

Prospects for Political Consolidation

"Atreya"

THE AICC (O) meeting that took place in New Delhi in the first week of July represented something unique in that compulsively shedding a lot of traditional ambivalence, guilt feeling and defensiveness, it cautiously launched a proposal that was in the direction of political consolidation. The AICC (O) leaders whose perspectives were hardened through the habits of "Me-Tooism" in relation to stealing others' thunders, and by this had a tradition of parasitism on other ideological groups, learnt for the first time the necessity for recognizing the existence of possible friends and getting along with them. This lesson was hard to come by for the leaders of the Congress (O) who in the height of their glory tended to look upon other democratic parties with considerable disdain. Many aspects of the present crisis that were detected in their very origins many years ago and forewarned about, made no impression on the Congress (O) leadership before the split. Many of the Congress (O) leaders either consciously or unconsciously connived at policies which Mrs. Gandhi and before her her father had initiated and which brought about the present crisis that threatens to strangle democratic processes and norms.

Who could forget the laudatory songs of Kamaraj after his visit to the Soviet Union about the management of Soviet society? Who could forget the deal Kamaraj made with CPI in Tamil Nadu and the alliance that brought Mohan Kumaramangalam as the Advocate-General of Madras and the eulogies he was receiving from such pro-Communist and fellow-travelling instruments as the Blitz National Forum? If these were credibility gaps, they nevertheless provided a respectability and promotion for Moscow and CPI in a measure that neither could by themselves obtain in all these years.

With such a record, it must have been terribly difficult for Congress (O) to break off from the most powerful vested interest in the world — the vested

interest in the first mistake. The significance of the Congress (O) resolution on consolidation of all "like-minded parties" believing in democracy, nationalism and secularism is in the liberation of the Congress (O) leaders from such vested interest, and acknowledging that there is really a grave threat to the open society in India from the conspiratorial combination of the Prime Minister with the Moscow-lining Communists and such groups as the Muslim League and regional chauvinist groups like the D.M.K.

Irrespective of other considerations, the resolution of Congress (O) is a "giant leap" in the direction of consolidation for the first time in Indian politics in the context of disintegration, defection and division of all political parties. In fact the atmosphere of disintegration and disruption has reached such proportions that there is hardly any hope in the country for any form of organized behaviour, that could be sustained, predictable and capable of being an instrument for development.

When the Prime Minister went on a rampage to break up her party to get rid of what she considered to be "dead wood" that was coming in the way of her plans and programmes, she taught the country for the first time a fine lesson in "hardline" politics. She taught for the first time to all politicians that the will to rule, lead and guide constitutes the ingredient of consolidation and focus. She taught that politics is not a pleasant parlour game but a hard-hitting exercise and she insisted on playing it that way. It is futile to berate her for her "unscrupulousness" in entering into alliances because all parties in India face this same dilemma.

The real threat to India and her people comes from a confrontation in which the Prime Minister and her Moscow-lining CPI allies have resources, organization, clearly spelt-out goals and unlimited international resources provided by the Soviet Union to draw India into her orbit. As against this combination, the forces representing the three qualitative characteristics of democratic commitment, national integrity and secularism were divided, dispirited and disorganized. The initiative taken by Congress (O) represents the first positive move to consolidate and integrate these forces into a workable organizational weapon.

It is precisely because of the capacity of such a weapon to thwart the plans and blue-prints of Communist take over that intensive hostility has been generated against the proposed "Grand Alliance" move. The first hurdles to the Grand Alliance move of

Congress (O) came from Congress (O) itself when the leaders, after passing the resolution, got cold feet at the name-calling and character-assassination initiated against Congress (O) leaders. A mythical "Masani-Madhok" thesis was created and splashed into headlines. For a while, there was the usual defensiveness, explaining away things, declaring good intentions, the same spineless attitudes.

It is because of such supineness of Congress (O) that none of the democratic or liberal parties have been willing to come anywhere near it. If they had taken initiative to cooperate with Congress (O), they were not sure they might not be ditched by the Congress (O), when confronted with the first hard challenge or confrontation. The Congress (O) had to go through a metamorphosis and sweat out the toxins of its supineness and fat built over the past two decades to be able to face the realpolitik of the 1970's.

After the initial confusion, the Congress (O) closed ranks, thanks to clear thinking provided by its President and Dr. Ram Subhag Singh and irrespective of some ripples at State levels, it was decided to pursue the path of consolidation more vigorously. In line with the resolution official communication was addressed to the Swatantra, Jana Sangh, P.S.P., S.S.P., B.K.D. and independent members of Parliament. The Congress (O) correctly decided not to approach the C.P.I., D.M.K. and C.P.M. The response from P.S.P. and S.S.P. is bound to be discouraging especially from P.S.P. which prefers the Prime Minister to the "reactionaries".

After ensuring that Congress (O) means business, both the Jana Sangh and Swatantra Parties have endorsed through unanimous resolutions the call for consolidation given by the Congress (O). Aged Rajaji personally introduced the resolution in the Madras convention of the Swatantra Party and called for amalgamation of the democratic, national and secular parties immediately in the presence of what he termed as a grave crisis to the continuation of the democratic process in India.

