

Rational Politics

V. B. Karnik

RATIONAL politics is the need of the hour, not by one party or the other but by all parties standing for the progress and prosperity of the people. Irrational politics of one drives others in the same direction. The result is a round confusion and chaos in the political field leading to instability and disorder. That generally is the picture as it presents itself today to any dispassionate political observer.

The main responsibility for this unhappy state of affairs is that of the Central Government and its leaders. Since the quarrel in the Congress organisation came out in the open in the middle of July last, they have taken no definite step on any issue except for the solitary exception of nationalisation of fourteen major banks, which has by now lost its glamour and effectiveness. Indecision and drift have been the major characteristics of all government policies and activities. There is loud talk of socialism, but little concrete action to improve the condition of the people which should be the objective if socialism is to have any meaning.

The political parties have not behaved any better. The old Congress and the new Congress are engaged in the destructive game of disrupting each other's strength and organisation. In order to succeed in that game they do not mind entering into unprincipled alliances with other parties and groups. Out of all other all-India parties there are only two which have a definite object in view, which in both cases is not only irrational but also destructive of national unity and democracy and freedom. One is the Jana Sangh and the other is the Communist Party Marxist. The Jana Sangh is intent on establishing a Hindu Raj which will have no place for Muslims except as second-class citizens. It also stands for the revival of old Hindu ideals and institutions. The Communist Party Marxist is, on the other hand, out to create disorder and anarchy in the hope that in that condition it will be able to establish its own dictatorship. The line of action that it is following in West Bengal and Kerala should leave nobody in doubt about its immediate and ultimate objective.

In spite of the grave danger presented by these two parties at the two ends of the political spectrum, the others are busy destroying each other in the vain hope of strengthening one's own position. In order to secure mass following, they raise from time to time alluring slogans and participate in many activities based on the ignorance and superstitions of the people. The test in each case is not the beneficial result but the possibility of being able to gather a large following. The people can be fooled in this manner for some time, but in the end they find out and begin to despise all politics and all political leaders. This mood of public disillusion and frustration provides a fertile field for the rise of dictatorship. Those who are not for the growth of dictatorship should keep in mind this inevitable result of their pursuit of irrational politics.

Rational politics always keep before the people well-defined and easily attainable goals and a concrete plan of action that will take them to those goals. The goals comprise social and economic ends which lead the people from one stage of progress and better life to another. There is always a readily discernible relationship between the means and the ends. The people are not required to take things on belief, nor are they called upon to struggle and strive blindly for airy nothings. Rational politics does not look upon the people as immature children to be satisfied with toys or as incalculable forces to be manipulated one way or the other. It treats them as grown up human beings capable of learning and advancing in all fields of human endeavour. It knows that they can be misled, but is also aware of their capacity to learn from their mistakes and to hark back to the right path. It believes in constant education through action and precept and has the patience to wait for results which, it is convinced, are bound to follow.

If the country is to advance on the road of social and economic progress, it will have to adopt the path of rational politics. In order to pursue that path, it is not necessary to establish a brand new party. There are enough men of good will and prudence in the existing democratic parties who can, if they are convinced, persuade their organisations to move in the direction of rational politics. It is not necessary to wage a war against parties or politicians. Far more important and essential is the task of creating a climate for rational politics. Once that climate is created, parties and politicians will realise that they cannot make a headway without thinking and acting in terms of rational politics.

Training For Democracy

(from a Correspondent)

THE Leslie Sawhny Programme of Training for Democracy organised, during the year 1969, twenty-two training courses, high level seminars and conferences in which over six hundred public men, industrialists, executives, political workers, women social workers, trade union functionaries and students participated. The biggest training camp during the year was held for 115 students in Mangalagiri, about ten miles away from Vijayawada in Andhra Pradesh. The usual nine day training courses were held in various States such as Mysore, Maharashtra, Bihar, Andhra Pradesh, U.P., Kerala and Rajasthan.

