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"Democratic Republic"

NISSIM EZEKIEL

A country with a one-party dictatorship, where voters in elections have no choice of candidates, calls itself a "democratic republic". It controls the press and the judiciary, closes all its doors so that no one can leave or enter except under official supervision, but it refers to itself as a "progressive, socialist, people's state". It does not permit criticism and persecutes its dissenters, yet claims to enjoy "real freedom". It subsidises propaganda against all other socio-economic systems, but dismisses voices in their defence as "reactionary". Faced with demands for human rights, it condemns the "cold war", and offers "peace" proposals. Insisting that it stands for a "revolutionary" ideology, it establishes a totalitarian tyranny over literature, the arts and intellectual life. For every argument against this policy, it has an armoury of "dialectics", designed to prove that it has the support of "history" and of the "future".

Militant, aggressive, cruel, merciless and wholly bureaucratic, such a society presents itself to other societies as "advanced" and "humanist". From birth to death, its members submit to governmental power, which persistently announces that it is in possession of the "Truth", while citizens of other societies, not similarly dominated, are regarded as victims of their "ruling classes".

In a way, it is a tribute to the validity of freedom and democracy as ideas, that their enemies do not deny the words. They merely distort the necessary content of those ideas to accommodate their ideology. They hold "elections", for example, and they uphold the full process of "judicial trials". How they do it is an open secret and has been for decades. The elaborate facade of "justice" is intended to deceive, but it is still considered useful, whereas fascist and semi-fascist regimes dispense with it. Communism, after all, is "progressive", and has its special pleaders all over the world. It will not do to lose their support by arbitrary punishments. Wise to preserve some "bourgeois" virtues, even if hypocritically.

It is well known that in the Soviet Union many individuals, particularly of the literary, artistic and intellectual class, are confined to "mental homes" when they resist the pressure of the totalitarian system. If the

Soviet Union had the global power, it would do the same to all its political opponents on a global scale. The Gulag would be extended to cover the earth. Wherever a communist government is formed, it *must* destroy the opposition. It cannot do otherwise, unless its ideology changes, and if the ideology changes, it is not a communist government. Step by step, it has to decline into democracy, till it is voted out of power. And who has heard of a communist government voted out of power?

To ask such questions, to make such statements is to be dubbed "anti-communist", a reactionary camp-follower of Imperialism, a stooge of the capitalists, a bourgeois propagandist, an enemy of the working class, and so on. World peace, no less, is threatened if you so much as mention the most commonplace and widely acknowledged facts about communist governments. Look at their housing programmes, we are told, study their solutions to urban problems, consider their new schools, universities, hospitals, their support to publishing, theatre, cinema and museums.

Yes, we have considered all these things, and we are not convinced. We want to know why a poem or a short story that is likely to be disapproved of by the government has to be duplicated and circulated *underground*. We want to know why a "people's democracy" denies to its people the right to travel abroad, to read what it pleases, to write and speak what it believes? We want to know why the Iron Curtain prevails and why a Great Wall had to be built? We want to hear those thousands of human voices which will prove the existence of "true democracy" and "real freedom" more convincingly than communist official propaganda on their behalf.

Communism is not only the god that failed and the prophet who misled, it is also the perpetual creator of lies about its own reality. Its radicalism, secularism and other positive values are tainted by the sin of power-mania: it claims all the privileges of freedom and democracy, to destroy both. It tempts the proletariat with the idea of dictatorship over the other classes and, when successful, sets up a party dictatorship. It attracts intellectuals with the bait of economic justice for all and social transformation of society, but in power always functions tyrannically. All its pretensions turn out to be hollow. To believe them is surely one of the greatest of political follies in the twentieth century.

Justice Krishna Iyer

1: Judge As Rhetorician

K. S. VENKATESWARAN

William Jones said of certain passages in Hegel that they were written with a passion of rationality but he wondered whether they had any significance except that the words were strung together with syntactical correctness. If small things may be compared to great the jibe comes home with remarkable appositeness in the case of Mr. Justice V. R. Krishna Iyer who laid down office as Judge of the Supreme Court on 15 November.

Painful as the task is of critically reapprising the role of a member of the highest legal tribunal, it nonetheless becomes a positive duty in an age in which judicial worth has come to be gauged by verbosity and measured by column-inches of public notice. To embark on such a reappraisal is therefore not to assail the learned judge in his individual capacity—indeed it is debatable whether the personality of such men warrant the exercise at all.

A recent issue of one leading monthly pithily characterised Justice Krishna Iyer as a "windbag". It cited several examples of the judge's meaningless verbiage, disguised not infrequently as gems of judicial erudition. It observed that "he has a way of making simple commonsense sound like the most complex piece of jurisprudence. And such is the complexity of his mental process that it is not often that he recognises commonsense."

The indictment is as true as it is disquieting. What is unpardonable is the blatant use of the judicial office as a platform for such substanceless harangues. Worse still, when the veneer of judicial detachment is abandoned, and ideological preferences revealed in no uncertain terms, it comes as a jolt to the equanimity of all those who have been accustomed to accepting restraint and aloofness in judges as an indispensable concomitant of judicial independence.

The main burden of Justice Iyer's loquacious pronouncements over the years finds sustenance in what Judge Learned Hand once referred to as "sedulous adulation of our cultus hero 'the Common Man', endless iteration of accredited catch-words, cunning use of question-begging sedatives..." and so forth. Even in his judgments, Justice Iyer, more often than not, meanders into pastures far afield whence the return is tortuous and uncertain.

To cite one example, let us take the learned judge's circumlocutious perorations in a recent case, **Organo Chemical Industries v. Union**, which provoked the eminent constitutional expert, Mr. H. M. Seervai, to observe tartly that "Mr. Justice Krishna Iyer's concept of the judicial function, and, even more, the way in which he gives effect to that concept, is subversive of the law and the Constitution, and is likely to undermine the high position which the judiciary has earned for itself..."

In this case, Krishna Iyer J., in an undisguised attempt at replying to the criticism made by a brother judge (to which we shall advert presently), had this to say by way of explanation: "... (Exordiums are opprobriums and socio-economic aperçus are anathema for some judicial psyches; and I should have, for that reason, abandoned my habitual deviance from the orthodox norm idealised by some that a judicial judgment shall be a dry statement of facts, drier presentation of the law and logomachy and drier in least communicating to the law-abiding community, which is the court's constituency, the glow of life-giving principles rooted in social sciences and translated into juristic rules which legitimate our institution functionally. The last consideration, in my humble view, is the élan vital of the judicial process and jettisoning it is judicial self-alienation from the nation..."

Comment would be superfluous. Suffice it to say that Churchillian admonition about it being slothful not to compress one's thoughts assumes a poignant relevance in such circumstances.

If the impossibility of finding one's way through the thickets of endless verbiage were the only fault of Justice Iyer, we would have far less reason to cavil. We might even take it in our stride. But, alas, there is yet another, more compelling aspect in the judge's make-up which merits closer consideration. Indeed, such is the seminal germaneness of this aspect that it recently manifested itself in the unprecedented spectacle of a distinguished fellow-judge in the Supreme Court taking judicial notice of it in terms that were not exactly adulatory. In the course of a judgment delivered last year, Justice V. D. Tulzapurkar, whose rectitude and intellectual integrity are unquestionable, felt obliged to make the following observations:

"Before parting with this appeal, I feel constrained, as a part of my duty, to give vent to my feelings of discomfiture and distress over one thing which is exercising my mind for a considerable time in this Court. In all humility, I would like to point out that prefaces and exordial exercises, perorations and sermons as also theses and philosophies (political or social), whether couched in flowery language or language that needs simplification, have ordinarily no proper place in judicial pronouncements.

