

Clouds of War

V. B. Karnik

CLOUDS of war are hanging over the country. They have been hanging for quite some time, but in recent days they have assumed a much more threatening form. As things stand at present, a war may break out any day.

Pakistan has massed its army on the Indian border and in reply India has done the same thing. Border skirmishes have been taking place every day and there are reports from time to time of air space violations and of movements of small groups of soldiers across the frontier. If only an excuse were needed any one of these numerous incidents can be used as an excuse for declaring a war.

In India, there is plenty of pressure upon the Government to go in for a war. War is advocated as the only effective way of solving the problem of refugees. It is advocated also as a means for teaching a lesson to Pakistan and for hastening its disintegration. The Government has so far withstood this tremendous pressure, thanks mainly to the farsighted and resolute attitude adopted by the Prime Minister. But it is difficult to say how long it will be possible for the Government to resist the tide of public opinion.

There is little reliable news about what is happening in Pakistan. There is definite news, however, that a hate-India campaign is being vigorously developed and that the activities of the Mukti Bahini in Bangla Desh are being represented as the activities of "Indian agents". This is enough to arouse public opinion in West Pakistan and make it clamour for a war. Moreover, the military junta may not itself be averse to a war. It may seek to save its face through a war; or, faced with defeat and ruin, it may use war as a desperate gambler's last throw.

If Pakistan begins a war India will, of course, have no alternative but to fight it and fight it to the bitter end. There can be no doubt that the Indian army and the Indian people will give a good account of themselves and make Pakistan regret its decision to begin the war. But it will be unrealistic to suppose that it will be an easy walk-over. The Pakistani armed forces are tough and well supplied with arms and ammunition.

It will be a bitter fight resulting in tremendous destruction on both sides. In the end India may be in a little better position but, in modern times, no war ends in a victory and no territorial gains of a permanent nature can be made on the basis of force of arms.

It is difficult, therefore, to see how a war will solve the problem of refugees. It will, on the other hand, make its solution more difficult. Refugees will not go back during the days of the war and the destruction that may be wrought by the war will make their return more difficult for a long time even after its end. People who have left their hearths and homes as a result of oppression and fear do not return until a civil administration of their confidence is re-established. War will not hasten, will rather postpone the rise of that administration. Instead of accelerating, it will delay the return of the refugees. Whatever else it may or may not do, war will not serve that purpose which is supposed to be its main end.

War will be far more disastrous to Pakistan. In the first place, it will not succeed in retaining its Eastern part. War will destroy all possibility of keeping it in Pakistan. In the next place, it will inflict irreparable damage on the Western part. Pakistan has already lost heavily as a result of the revolt in Bangla Desh. The revolt may spread to other areas and the integrity of West Pakistan itself may be in danger. No responsible Pakistani can, therefore, be unconscious of the fearful consequences of war and think of it without a shudder. But he must also know that it cannot be avoided unless a political solution to the problem of Bangla Desh is found as early as possible. Howsoever difficult it may be, a political solution is not impossible even today. India has made it clear several times that it is not interested in a particular type of solution. Whatever solution is acceptable to the elected representatives of Bangla Desh and ensures the return of the refugees will be welcomed by her. It is the duty of sane men in both countries to work for that type of political solution with all the force and influence that they can command. It will be disastrous if they surrender their better judgment and get carried away by the war hysteria that is developing on both sides.

A far bigger responsibility is cast upon the United Nations and the big nations of the world like the United States, Soviet Russia, China and England. Instead of rushing with relief and advice after the fires of war have heavily damaged the two countries, let them take immediate measures to stop the outbreak of the conflagration. The conflagration is not breaking suddenly.

Ample notice and warning have been given to all concerned. If, inspite of this, they do not act, they will be as responsible as others for the tragedy that may overtake the peoples of India and Pakistan.

They must tell the Government of Pakistan in plain and unambiguous words that the world community cannot tolerate and remain indifferent to the suppression of a large mass of humanity and denial to it of the elementary rights of citizenship and that the Government must immediately change its way and seek a political settlement with the elected representatives of the majority of its population. Unless Pakistan accepts this advice and implements it, all aid, economic, military and even humanitarian must immediately come to an end. The world community represented by the United Nations and the big powers is in a position to exert such pressure and avert the war. Let that pressure be exerted now as rigorously as possible.

What India has done so far is unique in many respects. She threw open her doors to the millions of refugees who were running away from mass murder and mass terror. For months she has given them shelter, and food which she could hardly afford. There was no obligation upon her to admit the refugees and to look after them. It was a great act of humanity, charity and faith. It must be realised, however, that the strain is now proving unbearable. The patience that India has exercised in the face of the grave burden that Pakistan has imposed upon her is also remarkable. The recent tour of the Prime Minister has served well to bring these facts to the pointed attention of the statesmen of European nations and of the United States of America. India is insisting upon a political solution as that alone could, as the Prime Minister has stated in her latest communication to the Secretary General of the United Nations, "bring normalcy to that 'tormented' region."

K. K. SINHA

It is with deep regret that we learnt of the tragic death, in a car accident near Kharagpur, of our esteemed correspondent and dear friend, Mr. K. K. Sinha of Calcutta. Mr. Sinha has written extensively for *Freedom First* on the political problems of Bengal. He was a wellknown political worker from his early youth. He was one of the earliest adherents of late Mr. M. N. Roy and worked with him closely for the development of the Radical Humanist Movement. He was for some years closely associated with the Indian Committee for Cultural Freedom. He was an ardent democrat and worked hard for the growth and consolidation of democratic forces in Bengal. We pay our homage to his memory and send our deep condolences to his wife and daughter.