If the Grand alliance of the democratic, national and secular forces comes about as a consequence of the enthusiastic support given to the proposal by Swatantra, Jana Sangh, B.K.D. and Congress (O), there will emerge for the first time in Indian politics the objective conditions for organized politics with quality norms. A grand alliance of Congress (O), Swatantra, Jana Sangh, B.K.D., will help in the removal of some of the aberrations in some of the parties and refine them. For instance the influence of Jana Sangh will teach organizational discipline to other parties, and the liberalism of the other parties will teach the Jana Sangh to dilute some of its rigidity.

The directives of the Swatantra Party to its Gujarat Unit not to pursue attempts at toppling the Congress (O) Government in the State, and the unani-

mously passed resolution at the Jana Sangh convention supporting the Grand Alliance move, and finally the sponsorship of the resolution of Swatantra Convention by Rajaji himself reveal that the Grand Alliance idea mooted by Congress (O) is no longer an academic exercise.

In terms of organizational efficiency, all this represents a major breakthrough because all the parties envisaged as rightly belonging to the Grand Alliance concept were squandering their scarce resources often in opposing each other, working at cross purposes. When seriously worked out consolidation emerges as a definite possibility, this will attract many wavering groups which are terrified of making a choice because very few options are available and a wrong choice might prove disastrous for such groups. This is the type of ideal situation of defensiveness preferred by the Communists for aggressive pushing and take over.

The Prime Minister does deserve credit for being the instrument of all these developments. Rightly or wrongly, she has played the role of a motivator generating accelerated movements in political behaviour. Though her instinctive sense of direction and beeline might be tilted towards Moscow as some of her critics firmly allege, she can pride herself on the fact that she has brought about greater consciousness and commitment to politics in this country. Before her adventures, politics was a leisurely endeavour in which sloppiness prevailed among most of the non-Marxist parties. The Prime Minister has changed all that and if the Grand Alliance does materialise as an outcome of her hard-lining politics, it would have been worth it.



—Courtesy: Amrita Bazar Patrika
July 9

Notes

Welcome, Madame Binh!

INDIA is a hospitable land and is always prepared to welcome all those who come to her. The country is so vast and consists of so many different kinds of people that everybody, whatever his pursuits, is sure to find some friends to welcome him, and India as a whole has never objected to such welcome being extended, however unwelcome the activities of the guest may be to the rest of the people.

If Madame Binh had come as a private individual to meet her friends or even to canvass her opinions amongst those who desired to listen to her, there would not have been the least objection to her visit. India is a free country and she has as much right to visit it as those who regard her views and activities as opposed to the interests of her country and to the interests of world peace.

But Madame's visit has been imposed upon the country. The Ministry of External Affairs has gone out of its way to invite her to visit the country as the guest of the Minister for External Affairs. She is treated as an official guest and is provided all facilities and comforts at public cost. The visit is not therefore, the private visit of a private individual, but a matter of public concern and raises many issues of political and practical importance.

The political issue is: how could the Government of India invite the representative of a movement which has risen in revolt against the Government which it has recognised as the legally constituted Government of the country? The Government of South Vietnam has, with the full permission of the Government of India, established a Consulate General in New Delhi and enjoys many diplomatic privileges. That Government may not be to the liking of some sections of the people and they may want to subvert it. But it is a matter for the people of South Vietnam to decide and the Government of India has no business to interfere or to extend its patronage to the rebels. By inviting Madame Binh as an official guest, the Government of India has unnecessarily got itself involved in an internal affair of the people of South Vietnam.

From the practical point of view what has the Government gained by getting Madame Binh into the country and parading her about? Has it enhanced the prospects of peace or of political settlement in South Vietnam and other parts of Indo-China which is the common and persistent desire of all peace-loving nations and peoples? It may have, on the other hand, strengthened the intransigence and the militarist out-

look of the Government of North Vietnam and of the National Liberation Front of South Vietnam. The Government of India can play an important role in securing a political settlement by bringing all contending parties, including the U.S.A., to a conference table. But that object will not be facilitated by ostentatiously playing host to a rebel leader. It is a different matter, however, if the object is to help the communist cause. But that object will never receive the support and sympathy of the people of India.

"Land Grab" Movement

THE Communist Party of India has just initiated what it calls a "land grab" movement. The declared object of the movement is to secure redistribution of land by taking possession of land regarded as surplus from the hands of the Government and landlords. The party will lead land-hungry peasants to surplus lands and ask them to occupy them.

Occupation, physical or symbolic, will not, however, solve the problem. One piece of land cannot be cultivated by tens or hundreds of peasants. It must be allocated to a family or two. There must be a machinery for making the allocation after considering the claims of a large number of claimants. Even after getting land, the peasant will need agricultural implements, seeds and many other things before he can bring it under cultivation. Has the Communist Party thought of any plan to make these essential requirements available to the peasants? There is no trace of any such plan.

The "land grab" movement is not therefore a constructive effort to solve a problem, which is, no doubt, a burning problem in rural areas. It is a naked attempt to exploit the unrest and discontent in the villages for the benefit of the party. It will neither benefit the land-hungry peasants nor help the solution of the problem of land redistribution. It will only help the forces of lawlessness and disorder. When law and order are breaking down in many places in the country it is the height of irresponsibility to undertake any activity which will encourage people to take law in their own hands.

