneers. Wasn't necessary I tell you, show a young person what socialism means and he recognizes life! A future! But it won't be pure in our lifetime. You know that, don't you buys? Not even in hers, may be but in her children's life time – then they'll begin to feel it, all the benefits, despite our mistakes – you'll see, despite our mistakes... (32) p

Harry enquires about the things that happened and proudly explains his experiences. Hymie departs. Harry takes a book to read. Sarah enters with Ronnie a boy of 5 years and starts screaming at Harry. But Harry pretends as though he is reading. Ada tries to shun the argument. Ronnie stands watching with bewilderment. Mosley's attack on the East End helps to explain why Sarah Kahn and her Jewish family and friends dedicate
their energies to socialism. For Sarah, the socialist affiliation is a vehicle for her rage against injustice and an outlet for her maternal instincts. For the Kahns' friends Monty and Prince socialism provides the mechanism for fighting fascists in Spain, and, like so many of their mates who have volunteered, they thrill at the prospect. For Dave Simmonds, a belief in socialism becomes a way of resolving some conflict he feels between his pacifist and his Jewish convictions by giving him permission to oppose Mosley's blackshirts. The only family member who does little to resist Mosley's threat is Sarah's husband, Harry, a man with a penchant for doing as little as possible, whatever the situation, and depending too heavily on his wife for survival.

In the Second Act we find war has come and gone. Kahn's have moved to an L.C.C. block of flats in Hackney. The working class is little more respectable now. It is late in the afternoon. Harry is lying down on the sofa is out of work. When Sarah questions he replies that it is closed down and hands over his pay packet to Sarah.

Sarah: It always happens where he works. You can't bring luck any where, can you! When it's a slump you always manage to be the first one sacked and when the season starts again you're the last one to find work. Ah, Harry, you couldn't even make money during the war. The war! when every body made money. (36)
Sarah forces Harry to prepare tea. Ada walks in. Ada gets married to Dave, she is 25 years of age. Ada asks for Ronnie whether he has gone to her place. Sarah invites Ada to have supper with Barley soup. Ronnie comes in he is aged 15 very enthusiastic lively, well spoken like his sister very excitedly says that he has distributed 250 leaflets in one and half for May day demonstration. The fire of revolution has got exhausted in her and now she is not paying any interest towards demonstration. Disintegration of political ideology starts first from Ada. As Ronnie gets the ideas from Ada Ronnie makes fun of her words. Ronnie gives out the letters that he got from Ada’s house and starts mocking her regarding the letters. As the time moves on the zeal of active participation in the demonstration got diminished. Sarah comes in with soup. Everyone moves to lay the table, Ronnie in haste, Ada while reading. Harry clumsily. Ada and Ronnie appreciates the taste.

Harry admits that his job is unstable. Ada blames him that is he who is more unstable. According to Harry people go for work just for gossip. Ada calls him as the world’s biggest procrastinator as Harry postpones to search the job. Ada is vexed with Harry and feels glad as she is going to leave to live in the country when Dave comes back. She wants to feel life and enjoy it.

Ada: Anywhere when Dave comes back we shall leave London and live in the country. That’ll be our socialism. Remember this, Ronnie, the
family should be a unit, and your work and your life should be part of one existence, not something hacked about by a bus queue and office hours. A man should see, know and love his job ... (41) p

For her family should be a unit and work should be part of ones existence just not hacked with office hours. Ada wants to be away from political activity and vexed of humanity. Ada: It's always only just begging for the party. Every defeat is victory and every victory is the begging. (41) p

In the country they can be away from the smell of bricks and the kids can grow up without seeing the parents who are shouting at each other. Ada is tired of waiting for Dave. She has spent 18 months waiting for him to return from Spain and have spent 6 years for him to come home from a war against fascism. She has spent six years in the office by auditing books and working with moron (stupid) young girls. Same is the experience of Dave fighting with men who did not know what the war was about; away from the wives and behaved like animals. The service in the war killed the illusions that Dave had about the splendid and heroic working class. Ada acknowledges that industrial society is rotten. Ada: The only rotten society is an industrial society. It makes a man stand on his head and then convinces him he is good looking. I'll tell you something. It wasn't the trotslyist or the social
democrat who did the damage. It was progress!
There progress! And nobody dared fight
progress. (42) p

Ada compares industrial society with a ‘jungle’ as it is struggling for
its own existence. People never tried to destroy the values of the jungle of
an industrial society. She feels it as a crime, to spent all the working hours
in front of a machine without owning it. As the world is in disorder she
does not want to care the world. Ada wants to withdraw her activities.
Harry calls Ada as a coward, to him it is an industrial age and has to face
the facts. There arises a quarrel between Harry and Sarah. Harry pleads
Sarah to leave him off. Ada tries to leave but Sarah invites to stay for
supper. Ada rejects the invitation as she has to write to Dave and has other
work. Ada leaves, for her flat by wishing all her family members. Sarah
admits to Ronnie that Ada is running away from a problem, earlier she
used to sit and discuss things. Ronnie consoles Sarah. Sarah starts nagging
Harry for not asking Ada to stay for supper and about his sharing, the
cigarette ash on the floor. Nothing worries him, he sits and takes out a
cigarette to smoke. Sarah drags the cigarette and asks him to talk to her.
But Harry chokes (unable to breathe) then starts widely around and he
receives a heart stroke. Sarah shouts at Ronnie to fetch the doctor, she tries
to ease Harry.