—Editor

stop the further influx of refugees and enable those now in India to return." She has expressed her belief that "statesmen of goodwill all over the world" are convinced of that fact and has offered India's support to any efforts that the Secretary General may make "to bring about a political settlement". It is for world statesmen now to justify the Prime Minister's belief and help her avert the danger of war.

Liberals and Proposed Press Law

AS a result of a discussion among journalists, publicists and intellectuals at the India International Centre in New Delhi on November 14, 1971, there was unanimous agreement that the proposed legislation allegedly for diffusion of ownership of the press would not only not serve the professed purpose but was both unnecessary and undesirable. It would destroy the better organised newspapers and damage the freedom of the press as a whole.

The occasion was a one-day seminar sponsored by the Indian Liberal Group, a non-partisan organisation affiliated to the Liberal International, the world union of Liberal parties and groups with its headquarters in London. The participants in the seminar noted that the Press Council, which was the body charged with an investigation of these problems, was completely bypassed. This should now be rectified. The Council should be consulted and asked to investigate the matter. Until its report is received and published for discussion, there could obviously be no question of legislation on the subject.

While there is no monopoly within the Indian Press and the individual reader enjoys freedom of choice, the reader's right to good newspapers should be placed in the centre of the picture. There is need for improving the quality and professional competence of newspapers.

There was a consensus that owners, editors and journalists in each newspaper should recognise their common interest of maintaining the independence of the press and get together so as not to allow such domestic problems as they may have to be made the excuse for outside interference, whether legislative or otherwise.

Mr. Frank Moraes and Mr. M. R. Masani took the Chair at the afternoon and morning sessions respectively and Mr. A. G. Noorani acted as Rapporteur. Among others who participated were Mr. Asok Chanda, Mrs. Kamaladevi Chattopadhyaya, Mr. C. R. Irani, Mr. Inderjit, Mr. D. R. Mankekar, Mr. Asoka Mehta, Mr. D. N. Patodia, Mrs. Nayantara Sahgal, Mr. A. D. Mani, M.P., Mr. A. K. Sen, Mr. R. Talib, Mr. V. M. Tarkunde, Col. H. R. Pasricha, Prof. B. R. Shenoy and Dr. J. D. Sethi.

Notes

Ruling Congress Violence

WHAT the adventurists of the Ruling Congress did in New Delhi to take possession of the office of the Old Congress at Jantar Mantar Road has been roundly condemned by all sections of public opinion, except of course the loyalists who must support their party, right or wrong. This is clear from the reactions of the press as well as the debate which took place in the Lok Sabha on the basis of a motion deploring the failure of the Delhi police to take preventive action. The motion had no chance of success, but the opinions expressed in the debate by all opposition groups should serve as a warning to the Government that unlawful and violent acts will not be tolerated by public opinion, howsoever highplaced the perpetrators may be. It is to be hoped that the lesson will not be lost on the leaders of the Ruling Party.

The Old Congress does not, it is true, enjoy any public support. It will be best, therefore, if the leaders of that organisation take note of this fact and renounce their claim to all properties that they hold in the name of the undivided Congress. But that is no reason why members of the Ruling Congress should resort to violent and unlawful activities for taking possession of those properties. Legal remedies are open to them and they should take recourse to them. There is a greater responsibility on them to maintain and uphold the rule of law and to discourage all unlawful activities. By what some of them did in New Delhi they have damaged the reputation of their party and strengthened the suspicion prevalent in many quarters that the party's commitment to democracy is not as real as it should be.

Banning of Books

Mr Ved Mehta, the wellknown Indian author now settled in the United States, has done well to publicise the story of the treatment that his latest publication, *Portrait of India*, met with at the hands of the Customs authorities in Bombay and their superiors in New Delhi. The book, already published abroad, was scheduled to be published in India in January 1971 from imported sheets. The sheets were received in Bombay but were not released by the Customs on the ground that they contained objectionable matter.

The matter that was objected to was a map and a few statements. Some of the statements that were objected to were statements made by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Dr. Radhakrishnan and Mr. Lal Bahadur Shastri. It was ridiculous to object to the publication of those statements. The objection to the map was equally ridiculous but, in order to avoid delay, the publisher

agreed to delete it. Accordingly, the copies of the map were later destroyed by the Customs.

But that did not hasten the release of the sheets. The file went from Ministry to Ministry with the publisher making several representations and giving all explanations that he was called upon to give. In the end it was the intervention of the Prime Minister's Secretariat that proved effective and the sheets were released. But as stated by Mr. Ved Mehta, "it took almost a year's delay, countless telephone calls, telegraphic messages, conferences and paperwork" and all because of, in his words, "a misguided, overzealous Assistant Collector of Customs."

Banning of books is, in the first place, wrong and to entrust that authority to a Customs officer who is utterly incapable of judging the merits of a book is doubly wrong. This is a hangover from the British days which should be ended as early as possible.

There is a story of a similar misadventure in the case of another book, *Pakistan Crisis* by Mr. Daniel Loshak, the New Delhi correspondent of the *Daily Telegraph*, London. It is reported that pressure was exerted upon an Indian publisher to dissuade him from publishing an Indian edition of the book. This story is not as authenticated as the first. But, if it is true, it is an arbitrary and undesirable use of authority to prevent the publication of a book.