As if not to be left behind, the Samyukta Socialist Party and the Praja Socialist Party have also decided to organise their own joint civil disobedience movement. Apart from the land problem, the S.S.P.-P.S.P. movement also desires to tackle the unemployment problem. How a civil disobedience movement can tackle either problem is a thing which passes one's understanding. Opposition political parties are not bothered many a time about the concrete results of their activities. Sometimes they undertake activities just to be in the limelight or in order that other parties may not steal a march over them. Both considerations seem to have weighed with the two parties in their

decision to launch the civil disobedience campaign. Ordinarily, the campaign could have been ignored. But in the conditions that obtain in the country any movement that weakens respect for law is likely to pose a grave threat to peace and strengthen the dark forces of lawlessness. The two parties have chosen the most inappropriate time for launching their movement.

The two movements, the "land grab" movement and the civil disobedience movement should bring home to the Governments, in the States and at the Centre, the urgency of land reforms. In many States laws have been passed, but they have not been implemented. Landed interests have been allowed to defy or ignore the laws. This must stop and the provisions of the laws must be immediately implemented. This should be the answer to the two movements. Once that answer is provided, it will not be difficult to tackle effectively the problems of law and order that may be created.

Coloured Immigration in U.K.

THERE is a good deal of justified resentment in the country over the treatment that is now-a-days being meted out to Indian, Pakistani and West African settlers in England. As Commonwealth citizens they were until recently allowed free entry into the United Kingdom. They could take jobs in the country and settle down on a permanent or semi-permanent basis. That is no longer true. Severe restrictions have been already imposed upon new would-be immigrants and it is likely that in course of time they will be further strengthened. Worse still, racial antagonism is growing and even those who have settled since long have to face many a time insults and other disagreeable experiences.

In view of these undesirable developments, the assurances given by the new Prime Minister of Great Britain, Mr. Edward Heath of "justice to all those who are already in this country, whatever their race, creed or colour may be" are very welcome. In the course of his authoritative statement on his government's policy he stated in an emphatic manner: "The position of those who are already here is not to be altered in any way. They will continue to have the right to bring in close and genuine dependants and they will remain free to choose where they live and where they work. We shall continue to make available special assistance in areas of social need, and particularly those where large numbers of immigrants have settled, because we all know the burden on housing, schools and the health service."

The Home Secretary, Mr. Reginald Maudling emphasised the same point when he said: "There must be no first and second class citizens and no discrimination. All who live in this country must be equal before the law, and all who live in this country

should be equal in all social terms as well." In view of these assurances, it will not be unreasonable to hope that the Government will put down with a firm hand every exhibition of racial prejudice or hatred.

On the question of future immigration, however, both were equally clear and emphatic that no further largescale immigration would be allowed. This will not be liked by those Indians who are desirous of emigrating to U.K. but on grounds of public policy it will be difficult to object to it. As things stand at present, every country has the right of determining the composition and the strength of its population. If England thinks that it is no longer in a position to absorb a larger number of coloured people, there is nothing that one can do against it.

Holders of British passports from East Africa, however, stand on a different footing. By virtue of their passports they are entitled to enter the United Kingdom. Their entry can be regulated or staggered, but it cannot be altogether prevented. To seek to do the latter will amount to a breach of a solemn promise.

Marxist Logic

MARXIST Communists demand an early election in Bengal. They have been demanding it vociferously, and a few days back they even went to the extent of organising a Bengal Bandh in support of the demand. But curiously enough they are opposed to an early election in Kerala. They have vehemently opposed the Election Commission's plan to hold the election in September. The main argument that they have advanced against the September election is that the rolls are defective. But defects in the rolls can be easily removed. Law has provided a machinery for addition as well as deletion of names from the rolls. Marxist Communists can easily take advantage of that machinery for improving the rolls. But theirs is not a constructive attitude. They do not want the election to take place in September or immediately thereafter as it would not help them to get the success they are after. It appears that they need some more time for their preparations. On the other hand, they appear to be prepared in Bengal. According to their logic, whatever suits them is correct and lawful; whatever does not suit them is wrong and fraudulent. The logic may satisfy them, but cannot satisfy the rest of the world.

BOOKS RECEIVED

1. *Defence, Without Drift*, P. V. R. Rao, Popular Prakashan, 35C Tardeo Road, Bombay 34. Rs. 30/-.
2. *Contemporary Relevance of Gandhi*, Edited by M. P. Sinha, Nachiketa Publications Ltd., 22, Sleater Road, Bombay 7. Rs. 15/-.
3. *New India 1885*, Briton Martin Jr., Oxford University Press, Bombay 1. Rs. 55/-.

Social Market Economy

M. R. Pai

AT a time when India is beset with numerous economic problems, to talk of an Indian economic miracle might sound ridiculous. Yet, on the basis of visits to different parts of India over the last 15 years and a study of the West German economy, both in its theoretical aspect and a recent visit to that country, the author is confident that an Indian economic miracle is possible. It would mean the release of creative energies of the people to generate millions of jobs, more purchasing power for the poorer sections of the society and provision in the foreseeable future of not only the minimum necessities of life but also what we consider to be luxuries for every one.