One of the distinguishing features of this year's activity was organisation of three high level seminars, in collaboration with the Friedrich-Naumann-Stiftung of West Germany. A five day seminar was organised in Calcutta in September on "The Role of Competitive Enterprise in the Indian Economy". The ground covered at the seminar included topics such as the role, problems and future of free enterprise in our economy, the problems of professional management, the condition of employees in enterprises, the social responsibilities of business, fair trade practices and the consumer, and the background of the 'German Miracle'. Among those who initiated discussions on these topics were Dr. Prof. Heigl of the Ruhr University, West Germany, Mr. M. R. Masani M.P., Dr. R. C. Cooper, Mr. D. N. Patodia M.P., Dr. F. A. Mehta and Mr. S. R. Mohandas. There was general agreement at the seminar about the positive and dynamic role that competitive enterprise could play not only in our economy but also in the maintenance of our democratic institutions. It was also stressed that the public image of Indian business needed to be improved by a greater awareness of the social responsibilities of business and by more effective communication and participation in active citizenship. It was also felt that the conflict between the intelligentsia and the business elite, which is absent in many other countries, but which is present in our country, added to the problems of free enterprise in India.

The seminar in Calcutta was followed by another five day seminar in Delhi on "Modernisation of the Indian Social Structure". The participants and discussion leaders in this seminar included Dr. S. Chandrasekhar, Union Minister for Health and Family Planning, Mr. Nirad C. Chaudhuri, Prof. V. V. John, Dr. Andre Beteille, Mr. A. G. Noorani, Prof. A. B. Shah, Mr. A. D. Moddie, Prof. Balraj Madhok, M.P., Mr. Justice G. D. Khosla, Mr. M. R. A. Baig, Mrs. Nayan-tara Sahgal, the Maharaja of Dhrangadhra and

Mr. Philip Spratt. Despite the wide variety of the personal experience and the background of the participants there was general agreement about the inevitability of modernisation of institutions in India, but there were serious doubts about the inevitability of modernity which implied a rational and scientific outlook, without a sustained and concerted effort at educating the people who were living in many centuries at the same time. It was recognised that, while on the whole caste was weakening, its exploitation tended to distort the democratic institutions. The seminar felt that our tendency had been to solve problems through legislation. Hence the excessive legislation of the last twenty years. It was noted that there were built-in limits in legislation though law could be an effective instrument of change. The seminar also agreed that there was no hope of modernising our social structure without population control. It therefore, welcomed the introduction of legislation to raise the minimum age of marriage and the proposed liberalisation of abortion.

The third high level five day seminar was organised in Madras in December, 1969 on 'The Problems of Foreign Investment and Aid'. Those who led the discussions included Prof. P. T. Bauer, of the School of Economics and Political Science, London; Prof. B. R. Shenoy, Mr. I. T. Mirchandani, Mr. M. R. Masani M.P. and Dr. Klaus Berkey of West Germany. The participants in the seminar included: Mr. M. S. Gurupadaswamy M.P., Mr. K. Santhanam, Mr. M. R. Pai, Mr. L. A. Veit of U.S. Embassy and Dr. Hohmann of Indian Institute of Technology, Madras. The seminar could not come to unanimous conclusions on the role of foreign aid and investment but noted the complexity of issues involved in it. There was, however, general agreement on two points, namely, that foreign aid could have been used in the past and should be used in the future more effectively and economically. Secondly, more favourable conditions should be created for a greater massive flow of private investment.

Perhaps, the most significant activity was the convening of a conference of a few industrialists in Bombay in September to assess what had been done in concrete terms in furtherance of the declaration on Social Responsibilities of Business adopted at the International Seminar held in Delhi in March, 1965, under the auspices of the Gandhian Institute of Studies, Varanasi and the India International Centre, New Delhi. Those who participated in the September

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Why I Oppose Socialism

M. R. Pai

SOCIALISM is fashionable in India today, like sideburns and tight pants in her cities. The competitive race that politicians professing socialism are running with each other does not, however, mean that socialism is good for India. Nor, that it would endure.

As a citizen of Indian democracy, I oppose socialism mainly on four grounds.

First, socialism cannot solve our problem of poverty. With socialism, India would slide from poverty to pauperism.

Second, it would lead to destruction of individual liberties. Our democratic constitution would disintegrate under pressure of socialist policies.

Third, socialism would result in glaring inequalities between the rulers and ruled and lead the country away from the path of social justice.

Finally, it would come in the way of India's greatness, while destroying her noble traditions.

