

### Congress in Crisis

Adam Adil

**N**EVER before in its history of 85 years the Congress has faced a crisis which it is facing at the present moment. The crisis has divided it almost in two halves.

Of course, in the past Congress has not been entirely free of crises. In 1907 at the time of the Surat session, the moderates and extremists came to a clash, and even brickbats, chairs, tables and shoes were exchanged. Also in 1938 at the time of Haripura Congress, Subhas Chandra Bose and other radicals came in conflict with Gandhians. There were serious problems at other times too. But these problems never led to a breaking point. One section of Congress M.P.s numbering about 62 who are opposed to Mrs. Indira Gandhi, have already started sitting in opposition in the Parliament. They call themselves "Organisation Opposition".

The genesis of the present crisis in the Congress can be traced to its recent Bangalore session when some of the members of what is generally known as Syndicate sought to ignore the Prime Minister's opinion in the selection of the Congress candidate for the election of the President of India. Naturally she reacted sharply against such a treatment. Again, although the A.I.C.C. passed the ten point economic programme, some members of the Congress High Command adopted a lukewarm attitude towards it and even sought to ridicule some of the items. All this led to suspicion whether the Congress High Command was really serious about the economic programme. Obviously due to the pressures of her followers Mrs. Gandhi had to make a determined effort to demonstrate that she was serious about the economic programme, and that at least she was not just fooling the gullible people. Therefore, she had to pin-point the ten-point economic programme more unequivocally in the form of a note presented to the Bangalore session of the A.I.C.C. Although she described her note as "stray thoughts hurriedly dictated", it was obvious that she had given mature thought to it. She could not, of course, be oblivious of the fact that a vast country like India could not be ruled by stray and hurried thoughts.

The events that followed are fresh in our minds to need any repetition here. One thing is clear that if Congress breaks it will seriously jeopardise the stabi-

lity of the governments at the Centre as well as in Congress-dominated States. If the Congress breaks there is no other democratic political party, which is strong enough, to take its place. Swatantra and Jana Sangh have, in recent years shown impressive strength. But they have yet to show uniform all-India influence as the Congress has done. Swatantra has shown some strength in Orissa, Gujarat and partly in U.P. and to some extent in Bihar. Jana Sangh is strong in the north especially in the Hindi belt of States. The strength of these parties in other States is negligible. Similar is the case with other democratic parties like S.S.P. and P.S.P. D.M.K. which is a regional party is strong only in Tamil Nadu; it has no following elsewhere. Now remain the communist parties: C.P.I. and C.P.M. It would be a disaster if these parties grow. One cannot think in terms of either of the communist parties taking the place of the Congress and providing an alternative government. That would sound death-knell of democracy in the country.

Hence in the absence of any democratic political party strong enough to form an alternative government at the Centre and in the States, it is in the interest of India's political stability and democracy that Congress must remain united and Congressmen must work together.

It is needless to stress that both factions in the Congress are responsible for the present state of affairs. Both have committed mistakes. A reference has already been made to the folly the Syndicate committed in ignoring Mrs. Gandhi while selecting the Congress candidate for Presidential election. It was equally serious folly on the part of Mrs. Gandhi to have opposed the Congress candidate in the Presidential election after having proposed his name. Both the camps committed one mistake after another; both did not stick to the unity resolution adopted by the Congress Working Committee on 25th August. The mere lip sympathy to the unity resolution was evident, when the followers of Mrs. Gandhi initiated the move for the ouster of Mr. Nijalingappa from the Congress Presidentship. Similar attitude was revealed when Mr. Nijalingappa ignored the requisition for an early A.I.C.C. meeting and half of the Congress Working Committee members expelled Mrs. Gandhi from primary membership of the Congress. As a reaction Mrs. Gandhi's followers held the requisitioned meeting on their own initiative and dismissed Mr. Nijalingappa. In view of the fact that 440 members out of the total membership of A.I.C.C. which stands at 705 attended the meeting it is obvious that Mr. Nijalingappa and

other members of the Syndicate have lost their hold on the majority of the A.I.C.C. members. Sensing this fact, Mr. Nijalingappa should have gracefully resigned and called the requisitioned A.I.C.C. meeting early. The lesson of Haripura session when on the advice of Mahatma Gandhi the whole Working Committee had offered its resignation the moment they did not agree with the Congress President (Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose) was not usefully followed in the present context. Unfortunately, the Congress President and the Syndicate members of the Working Committee preferred to adhere to their positions. Mr. Nijalingappa, simple man that he is, was obviously under the pressure of his own colleagues not to "surrender". Probably left to himself he would have acted in a different way.

Now the question is whether the Congress can still be saved. It is learnt that the former Union Finance Minister, Mr. Krishnamachari is making renewed efforts for a rapprochement between Mrs. Gandhi and Mr. Nijalingappa. It is said that he went to Delhi on the eve of the requisitioned A.I.C.C. meeting with this specific purpose, and he agreed to unfurl the flag at the meeting only on assurance that Mrs. Gandhi would not oppose unity measures.

It is, however, certain that the majority of the A.I.C.C. members and Congress rank and file are with the Prime Minister. There is therefore, no alternative for the Syndicate members of the Congress High Command to rescind the expulsion of Mrs. Gandhi, accept her point of view and give the charge of the Congress organisation to her and her followers. This would involve the resignation of Mr. Nijalingappa and acceptance of new discipline by those members of the Congress who now find themselves in opposition to Mrs. Gandhi. On the other hand, the new organisation which has now emerged under the leadership of Mrs. Gandhi will have to be dissolved and Opposition Congress M.P.s will have to join the Prime Minister. This would be the price they would have to pay for keeping the Congress united. There is no other way out.