"In any case, day in and day out indulgence in these in almost every judgment, irrespective of whether the subject or the context or the occasion demands it or not, serves little purpose, and surely such indulgence becomes indefensible when matters are to be disposed of in terms of settlement arrived at between parties or for the sake of expounding the law while rejecting the approach to the court at the threshold on preliminary grounds such as non-maintainability, laches and the like..."

Not surprisingly, Justice Iyer's obsession with ideology comes through more transparently in his quasi-legal pronouncements, where the scope for windbagging is virtually boundless. His Chairmanship of an Expert Committee on Legal Aid, appointed by Government in 1972, produced a Report which bears ample testimony to his matchless talents in this area. Pompously titled "Processual Justice to the People", the Report is

a curiously-worded document. While serving a damning indictment on the present legal system, it seeks to offer a panacea for its ills by suggesting changes that would, if translated into action, largely perpetuate the existing inadequacies and, for good measure, create new ones, the noble intentions of its draftsmen notwithstanding.

Consider, for instance, the learned judge's exhortation: "The legal system, to ring true, must tune itself into the wave-length of social justice and befriend the lowly and the lost. Such a transformation is difficult unless our jurisprudence radicalises itself out of *laissez faire* values, our Bar and Bench reform themselves in professional orientation and court methodology and our law schools vitalise their syllabi through clinical legal education with accent on poverty and backwardness..."

2: Exercises in Demagogy

Statements such as these are exercises in demagogy. They are dangerously naive for practical application, as recent experience bears out clearly. When exhortations in a similar vein, backed by governmental inspiration, rent the air during the Emergency, the results were there for all to see. Nothing could be more tragic than the irreversible decay of the Bar's and Bench's dignity and autonomy, coupled with a further fall in professional standards.

But does Justice Iyer have time for such niceties as nobility of the profession or its autonomy? Hardly. His sole passion is to break violently with the *status quo* of "... slow-motion justice, high-priced legal service, long-distance delivery centres, mystiques of legalese and lacunose laws and a processual pyramid made up of teetering tiers and sophisticated rules and tools."

And in achieving his objectives if he were to have his way, he would stop short of nothing. Not even nationalisation of the legal profession. His own suggestion is "to create a competitive public sector in the legal profession which would not only help secure excellent legal representation in complicated cases for the poor who are granted legal aid but also to go a long way towards breaking the monopoly of the top-most lawyers who are charging unconscionable fees."

Justice Iyer's visceral antipathy towards the "elite" in the profession, whom he snidely refers to elsewhere as "jurisprudes", is hardly ever disguised. "Currently reluctant to greet such change, it (the legal profession) must be disciplined into the new Order so that the quest for justice through law ceases to be the sale of legal expertise on unsocial terms, and justice does not remain a close preserve of wealthy and economically powerful interests who alone can afford its price. The public commitment of the legal profession must oblige it to submit to social restraints and economic regulations as a realistic and constructive response to the basic philosophy enshrined in the Constitution."

Justice Iyer as an arbiter of labour-management relations sounds even less plausible. Believing as he does that "ideologically speaking, the Indian Constitution

takes sides with the former as between labour and private economic power," he cavils at "the phenomenon of some managements victimising marked-out workers with a view to break the backs of allergic unions or waging legal battles of attrition right upto the highest court, regardless of the cost."

That the boot is on the other foot, hardly ever crosses his mind. The inimitable George Mikes could not have been more perceptive when he said: "We still speak, for example, of the struggles of Trade Unions against exploitation, as if we lived in another age. Of course, all is not well; of course, employers would still exploit workers if they could. But they cannot. Today, the Trade Unions are the most privileged class in the country—privileged to break the law. They often hold the public to ransom to achieve their sectional interests while their more romantic supporters, glowing with honest indignation, shout nineteenth-century slogans and look rather pathetic."

The learned judge's disdain for the "proprietary" is matched only by his admiration for the Soviet Union and things Russian. Of course, for one who has had the distinction of serving in the first Communist Ministry in India (Kerala, 1957), the Soviet connection is hardly surprising. All the same, it begins to affect the sensibilities of every democrat when the Russian inspiration is allowed to cast its shadow, however lightly or insidiously, on such sensitive and time-tested institutions as our judicial set-up.

With all its imperfections and shortcomings, we can still claim with legitimate pride—as very few in our neighbourhood can—that the independence of our judges is pretty secure, as is the intrinsic fairness of the Anglo-Saxon system of jurisprudence which we have inherited. This is certainly a far cry from conditions in the Soviet Union where, we have it on the authority of Vishinsky, a former Procurator-General, the judges "should not hesitate to depart from the law and should show absolute obedience in following the (Communist) Party's directives, which represent the highest rule for them." (For a detailed account of legal perversions in contemporary Soviet society, see *Freedom First*, August 1980).

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Eurocommunist Delusions

Euro-communist Confusion about Soviet Occupation of Afghanistan.

MILOVAN DJILAS

Milovan Djilas, a former Yugoslav vice president, was deposed in 1954 for advocating a two-party system and later imprisoned for exposing the "new class" in a communist society. The article was originally published by The New Leader.

Future historians trying to understand the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan will no doubt find it difficult to make any sense of the seemingly illogical explanations offered by Leftist leaders in general and by Communist ones in particular. This does not apply, of course, to Communist leaders who fully support Moscow's line, like George Marchais of France. His stand merely proves again that the French Communist Party has always been and continues to be Leninist—that is, Stalinist—despite its support of so-called Eurocommunism. Indeed, I would stress that its encouragement of political pluralism is only a verbal and tactical ploy. No, the inconsistency I have in mind pertains to the interpretation of the latest Soviet conquest put forward by the Italian and Spanish Eurocommunists.

The leadership of the Italian and Spanish Communist parties unambiguously condemned the takeover of Afghanistan. The Yugoslav Communist Party did likewise—although except for the matter of independence from the Soviet Union, it does not fit into the Eurocommunist mould. (Nevertheless, I feel that internally Yugoslav Communism is somewhat less monopolistic and oppressive than the Soviet variety. And in the face of Soviet aggression the motives and positions of Yugoslav leaders, which I shall turn to later, become clear.)

Partisans of democracy should applaud the Yugoslavs' determination to preserve their national independence. They should rejoice, too, that the Spanish and Italian Communists have supported the principle of independence and criticized the Kremlin's actions. Their apparent confusions stem from the fact that they still carry some of their previous ideological baggage—and the old dogmas, already undermined in large part by past experiences, have now been dealt another blow by Soviet despotic expansionism.

For example, in the communique issued following their meeting in Madrid last January 27, as reported in the Belgrade daily *Politika*, Spanish party leader Santiago Carrillo and his Italian counterpart, Enrico Berlinguer, declared that the Soviet military "intervention" was responsible for "the most recent increase in (international) political and military tension". The takeover of one country by another, they went on, was an "event" equivalent to the NATO deployment of new nuclear missiles in Europe, resistance to SALT II in the United States, and similar developments. Con-

tinuing in this vein, the communique concluded that the Afghan crisis marked a revival of the conflict between the Eastern and Western blocs—in other words, between the USSR and the United States. The same thinking is prevalent in the leadership of the Yugoslav Communist Party.

This interpretation also led the Italian and Spanish Communist leaders to label as "disturbing factors" the "American threat to boycott the Olympic Games, President Carter's stated intention to maintain American dominance in world affairs, and the striving toward military superiority by both superpowers". Small wonder then that Berlinguer and Carrillo stressed "the absolute priority of preserving detente and peace" as well as a "renewal of East-West ties".