Since there is considerable confusion even among socialists on what it means, it is better to define socialism. Broadly, its objective is to create a society of the free and the equal. This is also the objective of several other ideologies and non-socialists.

The crucial difference lies in the methodology of socialism. That methodology is (a) Central Planning of economic activities by the State, and (b) State ownership of means of production, distribution and exchange.

This methodology has failed elsewhere. It will not succeed in India either.

Opposition to Central Planning is generally confused with opposition to all planning or all state intervention in economic affairs. It is dubbed as a plea for *laissez faire*. Far from it.

The modern state has to *plan* its own duties and obligations towards citizens. For instance, defence of territorial integrity and freedom; maintenance of law and order; provision of infra-structure facilities (such as honest and good administration, roads, ports etc.) which cannot be provided by citizens by themselves but without which there can be no economic activity; provision of basic amenities like drinking water, public sanitation; education; regulation of private enterprise; a stable currency; institutional and legal framework for economic transactions etc., are obligations of the modern states. They have to be planned and provided for.

In place of these basic functions, which would keep an underdeveloped country's government fully occupied, central planning has come to mean high cost steel plants and other inefficiently run state enterprises

and a tangle of monopolies or near-monopolies in insurance, air transport, banking etc. impeding economic activities of citizens and rapid economic growth.

State ownership through a Public Sector and nationalisation of private industries is no longer acceptable even to socialists in countries like Sweden and Great Britain which have had socialist governments. In Sweden, over 90 per cent of the economy is in private enterprise. Yet Sweden has had socialist rule now for about 40 years! Most of the European socialists have found that state ownership does not transform the economy into a paradise of plenty. In state enterprises, technological and managerial problems remain much the same. Production and productivity, the very basis of a better life for all, tend to fall precipitously. If Parliamentary control over Public Sector is sought to be made effective, efficiency falls. If autonomy is granted in the interests of efficiency, then the bureaucracy in charge of Public Sector runs amuck, enjoying power without accountability. Individual freedoms, including trade union rights of employees, are progressively destroyed.

Poverty, our basic economic problem, can be solved quickly only by releasing the creative energies of the people. Freedom, not statism, is the answer.

Socialists in India have developed a vested interest in poverty, just as communists have in disorder and chaos. The prescription of both will not eliminate poverty; it will add the tyranny of Authority to the tyranny of Poverty.

Moreover, socialism in India will lead the country from poverty to pauperism because of tremendous wastage of scarce resources. The Public Sector, with its record of losses (Rs. 35 crores on an investment of Rs. 3,200 crores in central "running undertakings") and misdirection of scarce resources into capital intensive, low-employment potential industries will aggravate Indian poverty. Other consequences of this statism are food problem and inflation (i.e. a cruel tax on hard-working fixed income groups). Neither are calculated to eradicate poverty, nor promote social justice.

If the economy and people of India have survived the shock of socialist economic policies over the past 15 years, the reasons are to be found in the fortunate circumstance of a good sector of the population being beyond the pale of monetisation (and consequently the mischief of a number of government's economic policy) and the immense capacity of the people to circumvent the plethora of impractical laws imposed on them by the rulers in the pursuit of socialism. As

an old saying attributed to a farmer says: "What I eat today is mine; what I save for tomorrow will go to the king".

Socialism was described by someone as the bridge to totalitarianism. Socialists are verbal champions of freedom, but their actions destroy freedom. Thus, they pave the way for totalitarianism.

With increasing state ownership, and control over the economy, Trotsky's warning will come true: Formerly the rule was that he who does not work shall not eat, but now the rule is he who does not obey shall not eat! There need be no surprise over the totalitarian trends in our public life on the heels of bank nationalisation and other socialist measures. Threats to the freedom of the Press, the right to property, to every industry and trade, to sacred treaty obligations, and misuse of All-India Radio and governmental machinery for personal and factional ends, demand for a "committed bureaucracy", which will be followed by a demand for "committed armed forces" (in other words, "commissar" system) are inevitable first steps in the march towards a full-fledged socialist state. Destruction of family and religion would complete the process of transformation.