The Prime Minister by her drive towards economic reforms has raised the expectation of the people very high. Whether she will be able to fulfil these expectations time alone will show. But odds are against her. But this fact cannot be a matter of joy to the Syndicate Congressmen for, if she fails to fulfil the expectation, anarchy will result. Hence the Syndicate Congressmen, in the larger interest of the country, democracy and socialism will be obliged to cooperate with the Prime Minister in making the implementation of the ten-point economic programme a success. It is true that by itself the ten-point programme would not make much difference in the lives of the people. A number of other economic and social measures would need to be taken for raising the standard of people's lives, for spreading education universally, for removing unemployment, for improvement of agriculture, for

## AN INDIAN IN POLAND

**M**R. SUKUMAR BOSE from Bengal was in Poland for several years from 1955 onwards. He went there on a scholarship from the Polish Government for studying Polish philology. He was admitted into the University of Lodz, where he carried on his studies. He became acquainted with a fellow student, Miss Irena Bronska, and both were married in 1958. After marriage Mr. Bose had to leave his studies and take employment. He got a job as a translator with the Central Technical Office of the textile machinery industry. He and his wife were living happily on the salary that he earned and a son was born to them.

But things changed suddenly in August 1968 after the invasion of Czechoslovakia. The misfortune that overtook Mr. Bose on November 28, 1968 is described by him as follows: "It was dawn and I had gone out to buy some milk and bread for breakfast. Seven men from the Polish Security Service (*Sluzba Bezpieczenstwa*) raided my apartment. When I returned about 20 minutes later, they wanted to search my apartment. I was taken to the police station about four miles away. I was in the police station till December 4. Then I was taken to the Central Jail of Warsaw, where I was subjected to interrogation. My case came up before the Polish Court on May 8, 1969, about six months after my arrest. I was charged with writing a satire against the Polish Government for a foreign radio station which contained secret information that Gomulka was a puppet of Russia, of criticising the administration for its failure to arrest the price rise, of accusing the Government of following anti-Semitic policies of supporting Israel against the Arabs, and of criticising the Polish Government for deployment of troops to Czechoslovakia under directions from Moscow. The Court comprising one Judge and two members of the jury held me guilty. The verdict was for a three-year prison term."

Later, the Indian Embassy intervened and Mr Bose was granted a pardon and allowed to leave the country. He wanted to take along his wife and son but had to leave alone as the formalities for the travel of his wife and son could not be completed in time. He was driven straight to the airport from the Central Jail of Warsaw on November 9. About a month has passed and Mr. Bose is still awaiting the arrival of his wife and son.

expanding industry, for eliminating disparities in incomes, and for providing adequate housing and other amenities. All this will require tremendous national effort. Therefore, all-out cooperation of Syndicate Congressmen with Mrs. Gandhi will be absolutely necessary.

# Reconstruction Of Indian Politics

M. R. Pai

IN the peculiar brand of secularism practised by the present Government, quoting from the epics may be considered heretical. However, there is no better analogy to the present happenings in the Congress Party than the war of *Yadavas*. Lord Krishna saw that the *Yadavas* would be a menace to the world after His departure, and therefore, arranged for their total destruction through internecine quarrels and war.

Mahatma Gandhi, Netaji Subhas with his INA, and Hitler who exhausted the British brought freedom to India. The Congress Party was an organisation which actively participated in the freedom fight, but after Independence, for past 22 years it dominated the Indian polity taking credit for the contribution of *all* others to the freedom movement. The systematic way Netaji's name has been sought to be erased from public memory is a first-rate scandal and shows how lust for power can overcome ordinary decencies of life.

There have been two big monopolies in India which have worked against public interest.

The first is the monopoly of the Government over money supply. This has been abused by the Government under the communist model of planning. This has led to inflation, anti-social income shifts, corruption and steady impoverishment of middle classes. The other monopoly—a near monopoly, to be exact—has been the power monopoly in politics. Through an historical accident, one party has dominated the political scene. This near-monopoly of the Congress is now broken. Demonopolisation, whether in economics or politics, is always to be welcomed.

First, let us look at the two warring groups: The "Syndicate" with Nijalingappa, Morarji Desai, Kamaraj, S. K. Patil, Atulya Ghosh and others, is politically outdated. Lao-Tse, the Chinese philosopher, had said six centuries before Christ: "If you do not resign in time, you will not only lose your fame, but you will betray your trust". Having enjoyed power for years, in the evening of their life, they should have gracefully retired years ago having built up a younger leadership. No, they stuck on to power because retirement is a repugnant concept in Indian politics. The consummation of political careers in India is a gun-carriage funeral.

The other side, commonly known as "Indicate", is an amalgam of communist-minded persons like Indira Gandhi, ex-communists like Inder Gujral, Raghunath Reddy, weather-cocks like Y. B. Chavan, tax-evaders like Jagjivan Ram and communalists like Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed and defectors like some "Young Turks" (who had defected their socialist or communist parties to jump on the power band wagon of Congress). Then there are the opportunists who pitch in their lot where-

ver the power base seems to be shifting. If events like attack on Nijalingappa, Mrs. Tarakeshwari Sinha and raid on Hari Krishna Shastri's house are any indication, the "Indicate" can be described as an edifice based on foundations of terrorism and communist methods.

The picture is not complete without a reference to the role of the All-India Radio. Even a Congress Chief Minister, Hitendra Desai, has given it a certificate which impartial observers endorse. All-India Radio, under ex-communist Gujral, is virtually a branch of Radio Peace and Progress of Soviet Russia at least so far as techniques of news manipulation are concerned.

What is missing, by large, in both camps, is the basic ingredient of public life—CHARACTER. What characterises both is not impatience or zeal for public welfare and service, but all symptoms of advanced cancer for power. Another characteristic is conspicuous hypocrisy. Many members of the Syndicate, for instance, have never been serious about socialism. Mrs. Indira Gandhi, and many of her colleagues speak in the name of the poor but have lived a life of luxury and total unconcern for the poor. Conspicuous hypocrisy is the mascot of their public life.

There are many who agree with this analysis, but are afraid of the consequences of the disintegration of Congress party. Their fears are mainly two: First, without Congress there would be instability at the Centre. Second, with Congress disintegrating, communists would take over. These fears are baseless.

As regards the first fear, the real bastion of our stable democracy is the Constitution. So long as political power is confined within the four corners of the Constitution, there will be political stability. Unfortunately, we have been accustomed to equate democracy with the Anglo-Saxon pattern of bi-polar politics. But there are many Continental countries which have coalition governments and stable democracies. The surprise in India is that for a country of continental size, there are barely seven national and some 16 state parties. For our diverse, pluralistic base, there should have been many more parties.