Scene II of the Act II took place in October 1947. When the scene
begins Ronnie is making a fire and is listening to the radio. Cissie the sister
of Harry comes in. They talk about the partition in Palestinia and about the two power blocks. Cissie enquires about the health of her brother. Harry is like an autumn leaf. He is shrunk and walks slowly. He has the ability to see what is happening and yet not able to do anything. Cissie thinks that Harry is just like their mother who is going to be bed ridden. Ronnie takes out a notebook in which Harry started writing his autobiography "Of me, the dummy and my family". Ronnie reads it out to Cissie. In that Harry has written that while he was working in the shop the dummy assumed the human form and questioned him of the life. Harry answers that he had never thought of life. Harry answers that he had never thought of life and he thinks of his childhood days.

Cissie enquires about Ada and Dave. Ada and Dave have gone to live in the country, they have a baby now. Ronnie works in a bookshop, becomes a socialist poet. Ronnie is also attracted towards socialism just like Ada and Dave.

Ronnie: I have all the world at my fingertips. Nothing is mixed up. I have so much life that I don’t know who to give it to first. I see beyond the colored curtains of my eyes to a world – say, how do you like that line? Beyond the colored curtains of my eyes, waiting for time and timing nothing but the slow hours, lay the thoughts in the mind. Past the pool of my smile ... (48) p.
Cissie enquired about Harry. Harry stoops in because of the stroke he cannot move his left hand and the doctors does not say anything. Sarah has gone out to find out if Harry needs any observation. Cissie hands over cigarettes to Harry and leaves to her home. In the landing Sarah meets Cissie, Sarah invites Cissie for supper, Cissie simply rejects and goes away. Sarah takes out a sealed cover and Harry tries to open but Sarah objects him. Sarah has a branch meeting and asks Harry to attend the meetings so that he can mingle with people. Harry does not want to go. Sarah advises Ronnie to learn trade and have some work. But Ronnie wants to write a novel in overnight as he has left school a year ago. Harry quits the job when Sarah comes to know he tells lies. Sarah pours out her agony in front of Ronnie, that she could not see her grandson as Ada is 200 miles away and because of sickness of Harry. She does not want Ronnie to be like his father. Sarah leaves for the meeting. Ronnie lays supper to Harry while having supper Harry sees the envelope and tries to open up. Ronnie snatches the cover but Harry bangs his hands on the table just like a child. On seeing this Ronnie was frightened and hands the cover to Harry. Ronnie starts crying Harry goes over to him and claps him. Ronnie says that he does not want to hear his lies and his weakness frightens. Harry replies that it is too late now they can’t change him.

Harry:  What I am – I am. I will never after neither you nor your mother will change me. It’s too late now; I am an old man and if I’ve been the same all my life so I will always be. You can’t after
people, Ronnie. You can only give some love
and hope they'll take it. I'm sorry. It's too late
now .... (56) p.

Act III scene one took place in the year 1955. Harry has his second
stroke and paralysis has made him completely unfit for work. Sarah retains
much of her energy but shows signs of age and troubles. Sarah is busy in
filling up an insurance form and Harry is listening to radio. An argument
takes place. Monty Blatt and his wife Bessie knock the door. On hearing
the knock Sarah jumps up makes Harry to sit properly, cleans the ash and
moves to receive them. They all shake hands and wish Harry. Sarah goes
into the kitchen to prepare tea. Monty has moved to Manchester and has
lost contact with everyone. He enquires about others. Hymie’s got a
business and his children got married, and stays at home. Prince works in a
second hand shop. Cissie got retired and lives on with the pension. Ada and
Dave are still in the country with two children. Dave is still making
furniture with hand. Ronnie is now in Paris as a cook, Monty blesses
Ronnie that one day he would become a hotel manager. Harry has received
two strokes cannot control his bowels. Bessie expresses her sorrow towards
him. Sarah complains that he would not do anything to help himself. She
describes that there are three men who received the stroke. They used to sit
together outside and talks for hours and smoke. That is their life. One day
one of them decided to live and found himself a job the other wanted to
die. He used to stand outside in the rain so that he could catch a cold and
die, that man was attacked with influenza and died. Harry is not like them. He does not want to die and does not care his life. Monty is no longer a member of the party. Bessie warns Monty not to discuss politics. But Sarah comments that,