It is seldom realised that socialism is not only the enemy of individual freedoms—the socialist rulers always having the uncontrollable itch to control everyone except themselves—but also specially so of farmers, middle classes and generally the small man. This is necessary because state ownership has a tendency towards bigness for sake of bigness, and for easy control over all the ruled that bigness affords.

The developments in the banking field illustrate this. When we became independent, there were about 740 banks. Most of them were catering to the needs of small men. They were systematically destroyed by mergers and dissolutions until barely 70 banks were left at the time of nationalisation in 1969. Except in the case of a few weak units, this process was unjustified, and small people were adversely affected. Between 1960 and 1967, over 200 banks were thus destroyed. Now, when seven-eighths of banking is appropriated by the government through nationalisation, and the trend towards centralisation and monopoly has been initiated, there are tears for helping the small man through these huge nationalised banks!

To cover up this thirst for bigness and monopolies in the state sector, there is a lot of talk by socialists about monopolies and Big Business in private enterprise. Truth is of little consequence. A government appointed commission could not find any monopolies in private enterprise. An intricate licensing policy of the government has prevented competition which is the best anti-date for any tendencies towards monopolies in the economy. As for bigness, not a single Indian private company figures in the list of world's top 200 firms. A small country like Japan has 45, while

a huge country like India, ranking 15th in national income in the world, has no private enterprise big enough to figure in the list!

The socialists always speak of social justice, and set out to do things which destroy it. Take equality for instance. Equality of income and wealth is a mirage except in a stagnant society, or a colony of slaves. The essence of equality is equality before law. In the socialist state, it is destroyed. The rulers and the ruled become two distinct classes, with the same set of laws administered with a split personality. Socialists who preach equality of income and ceilings on income have no hesitation in enjoying huge perquisites at public cost. Central ministers who draw barely Rs. 2,500 a month and enjoy perquisites worth Rs. 17,000 a month are but one example of this conspicuous hypocrisy. Legislators are not much behind in the race for perquisites. Under socialism, professional politicians evolve a perquisitive society and destroy equality before law.

Equality is destroyed in another way. The huge and growing army of government servants is denied access to political power. The area of decision-making left to the citizens is progressively reduced and there is concentration of decision-making in a few political hands.

Social injustice is perpetuated in yet another way. The emphasis on equality of income and cry for ceilings result in similar rewards to the deserving and undeserving alike. After 50 years of bitter experience, the Soviet regime is realising the necessity for income differentials. As one Soviet economist, Prof. Alexander Birman, put it: Why should "loafers" get the same pay as good and efficient workers?

Socialism has introduced in Indian society the poison of class warfare. Big against small business, businessmen against public, urban workers against farmers, landless labour against peasants—all are taught to hate others instead of creating economic opportunities for all and building bridges of understanding. The professional politicians are not aware of the consequences of setting a placid society on fire. When the day of disillusionment with socialism comes, as it is bound to, nobody can save these politicians from the fury of the masses which have been systematically taught to hate. The sight of legislators jumping from windows to escape the wrath of the ill-treated police in one State is only a warning to be heeded by all politicians of what happens when class warfare introduces distortions in society.

The cumulative effect of all these things is to place a premium on sub-medioerity and to destroy excellence. Is it any wonder that with vigorous socialist measures, larger number of people are running away from this country? In the phenomenon broadly known as the Brain Drain, during 1968-69, about 9,500 per-

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The Anatomy Of Rural Violence

"Atreya"

THERE have been periodic eruptions of rural violence all over India, but it was for the first time that with the "authentic seal" of Union Home Ministry's auspices that a highly dramatised report was released. The report should have gladdened the hearts of even the most frustrated inciter and engineer of such rural violence on an organized basis because the report presented a highly grim picture.

None but the insensitively complacent would say that things are alright in the countryside. The economic development plans have provided very little relief to the countryside until very recent times on account of the heavy bias in the developmental plans to industry at the cost of agriculture and the consequent urban bias in the developmental programmes. It was only with the pressures in the wake of a calamitous drought that greater attention was given to agriculture and the dividends of such attention are being seen in the remarkable improvements seen in agricultural production during the recent years.

In such a context, the Home Ministry's statement that rural violence poses a critical situation came as a considerable surprise to almost everyone and made them wonder whether the statement had its own political axe to grind in the context of factional politics going on in New Delhi.