It is necessary to examine the foundations of what has been described as the German Economic Miracle. It is said by some that the massive Marshall Aid by the United States was responsible for the German Economic Miracle. This is not correct. Marshall Aid may have accelerated the process, but even without such aid, the Miracle would have taken place. On close examination, the word Miracle itself seems inappropriate to describe the West German economic reconstruction and economic progress. What happened was that certain economic consequences took place as a result of certain economic policies. When this was described as a Miracle, the description soothed the frustrated sense of a defeated people and gave them a pride in their achievements.

At the end of the Second World War, Germany was totally devastated. Yet today Western part of Germany, known as the Federal Republic of Germany, enjoys one of the highest standards of living in the world. There are so many job opportunities that nearly 2 million Italians, Spaniards, Turks and other foreigners are working in West Germany. Still the country is said to have 900,000 vacancies. Contrast this with 1950 when there were 12 million unemployed!

The hours of work per week have come down from 48.6 in 1955 to 43.3 in 1968. *Per Capita* income has multiplied four times. A sure indicator of progress, namely, the percentage of household expenses on food items (food, beverage and tobacco) has come down from 46.3 to 37.6 between 1958 to 1968. In the same period, excepting Portugal and U.S.A., none of the Western countries has had such a record of price stability as West Germany. Between 1949 and 1968, the national working time required for the purchase of items of daily use also became shorter in view of the progress of the economy. For instance, a kilo of bread required 23 minutes working time in 1949, but only 15 minutes in 1968; sugar: 58 minutes and 15 minutes;

potatoes: 27 minutes and 17 minutes; motor car: 3,946 hours and 859 hours, respectively.

This progress was due to an economic philosophy known as the Social Market Economy. The theoretical foundations of this philosophy can be found in the books by the late Prof. Walter Eucken, "Foundations of Economics" and "This Unsuccessful Age". Dr. Ludwig Erhard, as a Minister for Economic Affairs, was a firm believer in this philosophy which he implemented.

This philosophy is not to be confused with *laissez faire* economics of the 19th Century. Social Market Economy is a combination of individual, collective and State efforts making use of the market mechanism but with due respect to considerations of social justice. Mr. Wolfgang Frickhoffer, Chairman of the Action Committee for Social Market Economy, sums up its characteristics as follows:

1. The basic idea is to keep competition alive by keeping the market free of distortions. Social market economy requires considerable State *activities*, but not State *intervention* in economic affairs. By this is meant that the State must undertake the following functions in the economy:

- (a) Promote anti-cyclical measures, maintain stability of currency, secure high employment and equilibrium in balance of payments. This is done by use of central bank measures for appropriate credit policy, by use of the Budget and fiscal policies, and by floating the rate of exchange, i.e., keeping the international value of the currency free from artificial restrictions.

- (b) Competition is promoted by taking strict measures against monopolistic tendencies and restrictive trade practices. In Social Market Economy, free enterprise does not mean freedom to undermine freedom of enterprise. The State ensures fairness in business conditions for all, while accepting differences in human and natural resources as such differences are inevitable and also the basis of specialisation of labour.

- (c) The State actively engages itself in doing those economic activities which cannot be done by individuals by themselves but without which economic life cannot function smoothly. In other words, social overheads or infrastructure facilities are provided by the State. Roads, communications, public sanitation, etc. constitute the infrastructure. Planning by the State should not be central planning of all economic activities, but planning by public authorities for provision of infrastructure.

- (d) The most important factor in the Social Market

Economy is *adaptation intervention*. The idea is to help private business, workers and others in the economy to adapt themselves to changes brought about by technological advances and not to protect any group of people or individuals at the expense of the general public. This is in sharp contrast to the old-time subsidies to industries in difficulties. Such subsidies are considered to be bad as they blanket market signals, and perpetuate inefficient allocation of resources. One important aspect of adaptation intervention is the close collaboration between the Government and business organisations, trade unions, local authorities, universities and those associated with or interested in economic processes.

(e) The State as a buyer of goods gives an impetus to technological development. For instance, the electronics industry, which is the basis of the second industrial revolution today, can be given a boost by State purchases for space research.

(f) The State does not interest itself in nationalisation because as a partial owner it would be deflected from its natural role of an umpire in the economy. What makes the modern state powerful in the social market economy is not its ownership of enterprises, but sticking to its proper functions as described above. It does not indulge in centralised planning, but allows planning by the private units and planning by public authorities for providing the infrastructure.

The Social Market Economic policy is flexible and can be applied to all countries. It does not offer privileges to anyone. It is a sort of a rule of law in the economic sphere tempered with justice. It gives opportunities to entrepreneurs to serve the public by producing goods and services wanted by the public and in

the process releases the creative energies of the people in all spheres of life.

Some noteworthy features of the West German social structure which have made this free market economy eminently successful are as follows:

1. The whole nation comprises a people who are well organised. For instance, all traders and industries are compulsorily members of the Chamber of Commerce which in turn are federated. On the other hand there are strong trade unions for blue-collar and white-collar employees. Incidentally, the distinction between these two categories is now fading away because of the high standard of living enjoyed by both. These federations and trade unions are free from political intervention and look only to interests of members, industry and the nation.