What is taking place now is a reconstruction of Indian politics. We are moving towards a period of coalition Governments. After an initial period of confusion, things would settle down. For a people who got their freedom cheap, this period of confusion is the price they have to pay. And, there will be one immediate good emerging from this: for the first time, many of our arrogant politicians will learn the meaning of the word HUMILITY. Hitherto, unquestioned power had gone to their head. While "intellectuals" and urban people had some sort of insulation from the effects of this power madness, because of more vocal public

opinion, people in smaller places and villages were entirely at the mercy of party bosses. In most places, these party bosses were not the same decent, god-fearing people who had fought for Independence under the Congress banner, but rowdy elements whose main virtues were obedience to party bosses at state level and ability to mobilise voters at elections. Anyone running across the path of local Congress bosses had to drink the cup of bitterness. All this flowed from the monopoly complex in which there is no scope for humility.

The second fear, viz., communist takeover, has been induced by the propaganda of the rulers. The fact of the matter is that there is very little difference between a communist government and the present Indira Gandhi Government. In domestic and foreign affairs of the Government, especially Mrs. Gandhi and Foreign Minister Dinesh Singh are careful not to offend the Soviets and active in promoting their line with the necessary polish. Indian Ocean is becoming a Soviet sphere of influence with reportedly facilities for Soviet warships having been given in the Andamans. The so-called Asian Security Plan has no greater champion in the Kremlin, than India's Dinesh Singh. The External Affairs Ministry virtually functions as a wing of the Kremlin. The move to establish an Embassy at Hanoi in spite of the consistent hostility of that regime to India is another concrete instance of a foreign policy mortgaged to Soviet Russia. As regards Soviet arms aid to Pakistan, the Government has no guts to raise any question in national interests. The Defence and Foreign Ministers shuttle back and forth between Kremlin and Delhi like errand boys. Mrs. Gandhi does not miss any created opportunity to pay homage to the Soviet Premier!

Mrs. Gandhi's economic policy has all the vowels of the alphabet of economic policy of communists. The so-called ten-point programme of AICC, which will lead the country to State capitalism as in communist countries, can be traced in earlier communist party programmes if anyone cares to go through old files of *New Age*, CPI official organ. Her close advisers and enthusiastic supporters are communists. CPI's Dange, Moscow's reliable mouthpiece in India, has openly declared support to Mrs. Gandhi, and from time to time publicly warns her on the deviations to be avoided.

At this rate, it is only a question of time before communists openly take over the Government. Mrs. Gandhi has shown enough lust for power to remain in office at any cost to the nation. It should not be a matter of surprise to see her head even a communist government. It is not policies alone which mark out Mrs. Gandhi's government as a communist one for all intents and purposes. What is worse is that she has introduced communist methods in Indian politics. The

misuse of official machinery, attacks on opponents through street rowdies, stage-managed crowds "to congratulate her", news management through All-India Radio, false promises which cannot be fulfilled (as on bank nationalisation) and telling of blatant lies and duplicity, (of which events during presidential elections are but one instance)—these are all borrowed from the political dictionary of Lenin, Stalin and Mao.

This then is the picture: Both Syndicate and Indicate are outdated, the former politically and the latter economically. They represent obsolescent political forces. The former inadequate to meet challenges before the country, the latter not only inadequate but also hostile to national interests. The challenge before the nation is totally different from the obsolescent obsessions of both camps. It is to modernise the economy, give a jolt to it to move in the direction of tremendous production and productivity of which it is capable, and to become a Super-Power in the world. Freedom, prosperity and national greatness are the manifest destiny of India and not political satellitism and economic stagnation.

The question before the nation is so to reconstruct political forces as to snuff out from power these obsolescent forces before they engulf the nation and bring about economic feudalism and political serfdom.



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# Prime Minister And The Party

"Atreya"

THERE are many all-India and regional parties in India. The major all-India parties are the Indian National Congress, Swatantra, Jana Sangh, Praja Socialist, Samyukta Socialist, Right Communist, Left Communist and Republican. Among the regional parties, we have the D.M.K., Akali Dal etc. A simple fact concerning all these parties is that their leaders have not declared war on their own respective parties to break it into shambles. All the party members and leaders are watching with considerable interest the phenomenon of the Prime Minister of India doing all that she is formidably capable of, using her power and patronage as the Prime Minister, to wreck the Indian National Congress, to smash it and fragment it. In so doing, they also watch the smokescreen of jargons through which this destruction is done.

The Prime Minister has coined such expressions as "Bossism", "Syndicate", "Conservatives", "Reactionaries" to describe her opponents in the party. By the constant barrage of character-assassination of her opponents in the party either by herself or through her new-found progressive friends, she seeks to advance her own popularity and denigrate the party leaders who "dared" to contest her decisions.

It all started decisively in her own mind just prior to the Bangalore session. Mrs. Gandhi had already formed an iceberg type of syndicate in which the visible one-third members were herself, Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed and Mr. Jagjivan Ram. The invisible two-thirds of the iceberg syndicate consisted of her communist-lining friends donning the respectable mantle of progressivism. The Prime Minister's preciseness was only to the extent of making a bid for total subservience to her personality. The so-called 10-point programme was packaged in the form of "Stray Thoughts" which she chose to write to her intimate friend and syndicate member, Mr. Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed, and the High Command of her party was supposed to be honoured with a carbon copy of these "stray thoughts" for a serious discussion. She had no candidate in mind for the Presidentship. She had herself suggested Sanjiva Reddy, the Speaker as the President, but sulked and fumed when Sanjiva Reddy was nominated as the party candidate for Presidentship. She lost all her sense of restraint, dignity of office, and lashed out at her party colleagues, promising to "show them" what she was capable of. Right from that time, this "hellish fury of a woman scorned" has marked her behaviour throughout. It was not her nationalisation of banks that brought forth any difficulties. It was the retaliatory dismissal of her Deputy Prime Minister that indicated