Rural violence in its chronic form has usually been an engineered violence. It has been engineered with precise strategy and tactics by ideological groups belonging to Naxalites and extremist left groups in recent times and Marxist groups earlier. But even taking an alarmist view, one finds that rural stability far outweighs rural violence and this fact intrigues. In West Bengal the CPM and Naxalites have been making frantic efforts to generate violent unrest and have succeeded. In Tamilnad, in the Tanjavur district, the rice bowl, left-communist controlled peasant unions have been timing their violence and agitation to coincide with sowing and harvest operations in the hope of neutralising the importance of the rice bowl.

In Kerala too the left communists and Naxalites have been making frantic efforts to generate large-scale rural violence, but without significant success. Acts of individual terrorism have certainly been there against political opponents, but it cannot certainly be said to have reached the proportions that would warrant the conclusions derived in the Home Ministry's statement.

It is interesting to recall that under the aegis of the Cominform in 1949, instructions in strategy were given to the Communist parties from Bucharest. The party line then was that in the colonial and ex-colonial

countries, the writ of the ruling cliques operated effectively in the cities, but it was feeble in the rural areas. Therefore the Communist parties were called upon to launch a two-pronged strategy of united front tactics in the cities and insurrectionary tactics in the country-side involving frontal attack on the bourgeoisie. Later this insurrectionary line was watered down. The insurrectionary line failed because the rural population failed to respond to the calls for insurrection. Furthermore, organizationally, confusion and rifts developed among Marxists themselves over the question of defining who constituted the bourgeoisie in the rural area. The "Kulak" versus landless labourer dichotomy was difficult in the colonial economy where the land-owning peasant is hardly distinguishable from the landless agricultural labourer. In Punjab the Moscow-lining Communists were found to be championing the cause of the small peasants while the left-communists incited the landless agricultural labourers against them.

Coming to the present statement on rural violence by the Home Ministry, all the contextual factors that are known to every student of political affairs indicate that the dimensions of rural violence are perceivable and measurable, their auspices identifiable. A computation of all these factors reveal that while the developmental inadequacies in rural areas create some type of problems, the violence described in the Home Ministry statement is assiduously generated violence at considerable efforts. This has been essentially a political problem in its immediacy. It is not violence that the Home Ministry belatedly dramatises that is remarkable. It is the rural stability that has by and large been prevailing all over the country in the face of untold sufferings that is remarkable. The enduring capacity of even the current generation to suffer in silence is the fact that seems to be remarkable.

If the Home Ministry's statement is aimed at prodding the Nation to action towards development of the rural sector, one could certainly go along with such objectives. If it is a clarion call for immediate solution of pressing rural problems, by all means one can welcome it as a spur. But the manner in which the release has been made makes the motives suspicious. The CPM has attributed sinister motives to the Union Home Ministry statement as perhaps the alibi and design for the early removal of CPM from the West Bengal United Front Ministry on the patterns of Kerala. They accuse Indira Gandhi of working out a design under which Chief Minister Ajoy Mukherji will be the instrument of CPM denigration and the "Revisionist Communists" giving their fullest support

to Indira-Ajoy Mukherji collusion. The Home Ministry statement, they accuse, is the suddenly-perceived justification for this process.

There is some validity in the criticism of CPM. The CPM is of course in a similar position in relation to the Naxalites. All this is like the cartoons that depict in a serial order big fish swallowing smaller fish. Naxalites term their violence as genuine class war and revolution in the rural areas on the lines of true Marxism. They accuse CPM, CPI and all others as revisionists and revolutionaries by intrigue and collaboration with the bourgeoisie. The CPM then call the CPI in the same terms and this goes on. At the Congress Party level, the Prime Minister is doing the same type of accusation of the organizational wing.

It is strongly suspected that the Home Ministry statement has been artificially inspired to provide justification for numerous "spectacular and radical" measures which the Prime Minister intends to unleash in the wake of all gloss and sheen vanishing from the act of Bank nationalisation. While the information contained in the Statement will be found factual, their interpretation and placement in the relativity and context of evolving situation in the rural areas, will be found highly questionable. It is this aspect of the interpretation suddenly given by the Home Ministry that has provided serious misgivings in the minds of all analysts that the report seems to be a part and parcel of political weaponry that is being freely used to settle many scores. The basic problems of development are of course there and need urgent attention. Instead of emphasising this, it is regrettable that the Home Ministry report should take on a simulated alarmistic position to serve hitherto undeclared purposes.