The appraisal of events in terms of the behaviour or misbehaviour of the superpowers can be traced to the Leninist teaching about the division of the world among imperialist nations. What distinguishes the Eurocommunist analysis is its revision of the Leninist view to treat equally the moves of the "socialist" Soviet Union with those of the "capitalist" United States. Thus Berlinguer and Carrillo presented a less dogmatic and more objective assessment of contemporary occurrences, a step in the right direction. In the end, though, they retained some of their past Leninist biases. For tactical internal reasons, it may be premature for them to reject all those prejudices; yet the mere parroting of old notions can only deepen old and dangerous misconceptions.

The United States undoubtedly was guilty of many transgressions and mistakes in supporting dictatorial and corrupt governments. But when Berlinguer and Carrillo equate those actions with the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and when they attribute this crisis to the USSR-USA rivalry in the Middle East, they close their own and our eyes to an unbridled Soviet expansionism and a rigid, unyielding totalitarian-militaristic Soviet system.

Berlinguer and Carrillo are rightly worried about the preservation of peace. They fail to notice, however, that humanity is threatened by a potential holocaust primarily because the Soviet state is exploiting emerging revolutionary movements, taking advantage of the lack of resolve in Western Europe and the United States. It is the Soviet Union's recent shift to a global offensive that is a real danger to world peace. Unfortunately, this is often observed by the contradictions and conflicts between the USSR and the United States, by unresolved ethnic and religious relations in the world and, above all, by uneasy and inequitable North/South economic relations.

Detente and peace are without question worthwhile, but they cannot be preserved today with an imaginary balance. That self-deceiving equation and the Western reticence to oppose Soviet moves merely encourages Soviet expansion. To argue that the Kremlin's "intervention"—a poor synonym for the "occupation"—in Afghanistan is the result of the USA-USSR conflict detracts from and masks the aggressive, despotic nature of the Soviet system.

Today, a national Communism has become the domestic tool of the Soviet Party bureaucracy, but Marxism-Leninism remains the foundation of the ideology it seeks to spread. Peace can be preserved only by achieving sufficient superiority to prevent military expansion, to prevent aggression, which at present is carried out by the Soviet Union alone.

Understandably, an independent Europe is what Berlinguer and Carrillo hope for. No one should oppose such a Europe, if this means a Europe that is united and sufficiently strong to resist Soviet expansionism. The Soviet intention is to pacify Europe, to separate it from the United States and simultaneously to undermine it by conquering or controlling the countries that provide Europe with much needed raw materials. The goal of Soviet expansion is not so much the subjugation of Afghan tribes, as the control of Middle Eastern oil and an outlet to the Indian Ocean in order to dominate Europe, and to force European industry to work for Soviet "socialism".

Yugoslav Errors

Evidence of the Eurocommunist contradictory thinking can be found among some Yugoslav Communist leaders, but the situation here is quite different. Because the Yugoslav leaders feel threatened they try to avoid "provoking" the Soviet Union with relatively strong statements. Their strategy is based on the Utopian belief that a "nonaligned ideology" can be preserved if blame for the world's ills is even-handedly assigned to both superpowers.

Another simplistic approach is to attribute any crisis to "superpower rivalry". The Secretary of the Central Committee of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia, Dusan Dragosavac, has already written off Afghanistan so that Yugoslavia may once again confine itself to supporting the illusory Final Act of the Helsinki Accords on European Security and Co-operation.

That kind of rationalizing can only lead to the return of "fraternal friendship" with Soviet ruling circles. Dragosavac even fails to treat the two blocs equally, implying that the Western bloc is worse than the Eastern one for the simple reason that it is "capitalist".

It is fortunate for Yugoslavia that more lucid and courageous ideas have been advanced by many others here, and have been followed by corresponding actions. A practical example of such constructive thinking can be found in the non-dogmatic evaluations of current developments, and in the determination of Yugoslav citizens to mobilize an effective self-defence.

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Free Press Or Enslaved Press?

CUSHROW IRANI

Address As Chairman, International Press Institute, to The 21st General Conference of UNESCO in Belgrade, Yugoslavia, on Monday, 13 Oct. 1980.

A famous British Jurist once reminded us that income tax was a tax on income and on nothing else. It is well known that Unesco does excellent work in many directions, but I believe the time has come to say categorically that Unesco is, or ought to be concerned with education, science and culture and with nothing else. However, here we have the MacBride Commission in effect saying that communications are synonymous with all human activity, past, present and future. It is a safe catch-all proposition. It also leaves governments so minded free to grab as many of the levers of control over the press in their countries as they can.

The Report claims to have achieved a remarkable synthesis of different and opposing points of view, bridging ideological divisions, political chasms and assorted pitfalls in various directions. It is indeed a remarkable document. Except on the issue of felicity of language, it is rather like Shakespeare, you can go to it for an appropriate quotation to support any position on almost any issue!

Let me say quite plainly, that there is no synthesis possible between freedom and the lack of it by whatever name called; between the concept of a free press working independently of and often in spite of governments; and the concept of the press as a tool of governments; and between news on the one hand and propaganda disguised as news on the other.

We are talking here, Mr. Chairman, of free speech as a basic human right. Either it exists or it does not. It is one thing to argue in favour of progress towards a freer and more just society for all human beings. It is quite another to make this progress dependent upon progress in economic development. Declamations apart, there is no connection that has been demonstrated between human rights on the one hand and predetermined levels of economic development on the other, although it is the temptation of despotic regimes everywhere to make the latter dependent upon the absence of the former.

No such sophistry in argument nor mock concern for economic betterment can be allowed to interfere with the conclusion that basic human rights are basic to all human beings, here and now, and not when they have reached some particular stage of economic development.

Yes, there is a bias in what I am saying. There is a bias in favour of the belief that the state exists for the individual and not the other way around: that news is what a diverse and varied press choose individually to print and not what governments ordain and

would be in the interests of themselves; and that while there is certainly a case for self-examination and self-improvement within the press, to regard the press as an instrument of government policy is a contradiction in terms.

The International Press Institute therefore:

- (1) stands and fights for a free press, irrespective of national frontiers;
- (2) recognises that the only proper safeguard of a free press in any country is the credibility, the respect and the confidence that it commands from public opinion.

The Institute therefore supports all efforts by the press themselves to improve both their conduct and their performance, while seeking in many different ways to improve the practices of journalism. The Report we have submitted to this Conference sets out very briefly what has already been achieved.

We are not complacent. A good deal more needs to be done in this direction and our efforts will continue. But that does not mean that we must support some of the initiatives that now confront us. Let me give just two examples.

The first is training and equipment. There is a great deal of material on this subject in the Draft Programme and Budget for 1981-83. It would be absurd to enquire whether you were in favour of training or you were opposed to it. Training is a neutral concept. You can train to be a policeman, but you can also train to be a burglar.

You can train to be a journalist, sceptical of everything that is fed to you irrespective of the source, ferreting out the truth, reporting objectively, arguing logically and criticising fearlessly where necessary. But you can also train to be a propagandist, conditioned to accept official information as the truth, official activities as being automatically worthy of praise and shunning any criticism of any politician or bureaucrat as something which would endanger the march towards economic development, the current opium of the people.

Take equipment: there is no denying the fact that in large parts of the world, the Third World in particular, there is a great hunger for modern tools of communication — efficient networks, better printing facilities and cheaper tariffs. It needs to be stressed, however, that these are required by the press in those countries, whereas the initiatives taken by Unesco would place them in the hands of governments which, if you will pardon the understatement, is not the same thing.

Thus it comes about that in my country, for example, the press makes do with printing equipment, much of it over 50 years old, because every impediment is placed in the path of its modernisation. At the same time, the Government is about to acquire, with overseas assistance, a multi-million-dollar computer designed for information storage and retrieval on a vast scale, but whose use will be restricted to governmental purposes only. Propaganda would thus be cheaper and more efficient, apart from being more plentiful while

FREEDOM FIRST

the practices of journalism labour under greater difficulties and increasing restraints.