her vindictiveness. Though personally many tears might not have been shed over Mr. Morarji Desai and his dismissal, the process caused deep anxiety and concern to all men concerned with decent norms of organizational behaviour, and rudimentary disciplines. What the Prime Minister could do unceremoniously to a Deputy Prime Minister became frightful when contemplated in relation to persons of smaller status. The Prime Minister made it abundantly evident that after the Bangalore session she was going to build a super syndicate of her own sycophants and satellites. The next move of hers was to play around with the Presidential contest. As Mr. Sanjiva Reddy now reveals it, and is not denied by the Prime Minister, he was made the scapegoat cynically in her unilateral declaration of war against the party High Command. Constant repetition of the term "syndicate" to portray the leaders of the Working Committee helped to provide an imagery in which the Prime Minister appeared as the innocent victim of an alleged coterie of party hatchetmen. In such a climate, she worked like a beaver to defeat the party candidate and ensure the success of Mr. V. V. Giri, the Opposition party candidate. After signing the nomination papers of Mr. Sanjiva Reddy, the Prime Minister had no qualms of conscience to cynically peddle conscience-voting and disrupt Congress Party ranks. What is surprising is not the fact that she succeeded in her disruption, but the extent of consolidation that the party was still able to demonstrate, notwithstanding the massive effort by the Prime Minister to "rule or ruin the party" following the same strategy that Marxists adopt towards non-communist organisations.

After the installation of Mr. V. V. Giri and certification of "darling daughtership", the Prime Minister took a breathing spell to survey the scene and assess the extent of the devastation she had done of the Congress Party. She still found the main edifice fairly intact. Then came the Tamilnad developments. Mr. C. Subramaniam resigned from the presidentship of Tamilnad Congress in protest at the stance of Mr. Kamaraj and ranged himself publicly against Kamaraj and in favour of the Prime Minister. The Congress President was given a note by the party secretariat concerning the status of Mr. C. Subramaniam as a member of the Working Committee after his resignation. Earlier the Prime Minister and her syndicate had resorted to the technique of "Zinoveiv Letters" to wriggle out of their commitment to support Sanjiva Reddy. The "Zinoveiv Letters" were a non-existent phantom invoked and used to damn the opponents and, after the damage had been successfully done,

admitted ruefully that they did not exist. To ensure Sanjiva Reddy's defeat, the Prime Minister's syndicate resorted to the charge that the Congress President had sought the assistance of Jana Sangh and Swatantra. After poor Sanjiva Reddy was defeated and the Congress President pinned down the accusers to prove their accusation, the Prime Minister's syndicate, like the cats that had swallowed the canaries, smugly replied that they might have been mistaken! In the same way, when the Subramaniam episode developed, the Prime Minister and her syndicate felt this could be used as an opportunity to isolate the High Command leaders further. Earlier, under Chavan's initiative, a "Unity" resolution had been adopted. At that time, the Prime Minister was very uncomfortable with Chavan and Sukhadia lining up with the party leaders. The Subramaniam episode was now utilised to project another "Zinoveiv letter" type of incident. Chavan and Sukhadia fell neatly into this trap and without retaining any options for himself, his base and his bargaining power, Chavan caved in and became a part of the Prime Minister's syndicate in the only way and in the only terms he could be admitted, namely as a sycophant or satellite.

In the meantime, the Prime Minister summarily informed four junior Ministers that she wanted their resignations, on the lines of her treatment of Morarji Desai. While doing this crassest form of hatchetery, and dictatorial bossism, she successfully unleashed a thick smoke-screen accusing the Congress Party leaders of "bossism" and juxtaposed "bossism" with "democracy". In an exclusive interview to the Italian Communist Party journal *L'Unita*, the Prime Minister said that the present political struggle was not a personal but a policy issue, "between socialism and conservative forces". "When I nationalised the 14 largest banks, a violent campaign against me instantly was unleashed in the big privately-owned newspapers. The struggle is not easy", she said.

With the claims she made of maximum following amongst the Congress Party rank-and-file delegates, the most elementary thing the Prime Minister should have done as a democrat was to attend the duly-constituted Working Committee and AICC meetings and using her majority overthrow the "conservative" leadership. Her refusal to do this indicates many things eloquently. The first is her contempt for democratic procedures and a preference for *coup de etat* on the lines of her Marxist friends. Even more important than this is the demonstrated fact that the Prime Minister has undertaken on to herself the supreme and historic mission of demolishing the Congress Party and on its ashes, so to say, build herself up as the new Indian Redeemer, in the same pattern as the deposed Kwame Nkrumah.

The manner in which an important member of the Prime Minister's syndicate stood exposed in the Rajya Sabha over filing of tax returns and the studied silence of the Prime Minister and her colleague involved in this, the futile attempt of Mr. P. C. Sethi to pass on everything to the mute and anonymous Income-tax Officer, represented the levels of cynicism to which the Prime Minister and her syndicate had sunk. Whatever might have been the shortcomings of her father, Jawaharlal would never consciously put up with such low standards.

India is on the threshold of new political developments, many of them likely to be convulsive. The only thing that can be said in favour of the Prime Minister is that by demonstrating the highest degree of cynicism and *Blitz*-certified hatchet politics, she has provided valuable empiric evidence of what anarchic politics can be. She has demonstrated eloquently what a preview of Marxist take-over can be like in terms of treatment of those who may not support ruling hatchet-men. She has contributed to political education as touchingly referred to in the statement by Mr. Bakar Ali Mirza, M.P. from Telengana. She has demonstrated the art of political power play to men who believed gullibly that politics meant mere counting of heads and party manifestoes. She has contributed to spell out the issues more clearly. Politics will be less hypocritical after all these developments. For this unconscious contribution, the Prime Minister deserves plaudits. Her group alone can be called the real "syndicate" because it consists of total conformists and sycophants. The alleged syndicate consists of divergent men with divergent views, ideologically comprising of right, centre and left. The only issue on which the High Command members are united is the preservation of the party. After expulsion of the Prime Minister, the party had differences over whether Dr. Ram Subhag Singh should be made the leader or Mr. Morarji Desai. Such democratic choice cannot be available in the Prime Ministerial camp. *That* is the real syndicate and real Bossism indeed!