2. The German people are highly disciplined and what is considered to be hard work by many people in India is considered normal work by them.

3. There is a good system of training for every industry, craft or vocation. During this period, emphasis is laid on teamwork, along with picking up of skills in the line. Thus, education and training are functional as they are related to the needs of the economy.

4. There is a good technological base to the economy. Today the rapid growth of the automobile industry has increased mobility. The advances made in the field of computerisation are pushing West Germany forward to a still higher level of technology.

5. Germans are worshippers of the concept of excellence. People take pride in their job. This is a significant factor in the phenomenal progress of West Germany.

With suitable adaptation, the Social Market Economy can be applied successfully to India.

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President's Rule

Analyst

SM.T. INDIRA GANDHI'S brief 'stop over' in Calcutta on July 17 indicated at least one thing very clearly that the Elections are not coming soon and that she pins much hope on the progress of development projects in Calcutta. Whether there will be another Ministry is not yet certain. If the chances were nil she would have stated that the Assembly would be dissolved. She was deliberately ambiguous about it. That means the attempt to form a ministry is still on. Smt. Gandhi, it appears, is now better informed about the unhappy law and order situation and is contemplating giving more powers to the police. However, it is time that a general assessment of the situation under the President's Rule is made.

It is now over 4 months that the President's Rule was declared in West Bengal consequent upon the break up of the UF rule due to internal dissensions. Although it is not a long period, it is long enough for the new regime of administrators to settle down to business, to size up the problems and to initiate some new policies. There is no doubt that the Advisors who have been appointed have put in quite a lot of hard work and have been able to assess the nature and the magnitude of the more urgent problems. They have also worked out schemes and projects and legislation that are needed to be launched immediately. While preventive steps have to be taken immediately so that the situation does not deteriorate further, positive, constructive steps take more time naturally.

Then there are at least 4 steps of the ladder to get any major policy raised and poised on the launching pad. After formulating the policy documents at the State level, it has to be scrutinised by the department concerned at Delhi. If this hurdle is jumped, the Union Cabinet has to approve of it. Then comes the meeting of the Parliamentary Consultative Committee where different political forces are at work. And finally, even if all these hurdles are cleared successfully there is the question of finance and of the green light to be given by the Prime Minister to go with the job with the hint whether to go ahead feverishly or at leisure.

Thus, whatever the new policy suggested, it can hardly be executed on an emergency footing, remote-controlled as it is. That is one reason why the President's Regime cannot show quick results in any sphere. What it has achieved are two or three things. One, that the police now *tries* to go into action to suppress violence. Two, the police is being strengthened, in terms of numbers at least, by the CRP. Three, the Administrative Officers at the top are slowly recovering

their self-confidence and, with some transfers and reallocation of tasks, the higher echelon is becoming more alert to its duties. This is the concrete result. Rest of it is paper work, though not unimportant.

The new land reform policies have partially been finally enacted by President's signature in mid-July. This is also something concrete. But this does not yet affect those who have forcibly occupied land of small holders or the benami or vested land. Meanwhile, the CPI's land grabbing movement has been aggressively launched with several murders to start with, but neither the PM nor the Bangla Congress are criticising the same as violating the Rule of Law, and the Administration also has so far been queerly less emphatic in resisting it. The implication is that if similar movements are launched by CPM, SUC, FB or RSP, which have been promised, there will hardly be any political morality to resist it.

In the realm of law and order, in spite of arrests to the extent of six thousand in the last four months, Naxalite vandalism and attacks have continued, so have inter-party clashes, although on a much lower key. The public, happily, is slowly picking up courage to resist such acts in some areas. Some of the arrests have revealed that factories for the manufacture of small arms, shooting practice sites, base-areas for training and coordinating operations have been in existence and links between Naxalites and China, Pakistan and Mizos have been discovered. Some senior Naxalites have been arrested too. Some division between Naxalite leaders is also reported. But it is equally true that from schools and hospitals, the attacks have been shifting to post offices, railway stations, telephone offices, BDO's offices, land settlement offices, etc. Attacks on uniformed and non-uniformed police pickets and CRP men have also been on the increase. Thus the situation is far from controlled even with increased police and CRP strength. The authorities here desperately needed some sort of a P.D. Act (otherwise most arrested Naxalites have to be released on bail) and urged the Centre for one, albeit with abbreviated powers. But, even after the Union Cabinet okayed it, Bhupesh Gupta said Nyet and so it was. Could it be without the connivance of the Prime Minister? That indicates that Smt. Gandhi is not in a position to give clear directions to the Administration and that the CPI already exercises some real power at Delhi. The latest visit of Smt. Gandhi seems to have convinced her that some special powers for the police are required and perhaps some kind of help of the military may have to be invoked.

Meanwhile, the real political forces are biding their time. Almost all leftist parties have decided to launch "movements" directed *against* the Administration and the Bengal Bandh of July 14 (French Revolution anniversary!) and the bargemen's, the dockers' and the port shore labours' strikes have shown how the economy of this half-prostrate State can be held to ransom, and not only of this State but also of the country. Tea, Jute, engineering exports have been hit hard indeed, but the Centre or the local politicians could hardly utter a word. Durgapur production is under the complete stranglehold of the trade unionists, mainly CPM, and it is working at 10 per cent capacity with a loss of Re. 1 crore per month. K. T. Chandy, the H. S. L. Chairman, reputed to be a progressive, admits that trade unions are being manipulated politically. He was considering the possibility of a lockout! These developments indicate that Naxalite vandalism is just a fleabite compared to what is held back, to be deployed at a suitable time.