The second example follows from the first. We are to have, at the end of this Conference, a new Unesco programme, the International Programme for the Development of Communications. It will go on studying communications, identifying problems, pondering over them and preparing more reports. These reports will lead to further studies and the discovery of fresh problems.

In a word, and to put it bluntly, it will mean more jobs for the boys. It will also mean that governments so minded, and they are all members of Unesco, will be able to point to these various studies and recommendations as justification for continued encroachments upon a free press and to keep their press in thrall. They will say that they are doing this to fight against war and racial prejudice and to advance economic development.

Their real objectives will be what they have always been, the enjoyment of political power without checks and balances, without accountability and, preferably without end. The Programme will start on a low key because the money that will be needed is simply not there, but start it will, financed by savings under other heads of the Unesco budget.

The proper question to ask would be—if sums between 1.5 and 1.7 million U.S. Dollars can be found in this way, how much more can be saved by a searching review of expenditure in other directions? But such questions will not be asked.

The Programme will be staffed and launched and soon afterwards supplementary demands will be raised. "What has been started must be continued", so says Paragraph 130 at Page 33 of the Draft Programme and Budget for 1981-83—and the anxieties of a free press everywhere will increase.

I have said all this to serve notice that the press is only too well aware both of the long term objectives and the short term tactics. It is also to declare our resolve to be watchful and vigilant — after all, eternal vigilance is our stock in trade, and at all times I promise you we shall give a good account of ourselves.

In his opening speech to this General Conference, the distinguished Director-General of Unesco referred to "Unesco's duty as an active interpreter of the world's moral conscience." I shall watch very anxiously in this debate on communications for the first signs of the world's "moral conscience". If I watch in vain, as I fear I shall, it must be because conscience is a matter for individuals, not governments.

JP FORUM FOR TOTAL REVOLUTION

For the furtherance of Jayaprakash Narayan's ideas with regard to socio-economic changes in the country, some of his close friends and followers have formed a forum on his 78th birthday.

Named after the author of the total revolution movement, the JP Forum aims at furthering the cause envisaged by him.

The Forum is conceived as a meeting ground for such individuals and groups who consider themselves committed, in one way or other, to translate JP's dreams into practice. Remaining aloof from power and party politics, it would strive to co-ordinate the activities of numerous groups and individuals associated with JP and his work in recent years.

Besides presenting JP's ideas in a systematic way with the help of eminent scholars and associates of JP from time to time, the Forum will also try to interpret and analyse important events local, national and international, through its units scattered all over the country in the frame of total revolution as envisaged by JP.

Of over hundred persons sponsoring the formation of the Forum, prominent are Sri Minoo Masani, Sri Hari Vishnu Kamath, Prof. Samar Guha, Prof. Purushottam Ganesh Mavlinkar, Sri Vadilal Daoli, Sri Brahmanand Mishra, Sri S. H. Razi, Dr. Parimal Kumar Das, Sri Rafiq Khan, Sri B. P. Pandey, Smt. Indu Pandey, Dr. S. K. Garg, Sri Mrinal Biswas, Sri Talatzeb Mohd., Kamal, Sri Jagannath Sharma, Sri Banarasisdas Goal, Sri S. S. Singh and Sri Pirelal Sharma.

The sponsors of the Forum believe that JP's total revolution called for basic changes in building up a new social order based on a synthesis of the old and the new, of spirituality, democracy and science. The two wheels of JP's total revolution were a limited, responsive state power and an enlightened, organised autonomous people's power. It is tragic that both the wheels have stopped moving in the right direction. And there is none to show the right way.

It is with the objective of injecting the JP impulse which the country needs sorely in every walk of national life today that the Forum is being formed. It will carry forward the process of change JP had initiated. As never before, today there is a need to have a broad-based platform where every one who ever had been associated with JP and his work right from his early days till the formation of the Janata Party and who thinks JP's ideas still have relevance, tries according to his understanding and capacity to translate JP's ideal of socio-economic changes into practice.

Till it acquires blood and flesh, the Forum is to function from Rajghat, Varanasi, as its headquarters, and after it has taken organisational shape its national secretariat would be shifted to a more suitable place.

From Sarvodaya News Service, Edited & Published by Brahmanand Mishra, Rajghat, Varanasi 221 001, U.P.

Radical Humanist Association

Since independence, the Indian People have been undergoing repeated experiences of electing popular governments with great enthusiasm and expectations and quick realisation of the government's abject failure to solve the people's urgent problems of poverty, unemployment and creation of a just and egalitarian society.

Successive governments of the Congress became unpopular soon after their election, but were not replaced by governments of any other political parties for want of a better alternative till Jayaprakash Narayan presented the alternative of the Janata Party in 1977.

The Janata also failed to solve out problems due to their lack of commitment, squabbles and dissensions.

Riding on the wave of popular disenchantment with the Janata, Mrs. Gandhi returned to power on the promise of giving a government that worked, inspite of her dark record of emergency and authoritarianism.

Within nine months of her regime the people have discovered that her government also does not work for the welfare of the people and she has commenced her old game of finding alibi in an allegedly unworkable constitution, uncommitted judiciary, hidden foreign hands and obstructionist opposition.

Unable to solve the problems of rising prices, increasing economic hardships and progressive breakdown of law and order, she has started passing repressive and arbitrary laws like the National Security Ordinance, denigrating the judiciary, the opposition and the press, demanding unrestricted power to amend the constitution and to appoint and transfer judges of the Superior Courts, so that she can amend the constitution as she likes, pass repressive laws that cannot be challenged in courts of law, thereby creating a climate of fear among the people and ultimately wielding absolute power in her hands as she did during the emergency.

She may also introduce some kind of a Presidential form of government, which will only degenerate into a dictatorship as is the experience in most of the third world countries.

This All India Conference of the Radical Humanist Association is of the view that no government in India, of whatever party, can solve the problems of poverty and usher in an egalitarian society without decentralisation of political and economic power, without providing a corruption-free administration and without the active support of the people.

The people should not look to the Government alone to solve our problems, and no government should think that it can alone solve out problems.

There should be a combination of people's power and state power as Jayaprakash used to point out, and power of the people should have constant control over power of the government at all levels.

All-India Conference, Jaipur 18-19 Oct. 1980

A Touch Of Xenophobia

Hydrophobia as everyone knows is a condition where one starts barking and growling at the sight of water. The situation may become intolerable enough to end in death. I do not know whether Xenophobia is a related disease, but of late I have found myself suppressing a desire to growl at and bite any foreigner who happens to pass by me. The dictionary explains curtly that "Xenos" means stranger, and fear of the creature leads to a "morbid dislike". It does not mention any symptoms of the disease.

It does not explain why I should find it intensely irritating, for instance, to have floating across my vision, every time I go into a restaurant, a greasy-haired youth with a vacant stare and baggy pyjamas who looks as though he has recently escaped from a harem, sitting with another young thing who looks as though she has had to spend her time as a prisoner of a Tibetan monastery where they supplied the clothes but nothing much to eat. Naturally, these experiences have left them bereft of table manners and money, so that they eat like savages, stare contemptuously at those who have not got over their bourgeois conditioning in such matters, and then fight over the bill at the end.

"We love India. We came to India because we love Indian culture," they say, as though they had managed to capture a specifically Indian type of virus that they have preserved in a vial of formaldehyde labelled "Culture Indica—to be taken in small doses only". For the thing is that though they love Indian culture they can't stand India itself, and Indians even less. A Dutch boy who looked as though he had just wandered in from the Neanderthal age, and had been growling all the while, confessed as much when he said that the sight of so many Indians who all came up to the height of his knees, terrified him. He used to sit on top of a double-decker bus murmuring "Dirty brown rats, dirty brown rats", but nobody minded because he was speaking in Dutch.