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sons left this country. How many socialist politicians have left this country for good? Certainly not when they can live as the self-appointed sons-in-law of the Indian people.

A strategically located country like India, with her vast natural resources and resourcefulness of people, is destined to become a Big Power. Socialism is an obstacle in the early realisation of that supreme status because socialism will take the country from poverty to pauperism; and from freedom to slavery. But with the inevitable process of disillusionment, ultimately Indian people will reject socialism and find a philosophy more in tune with the genius and requirements of the country. Till such time, those who believe in freedom and national greatness have to fight a battle against incipient authoritarianism because socialism is indeed the Road to Disaster.

Those well-versed with organizational dynamics know that the real crisis in the rural areas is fragmentation of whatever organization that had traditionally existed. It is often not realised that break-up of existing organizational set-up generates quite a lot of tensions when compensatory new forms of organizations have not been built up. Our policy-makers and planners are so busily engaged in the process of breaking up existing organizations without least caring to provide for substitutes that many of the aspects of violence in rural areas are the convulsions of organizational break-up.

Where organizational integration has taken place in rural areas, stability has resulted and this stability has been able to cushion many onslaughts on it. For instance the best standards are possible of development when we see such a phenomenon as organized agriculture in the Plantations in rural areas. When plantations with larger and larger size developed, they generated standards arising out of orderliness and measurement that benefited everybody involved in the process of such organization. This organization has then been able to provide high degree of stability all around without in any way sacrificing equity and justice requirements.

Somehow these lessons do not seem to have been learnt by the policy-makers nor by the Home Ministry when they deal with the problem of rural violence.

All vote-catching devices of radicalism can have very little significance if in actual fact the impact of such radicalism is towards break-up of organization instead of generating or integrating organization. The present race seems to be between competitive anarchy and organization, with the latter gradually losing the battle. The Home Ministry announcement about rural violence seems to be one more nail in the coffin of organizational development in the rural areas.



BOOKS RECEIVED

1. *Industrial Workers in the U.S.S.R.* Edited by Robert Conquest. Published by Frederick A. Praeger, New York. Price: \$ 6.25.
2. *Jammu & Kashmir Guide 1969*, Mulk Raj Saraf. Published by Universal Publications, Jammu & Srinagar. Price: Rs. 25.

Jamshedpur Strike-Lessons

R. Muthuswamy

MR. J. R. D. TATA, while briefing newsmen in Bombay about the recent 48-day strike in Jamshedpur observed rather pithily "change the labour legislation or enforce the existing legislation". When he said this, he was echoing the anguish of all those involved in industrial relations and the despairing and desolate conditions created by our industrial relations policies and practices over the past two decades. He further added that this was the second attempt within ten years of the Communists to take over the labour movement in the steel city.

The strike embraced seven units viz., Tata Engineering and Locomotive Company, the Indian Tube Company, Tata-Robins-Fraser, Indian Steel and Wire Products, Indian Cables, Jamshedpur Engineering and Manufacturing Company and Tinplate Company of India. In all these units there is a recognized INTUC Union, which unfortunately is faction-ridden. The factions opposed to Mr. Michael John joined in the strike. The strike was called by a united front of unions belonging to four political groups, namely, Left and Right Communists, Samyukta Socialist Party and Praja Socialist Party along with the dissident section of INTUC union. Immediately after the strike was called by the united front, called the Jamshedpur Engineering Workers' Coordinating Committee (JEWCC), an agreement was entered into by the companies with the recognised union on substantive issues; yet the strike was continued by JEWCC on the question of 132 chargesheeted employees, who were under suspension.

The front was headed by Mr Kedar Das, Right Communist leader who has worked amongst workers in Jamshedpur for more than two decades. Originally the united front called for a day's protest strike when the substantive issues were being discussed in a tripartite conference. According to Mr. Tata there was inaction on the part of the Government. It failed to take action against the illegal strike at least in one of the units, the Tata Engineering and Locomotive Company, but on the other hand advised employers not to take any action against anybody. Hence his exhortation to the Government to enforce existing law.