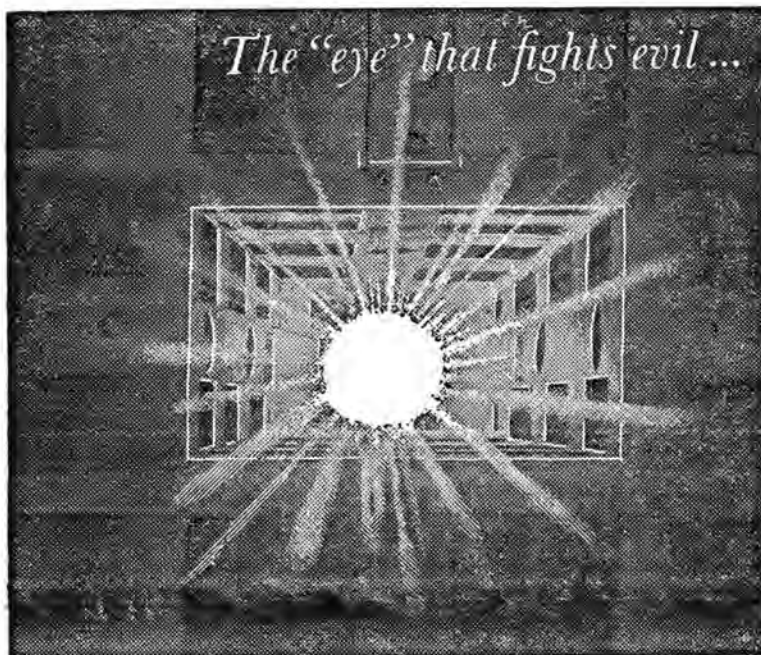
Once again an attempt was being made to have a non-CPM ministry. Perhaps, with Smt. Gandhi in the venture more actively, and with Soviet blessing, the attempt would be more serious. If this comes about "head you lose, tail I win". An internal political force with government powers may then try to isolate and counter the CPM and the Naxalites. That will be in a way good. But this will be done by undertaking sweeping leftist policies that will further disenchant the investing and the entrepreneurial classes, thus debilitating the economy still further. A competition in leftism between the sixes and the eights (plus 2) will be generated with a view to win the masses for election.

And once again the administrative morale will become a casualty.

Where does this lead us to? The situation in West Bengal remains intractable, dynamic of course but in the sense that it is steadily advancing on the path to unsettled conditions, marginally maintained in superficial peace by sheer police and CRP force, but unable to generate confidence to create more employment and economic vitality. Perhaps, if things go worse, the Military may be asked to help too. But that also will hardly help, for it will be then an open admission of an undeclared war and the failure and impotence of civil government.

But the vacuum is intensely *political*. It cannot be filled even by a massive carrot worth Rs. 155 crore development project that Shri B. B. Ghosh and Smt. Gandhi visualise. As Shri Ghosh must be now beginning to realise, the nationalised Banks are shrinking back from any commitment and now he wants Smt. Gandhi's direct intervention. But that is politics. What is urgently needed is a frontal attack on the politics of revolution by men in authority and politics, and a determined demand for a return to the politics of recovery and progress through hard work under a stable administration. Smt. Gandhi's amorphous leftist cocktail will not do. Will she have the courage to make up her mind even now, or will she allow the drift towards a treacherous marshy land from where poisonous carbon monoxide flashes might beckon the frustrated soul of Bengal to a nightmarish consumption?

July 18, 1970



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National Integration

G. L. Mathur

INTEGRATION, national or international, implies a coming together of diverse interests, political, social or economic, with a view to bring about a climate of unity, of harmony among groups of people or the nation. This sense of 'togetherness', no matter what one's caste or religion, for the achievement of common goals of national interest should be recognised as the 'guiding light' to which we all should owe our allegiance. But in India, our present thinking is marked by a series of word-battles on the question of form of government or language, river water and border disputes, political defections and communal disaffections so that one wonders whether we are a nation or merely a bee-hive of conflicting motives and corroding passions born of our infatuation for power, political or otherwise. Let us, therefore, realise, and sooner the better, that integration, no matter what its denomination, depends upon the mind and character of our people, and the character of our people at the present moment, judged in terms of civilised values, was never so low as we find it today. Go wherever you please, bribe, redtapism, profiteering, tax evasion, short-weight, ticketless travel and the like are rampant throughout the country. What then are the reasons that have reduced our country to such miserable depths of shame?