"India is the only place where we can still go," they explain, as though on the way to some distant state of being. "Europe is finished, dead, America is too materialistic. Africa, well, there is not much hope for mankind in Africa. Where else is there that we can go?" Their India is a mixture of Herman Hesse and Kipling where Rishi types drip wisdom as bountifully as the snows on the Himalayas, the food and clothes are cheap, footwear unnecessary and the peasants are waiting to be saved.

Of course, India is also a place where one can get robbed, beaten up or stranded in the wilderness, with surprise attacks of cholera, malaria or jaundice, but that just adds charm to the experience for those who have come from a world where everything is so pre-planned and pre-packaged that dysentery here becomes a metaphysical experience. India is the only place where the thrills are still genuine.

Indians have also experienced a transformation. Back in the sixties, it was impossible to go through a wedding ceremony or a name-giving or house-warm-

ing, or even a run-of-the-mill festival, without dragging out the nearest available foreigner bundled into a *saree* or *dhoti*, looking even more ridiculous with a "tikka", to match the event.

Foreigners felt that they could get a less expensive holiday if they were nice to the natives, while Indians, starved for consumer goods, felt hallowed if they could get used chewing gum wrappers, old razor blades, or whiffs of Camay soap and Clairol shampoo from the bathrooms. It was a lean time for Indian consumers, and the Peace Corps era was created specially to educate them in the joys and variety of Western consumer goods. I still remember one American girl who came bearing plastic beads for her Indian guests!

All that has changed, of course. When we visited a family with a German son-in-law we were given a lesson in ecology-conscious living. While everyone else was well into the old whisky-soda or fizzy drinks routine, the son-in-law made a dramatic entrance, clutching a partially opened coconut that he had carried half way across the town for lack of a nearby source, and proceeded to drink it. He preferred fingering a sitar to talking, and sat down for dinner Indian style on the floor which he claimed was better for the digestion, while we less enlightened Indians scraped away Western style at the table.

For such reasons, perhaps, foreigners now avoid noticing Indians in India, and Indians themselves feel slighted that nobody asks them to explain Sanskrit *slokas* in trains, or how to smoke a *beedi*. In both departments the foreigners now have better training. It is when the female of the species sits without a bra and indicates that she really does not care that the kindly Indian next to her is staring down her blouse, that the sense of outrage sets in. It does something to him, it turns him into a dirty brown rat who would do anything to have a tiny nibble at the goodies that he sees spread out before him. When he finally tries, she turns and flings the worst insult at him, "You dirty-minded Indian rat."

The other variety of foreigner that is now to be seen in India is the newly minted Islamic rebel pouring in from the Middle East. He prefers to study in India or take refuge here while things are being sorted out back home. In any case, the West is full of corrupting influences, so inimical to his delicate sensibilities, and much too expensive. These foreigners appear to come mostly in all-male varieties with quantities of hair growing on their arms and chests and both in and out of their heads, who walk about in gangs ogling the infidel women.

All Indians are poor in their estimation, and so must bend to pick up the coins that they throw at them. In fairness it must be noted that Indians are experts in the art of grovelling. At the private temple of the Maharaja in the Amber palace, Jaipur, for instance, not only did the priests put on a special "aarthi" for the sake of the Asahi Pentaxes and the Super Roleiflexes, but each tourist stood and waited outside the temple while two Indians gratefully rolled up their socks on either foot and tied the laces of their shoes for them.

GEETA DOCTOR

VOICES 2

Foreign Fund Flows

Perhaps the government has a point in not revealing all it knows about the flow of foreign money from abroad, other than the remittances of Indians living abroad. There is the risk of offending other countries, which may not be advisable because of foreign policy compulsions.

Unfortunately, the evils of foreign money are talked of only when things go wrong for the country or for the ruling party. It was after the 1967 general elections that the gravity of the danger was realised. The debacle of the Congress Party, the first of its type since independence, led it to embark on a search for its causes. The Intelligence Bureau undertook a wide-ranging enquiry. Its findings were not disclosed, but the general issues thrown up by them, and shared by the Government with the public, showed that suspicions on the question were not baseless.

The then Home Minister, Mr. Y. B. Chavan, rightly pleaded in Parliament that the issues figuring in the prolonged debate on the flow of foreign money in the country were vital. He claimed that it would not be appropriate to discuss these from the view-point of apportioning blame among the political parties.

According to the latest report of the Home Ministry, Rs. 297 crores of foreign contributions was received in 1978 by some 4,700 associations. The money came through banking channels, but once it found its way into the country, the government could not keep track of it. It is suspected that huge funds were also funnelled through clandestine conduits.

The 1976 law on foreign funds creates an illusion of regulating the inflow. The mechanism devised by it ill-serves the purpose for which it was meant. The government, for instance, is empowered to verify whether non-political organisations have observed the rules of the game and utilised the money according to the declarations made by them. No inspection worth the name is carried out. Random enquiries are made, which are not followed up. Receptient organisations dutifully file their statements supported by reports of chartered accountants, delightfully vague on substantive points, with large sums indicated as expenditure on cloudy items.

The existing law does not cover a number of sources of foreign money. The countries of the European socialist bloc enter into trade agreements with our state trading agencies through middlemen who are given fabulous commissions. A large part of these flows through clandestine conduits. Cases of this nature have come to light in the course of investigations concerning a few Soviet trade deals with state trading agencies in Punjab and Haryana.

Besides, there are manufacturing concerns run in our country by pro-Moscow elements in collaboration with some states of Eastern Europe. It is doubtful if strict watch is kept over their finances and steps taken to see that foreign money does not fund political activities. Nobody knows how much money flows in the country through the state deals of our

Communist-governed states with East European socialist countries. The relations of the political parties that govern these states with the Soviet Union is well known. There is need to keep strict watch over them.

Another channel of foreign money over which the Government keeps no control is the publication work entrusted by foreign governments to Indian presses. It is widely suspected that through such deals in New Delhi, huge amounts of money fund political organisations.

Another source of foreign money is the public functions that Embassies in Delhi hold. Lavish expenditure is made on them through members of political parties.

There is need to curb the flow of foreign money in India by devising proper legislative procedures. The present law requires detailed amendments.

J. G. TIWARI

VOICES 3

The Butt Of Ridicule

I recently saw an appalling film made by the Films Division, India. The subject was Evacuation — a basic human need, and essential for survival. The fact that millions of Indian citizens do not have a clean and private place to evacuate is, to use a cliché, shocking.

The film's subject, therefore, had tremendous potential, which it rather predictably failed to tap. In spite of a number of avenues open to the director through which he could have attacked problems in this area, he failed to select even one. As a result, the film disjointedly meanders through comedy to farce, and finally even to idiocy, evoking only sniggers instead of sympathy from viewers.

This otherwise serious theme was treated flippantly, and the uncomfortable evacuator, deprived of privacy, was rudely made the butt of one hell of a funny joke. Frequent shots of people urinating or excreting along the railway lines, amongst the rocks on the Bombay seashore, against walls and footpaths, were interrupted by a silly "story". This story, which surfaced sporadically, could not make up its mind whether it wanted to be a cartoon or not. It showed a well-dressed middle-class office-goer with an uncontrollable urge to urinate. Unable to find a urinal, the poor fellow was then systematically chased all over Bombay, from Churchgate to Bandra Band Stand by amused policemen, street-sweepers and even lovers on the beach!