The strike was clearly motivated by political considerations of getting control of trade unions in a crucial industrial centre but the irony of it was that there were too many contestants and the temporary unity among the rivals was only for the purpose of dethroning the existing recognised union but not for positively establishing the representative character of any other union. In this process, perhaps, the entire

trade union movement got a jolt and a vacuum has been created. The fact remains that the recognised union, itself divided into two factions, is not a representative union but it is equally true that other unions could not also singly deliver the goods. This has created instability and in the decade ahead unless there is serious rethinking on the vital question of 'representative unionism' on the part of our policy-makers there will be an exacerbation of frustration and apathy on the part of workers as well as their organizations.

Basically, the problem in Jamshedpur was that there was a minority union recognized for all purposes and there was no effort to periodically check up how far this union had maintained its representative character. This helped the rival unions, who were also equally minority unions, to play upon the mounting frustration of workers and create trouble. The policy of voluntarism in the matter of recognition of unions and unrestricted freedom to outsiders to act as office-bearers of various unions has brought about the present sorry state of affairs. Added to that, the membership prescription of a very low 15 per cent for purposes of recognition has also helped multiplicity of unions each aspiring for recognition.

This practice has led to recognition of minority unions, who at the time of crisis, are unable to deliver the goods as it happened in Jamshedpur.

While conceding the fact that the Michael John factions does not represent workers, there is no other union to take its place as each one is suffering from the same malady of minority status with a very low membership. Thus in the present situation the employers are left without any choice and a vacuum is created in the industrial relations area. In this process the workers have lost confidence in any of the unions and thus the entire union movement has suffered a setback. It is in this context that the plea of Mr. Tata to change the labour legislation should be understood.

Political influence in Indian trade unions is as old as the union movement itself. This has resulted in fragmentation of the movement and unless some sort of statutory control is imposed on this, this problem cannot be solved. It was contended in the early stages that workers were not strong enough to run their own unions and in order to guard them against victimisation, it was necessary that outsiders should be permitted to be union leaders. This permission under the statute has been taken full advantage of by political leaders of all shades and workers have not

so far been able to develop their own leaders from their ranks.

Unfortunately the National Commission on Labour has also not studied this aspect which has weakened our trade union movement. With outsiders as union leaders and very nominal qualification for getting recognition, based on membership verification, has brought about a situation in which it is possible for a minority union to enjoy recognition for a long time but without the capacity of delivering goods. On the other hand, if under a statute union recognition is given to a union for a fixed period after ascertaining the wishes of *all* workers in a particular union, this would not only provide for some order in dealing with recognised unions but unions will also be earning their representative character in the true sense. As stated earlier, in the context of an outsider-dominated movement, it becomes all the more necessary to ascertain the wishes of *all* workers in a unit in determining the representative character of a contesting union. This may present its own problem in view of the multi-partite nature of contesting unions as it happened in Jamshedpur but, once a commitment is made to declare only a majority union as the representative union, by a process of elimination, some order could be brought even in this frightening situation. Unless some such bold action is taken and the efforts of all involved in industrial relations are directed towards this end, there is no solution to politically-motivated strikes as we witnessed in Jamshedpur recently.

WITHOUT COMMENT

Sino-Soviet Relations

Both the Soviet Union and Communist China seem to have decided that they have more to gain at the present juncture from slanging each other in public than from negotiating in private. The Chinese began it in a racy New Year editorial which even departed from the Communist habit of insulting people without mentioning their names:

"Khrushchev, the clown, who swaggered like a conquering hero not long ago, is now a heap of dirt beneath the contempt of mankind. His successors, Brezhnev and Co., are faring even worse. They are enforcing fascist dictatorship at home and carrying out aggressions and expansion abroad".

The Russians could not resist this challenge, and within a few days *Pravda* and *Izvestia*, Moscow's leading newspapers, were laying into the Chinese leadership—with the slight nuance that for them Mao alone was the villain while Chou En-lai was scarcely mentioned, a reflection of the idea that the latter may be heading a pro-Russian splinter group within the Chinese Communist hierarchy.