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# The German Miracle

Arvind A. Deshpande

**T**O the world outside the defeat of the Christian Democrats, *Der Alte's* (Dr. Konrad Adenauer's) party, in the recent election in West Germany, is almost a political miracle or, shall we say, a prelude to a miracle yet to come, though the Germans themselves expected this. The victory of the Social Democrats and the Free Democrats has been welcomed everywhere and the enthusiasm it has generated compares to a degree with the enthusiasm the world at large showed when the late President John Kennedy took over the U.S. administration with his "New Frontiersmen". For the first time the German election has captured popular imagination. Dr. Konrad Adenauer's rule was like the rule of a grandfather in a family in which the young could hardly be interested, even if the grandfather was compared with Bismarck. Dr. Erhard was respected but then all talk centred round economics in his days. Then followed sheer boredom, relieved occasionally by the East German Government's antics.

And now comes the brave "Berliner" Herr Willy Brandt who talks of a "New Germany". All those who believe in liberalism, social justice and democracy could not have wished for a better combination or coalition—the Social Democrats and the Free Democrats. How nice it would be if one had such a coalition in India at the helm of affairs! Any way, in Germany, apart from Herr Brandt, there are many new and popular men in government, such as Herr Walter Scheel, a familiar and respected name to Liberals all over the world, Professor Dahrendorf of Konstanz University, a brilliant sociologist and politician, Herr Wehner and others.

For long the national interests and ambitions of the German people have been allowed to operate within the rigid framework of European integration and military alliances. Now it appears, West Germany is about to begin an earnest search for its own detente. Herr Brandt has since 1966 been in favour of an attempt to normalise relations with the Iron Curtain countries. He will now press his ideas more vigorously.

West Germany is the pivot country and the most advanced economy in Europe. Almost all the countries in Europe including the U.S.S.R. have always been afraid of the German nationalism, though, as Chancellor Brandt has said, Germany had given up the idea of achieving the kind of world power in the old sense of the term, with the military attributes and so on. But now there is a hopeful new mood. In fact, Poland which suffered most under Nazi occupation has already started responding to the overtures of Herr Brandt. Even the Soviet Union, which branded every regime in West Germany as a neo-Nazi regime, has taken a wait and see approach. Then there is that talk

about European security which implies dissolution of the NATO alliance and the ultimate withdrawal from Europe of the U.S.A., which is what the Soviet Union has been working at for years. General De Gaulle had helped them in this to a large extent but as I have maintained earlier, not France but Germany is the key factor in European politics.

Many Americans and West European politicians understandably view Herr Brandt's attempt to find "an opening to the East" with suspicion. But wasn't all this inevitable? The new mood of isolationism in the U.S.A. and its keen desire to improve relations with the U.S.S.R. should naturally result in West Germany working for its own detente. It would, however, be wrong to consider the new policy of Herr Brandt and Herr Scheel as a reaction to the U.S. or for that matter, the British or the French desire to come to terms with the U.S.S.R. It really comes from the new mood of self-confidence and self-assurance in Bonn. The Germans have not been anti-American as the French have been. France, U.K. sometimes are too sentimental about their culture but the Germans have shown greater realism and more dignity after the war though they are also very proud of their culture and achievements, and feel deeply on the German unification question. In fact this sense of self respect and dignity will probably lead to a better appreciation by others of the German question. Herr Brandt will succeed in this without giving the impression of anti-Americanism or pro-Communism like General De Gaulle. The modification of the Hallstein doctrine brings back memories of the late President Kennedy's change of policy towards the third world.

It might be asked why Herr Brandt is so keen on coming to terms with the Communists. No one can doubt his commitment to democracy and freedom. And one cannot deny that there are great and exciting possibilities in his attempt to bring East Europe closer to the West. The two Germanys are destined to come together. It is also equally true that the Communists in East Germany will be the last to reconcile themselves to a united Germany which will only strengthen the cause of freedom and democracy. So it is quite possible that the erstwhile Mayor of West Berlin may have in this process, to give up West Berlin to East Germany to get back the whole of East Germany later. At the moment no one in Germany, not even Chancellor Brandt, can breathe this kind of thought to himself. In any case all those who wish well of all the Germans should be happy about these new developments and prospects and about the slow but sure march of the Germans towards their natural destiny.

## PARALLEL FROM CEYLON

**M**RS. SIRIMA BANDARANAIKE, leader of the Opposition in Ceylon, believes there is a parallel between the problems which have been confronting Prime Minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi in India recently and those she herself faced before her fall from office as Premier of Ceylon. Mrs. Bandaranaike publicly expressed her thoughts on this subject in an article entitled "Indira has to keep vigil on the Frontiers of Freedom", published some weeks ago in the *Ceylon Daily News*.

Mrs. Bandaranaike's motive in taking the unusual course of writing such an article is certainly linked with the fact that the next general elections in Ceylon are due to be held next August. She no doubt hopes that by drawing a parallel between herself and Mrs. Gandhi at a time when Mrs. Gandhi is in power and embarking, in an atmosphere of high optimism, on an alliance with the left, she will raise her stock with the electorate in Ceylon and make her own alliances acceptable even though they proved so disastrous to her at the last elections.