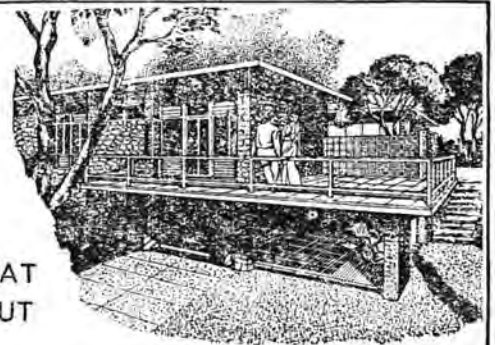
To my mind, the first and foremost reason is our wrong notion of our nation. We believe that our flag, constitution and the territory are more sacred than the men who inhabit the country. We are prepared to fight to our last man if these are attacked or insulted, but if our men are dying in thousands in famine or made homeless by 'quakes', flood or fire, we watch such a situation as mere spectators. At the most the Centre or some charitable institutions may take note of such catastrophes but so far as the common man goes, it is a mere table talk over a cup of tea when the newspaper arrives in the morning. The whole thing ends with hollow expressions of sympathy and disgust and is forgotten before the second cup arrives! Why is it so? The reason is that we have divided ourselves into so many camps of rich and poor, castes and creeds, language and religion, political affiliation and economic rivalry, unions of workers and students and so on so that each unit seems to have a flag, a constitution and an army of its own to command obedience from its followers. There is so much rivalry, back-biting, mud-slinging and a hectic struggle for political power among these groups that the idea of one nation is completely lost in the acrobatics to get the upper hand. And for the existence of this state of affairs, the guilt must be owned by our rulers and other leaders of

public opinion who know that their power is secure only so long as these water-tight pockets exist.

As against this, when sometime back, a child in America fell down in a well, the whole work came to a standstill and the entire American nation watched from their T.V. sets the rescue operations till the child was completely rescued and restored to its parents. As though by magic, the safety of the child became the concern of all the teeming millions in America. But in India, we have yet to realise that man is the measure of all things and unless that mutual respect and trust which each one owes to the other as a man is restored, we cannot call ourselves a nation in the true sense of the word and though we may have any number of conferences and seminars, any amount of platform speaking and pamphleteering, national integration would still remain a distant dream till we demolish the artificial walls that divide man from man.

The other suicidal notion from which we suffer is, what one writer has called, 'our religious philosophy of acceptance'. Our castes, communities or religious groups have their own codes of conduct and any infringement of this code is fraught with dangerous con-

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Review

Objectives of Planning in India

Murarji J. Vaidya, Popular Prakashan, Bombay, Rs. 15.

THE book brings together some writings of the late Mr. Murarji J. Vaidya, who was for a long time the President of the All India Manufacturers' Organisation founded by Sir M. Visvesvaraiya, the planning enthusiast of his days. The topics covered, divided in convenient sections, are mostly economic in their content, though some deal with the nature of democracy as practised in India. Since most of the material is culled out of Mr. Vaidya's lectures/addresses on different occasions but on related topics, there is an element of repetition in the argument. The last section is a light-hearted attempt at versifying some of the themes and can as well be ignored for the purpose of this review. The book is prefaced by a brief life-sketch of Mr. Vaidya drawn by Mr. G. M. Laud his college-mate for four years and a trusted friend thereafter.

Since the writings/lectures cover a span of fifteen years or more of the planning endeavour in the country, they form a running commentary on the achievements and failings of Government. The actors commented upon viz. the Congress Governments (Central or State) are the same; also the commentator's angle for viewing the scene has hardly changed. Mr. Vaidya was essentially a free enterprise man. In common with others of his persuasion, he envisaged a certain role for Government. Detailed planning of the type attempted in the country is not that role. The success of the first plan and the relatively better performance in overall terms of the second as compared with the third generally explain the change in public attitude to planning in the country. And this change is evident in several pieces included in the book. References to planning, direct or indirect, are found distributed over all sections. This is indeed as it should be, since in the last twenty years planning has provided opportunities for discussion by several economic commentators.

Mr. Vaidya's writings appear to show, as expected, the need for planned development. His quarrel with planners was one of emphasis and plan priorities. The lack of a fair measure of faithful implementation of a project has been as much his worry as that of planners. In most of his comments he draws support for his thesis from several countries whose way of life, political, economic and social bears no comparison with ours and this introduces some incongruities in arguments which could have been avoided. It is not suggested that experience from other countries is irrelevant; all that is sought to be conveyed is caution in its use.

In discussing Government's industrial policy and

the developments consequent on it, Mr. Vaidya concedes that fair progress has been achieved in India in the industrial sphere since Independence. And yet, if he finds in this development several points of disagreement, it is because he feels that more could have been achieved by giving a greater measure of freedom to private enterprise. This is an oft-repeated comment in all discussions on planning in certain sections of public opinion but about which no empirical evidence can be available. The comment also ignores the fact that several who hold on to this view have themselves been able to expand industrial complexes in the last twenty years, perhaps much more than what they themselves had imagined. There is besides the other consideration: planning in India has several objectives only one of which is industrialisation. In fact lag in achievement of some of them has been responsible for sharp public criticism and demands for investigation which have led to the institutionalisation of suggested remedies. At the same time, industrial genius in the country has indeed adopted the policy of utilizing to its best advantage whatever is good in Indian planning and at the same time criticise other aspects of development in a way which would urge policy-makers in granting reliefs to be used according to them, for further national development. Mr. Vaidya's approach to the encouragement to be given to small industries is an instance on the point, to quote his own words "they should be encouraged in development by every possible means including financial assistance". At the same time he wants the larger units to expand at a "rational rate and if this is not done it would be not only harmful for the larger interest of small industry but also cut at the root of industrialisation." Every one accepts this proposition but disagreement develops over the meaning of "rational rate."