In a free society writers should be free to publish their books. If they violate any laws they can be punished for those violations. To ban publication of books is to encroach upon the freedom of writers and also of readers and to subvert a basic principle of a free society.

Sino-Indian Relations

There is a possibility now of improvement of Sino-Indian relations. Since the conflict of 1962, there have been hardly any relations between the two countries, though neither went to the length of cutting off diplomatic relations.

In the last year or so there has been a distinct improvement in the foreign policy of China. She has been trying to improve her relations with many countries. Her relations with the United States, which was considered to be her enemy No. 1, have in recent months undergone a distinct change for the better. There appears to be a desire now of doing the same thing in the case of India.

There is no reason why we should not take advantage of this new mood and normalise our relations with China. The Prime Minister and the External Affairs Minister have welcomed this new trend.

It is to be hoped, however that we shall not swing to the other extreme and think of a return to the old credulous days of Bhai-Bhaism. We should have friendly relations with all countries, more particularly our neighbours. But in no case should we be carried away by enthusiasm for any friends and neglect the defences of our country.

C. P. M. In Wilderness

R. Muthuswamy

THE Communist Party of India (Marxists) will be holding its party Congress in Madurai, South India, in December 1971. As a prelude to this Congress, the politburo of the party met in Calcutta in the first week of November to finalise the draft political resolution to be moved at the Congress. According to reports, the discussions brought about certain differences and the resolution needed drastic changes. The draft was withheld from the press. The differences entered around incorporating the tactics to be adopted in future by the party. The tactics according to the draft now released to the Press is to build up a democratic movement by approaching the cadres of other parties at various levels. This has been necessitated by the isolation of the party both nationally and internationally and the need for going on its own in future.

Mr. Namboodiripad, while he was at the commanding height of the Chief Ministership of Kerala State once remarked that when his party could achieve its objective through the ballot, it need not worry about other tactics. He stated in another context that his party was taking to parliamentary work only to wreck the parliamentary democracy. True to his words, both in Kerala and West Bengal, where the Marxist dominated ministries functioned for short time intermittently Mr. Namboodiripad and his counterpart Mr. Jyoti Basu in West Bengal did their level best to build up revolutionary potential and wreck the parliamentary system. Even their own partners could not live with these things and the ministries had to go out. Since then the mid-term Election and the plans and programmes of the New Congress removed the inhibitions of the erstwhile partners of the Marxists, particularly the Communist Party of India, and it was possible for these parties to align themselves with the New Congress. The various efforts made by the Marxists to create trouble and chaos both in Kerala and West Bengal had been thwarted and the emergence of the New Congress as a strong party even in West Bengal and Kerala has added to their woes.

Internationally, with the Soviet Union co-operating with the Communist Party of India and the Chinese Republic co-operating with the Naxalites, the Marxists have none to lean to.

Both these realities are reflected in the draft resolution of the party and the party feels the need for doing a lot of spade work depending upon its revolutionary potential, and this necessitated the call for going to the roots instead of the top. The party has realised that there was very little scope for manoeuvring

with other leftist parties politically at the summit level and it has to depend on its own.

The process of this new strategy started with the breakup of the trade union wing of the party from the All India Trade Union Congress. After the split it formed its own central federation called the Centre for Indian Trade Unions, under the chairmanship of Mr. Ranadive, who is one of the theoreticians of the party. In outlining the policy of C.I.T.U. Mr. Ranadive made it clear that the trade unions would be not so much interested in as mundane questions as 'recognition' but would use these to achieve the party's political objectives. To a certain extent the Marxists have already succeeded in the trade union front and in the Bombay area, this approach to the cadres of other parties had paid dividends. In some of the engineering establishments in Bombay, the cadre workers of the party in the unions were able to successfully resist the central leadership and come out of the A.I.T.U.C. In the recent two strikes in Bombay in the Textile Industry and the Bombay Municipal transport undertaking, the C.I.T.U. joined the fray in order to keep up its mass face. Another dress rehearsal was in the strike called all over India on 23rd November by different units and industries. Though the strike is entirely politically motivated, by influencing the various cadres in the units and industries, an economic colour has been given. Agitations on petty issues which have been started already by the cadres are kept up without settlement in order to whip up the frenzy and keep the tempo going till 23rd. The success of this one day's strike would prove to the leadership the points of vulnerability and dependability and the capacity to deliver the goods on behalf of the various cadre members. The irony of it is that none could foresee that this strike had a political overtone on the basis of a summit decision made by the Marxists at the highest level.

With regard to the New Congress, the Marxists have found that they had a formidable enemy and therefore their tactics are double-faced. While retaining their capacity and initiative to create trouble at various fronts, they would try to build a public image by supporting such progressive measures as were brought in by the New Congress.

To sum up, the offset of the resolution to be passed by the party congress and the new tactics arising out of it, the hand of Marxists may be seen more and more in various popular agitations and the cadres belonging to various other leftist parties would be made to join those agitations. Infiltration is the next logical step to this method of agitations.

The End Of The U.N.?

M. R. Masani

THREE arguments have been advanced for the admission of the Chinese Communist regime to the United Nations. The first is the doctrine of universality—that the governments of all nation States should be members of the U.N. The second is that the Mao Tse-tung regime “represents” no less than 700 million people. The third is that, as a result of its admission to the U.N., the Chinese Communist regime will cease to be a war-mongering and aggressive one and become peace-loving. It may be worth examining each of these arguments.