There was also a feeling of euphoria in Ceylon when in June 1964 Mrs. Bandaranaike, then Prime Minister and leader of the "middle path" Sri Lanka Freedom Party, joined in coalition with the Trotskyist Lanka Samajist Party (LSSP) and appointed one of its leaders, Dr. N. M. Perera, to be Minister of Finance. This move followed what had been a period of decline

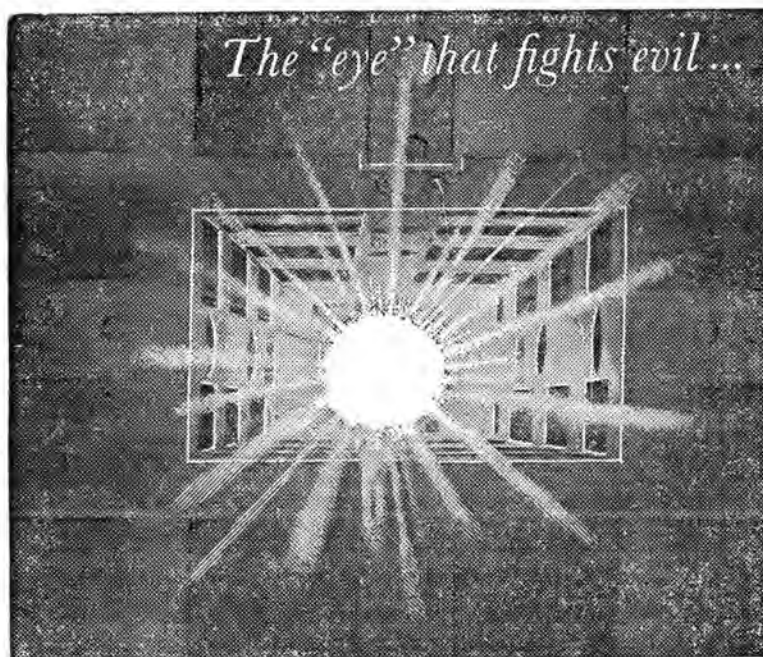
and unpopularity for the Government and it looked like a dramatic attempt to stimulate popular enthusiasm.

Even the potential victims of the new policies rejoiced, or at least interpreted them optimistically, and refused to be shaken by mass demonstrations organized by LSSP which were meant to warn the "reactionaries". Business circles welcomed "bold leadership" at last. Others said that socialist measures were now going to be in the hands of people who believed in socialism, and public expectations rose.

At first the Marxist ministers avoided provocative statements and actions, but Dr. Perera's budget in July soon gave them away with its doctrinaire and blatantly anti-private-enterprise provisions. Disillusion, heightened by the minister's failure to bring about any reduction in the cost of living and the renewal of labour unrest, had already set in by March 1965 leading to Mrs. Bandaranaike's defeat at the general elections in that month.

The *Ceylon Daily News* at the time (26 March 1965) thought that the "greatest single factor" responsible for this "was the threat to democracy, stability and the maintenance of law and order her regime posed—primarily because it was swayed by her Marxist colleagues, those who had been invited as "partners" and ended up by threatening to swallow up the SFLP and the whole country as well".

—*Swiss Press Review and News Report*



*The "eye" that fights evil...*

The glaring "eye" of the Cobalt Bomb helps fight cancer. It's one of the many modern weapons used in the world-wide crusade against this dread disease. In India too, the battle is on. Research is helping find a cure for cancer. But research costs money. A lot of it, in fact. You can help with your mite. Every rupee you give will help develop new medicines, new techniques to help save lives.

Remember, cancer is curable if detected early. WATCH FOR THESE DANGER SIGNALS: 1. Any sore that does not heal/ 2. A lump or thickening in the breast or elsewhere/ 3. Unusual bleeding or discharge/ 4. Any change in a wart or mole/ 5. Persistent indigestion or difficulty in swallowing/ 6. Persistent hoarseness or cough/ 7. Any change in normal bowel habits. If you notice any of these 7 Danger Signals—consult a doctor AT ONCE.

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CANCER SOCIETY, Hospital Avenue,  
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ENTERPRISES**

CMTI-3-101

# Peaceful Transition To Communism?

V. B. Karnik

**T**ACTICS of communist parties change from time to time according to the needs of the international communist movement, though the goal always remains the same, namely, communisation of the country concerned. Dr. Fic's book\* deals extensively with declarations on tactics adopted by the Communist Party of India in the period between 1951 and 1958 ending with the fifth congress of the party held in Amritsar in April 1958 where the final decision was taken on the tactic of peaceful transition to Communism. According to the author, the party was moving in that direction from 1951 onwards when the so-called Ranadive line of armed revolt was dropped after very disastrous experience.

The book deals only with published declarations of the party and party leaders from which extensive quotations are given practically on every page. In that respect it will serve as a useful reference book to all those who desire to study those declarations. It does not, however, deal with the actions of the party or party workers which are always a much more reliable guide to its intentions and designs. It does not also deal with the submerged part of the iceberg consisting of secret notes and messages and confabulations which give many a time a different meaning and direction to published declarations. For example, the Madurai Congress of the party held in December 1953 adopted a resolution on the political situation. On the surface it was an innocuous resolution. But its real meaning was clear to those who knew of the secret document "the tactical line" brought by the leaders from Moscow and made available to a select few in the party. It is, no doubt, difficult to get these materials. But the fact that they exist should make one wonder if the published declarations tell the full story.

The fact that stands out through the book is the complete subservience of the Indian party to the dictates of Moscow. The left adventurist Ranadive line was adopted in 1948 in pursuance of the Zadnov thesis. It was abandoned in 1951 on the basis of advice received through Rajani Palme Dutt. Later, the line of peaceful transition was adopted in accordance with the decisions taken at the twentieth congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. The changing conditions in the international communist movement, now represented by the two rival centres of Moscow and Peking, are exerting a constant pressure upon the line. The exercise of pressure is easy now as leaders of the Communist Party of India go to Russia, China and other communist countries many a time for one reason or another, not excluding medical treatment.

\* *Peaceful Transition to Communism in India*, Victor M. Fic, Nachiketa Publications, Rs. 50.

The tactic of peaceful transition that is now in operation according to the decisions of the twentieth congress of the CPSU as elaborated by the Declaration of 1957 and the Statement of 1960 does not exclude non-parliamentary mass struggle. As a matter of fact the Declaration of 1957 calls upon Communists to "transform Parliament from an instrument serving the class interests of the bourgeoisie into an instrument serving the working people, launch a non-parliamentary mass struggle, smash the resistance of the reactionary forces and create the necessary conditions for peaceful realization of the socialist revolution." It states further: "In the event of the ruling classes resorting to violence against people, the possibility of non-peaceful transition to socialism should be borne in mind. Leninism teaches, and experience confirms, that the ruling classes never relinquish power voluntarily. In this case the degree of bitterness and the forms of the class struggle will depend not so much on the proletariat as on the resistance put by the reactionary circles to the will of the overwhelming majority of the people". To make the position clearer two Russian authors state in an authoritative manner: "No Marxist expects to achieve the victory of socialism solely with the help of the ballot box; what is meant is broad revolutionary actions of masses outside parliament, the class struggle inevitable everywhere which, under definite conditions, may lead to the utilization of parliament for the peaceful development of the socialist revolution..." Indian democrats should feel highly obliged to Dr. Fic for bringing out this hidden meaning of the tactic of peaceful transition. What is happening in Bengal and Kerala is a faithful implementation of that real meaning of the tactic.