Sarah: Politics is living, Bessie. I mean everything that happens in the world has got to do with politics. (61) p

Monty owns a little green grocers business, no one knows him as a member of the party. All the important leaders of the Anti-fascist league were shot dead. Monty describes Sarah as a fine woman and she is still strong to fight. Sarah has one fault and to her world is black and white. If one is not white then he must be black. She cannot see shades in life and cannot estimate people. She never read anything about political economy. Some one told her socialism was happiness so joined in the party. The only thing that matters her is to be happy and eat. If anything makes people unhappy or stopped people from eating, she feels that it is the fault of the capitalism. East end is a big mother for Monty. It is a slum, there is misery, still they used to go somewhere and sing the songs together. They used to participate in the May day demonstrations, strikes and rallies. Monty speaks about Barney. Barney used to sell Haricot beans. Barney drops the beans in dye to color them and sells them for six pence. But he got them for three pence a pound in a grocer's shop. A pound of beans used to last
him for months. Sarah calls it as a dirty, unclean cheating. But Monty takes it in a friendly way.

Monty: Sweetheart, you take life too seriously. Believe me, those farmers knew very well what they are buying. No body swindled anybody because every one knew while they were talking Harry wakes with a jerk, something happened to him again. (63) p

Scene II of the Act III took place in Dec 1956. it took place in the Kahn's room. It is a late evening. Sarah, prince, Hymie and Cissie are sitting round the table. They are playing solo. All are looking for Ronnie. He is arriving from Paris. Sarah has grown old. She wears glasses without them she could not see the things properly. While they were playing, they hear a loud scream of a young girl crying for her lover. Sarah goes to look at it. The flats are the world on their own. People live a whole life time and does not know the neighbour next door. The people have become materialistic. The young girl has spent the evening watching television with Philip and got home late. Her father scolded her. So she ran back and started screaming for Philip. The great lover comes out in his pyjamas to sooth her. Cissie, Hymie, Prince leave, Harry goes to bed. Sarah settles in the armchair and dozes, waiting for Ronnie.

Ronnie appears on the balcony with his cases. He gently opens the door and lets himself in. He tip toes over to Sarah and stands looking at her. He is no longer enthusiastic. On seeing Ronnie Sarah cries and tells
that she felt lonely without him and his friends. As she has grown old can't bear the burdens. Now Ronnie hates kitchen. He realizes that he was in the false notion of earning an honest penny.

Ronnie: I hated the kitchen; people coming and going and not staying long enough to understand each other. Do you know what I finally discovered— it's all my eye! This notion of earning an honest penny is all my eye. A man can work a whole life time and when he is sixty five he considers himself rich if he has saved a thousand pounds rich! ... (70) p

Sarah tries to ease Ronnie. She requests him to have tea and some cake. But Ronnie asks Sarah not to fuss him. Everything has broken up. He feels ashamed of using the words like Democracy, Freedom and Brotherhood and there is no meaning in that. A great socialist writer he had hoped to be, now he can't make the sense of a simple word. There is nothing to write.

Ronnie: What has happened to all the comrades, Sarah. I even blush when I use that word, comrade! Why do I blush? Why do I feel ashamed to use words like democracy and freedom and brotherhood? They don't have meaning any more. Remember all that writing I did? I was going to be a great socialist writer. I can't make sense of a word, a simple word ... (71) p
Ronnie comes to know about Monty, Ada, Dave, Prince, Hymie and Cissie. Ronnie is terribly upset and cannot understand what happened to them.

Ronnie: Were we cheated or did we cheat ourselves? I just don't know, God in heaven, I just do not know! Can you understand what it is suddenly not to know? And the terrifying thing is – I don't care either. (72) p

He collapses into the armchair. They sit in silence for some seconds. He has lost his faith and ambition. Now he understands the words of Harry.

Sarah tries to console Ronnie. The family that they wanted has disintegrated and the great ideal that has been cherished has exploded in front of their eyes.

Ronnie: You know that I’m right. You’re never bee right about anything. You wanted everybody to be happy but you wanted them to be happy your way. It was strawberries and cream for everyone whether they liked it or not. And now look what’s happened. The family you always wanted has disintegrated, and the great ideal you always cherished has exploded in front of your eyes. (72) p

Sarah asserts that she is a communist, since the time when all the world is a communist. When Ronnie was a small boy, there was unemployment and everybody was thinking that all world was a communist. But its different now. The people have forgotten everything.
Sarah screams that she has fought with Harry and the rotten system, all her life, she worked for the party, that meant glory, freedom and brotherhood, she asserts that socialism is her light and she cannot bear meanness and jealousy she wants to have light and love.