The third major section of Mr. Vaidya's criticism of public policy relates to the impediments on development which taxation proposals of Government from time to time have been instrumental in placing. Here again the debate about how heavily we have taxed ourselves and how the tax receipts are used has been as old as the taxation system itself. And this is so in any democratic set up. An accepted tenet of taxation is that it must touch sections of the community which are capable of being taxed. The point which is decided by Government is therefore the capacity of different sections to be taxed and the amount to be collected from each. The views expressed by business interests of which Mr. Vaidya was an illustrious member are bound to be such as would favour their advancement. But with all the criticism on the rates of taxation, may be because of difficulties of implementation and may be for other reasons, the investment climate does not appear to have unduly suffered solely on this ground. And judging from the experience of

the last two decades, whether a different set of overall policies could have made the rate of total investment look better will always remain in the realm of speculation.

On the whole the book records the views of the business community and serves the purpose of showing one side of the picture of developments in the country.

B. N. DATAR

NATIONAL INTEGRATION—Continued from page 9

sequences so that each group, like the proverbial frog in the well, dwells and revels in its own domain and shuts its door to the refreshing climate radiated by other cultures. Thus our society is static because we are the prisoners of our own beliefs. Our passivity has reached such dimensions that dictatorship or a civil war can alone shatter to pieces our age old pugnacious and out-worn beliefs.

At a time, when man has conquered the moon and making interplanetary travel possible, the Indian society delights in recognising as many gods as are the stars overhead and despite the basic unity and love of fellow-beings taught by all religions, it regales in upholding diverse superstitions and taboos that belong to the bygone ages. Any scheme of national integration, therefore, cannot succeed unless the tradition-ridden mind of the Indian society is schooled in the newer

values of socialism and humanism and our common heritage as the supreme commanders of our destiny.

Among the many ways suggested to bring about an integrated society, the one relating to inter-caste marriage should be upheld and regarded as a significant step in uniting the different communities by creating blood relationships which flow from such alliances. It is wrong to think that religion obstructs such marriages for any number of examples of such successful marriages can be given. The youth of the country should be encouraged in this respect by the Centre and the State Governments as also by the Family Planning Ministry and where parents do not cooperate and disown such marriages on the ground of caste or religion, they should exercise their baneful influence. With a view to encourage inter-caste, inter-communal and even international marriages (like the one recently put up by the Prime Minister by marrying her son to a daughter of Italy) the Centre should inspire the youth by allowing them certain facilities and privileges in terms of selection in the services, promotions, increments and the like. The Family Planning Ministry, which already looks after the welfare of the Indian society, should be charged with the additional responsibility of making intensive and extensive propaganda (as it is doing with conspicuous success in reducing the birth rate) with a view to encourage the young in adopting this new way of life.

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'Tis not too late to seek a newer world."
—Tennyson.

Henry VIII in the 16th century Britain could not be half as authoritarian as Mrs. Gandhi has proved herself in the later half of the 20th century in democratic India.

—Thought, July 4.

When Alexander Dubcek was expelled from the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, there was one country where this did not make headline news. Paradoxically, this was Czechoslovakia itself.

—Swiss Press Review and News Report, July 6.

It is the corrupt politician in power who cynically exploits the controls, licences and the urge of social justice that comes to my mind as the great destroyer of Indian democracy.

—Commerce, July 11.

Of what avail will socialism or any other Ism be if the independence of the country itself is lost and India goes the way of Czechoslovakia?

—Mysindia, July 11.

If there are five parties, join with three to crush the fifth. Then side with two of the remainder and eliminate the fourth. Then team up with one of the two to destroy the third. That leaves only one opponent, which can be easily handled.

—Lenin in 1917, quoted in *Swarajya*, July 11.

"May you live in interesting times".

—Ancient Chinese Curse quoted in *Time*, July 13.

With the establishment of a Leviathan Communist State in Asia, north of the Himalayas, the Communist menace in India has trebled.

—C. Rajagopalachari, *Swarajya*, July 18.

The world, in short, is entering a new era of less dependence on the U.S.

—U.S. News and World Report, July 20.

The Communists are in the confidence of the PM even more than the Home Minister.

—J. B. Kripalani, *Indian Express*, July 22.

While in urban areas unemployment might grow, in rural areas the main problem was of under-employment.

—Prof. D. R. Gadgil, Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission, *Economic Times*, July 27.

Naxalite operations are a copy of the Vietcong operations in South East Asia.

—C. Rajagopalachari, *Swarajya*, July 25.

Everybody wants to be rich, but nobody likes those who are.

—Nayantara Sahgal, *Sunday Standard*, July 26.

We are virtually becoming a colony controlled from Moscow, rather than a free country.

—D. F. Karaka, *Current*, August 1.

Madame Binh's visit has indeed led us into the Soviet camp.

—March of the Nation, August 1.

There is only one Maharani in the Cabinet and the rest are slaves.

—Balraj Madhok, *Indian Express*, July 29.

The All-India political parties of yesterday are really dissolving into regional parties without changing their names.

—Amrita Bazar Patrika, July 28.

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