Ministers and other dignitaries of the Government of India feel highly elated at the praises that Russian rulers shower upon them and at the red carpet receptions that they receive when they go to that country. They will be well-advised to bear in mind the following observations of Dr. Fic: "While the Kremlin praised India and her premier in the banquet halls, Russian and Chinese theorists cast a different light upon them in their writings. Looking at them through the prism of Marxist dialectics they considered them as temporary allies who at the moment play a vital role in the Kremlin's grand strategy, but whose usefulness would shortly be outlived. Accordingly, Moscow must be ready to recognize such a moment as soon as it arrives to throw its support behind the communist party, which always has been for the Kremlin the only and true representative of the Indian people".

In the latter part of the book Dr. Fic has discussed the problems of Sino-Soviet tensions and their impact

(Continued on page 11)

# Reviews

## *Fundamental Rights and Amendment of the Indian Constitution*

S. P. Sathe, University of Bombay, Rs. 4.

**W**AR-DRUMS between lovers of freedom and democracy on one part and fanatics of totalitarianism and dictatorship on the other part are beating louder and louder everyday. The latter are daily becoming more assertive and aggressive and are readying themselves to smother our nascent democracy.

In India, democracy is the deliberate choice of a few. It has been institutionalized in the form of our Constitution, the corner stone of which is the Fundamental Rights. It has yet to become a living thing for large sections of our people. As it is put in practice, especially in the context of the backwardness of our country and the new dynamism of social, political, economic and cultural developments, it produces stresses and strains, pulls and pressures.

The present controversy regarding the nature of the Fundamental Rights as enshrined in the Constitution and the question whether they are inviolable and whether Parliament has got the right to take away or abridge them has brought to the fore several far-reaching issues.

The majority decision of the Supreme Court in the case of *Golak Nath v. State of Punjab* in February 1967, reversing its earlier decisions in *Shankari Prasad v. Union of India, 1951*, and *Sajjan Singh v. State of Rajasthan, 1965*, has denied to Parliament the right to take away or abridge Fundamental Rights. Shri Nath Pai's Bill to amend the Constitution seeks to reverse that decision. Major political parties are divided on this issue. The Congress, P.S.P., and C.P.I. support the Bill, while the Swatantra Party and the Jan Sangh oppose it. The controversy has taken an acute form and in course of time it may become a hot issue for mass agitation.

At this juncture, dispassionate and scholarly opinion of an academician is very welcome for a balanced understanding of the issues. Dr. S. P. Sathe of the Department of Law, University of Bombay, has rendered service in this context by writing a thought-provoking and erudite treatise on the problem. His monograph is a valuable reference book for all those concerned with the future of democracy. He has examined from the standpoint of constitutional theory and practice the major inarticulate premise of the transcendental nature of Fundamental Rights and their inviolable nature on which legal interpretation of the Supreme Court was posited and the interpretation itself. He has also assessed the implications of the

postulates laid down by the Supreme Court for future constitutional developments. He has further discussed various problems dealing with the scope and power of Parliament to amend the Constitution, the doctrine of prospective over-ruling, the nature of Fundamental Rights and the ultimate sanction for the survival of democracy.

The author is of the opinion that rights of various natures incorporated in the Constitution should not be treated in a rigid manner and that they are always subject to changing human conditions. So Parliament as the tribune of the people has got the inherent right to amend all provisions of the Constitution including the Fundamental Rights. However, while amending the Constitution including the Rights, the ideas of individual freedom, secularism and egalitarianism and the values such as liberty, justice, equality and fraternity should not be watered down by any constitutional amendment. This limitation is, however, only a rule of political morality and its sanction lies not in the judicial process but in the good sense of the people, vigilance of public opinion and rational and scientific outlook of the people.

The author emphasizes the point that, since the hold of the Congress is waning as shown by the Fourth General Election and as more and more States are ruled by non-Congress Governments, the country will experience a period of increasing instability; there will be greater pulls and pressures and tensions from various directions. In such an eventuality, Parliament may not be able to function as the sole guardian and watchdog of the Fundamental Rights of the people. So the Supreme Court as the lawful guardian of the constitution will have to play an increasingly assertive role. From that angle, the decision in *Golak Nath's* case will go a long way to preserve the ideals and values of the democratic system. Moreover, one can say that the Constitution itself provides sufficient scope for a more liberal and broader interpretation of Fundamental Rights so as not to interfere with the transformation of society in the desired democratic direction.

The monograph avoids legal jargon and cliches so as to make it easily readable. It contains at the end a nice summary of the basic contentions of the author and also a list of the cases on basic constitutional problems in our country and abroad and a bibliography.

M. B. SHAH

## *The Strategy of Food and Agriculture in India*

Edited by V. R. Mutalik Desai, Lalvani Publishing House, Rs. 22.50.

The book is a collection of essays on the important problem of food and agriculture. The essays are written by eminent academicians. They give a comprehensive picture of the problem. But somehow the col-

lection misses the point. One would have liked it to suggest the strategy to be pursued for tackling the problem or at least to assess in an objective manner the utility of the various measures adopted in the last few years. A good deal is being talked about the "green revolution". A discussion of its prospects and possibilities would have been very welcome.

The book begins with a discussion of the food problem. The discussion leads to the following conclusion formulated by Dr. Mutalik Desai at the end of his contribution: "the problem of food in India has different dimensions. The availability of food is at the outset low in quantity and dietary. The defective distribution system and political pulls have enhanced the crisis as well as prices. The food problem in India is mainly due to the slow growth of food production, low yield, malnutrition, under-nourishment, controlled distribution, wastages, food habits, rising prices and most important is the absence of a national Food Policy".