Sarah tells Ronnie that when she was pregnant Ada got diphtheria. She requested Harry to carry Ada to the Hospital. He does not have money and does not care to work. He escaped. Mrs. Bernstein saved them with soup. Ada still has the taste in her mouth chicken soup with barley. She says it as a friendly taste. She was told by some one that they saw Harry eating salt beef sandwich. He does not care for himself. Harry does not care to fight against his illness. That is why she fights against him. She fought against everybody who did not care.

Sarah: Ronnie, your father would never have left his mother to go abroad as you did. I don't tell you all this now to pull you down but on the contrary – so you should know, so you should care. Learn from us, for God's sake learn from us what does it matter if your father was a weakling, or the man you worked with was an imbecile. They're human beings. (75) p

Sarah advises Ronnie to learn to live from their lives and try to care for himself and for others. But Ronnie is not in a position to care. Sarah shouts at him that if he cannot care he will die. She is angry with him for
his rejection of her values, for his desertion of the party, and for his apparent lack of ambition. Like his father he would rather do nothing.

It is Ronnie, who is the most deeply affected persons and turns on his mother who insisted on remaining a communist. Sarah's reply ends the play on a note of desperate optimism.

Reade W. Dornan commenting on the political and ethnic themes in Chicken Soup with Barley - "the need for community and compassion, the power of activism against repression and a search for a clearly defined role for the individual. Wesker seems to want to embrace his mother's unquestioned acceptance of socialist values, but ultimately he finds himself doubting the party's usefulness for him. In the absence of a strong identification with the political institutions that were at one time a source of family strength, Wesker discovers instead a solace in traditional Jewish practices, the celebration of the extended family, the healing force of food, and confidence in the virtues of reason and argument. Superficial reminders of the Jewish heritage are also here - the passing reference to the formation of Israel in 1947 and to chicken soups, as well as the use of Jewish dialect. Most important, however is Wesker's discovery of that place where Jewish and socialist values converged in the fascist resistance, how the British Jews experienced another diaspora after the war, and why they eventually abandoned the party. This play about political disillusionment explains much about the playwright's own turn against the
more militant strains of socialism today". It is impossible to agree with the above criticism because the play’s theme is explicitly political. The play embodies socialist themes throughout although towards the close the political action replaces the importance of ethnic unity. The play also stresses the importance of freedom to the individual as is evidenced in Ronnie Kahn’s disillusionment with partly politics.

In an interview with Dornan Wesker described *Chicken Soup with Barley* as pessimistic. He describes the trilogy as a statement about Ronnies political disillusionment and failure. Wesker’s own description upon the positive aspect of the play is that readers and audiences have responded to the play for Sarah Kahns uplifting message. Sarah has become synonymous with indomitable women who have the determination to be resolute and committed in the phase of loss.

Irving Wardle comments that the first act of *Chicken Soup with Barley* successfully creates this sense of ‘going somewhere,’ the movement, the rushing in and out, the fighting, the preparation of food, all rigorously express the purposefulness of the characters at this stage. Sarah Kahn characteristically picks up a red flag in one hand and a rolling pin in the other.

Patrick Gibbs, comments on the Sarah’s assertion that without the idea of brotherhood there can be no life. “Since her own life appeared to be
in shreds about her, I took this to be ironic and the whole play to be a study in political disillusion.  

C.S.W.B. the first in the trilogy is notable for its theme and characterization. Wesker's interest in communism and his vision of socialistic pattern of society is the core of the play. The persons involved in the political struggle are the Kahn's-Sarah, Harry, Ronnie, Ada who make up an East End Jewish family. The play dramatizes the working classes movement which has lost the sense of purpose after the formation of socialist government. The action spans twenty years from 1936-1956. There are two levels of action. At one level the play is about the recurrent patterns of behaviour from generation to generation. Ronnie Kahn much to the annoyance of his mother becomes another Harry, his father who is lazy and slowly lapses all zeal. At the social level the play represents the working classes' loss of purpose and their disintegration. Critics have found that the two levels of action do not coalesce and therefore the play lacks unity. But the charge of muddlesomeness and lack of focus can be countered that the Kahn's family is a microcosm of the working class. Since in a play it is not possible to represent a national movement Wesker has chosen a family. As it happens in all movements the initial enthusiasm wanes. This is suggested by the distancing of Harry, Ronnie and Ada from their mother Sarah who represents Marxist-Leninist ideas. This is being very realistic but the disillusionment with which the play ends appears
inartistic. One of the fine achievements of the play is the portrayal of Sarah who comes alive with her presence. So the play has a political theme with which Wesker is seriously interested. The title C.S.W.B. and the kitchen aptly convey the meaning that survival even with meager food and kitchen is the means to reach out to everyone.
REFERENCES


2. Ibid, p.31.