Towards the end of the film the director suddenly woke up to his responsibilities and sleepily interviewed a sweeper here, a slum-dweller there, a couple of college students, and some working people. That was the "serious" aspect of the film. It failed miserably in every way. Sensitively done, it could have been a powerful analysis of the poor state or non-existence of sanitary facilities all over the country. It could have dealt with this fundamental problem in positive terms. Instead, it chose to ridicule the subject, and became what it portrayed: a stinking mess. It is being screened in all our cinema houses.

SANDHYA BORDEWEKAR

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THE WORLD OF BOOKS

INDIA: A POLITICAL ECONOMY OF STAGNATION by P. S. Jha *Oxford University Press*. 1980
Pp. 311. Rs. 70/-

The book is divided into three parts. Part one contains three chapters which are meant to provide basic information for the main thesis of the book. The section contains a chapter each on agriculture and inflation. Part II is the substantive portion of the book. It is divided into five chapters. Of these the first three constitute the core of Jha's thesis. These deal with the cause of economic decline, the class origins of economic laws and the rise of the intermediate class. The third part of the book presents an alternative approach to the problem of economic development.

We take the core part first and later comment on the first and third parts. The author begins with the assertion that the task of economic development is essentially political. The claim is well taken. As a matter of fact one could generalise it a step further and say that the task is essentially of social transformation.

The highlight of the book is an idea of Kalecki, that it is the intermediate classes largely consisting of market-oriented peasant proprietors, small-medium manufacturers, traders and other self-employed groups which control the economy. The author tries to substantiate this idea in the context of India with some empirical findings. He dwells on the theme in detail, indicating how the use of political power and bureaucracy has come handy to these groups, how they have managed to keep the needier sections of society at bay, and precluded the benefits of growth from filtering downwards.

The intermediate class has during the last three decades taken over the entire economy and has been manoeuvring it in the fashion which serves its own interest. Pursuance and perpetuation of this "self-interest" has gone much beyond the normal interpretation of the term in liberal economics. The group not only seeks to maximize its own gains ruthlessly but also actively uses the public sector for all sorts of gains. The author makes the assertion that powers with which the government had equipped itself to regulate the economy have been systematically usurped by this class.

The functioning of most of the industrial regulation and development legislation, rules, licences, etc., has been turned against its avowed objectives. These instruments have now become necessary to these interest-groups for hijacking the system in their own favour. So complete and over-riding has been this turning of tables that with the help of political leverage these groups indulge in machinations which further serve their interest. Needless to say there is some truth in

the thesis. It is recognized by any one who has not been a party to the game.

The author sees the stagnation of the economy during 1966-78 as a product of the manipulation by the intermediate class. Unlike some other analysts he is not content to attribute it to exogenous variables like draughts, wars and other national exigencies. Jha sees stagnation as engineered by this class with the help of the underground economy, black money, and jinxed political alignments.

As regards part one of the book, it should be noted that the introductory chapter dealing with agriculture is terribly "dated". It makes rather jarring reading in 1980. It is understandable that authors reuse their past writings to carry forward their ideas. But these need to be edited effectively so as to match more recent writings. From this point of view, the chapter does not make useful reading.

It is in the third part of the book that one finds the author completely at sea. He is seen caught in the whirlpool of the socio-political-economic mix, denigrating a decision here and a policy there, while holding aloft some hopeful trail blazer or other.

It is not due to ineptness on the part of the author. It reflects the state of the social sciences in general. That is why so many economists, sociologists, political scientists and the like, who seem impeccable while making their diagnosis of social ills, all-knowing as they demolish the works of their peers, become so pitifully vulnerable in their own alternative models.

On the one hand, this failure tells us something about the complexity and vastness of modern societies; on the other, it indicates the insufficiency of the paradigms, the models and theories which are the mainstay of professionals. Both these factors are at work when one comes across non-viable alternatives.

It need not be laboured that suggesting alternatives is an act of creation, a process of fusion and synthesis. It requires an integration not only of various methods, but also of different values, and of these values with methods. It requires a commitment, a perspective, a goal and an ideology. Without this ideological framework one may draw new lines but one cannot breathe life into them.

It is for want of such a perspective that the third part of the book ends up becoming a chimerical mess of well meaning thoughts, rambling, incoherent and incongruent. Since the core of the book plays on the hypothesis of Kalecki one would have liked part three to be a follow-up of the argument as seen in the Indian context. In the absence of that, the allegiance to Kalecki in part two seems to be perfunctory and a mere convenience. Rejection of even the basic Marxian notion of class, its repudiation as an obfuscating device, while at the same time vigorously supporting what is only an elaboration of it by Kalecki reminds one of the games academics play.

On the whole, one may agree with the general depiction of the state of our political economy as portrayed by the author, and even take cognizance of his rather spirited assertions against liberal economists or the classical Marxian position. It does not justify the occasional swash-buckling journalism the book sometimes indulges in. Nevertheless, it succeeds in capturing the mood with which some professional social thinkers are entering the eighties.

BRAHM PRAKASH

THE LIFE AND DEATH OF YUKIO MISHIMA:

by Henry Scott Stokes. Piper Books. Pp. 255. Rs. 13.

Yukio Mishima is the Japanese writer famous for his 104 books, but also for his sensational life ending in suicide by **hara-kiri**. The author, who is an English journalist, examines Mishima's life to get to the core of the aesthetic that would explain its strangeness and death.

The author portrays Mishima's grandmother, the dominating Natsuko, who brought up Mishima confined to the cloister of her sickness, old age and oppressive love. In her dark rooms he grew up with powerful, bizarre images. A night-soil man walking towards him became "the feeling of tragedy in the most sensuous meaning of the word"; dying and murdered princes from fairy tales were fascinating; blood gave him a sexual thrill; the smell of soldier's sweat made him crave for their destiny; and especially, the naked picture of St. Sebastian aroused his first orgasm. In this period was created, what he was later to call, his "heart's leaning towards Death and Night and Blood"

From then on, Mishima's life moved between one contradiction and another.

During the war, Mishima was associated with the Japanese Romantic movement led by a group of literary nationalists. They believed that death and destruction were the ultimate values in life. Hasuda, their leader, said, "I believe one should die young in this age. To die young, I am sure, is the culture of my country." Nevertheless, when Mishima was finally drafted, he misguidedly the doctor and escaped military service on health grounds. In his last years, probably as a compensation or another chance for fame, he organised his own private army called the Tatenokai. It was ridiculous, and soon regarded as one of Mishima's eccentricities.

By this time, Mishima had become a well-established writer. No longer withdrawn, though homosexual, he was happily married.

Mishima organized an exhibition of his life a week before he died, dividing his forty-five years into Four Rivers: Writing, Theatre, Body and Action. Stokes uses the same divisions to assess his work, discuss his narcissism and athletic endeavour, and finally examine his ideology.

Stokes finds Mishima a muddled imperialist, asserting the pre-war Emperor System as the only one for

the nation, but not knowing how to negate twentieth-century modernization.

Hara-kiri, the act of slitting one's belly so that sincerity, which resides in one's entrails, becomes visible and evident, is the traditional Japanese method of suicide. As a mode of death, it was thought defunct until Mishima fiercely asserted its validity. This kind of revitalization was at the heart of Mishima's action.

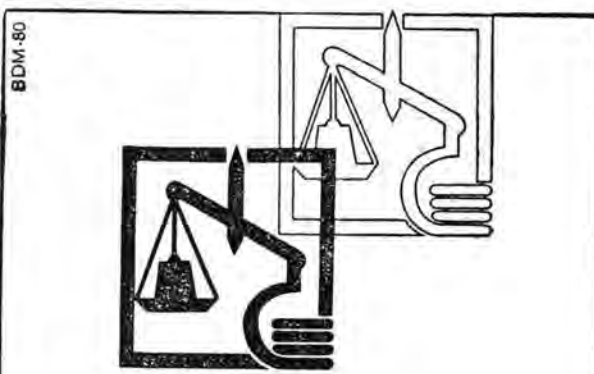
In an incredible **coup d'etat**, Mishima and the Tatenokai leader, Morita, took General Mashita hostage at a military base and ordered him to summon the armed forces so that Mishima could give them a speech. Following a struggle and many blunders, the army did hear him. He ended with these words: "Let us restore Nippon to its true state and let us die. Will you value only life and let the spirit die?"