The U.N. Charter does not reflect the doctrine of universality. It states specifically that the U.N. is a body consisting of peace-loving States or nations and that it is incumbent on anyone who wishes to become a member to qualify by an acceptance of the principles of the Charter and a willingness to let the people of the country in question determine its government. Obviously, the Mao Tse-tung regime does not fulfil these qualifications. It has been declared an aggressor in Korea in 1950 by the General Assembly and its record of genocide in Tibet is notorious. It may, of course, be argued that there are some other members already in the U.N. who also may not qualify and therefore the Mao Tse-tung regime need not be kept out. This is like the argument that, since some undesirable characters have become members of a club, a notorious bandit should also be admitted! In fact, those who raised the cry that the admission of Communist China would promote the universality of the U.N. have felt no compunction in jettisoning that principle and voting for the expulsion of Taiwan as if that country simply does not exist! Amusingly enough, it was none other than President Nixon who once gave the best answer to the plea of universality when he said: “What was really at stake was that admitting Red China to the United Nations would be mockery of the provisions of the Charter which limits its membership to ‘peace loving nations’.”

The second argument that Mao Tse-tung’s regime represents 700 million people is of course a monstrous perversion of the truth. The Mao regime oppresses 700 million people and has been doing so for the last two decades. Radio Moscow has alleged that the Chinese dictators have exterminated 25 million of their people in the last ten years while trying to maintain their dictatorship. Undoubtedly, this is an understatement.

The terror under which the Chinese people have been enthralled has by no means eased or ended. The number of people who try to escape from this tyranny has been going up sharply during the last few months. According to an Associated Press report from Hongkong on September 6, 1971, the number of Chinese

who risked their lives to swim from the Mainland to Hongkong has increased three-fold during the first eight months of this year compared to the previous year. Half of those who tried to escape drowned or were killed by sharks. But still they came. The number of illegal entrants arrested after reaching Hongkong was 2500 compared to 900 in the first eight months of 1970. For every entrant who was arrested, it is estimated that four more evaded the police. The number of Mainland Chinese who risked their lives to escape from Communist tyranny in the first ten months of the year has reached 16,500. This is the biggest exodus from the Mainland since 1962. In the face of these facts, to say that the regime ‘represents’ the Chinese people is nothing but a cruel joke.

The third argument is that the Mao regime will on being admitted to the U.N., become lovable, reasonable and peaceful. But statements made even after the U.N. vote show that far from displaying any such change of heart, the arrogance and aggressiveness of the Chinese Communist regime has, if anything, increased. The first two statements made by the Chinese Communist representative at the U.N. are good examples of this trend. History has proved without exception that appeasement only breeds further aggression.

President Nixon and the U.S. Administration, which started the landslide and then tried to control it, must bear part of the responsibility for losing the crucial and narrow vote of 59 to 55 in the U.N. Assembly which really decided the issue. There are three distinct ways in which this vote may be described as Catastrophic. The first is the disgrace of expelling from the U.N. one of its founding members, the Republic of China, which has proved to be a law-abiding and faithful member of the U.N. Taiwan has a population of fourteen million people, an excellent record of economic and social development which has given its people one of the highest standards of living in Asia and the highest yield of rice per acre in the whole world, with no Charter violation against its name and with a constructive record of economic assistance to several African countries. That such a country should be expelled in order to accommodate a bandit regime is nothing short of a major tragedy. It constitutes a precedent by which a majority in the General Assembly can arbitrarily expel any country it desires.

A second unfortunate aspect is the blow that it has struck at the morale of the people on the Chinese Mainland against whom the Mao Tse-tung regime is

(Continued on page 8)

Population Problem

(The following are extracts from a long interview with Mr Robert McNamara, the President of the World Bank, published in the "Observer" of London. The interviewer was Mr Frances Cairncross, the journal's representative.)

CAIRNCROSS: Mr McNamara, I know that in your view the most serious problem facing the developing world at the moment is that of curbing its population growth. How optimistic are you about its chances?

McNAMARA: I think that on this subject one should not be an optimist or a pessimist, but a realist, and a realist would have to conclude that the need to curb the rate of growth is so great that people will be bound to come to understand it, and to do something about it. The developing nations which are members of this Bank have a total population of the order of almost 2,000 million, increasing on average at the rate of about 2.6 per cent a year. That means it doubles in 25 years.

That sounds quite horrific.

Yes, and the implications are just becoming clear. Within the last year, demographic studies have shown that if the developing world—which, counting mainland China, has a population of some 2,600 million—reaches a replacement rate of two children per couple on average by, say, the year 2040, then that population of 2,600 million will increase by fivefold to an eventual total of something like 14,000 million—probably 14,500,000,000.

Is that likely to happen?

There is certainly no assurance that the replacement rate of two children per couple will be achieved even by the year 2040. On the contrary, I think the way we're going today, it's unlikely. But even if it were achieved as early as 2040, the population wouldn't stabilise until there were roughly 14,500 million people in the developing nations.

No matter what we do, we must get ready for a world population many times larger than it is today, and we must begin today to adjust development programmes to be ready for it.

Is the progress that is being made in the developing countries anything like fast enough?

No, and when I say that I don't want to denigrate the progress that has been made within the last five years. Today some 25 developing nations have official population planning programmes and this is immense progress. But compared with, let's say, the plans and programmes to expand food production, the popu-

lation planning programmes are very, very weak indeed in almost every country. With the single exceptions of Korea and Taiwan, it's difficult to point to significant results.

So what is the outlook?