The book then takes up for consideration the problem of agriculture. While stressing the importance of agriculture in any plan for economic development, Dr. Rau has given a rapid review of thinking on land-ownership from the ancient to modern times. There are then chapters on land reforms, sprinkler irrigation, marketing, and research and training. They provide a good deal of information which will be of use to students.

K.V.B.

### *Between the Lines*

Kuldip Nayar, Allied Publishers, Rs. 16.

**M**R. KULDIP NAYAR is an eminent journalist. He had unrivalled opportunities of seeing things from inside and at close quarters as the Press Officer of late Mr. Govind Vallabh Pant and late Mr. Lal Bahadur Shastri. The book is a vivid record of what Mr. Nayar observed and noted from that vantage position.

The book begins with the struggle for succession that began immediately after Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's death and ends with a diary of developments during the Chinese invasion that the author had kept. In between there are chapters on the language controversy, devaluation and relations with the U.S.S.R. There is nothing startlingly new in the information supplied by the book. But it is always interesting to watch the process of decision-making and to know how the various personalities involved in it behaved from time to time. Mr. Nayar's book provides that inside view of about half a dozen or so decisions of national importance taken during the last few years. That will be its appeal to students of contemporary Indian affairs.

N.D.

## **Letter to the Editor**

### **Literacy and Franchise**

Sir,

The unsettled state of affairs in most of the States makes one ponder over the causes and consequences of this chaotic condition. It is evident that political reforms have out-run literary and economic conditions in India. The orderly progress of parliamentary democracy in Western countries has been primarily due to the gradual progress of enfranchisement keeping pace with the progress of literacy and development of economic conditions. Adult franchise was introduced in India when the percentage of literacy was only 14. It was a hazardous experiment. Time has proved the risks involved. Though literacy has increased to 35 per cent since Independence it cannot be said that it is yet safe for democracy. Nearly 350 millions, mostly adults, are illiterates still. They are also poor. So they easily become a prey to all kinds of wild propaganda designed to mislead them and secure their votes.

In spite of the great drive for the spread of literacy the percentage of increase during the two decades of Independence is only 20 per cent or one per cent per year. This is far from satisfactory. The best incentive for the literacy drive will be to revise the franchise and base it on a literacy qualification. It will induce people to acquire literacy which in turn will contribute to the stability of political thought and action. With literacy so low as at present among the voters, a successful working of parliamentary democracy is well nigh impossible. The unrest at all levels of society does not auger well for the working of our democratic Constitution. If things are allowed to proceed in this chaotic manner people will seek security of life and property in other forms of administration. Let us therefore boldly adopt a franchise based on literacy instead of merely on age.

Ernakulam  
November 9

E. P. VARGESE  
Advocate

(Continued from page 9)

upon the policies of the Communist Party of India. He has referred in brief to the split in the party. The topic, however, is so important that it merits fullscale discussion which was not possible as the book stops at 1959. Since then many things have happened and to that extent the book is dated. All the same, it will be useful to scholars who desire to pour over communist writings and ascertain their exact implications. The line of peaceful co-existence or of peaceful transition to Communism suits the present interests of Russia as a nation-State. How far it will serve the cause of Communism and how far, in the teeth of opposition from China, Russia will find it possible to impose it upon communist parties in Asia and Africa is an entirely different matter. Dr. Fic has neither raised nor discussed that issue of great relevance to the contemporary political situation.

# With Many Voices

Moans round with many voices. Come, my friends,  
"Tis not too late to seek a newer world."  
—Tennyson.

Murders, violent clashes, looting, gherao and forcible occupation of land have become the order of the day in West Bengal.

—Ajoy Mukherjee, Chief Minister,  
*Indian Express*, November 12.

In spite of the crisis, and the almost calamitous knocks, the Congress era is nowhere near the end.

—D. K. Rangnekar, *Economic Times*,  
November 14.

We belong to the West. But we have to make our contribution in trying to reduce tensions between West and East.

—Willy Brandt, West German Chancellor,  
*Time*, November 14.

Inaction, thy name is the Home Ministry of India!

—*Swarajya*, November 15.

To defend India's attempted presence at Rabat in the name of secularism is to make nonsense of that concept.

—*Thought*, November 15.

The expulsion of Alexander Solzhenitsyn from the Russian Union of Writers last week was, like most assaults by dictators on artists, at once sinister and farcical.

—*Observer* (London), November 16.

To the Editor,  
FREEDOM FIRST,  
C/o Democratic Research Service,  
127, Mahatma Gandhi Road,  
Bombay 1.

Please enrol me as a subscriber to FREEDOM FIRST.

I remit the annual subscription of Rs. 5.00

Name: .....

Address: .....

Signature

The stage is being set for the descent of mobocracy on India.

—Frank Moraes, *Indian Express*, November 17.

It is still more than fourteen years to 1984, but there is already something unmistakably Orwellian about the Indian scene.

—Inder Malhotra, *Statesman*, November 17.

They are all socialists now of some brand or other.

—*Economic Times*, November 18.

For fifty years now society in the U.S.S.R. has been living under the law of caste and privilege, having in essence installed a caste system.

—Svetlana Allilueva, *Opinion*, November 18.

Hinduism has two great qualities — tolerance and absorption.

—K. Subha Rao, *White Star*, November 1969.

Mrs. Gandhi has shown that she can mobilise the votes; she has yet to prove that she can mobilise the nation's resources.

—Shamlal, *Times of India*, November 20.

Mrs. Indira Gandhi will now head a sort of undeclared United Front of her splitter Congressmen, with DMK, Akalis, Muslim League and a sprinkling of Independents.

—*March of the Nation*, November 22.

To wreck a dominant political party in a democracy means only two things: chaos and national crises.

—*Current*, November 22.

Dissent is permissible, but law and order must be maintained.

—David Lawrence, *U.S. News & World Report*,  
November 24.

Smt. Gandhi has given a new face to her Congress. But it is not enough. What is required is a new soul which will make all the difference.

—*Janata*, November 23.