Immediately after this, Mishima and Morita pledged allegiance to the Emperor and committed **hara-kiri**.

Stokes believes the two were having a homosexual relationship, and this deed was a **shinju**, a lovers' suicide, reinforced by Mishima's other beliefs.

To evoke a complete and credible picture in the case of someone as confused and enigmatic as Mishima is Stokes' achievement. At the same time, he is repetitive, and that gets tedious. One is aware of the limitations of the biographical mode, how it can convey the complexity but lacks the precision and resonance of a fictional character.

RASHIDA GHADIALI



Achievement has its own rewards.

Official recognition of Bombay Dyeing's dynamic achievement has come in the shape of numerous awards:

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BOMBAY DYEING

THE ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF ISLAM
by Asghar Ali Engineer; Orient Longman Ltd., Pp.
223. Rs. 65/-.

GANDHI AND NEHRU by B. R. Nanda, P. C. Joshi
and Raj Krishna; Oxford University Press (1979) Pp.
67. Rs. 14/-.

We begin by noting two facts about this book. The first is the accuracy of the title. The subject is just that—the conditions and circumstances in which Islam came into being and the conditions, circumstances and men who shaped its development. Note again that the word Islam relates to the religion. It does not include the culture, art, architecture, literature, traditions or mores which can so easily lead one away from the direct line of religion.

Fact number two is that the dedication on the title page is a true and honest reflection of the author's attitude to his subject. "To the memory of my father, who always encouraged me in my search for the truth, however unpalatable it might be."

The ability to face unpalatable truths, let alone search for them, is a trait which has not been conspicuous among Muslim students of Islam. And, in fact, the same lack of dogma which saves Mr. Engineer from taking a defensive attitude about Islam, also saves him from falling into the pit of orthodox Marxism. His analyses and interpretations are not forced into any preconceived mould. What he himself recently wrote in a review of Maxime Rodinson's book **Marxism and the Muslim World** could well apply to his own work. "His analytical framework is Marxist, but... not mechanical or dogmatic... he demolishes Marxist myths as vehemently as some traditional Muslim myths."

Mr. Engineer is obviously a scholar and historian. To me, his great merit is that he does not speak merely to his fellow-scholars. For a layman (laywoman) like myself, who has been struggling to digest some of the standard beliefs about us Muslims, Mr. Engineer's book is full of brilliant insights.

"In tribal society before the emergence of Islam" says the author, "tribes and not individuals were held responsible for acts of omission or commission... The Koran clearly says, 'No soul shall bear another's burden... if a laden soul cries out for help, not even a near relation shall share its burden'. Thus it is clear that in Mecca when Muhammad started preaching his new faith, individuals, as opposed to collectivism, had emerged..."

We are able to visualize the Meccan society of traders and merchants, the haves and have-nots, the assumptions which governed property; and an understanding of this background clarifies, for us, an idea of the spirit and intention behind many Koranic injunctions. The close relationship of the Koran to the life and practice of the merchants of Mecca, so lucidly explained by Mr. Engineer, brings many hitherto unexplained mysteries into the world of intelligent common-sense. And if we begin to understand that the Koran owed something to the Prophet Mohammad's sub-conscious as well as to more Omnipotent sources—well, this can only enhance our admiration and respect for the Prophet.

LAEeq FUTEHAULY

Tomes have been written on Gandhi and Nehru as well as on the relations between them. Compared to those, this is a small book consisting of simplified versions of talks delivered at a symposium held by the Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, New Delhi. The three writers are the historian Mr. B. R. Nanda, Professor P. C. Joshi of the University of Delhi, and Dr. Raj Krishna, the eminent economist who was for some time a member of the Planning Commission. Coming from such authors, the book has a distinction of its own.

The relationship between Gandhi and Nehru has puzzled many. Mr. Nanda has called it "a working partnership" which continued for about three decades. He has also stressed the differences between the two. He writes: "The young elegant man from Allahabad seemed to have little in common with the strange charismatic figure which burst upon the Indian political stage in 1919 with an almost elemental force. The primary school in Porbunder, where Gandhi wrote the alphabet in dust with his fingers, or the Bhavnagar college where he painfully struggled with lectures in English, belonged to an altogether different world from that of European governesses and residential tutors in Allahabad, Harrow, Cambridge and the Inns of Court in England in which the young Nehru grew up."

The partnership was not, however, without serious differences. Gandhi and Nehru differed "in 1922 on the aftermath of the Chauri Chaura tragedy, in 1931 on the Gandhi-Irwin Pact, in 1932 on the fast against separate electorates for untouchables." They also differed in 1942 over the Quit India movement and over the partition of the country. In spite of these differences it continued because, as stated by Mr. Nanda, "they needed each other."

The other two contributors have generally followed the same line. They have pointed out the broad similarities in the views of the two leaders in spite of differences in their approaches to various problems. Dr. Raj Krishna has stated that on economic issues there was no polarity between the two leaders: "In most instances the two leaders were, in effect, arguing about proportions and not choosing extremes."

Dr. Krishna has taken note, though, of some basic differences in the thinking of the two leaders. He has pointed out some failures of planning, but he does not attribute them to "the thought-systems of Gandhi and Nehru." He attributes them to the failure to organize the masses to assert themselves. This is a very important point, but it need not be discussed here.

V. B. KARNIK

An Experience and A Point of View

1: College Admissions

If there is one thing that cuts you to size, it is the process of admitting your non-SSC, but I.C.S.E.-passed child into a Junior College in Maharashtra State. Several mothers, myself included, are still reeling under its shocks and strains. Not only is it a breathless race against time, it is also a severe test of patience.

Ever since the country adopted the 10+2+3 format for education, the days of smooth sailing in college admissions are over. I do not know what happens in other States, but in Maharashtra a curious situation arises. Most schools have the option of reaching the 10th. standard level either through S.S.C. (Secondary School Certificate, issued by The Maharashtra State Board of Secondary and Higher Secondary Education, Pune), or through I.C.S.E. (Indian Certificate of Schools Examination, issued by The Indian Certificate of Schools Examination Board, New Delhi). Both the S.S.C. and the I.C.S.E. examinations, though testing students for the same 10th standard, do so in different ways. They have different curriculums, hold their examinations at different times in the year, and consequently, post their results at different times.

Genealogically, the S.S.C. and its continuation through +2 and +3 stages derives from the old Matriculation system. The I.C.S.E. and its continuation through +2 and +3 stages derives from the old Senior Cambridge system. In a bid to blend the two systems into a uniform format, the Maharashtra State has sought to upgrade the Matriculation system, while retaining its vernacular compulsions, and to downgrade the Senior Cambridge system to shed its Anglicised and elitist overtones.

Very logical and desirable. After the +2 stage, the medically inclined would join Medical Colleges, the engineering inclined would join the I.I.T.'s or Engineering Colleges, the technically inclined would join the Polytechnics, the commercially inclined would join the Humanities in the Colleges, and so on.

Difficulties begin to arise when students leaving a School which has followed the I.C.S.E. system to the 10th standard seek admission to junior Colleges for the +2 stage. All Colleges in Maharashtra State adopt the State-conceived H.S.C. system, discountenancing the I.C.S.E.-conceived I.S.C. system for the +2 stage.