Political acceptance of the need for population control is becoming more widespread, and that is the first step towards a solution. But we haven't gone much beyond that. We are going to have to do far more in the decades that lie ahead, both to reduce the rate of growth and to prepare the developing nations to deal with the vast expansion of population that is going to occur, no matter what we do. In my opinion, it's going to take at least two decades to reduce this rate of growth.

What has the World Bank been doing to persuade developing countries to adopt satisfactory population programmes?

In the first place, we have been talking about it with them. But much more significantly we have been advising Governments, at their request, on what they can do. The requests for our services far exceed our technical capacity to deal with them.

Have you ever made the granting of assistance to a country dependent on some sign that it would adopt an effective population policy?

Absolutely not. Never. There are certain nations in the world today, to which we make loans, that not only are not doing anything about the problem but have a clear policy of refusing to deal with it—and yet we are still making loans to them.

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The Meaning Of Jodhpur

A. B. Shah

PROFESSOR V. V. John's brilliant article 'Back to Square One: The Story of a Failure' in *The Times of India* of 17 November 1971 mentions two causes behind the barbaric attack on him by a group of engineering students of the University of Jodhpur. One was 'the educated Indian's dream of wangling a full-time salary for a part-time job' and his firm stand as Vice-Chancellor of Jodhpur that 'the university should have no part in training young people for this eventual felicity'. The other cause was the fact that the decision-making process in the university was 'frequently sought to be replaced by persons, both young and old, who are not impelled by the need for making better decisions but by mere feelings of self-importance.' 'Out of such tenuous material,' however, observes John, 'disaster can be wrought'.

John offers no solution for the problem, but not because he was writing from what he charmingly refers to as 'a horizontal position'. It is difficult to see a way out of the mess in which higher-education finds itself today. The present situation has been building up over more than two decades in direct response to what has been happening in the larger sphere of public life. These years have witnessed a steady growth of populist attitudes and a continual decline of standards of integrity and the rule of law, with barely concealed encouragement from those who control the levers of power. This has undermined the very concept of authority and, indeed, made it indistinguishable from that of brute force. In the event, instead of right acting as a restraint on might, might itself successfully passes off as right.

The public conscience too has been blunted by the unceasing spectacle of cynicism and hypocrisy on the part of the political elite. It is aroused, and that too for a brief moment, when things go blatantly wrong. Generally this means, when violence assumes *shocking* proportions—that is, when a woman member of parliament is assaulted in public or a vice-chancellor is *gheraoed* and subjected to a murderous attack. A desperate search is then undertaken for a palliative in the form of an unprincipled compromise. Peace-makers step in, making appropriate noises in favour of tolerance and mutual understanding, and ask both the parties to the dispute to re-establish 'normal', 'friendly' relations in a spirit of 'forgive and forget'.

But palliatives can only provide temporary relief; they cannot cure the disease. If anything, by giving a false sense of well-being, they merely contribute to a further aggravation of the malaise.

This is precisely what happened at Jodhpur and is no different from what has been happening in many

other universities in recent years. What distinguishes Jodhpur is the kind of vice-chancellor it has got and the cause that provoked the outburst of student violence beyond the already high threshold of public tolerance.

It would be difficult to list more than half a dozen persons in present-day India who combine in themselves the qualities that make Professor John a true educationist and a unique vice-chancellor. Such men are generally 'admired' by the Establishment but only from a distance; they are rarely called to occupy the vice-chancellor's chair. Their understanding of the role of higher education in a modernizing society like India's, their concern for youth and desire to help it grow into responsible and self-respecting manhood, their selfless idealism and courage of conviction, and above all, their unremitting effort to improve standards—all these render them unreliable in the eyes of those who select vice-chancellors for most Indian universities. However, the Government of Rajasthan, unlike that of Maharashtra, slipped up for once. Not finding a 'suitable' candidate for the post, it invited Professor V. V. John with the assurance that he would experience no interference from the Government.

That was in Mr Sukhadia's time, and so long as Mr Sukhadia was Chief Minister Professor John could go on developing the university without serious hindrance from disgruntled teachers, student leaders or local politicians. In a little less than two years he could tone up the systems of instruction and examinations, recruit brilliant young teachers to the faculty, bring out bilingual text-books, found a flourishing co-operative book-stall on the campus, brighten up the university library so that students began to sit in it, and start a high-quality campus newsletter. Among other major projects were the construction of houses for teachers and a subsidiary campus at a hill station where teachers on sabbatical leave could repair to study and write in peace.

The situation changed when Mr Barakatullah Khan became Chief Minister. His constituency is Jodhpur, from which he was elected with a narrow margin of about 500 votes in 1967. Having soon to face a fresh election from the same constituency, and lacking a strong enough base of his own in the party as well as the State, he is unwilling to court unpopularity with any group that is potentially capable of making trouble at election time. Hence the refusal of the local administration in Jodhpur to respond to the University's call for help or to take firm action against the would-be murderers of Professor John. The attitude of the police on a previous occasion, when Professor John was

subjected to a night-long *gherao*, convinced the students of the engineering faculty not only that they were entitled to a university degree without working for it, but also that the Government would not interfere if they asserted their right by methods already adopted by the 'socialist vanguard' of the ruling party against the 'enemies of the people'. What happened to Professor John shows that they were not altogether wrong in their reasoning. The only factor which they did not take into account was the fact that they were dealing with a vice-chancellor who was different from the general run and who carried his resignation in his pocket. The Government of Rajasthan, the striking students of the engineering faculty and the teachers behind them have been caught on the wrong foot. Probably they would try to find a way out of their predicament without loss of face. However, anyone who knew Professor John would wonder how on an issue like this there could be a 'compromise' which did not end either in the assertion of academic values or in their total disownment by the community at large.

Whatever the outcome of this particular imbroglio, it raises once again a much larger question. Unless we answer it in a satisfactory manner, higher education in India will have to be written off for decades to come. And if that is to be so, we may as well write off the chances of democracy surviving in this country.

The basic question about the future of Indian universities is this: if universities are going to be buffeted by the political winds of the moment, is there any way of ensuring that there will be at least a few institutions which are left free to serve the community without any fear of physical violence or financial strangulation? It is obvious that so long as a university has to depend on government aid and its legitimacy rests on the approval by the legislature, it cannot function in an independent manner. Also, so long as it is treated as a remand home for unemployable adolescents with no aptitude for hard work or serious intellectual pursuits, it cannot observe any standards worth the name. It is therefore necessary that the country should have some university-type institutions whose financial viability will not be conditional on large student bodies and adaptability to the current political climate.

Given the understanding and firmness of resolve, it is not difficult to set up a few such institutions. Professor John observes in his article that there is talent lying buried in our universities. There also are a fairly large number of young men and women who have in them the potentialities of first-rate leaders in the fields of thought and action. At present such teachers and students are dispersed all over the country but they are not in a position to work together in a team. There are also a number of young business executives who feel that something radically different needs to be done in the field of higher education. They have the resources, and it should not be difficult to persuade them to

make them available provided there is a worthwhile plan to support. I have elaborated this idea on a number of occasions in the past and so shall not here go into details. I would only observe that it is time that like-minded academicians and business executives got together to give it a concrete shape.

Government is not likely to look with favour on any initiative of this kind. But then which government in a developing society has ever liked private initiative against its own political interests? Fortunately, however, there is nothing in the law of the land which prohibits such efforts on the part of public-spirited citizens. If they succeed in setting up what may be called a few *national* universities which do not depend on Government assistance or populist support, they would be blazing a new trail whose significance will only be evident in the years to come.

(Continued from page 5)

engaged in a permanent war. The peasants' resistance to the regime has hardly died down as evidenced by the numerous executions in retaliation. The respect and recognition given to their oppressors will, therefore, weaken and demoralise the fight of the Chinese lovers of freedom for the liberation of their country. In that sense, the U.N. decision is a blow to the Chinese people on the Mainland.

The third and perhaps the saddest consequence is that the admission of Communist China virtually means the end of the United Nations in any meaningful sense as a body that is going to maintain the peace of the world. When World War II started in 1939 and when the Soviet Union attacked little Finland in 1940, the League of Nations was still there with all its paraphernalia in Geneva and with a membership not dissimilar to the membership of the U.N. today. How was it then that nobody thought of raising the issue in the League of Nations? It was because during and after the Italian attack on Abyssinia, the League had shown its impotence and its unwillingness to deter the aggressor and preserve the peace. Some nations bowed before the threats of aggressors in the mistaken thought that submission to evil and knuckling under in the face of violence could be traded for the survival of the League. As a result, the League was paralysed and then collapsed.

It is to be feared that the thinking and behaviour of those dominating the U.N. today is not very different. With the Chinese Communist veto now added to the Soviet veto, can it be seriously suggested that the Security Council will be a body fit and worthy of maintaining world peace and acting as an arbiter in international disputes? On the contrary, the results of this piece of political amorality are only too likely to be further appeasement and further sacrifice of human freedom.

Rural Servitude

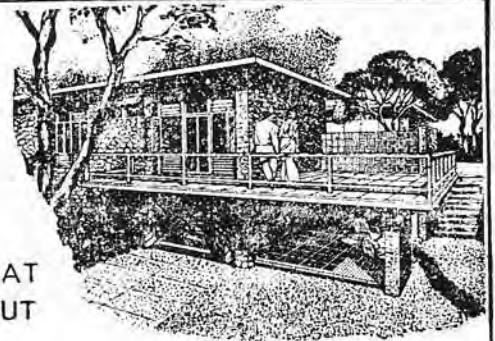
Abraham Brumberg

ANDREI AMALRIK, the 33-year-old Russian playwright and historian who was recently arrested for the second time and sentenced to three years at hard labour for writing and disseminating "anti-Soviet" works (including the book under review), is surely one of the most impressive figures in what has come to be known as the "Democratic Movement" in the USSR. In his previously published *Will the Soviet Union Survive until 1984?* (New York, Harper & Row, 1970), he revealed himself as a brilliant social critic, albeit perhaps one given to occasional sweeping prognostications. In *Involuntary Journey to Siberia*, actually written two years earlier, he emerges as the chronicler and observer *par excellence*—cool, realistic, committed yet dispassionate, with a flawless eye for both the detail and the essence of every phenomenon he describes, unobtrusively witty, and finally, modest without being in the least self-effacing. Above all, he is a man who has clearly lived up to his own prescription that the only way to survive under what he has called elsewhere a regime marked by "degradation and growing decrepitude" is to "insist on one's rights to an independent existence"—to "stand up for one's dignity and not give way to fear".