The differences between the two Boards engenders a series of bureaucratic flurries. Since the validity of the I.C.S.E. is by no means accepted, students having passed the I.C.S.E. are required to obtain

- a) an Eligibility Certificate from the Maharashtra State Board of H.S.C. for entrance into a Junior College; and
- b) a Migration Certificate from the I.C.S.E. Board, New Delhi.

To obtain an Eligibility Certificate, several documents attested by the Principal and the staff of the I.C.S.E. Schools are required, such as: a copy of the mark sheets, a School-leaving certificate, a character certificate from the Principal, and such others. At this point, Time works against the struggling parent. The schools are closed for the summer vacation, school-leaving certificates are not ready, character certificates cannot be issued by persons other than the teachers in charge of students, and the teachers are away taking a much-needed vacation. Secondly, Migration Certificates from Delhi keep us in unending suspense about their arrival.

The Eligibility-seeking parent starts her ordeal before the announcement of the I.C.S.E. result, which, again, appears mysteriously one day at the School via the post. Parents are not to be pampered by a short news item announcing the date of the I.C.S.E. result! The message gets around like wild fire when a careless parent, who happens to be passing the School in the course of her shopping, incidentally notices the I.C.S.E. results displayed on the school notice-board.

The Eligibility-seeking parent drops everything on hearing this, races to the School, discovers her offspring's result, doesn't even wait to exult, salvages what she can of mark-sheets, character certificates, etc. and stands 75th. in the queue at the Bombay Regional Office of the H.S.C. Board (Pune). This office is situated in suburban Matunga in the Ruparel College campus.

As all the rooms are occupied by presiding officers, ledgers and books, the queue spills over along the narrow spiral staircase from second floor to ground floor and beyond. Amid much sweat and tears (though fortunately, not blood) the 3-abreast queue inches forward until, suddenly, the parent is face to face with the Verifying Officer who checks your credentials. This is only the beginning. You scamper next to get your 80th. place in the second queue in order to pay a fee of Rs. 20/- for obtaining Eligibility.

As you come up to the table, an elderly lady jostles you and demands from the Officer at the table an application form for Eligibility, which is also handed out at the same table by the same Officer, who uses the same receipt book to accept Rs 1/- for handing out the Eligibility form! The parent exercises the utmost self-control and refrains from protesting, lest she start an argument and lose her place in the queue.

Finally, the parent is shepherded into the Middle Room where, at last, the Eligibility application is accepted after re-verification with the original documents, and summarily told to come a week later to collect her Temporary Eligibility Certificate. Why Temporary, the parent is about to ask, but the question dies on her lips. She has overheard an irate Officer telling a like-minded parent that everything takes time, and that the Final Eligibility Certificate will take maybe another three months.

The parent then switches roles and becomes the Junior College Admission seeker. She discovers some shattering facts. Some Colleges have closed down their Junior College section altogether; some Colleges are not issuing Application forms until the State S.S.C. results are out; some Colleges have stopped teaching

Basic French; some Colleges have already closed admission applications but throwing out candidates who were taught Modern Maths; some Colleges are re-directing suburban candidates to suburban Colleges. And so on.

The Admission-seeking parent unearths acquaintances, new and old, nodding and otherwise, and begs them to intercede on behalf of her offspring. Finally, she hands in the application with trembling hands, and lives on hope....

INDU SARAIYA

2: A Question of Aims

To the question: What's wrong with higher education in India today? the answer is: everything or almost everything. It has called for futile public debate and endless criticism on the technicalities of the system. The policy of "planned drift" has enabled the Indian Universities to mass produce illiterate graduates in every faculty. The imbalance and artificiality on the Indian educational scene is due to the neglect of our real needs and situation.

Young people come to the University either because they have nothing better to do or because a University degree is the only way to secure a job. This makes Indian education at once irrelevant and job-oriented, especially now when there are not enough jobs even after securing a University degree. Many of our young men and women disappear abroad forgetting that education is a growth from the soil and has to be rooted in a national culture.

The purpose of our Universities is at present obscure, and teaching has an uncertain aim. Instead of being an experiment in the life of values, encouraging inquiry and living thought, the Universities have become graduate-producing factories. Adding to the confusion is the language problem with sharp polarization at the College level, thanks to the distinction between the English medium and non-English medium schools.

If the students have proved a disappointment (which is not entirely their fault) the teachers are no better. Too often, young men and women become teachers by default because they cannot think of anything else to do. A teacher walks into a College without any training and with virtually no knowledge of what he/she is required to do. Teachers do not form a community with an intellectual tradition of their own. They forget that they are the architects of a new generation and could help create a little order, and some apprehension of a man's purpose in the jungle of humanity.

The balance on the educational scene can still be restored if there is a disinterested desire to help the young and a commitment to culture, Quality control, balanced planning and a clean administration may bring us out of the quagmire. Given the necessary stimulant of faith and motivation for excellence the Indian student will respond. The impetus should come from the teachers who should be at the centre and not at the periphery of education.

DECEMBER 1980

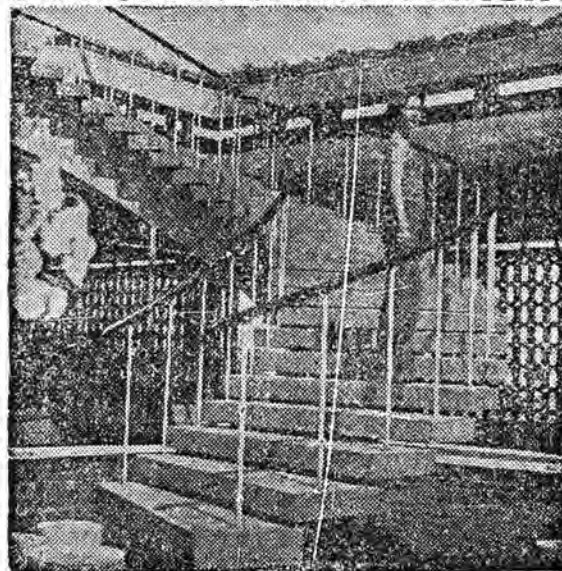
The effort to induct talented Indians abroad into the Indian development process has hardly evoked any response from the Indian bureaucracy. It has ended in frustration and mutual recriminations. It might not be wrong to say that India's expatriate sons and daughters, who have contributed much to the advancement of knowledge, would be only too willing to do something for their motherland, given the opportunity to "inter-act" with the country off and on. The emotional urge is there. It would be a homecoming in more ways than one. It would make them feel wanted in the land of their birth.

To be at par with the rest of the world, we need more faith in ourselves. At the risk of being called simplistic, I maintain that the return of faith could be the link between higher education and the community. The aspiring mind should resume the exercise of man's historic soul, renovate its muscle, pump more blood into it and so restore its strength.

Learning a professional skill and holding a job are not the aims of education. Rather, it is a sense of life and a quest for meaning. If the Indian educational hypothesis is based on a unified attitude towards the abiding, the first step towards the renewal of our culture will be taken. We await the prophet of an integral Indian education who will lead us from darkness to light.

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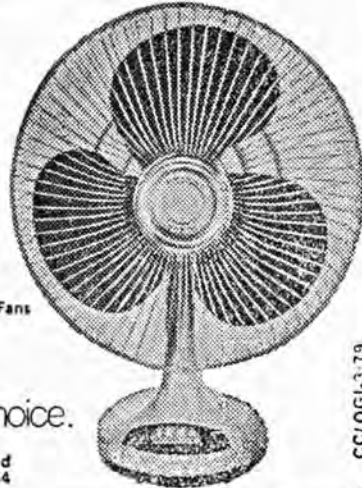
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