The present volume bears out the accuracy of his analysis of Soviet society as well as the wisdom of his rule of conduct. Judging by Amalrik's description, the Soviet regime has progressed since Stalin's day to a point where it may now be compared to the regime that existed in Russia around the turn of this century. The arbitrariness of the Stalin era, more pervasive and more savage than that of the despotic reign of Nicholas I. is gone. The present Soviet bureaucracy, as Max Hayward notes in his splendid introduction, is forced to "take some account of the law, such as it is, in dealing with people who have fallen foul of it"; and it shows signs of an emergent "pluralism," of overlapping functions and jurisdictions. Had Amalrik been arrested for the same crime—the formal charge against him was "parasitism," or lack of regular employment, but the real reason lay in his nonconformist views—not in 1965 but twenty years earlier, he might well have vanished without a trace. At the later date, however, the police was no longer wholly beyond—or above—the law. A "case", however absurd by the standards of Western jurisprudence, had to be made, "evidence had to be produced in court, and Amalrik was given the opportunity to hire a defence attorney. Also, it soon became apparent that

the regular police took a more lenient attitude towards Amalrik's "transgressions" (contacts with foreigners, an interest in "abstract" paintings, and the like) than did the KGB. Amalrik, his friends, and eventually his defense counsel did their best to exploit these differences, not by cringing admissions or by attempting to play one against the other (which would have been futile), but by insisting on Amalrik's constitutional rights and exploring every legal avenue of defense available to Soviet citizens. True, their efforts succeeded only after Amalrik had already served nearly half of his 1965 sentence of three years. And now, his second arrest and conviction clearly demonstrate anew how tenuous the Soviets' vaunted "socialist legality" remains today, all the changes and reforms notwithstanding. Yet if Amalrik has not beaten the "system", neither has he been beaten by it. By refusing to "give way to fear", he has at least shown that it is possible to oppose the regime and thus retain a sense of personal integrity, of faith in oneself and in the future.

Involuntary Journey to Siberia consists of two parts. The first depicts the circumstances that led to Amalrik's 1965 arrest, the trial, and the journey to his place of



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Involuntary Journey to Siberia. Andrei Amalrik, Trans. by Manya Harari and Max Hayward; introduction by Max Hayward. New York, Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc., 1970.

exile—a collective farm near Tomsk, Siberia. The second deals with the author's experiences on the Kolkhoz and present fascinating glimpses of peasant life and rural conditions in general. Politically, the Soviet Union today may, as suggested before, be comparable to Tsarist Russia *circa* 1900. Yet, if the village of Guryevka is even partially typical, then socially a good part of rural Russia is still the same as it was in the days of Gogol and Saltykov-Shchedrin half a century earlier. Some of the scenes described by Amalrik would be amusing (in the same sense that the scenes in Gogol's *The Inspector General* are), if they were not so appalling in their revelations.

To put it bluntly, the life of the Russian peasant remains nasty, brutish, and short. More than a century after the abolition of serfdom, the peasants are still—or rather again—little more than serfs of the State, unable to move to the cities or to manage their own affairs, deprived of the minimal legal guarantees enjoyed by urban dwellers, and totally at the mercy of the authorities—from the chairman of their kolkhoz, appointed from above, to the militia—who regard them as little more than chattel. (During an impromptu speech on Soviet law, Amalrik relates, the local prosecutor informed the peasants, “much to their pleasure, that the (kolkhoz) chairman and foreman were not entitled to beat them. In another kolkhoz, he (the prosecutor) said, the foreman had beaten up some of the kolkhozniks and locked one woman in his office without food for a couple of days, but he would shortly be brought to trial for this.”)

The peasants are uninformed, addicted to vodka, and almost unbelievably primitive. During a lecture on the 23rd Congress of the CPSU, Amalrik writes, “hardly anybody listened . . . since they were busy with their work, or if they did listen, it made no sense because they didn't even know what CPSU meant.” As for the district hospital, “all kinds of terror stories were told: somebody, for instance, swore he had seen a patient suspended by hooks from the ceiling to be roasted by doctors on a slow fire.”

Living in squalor, the peasants, in Amalrik's opinion, no longer retain any interest in—or memory of—individual farming even though they jealously guard their wretched “private plots”, and their attitude towards their master varies from sullen resentment to complete lethargy.

“I think that these are people”, says Amalrik, “with whom you can do anything.” His observations have the indisputable ring of truth, but his conclusions may not be altogether correct. However atomized the Soviet peasantry may be, however meekly it may accept its miserable plight, it still bears the scars of countless indignities and thus constitutes, at least potentially, a vast repository of grievances against the Soviet regime. One can only wonder, uneasily, what will happen if one of these days these subterranean feelings should burst

forth into the open. Unless certain basic social, economic and political reforms—such as those which Andrei Amalrik has advocated—are put into effect, Russia may yet see an explosion far more elemental and far more bloody than anything that country has experienced during its long and tortured history.

Review

Mahatma Gandhi:

The Man and his Mission

U. R. Rao, Edited by G. S. Pohekar, United Asia Publications, Rs. 15.

READING through this small book of 110 pages by late Mr. U. R. Rao, one of the founder editors of *United Asia* magazine, one gets a scintillating glimpse of the many facets of Gandhiji's personality and character unfolded before his eyes through various interesting articles. “Birthday Musings” make the reader unconsciously shed a tear when he reads about Gandhiji (whose birthday was being proudly celebrated by the nation) did not have even a lamp for use at night in the prison. Or, again, about the poor little children in the East End of London, where the Mahatma preferred to lodge when he was there for the Round-Table Conference, who sent him birthday gifts. Gandhiji enquired about those presents whilst he was hastily leaving for India, saying “they are the only things I am taking back to India except what I came with”. How full of meaning were his words. “The Martyrdom of the Mahatma” inclines one to feel that Gandhi had a premonition that he would be shot dead. For he had suggested it much earlier whilst preaching Ahimsa. Gandhiji considered birth and death as two aspects of the same State the one not at all better or worse than the other. The Mahatma was first and foremost a man of action, understanding, courage and compassion. How else could he have unflinchingly associated himself so closely with the lepers?

I am sure, Gandhi would not have preferred a better evaluation or a loftier compliment than the one given him by the author when he writes: “Social Reformer, or politician, saint or statesman, whatever the garb he wore, he was essentially and profoundly a human being claiming kinship with the meek, the gentle and the simple in heart.”

V. B. PATANKAR

Letter to the Editor

WE AND AMERICA

Dear Sir,

Much water has flowed through the Potomac and the Ganges since I wrote my last article innocently titled "America's Responsibility". Since then I have discovered that words like "responsibility", "honour", "pledge" etc. are just empty cliches in international diplomacy, that in a dog-eat-dog world it is every nation for itself and the devil take the hindmost.

Thus, we watch horrified (with the perplexed eyes of political innocents) that morals must suit the needs of men if they are to be adhered to; that slaughter of millions is a crime only when the perpetrator is Hitler; that re-election to a 2nd term can mean more to an American President than the fate of the rest of the world.

It must be admitted in all fairness to the Americans that they are not alone to be blamed for the absurd low in our relations. It has been a gradual process of erosion for which we must take larger responsibility.

Three successive American Presidents made honest, wholehearted endeavours to lift us out of economic squalor. If China is not already in possession of the Assam oil-fields credit must go to Kennedy for his spontaneous and unconditional response in our time of need. (He did not twist our arm into signing any "friendship - treaties")

To our eternal shame, our ingratitude to the U.S. did not die at this point.

We criticised America in Vietnam (while we were busy gorging their wheat) where they were doing a job which was a collective Asian responsibility.

We succumbed to communist pressure and sabotaged the Indo-US Education Foundation plan that could have revitalised our outdated education system.

We publicly equated the highly symbolic but statistically insignificant Russian aid with the billions that America poured into this country.

In short an honourable nation like India bit the very hand that fed it. We were beggars with a difference; we did not beg, we demanded!

All these unseemly antics of ours were tolerated, all our petulance was pardoned because the men who occupied the White House were decent, noble beings.

Now, the wheel has gone full circle. America has a President who is an unabashed political trickster; whose country and career are the sole considerations in his sleight-of-hand ping-pong; who is a ruthless realist to whom immediate gains are more important than long-term ideals; who gives what he gets, always with interest, often below the belt.

Indian politicians who for long strode with presumptuous arrogance suddenly find that in Nixon, they have a slippery tiger by the tail.....and his claws could be fatally sharp.

Victoria Road,
Bombay 27.
4-11-71

N. J. TAVARIA

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5. Persistent indigestion or difficulty in swallowing
6. Persistent hoarseness or cough
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GIVE TO CONQUER CANCER

With Many Voices

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

—Tennyson.

Yahya Khan would like nothing better than provocation by India to give him the excuse of starting a war with her.

—Badr-Ud-Din Tyabji, *Indian Express*,
November 8.

What a majority of the United Nations did on Monday, October 25, in expelling Taiwan was one of the most unmoral acts in world history.

—David Lawrence, *U.S. News & World Report*,
November 8.

Excessively complex procedures adopted by Government to process applications were a serious hindrance to the country's industrial growth.

—J. R. D. Tata, *March of the Nation*,
November 20.

We do not embarrass ourselves by reflecting whether there are any values we are supposed to be defending in addition to square miles of territory.

—V. V. John, *Times of India*, November 17.

The Union Government sometimes give the impression of a young urchin who has been bought a new toygun for the first time—by the way it revels in using and misusing its ordinance-making powers.

—Janata, November 14.

Is the Nobel Prize some kind of stolen goods that it must be presented behind closed doors and without witnesses?

—Alexander Solzhenitsyn, *March of the Nation*,
November 6.

To the Editor,

FREEDOM FIRST,

C/o Democratic Research Service,

127, Mahatma Gandhi Road,

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If Bangla Desh is to be a little more than an evocative abstraction, as at present, and the millions of refugees now in India have to be returned home in security and honour or alternatively rehabilitated in this country, it is the international community on which both would seem to depend finally.

—Thought, November 13.

"For the U.S., one China is not enough; for the Russians, one is too many."

—Joke passed round U.N. Lobbies quoted in *Time*,
November 1.

"Some people may have lost their moral courage. These people may sink so low as to become lackeys of Mao Tse-tung, that traitorous, deceitful, aggressive, terroristic bandit from the caves of Yenan."

—President Chiang Kai-shek quoted in the
Economist, October 16.

Whatever the people may not know, they know when the shoe pinches.

—John Strachey quoted in *Encounter*,
August 1971.

Now is the time for all good conservatives and true to come to the aid of the liberals.

—Henry Fairlie in *Encounter*,
August 1971.

"Under Nixon's Presidency, Washington has become the only capital of the three supergreats which seems capable of dialogue with the other two."

—"Le Monde" quoted in *U.S. News & World Report*,
October 25.

Suppose the Soviet army goes straight to the banks of the Yellow River, the Americans go to the southern banks of the Yangtze river, Japan invades and occupies Tsing Tao to Shanghai and India goes in and invades Tibet.

—Chou-En-lai quoted in *Opinion*, October 26.

According to Marx, scientific socialism means nothing but communism as is explained in the Communist Manifesto.

—P. Parthasarathy, *Indian Express*,
November 19.