What does this mean? Is it simply a war of words or does it reflect a serious deterioration in relations?

—*Swiss Press Review and News Report*



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

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

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**TATA
ENTERPRISES**

CMTI-3-103

Ajoy Mukherjee Challenges CPM

Analyst

AJOY MUKHERJEE, the Chief Minister of the "uncivilised Government" of West Bengal, still occupies the centre of the stage. In the second half of December he was conducting a virulent campaign against the Communist Party of India (Marxist) addressing largely attended meetings in the districts even at mid-night, concluding these with a 24-hour hungerstrike on December 28. In the hunger-strike he was accompanied by PSP and SSP leaders. Nearly 2 lakhs of people participated in it at more than 1400 centres. It is accepted on all hands that the mass fast movement had a sobering effect on the CPM and that the tempo of inter-party clashes became slower, and the public felt much more encouraged. The Bangla Congress itself is considerably strengthened and those in it who were pro-CPM have been eliminated with a strong and decisive hand.

One does not yet know why the movement was suddenly withdrawn. But what is taking its place is equally significant. Ajoy Mukherjee has begun to assert himself on some administrative matters which one could not imagine before. He ordered the withholding of the transfer order of an officer-in-charge of a police station in an area where there were allegations of serious molestation of three women by red-scarved volunteers of the CPM. The Governor has also objected to one Minister transferring his portfolio to another Minister temporarily due to the former's absence, without reference to the Chief Minister. This he seems to have done after several consultations with the Chief Minister. The Chief Minister is now receiving complaints and giving instructions to the District Magistrates by wire, with only intimation to other concerned Ministers. Lately he has cancelled the withdrawal of eight cases in the same area from where the officer-in-charge of the Thana was transferred. All this is entirely new and with apparent determination.

The initiative on the part of Ajoy Babu as Chief Minister has unnerved the CPM and Jyoti Basu has begun to dispute openly the Chief Minister's right to do so. But so far the CM has not reacted.

Meanwhile, attempts at bridging the gulf between UF partners are going on. Dates of meeting are getting inevitably changed. Agenda is becoming difficult to formulate. The other UF partners are feeling uneasy. None of them are prepared to take a principled stand. All want the Government to continue; no mid-term elections; CPM to continue in government; no Kerala type attempts to be made; the CPM should

only soften its stand. But the CPM is not budging an inch and is not prepared either to bend or to leave the Ministry.

The pronouncements of the Chief Minister during December have made one thing quite clear. It is that the Administration has been severely tampered with. The District Magistrates and Superintendents of Police are substantially paralysed and they hesitate to execute even the orders of the Chief Minister. Some of them have even told the CM that they would rather prefer to earn their living by selling *pan-biri* than feel so helpless. This is the position of the permanent gazetted officers; the condition of others can be imagined. Some of them, however, are enthusiastic CPM-sympathisers.

Signs in other sectors are also ominous. In the trade union and industrial sphere, the old comradeship of unity is gone. The AITUC is facing an open split and as a consequence a severe war between the two groups has begun. The coal belt has been experiencing it for quite some time. It has now extended itself to the steel industry. The omnibus RSS (Rashtriya Sangram Samiti) led by CPM, coupled with the 12th July Committee, is taking a political stance directed against Ajoy Mukherjee and the CPI although it was strictly to deal with economic issues. Other trade union groups have issued public statements against this trend.

A number of industrial units have declared lock-outs. Even Sir Biren Mukherjee of Indian Iron has threatened to do so. Over 500 industrial units have started building industries outside West Bengal. The condition of smaller engineering units is beyond description. Thus in a background of severe industrial depression fierce inter-union rivalry is expected to rage.

The Education Minister has promised a mighty movement among teachers and students if education upto Class VIII is not made free, involving another Rs. 10 crores which is impossible to secure in view of the State finances already showing red light.

The harvesting season has gone all in favour of forcible occupants of land and armed red-scarved gangs are dominating the rural scene, encouraged by their success and by the active or passive backing of the Administration.

The CPM has publicly claimed that nearly 1,00,000 volunteers are at its beck and call. Its membership has risen to 21,000, with an auxiliary membership of

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The New Left

Brian Crozier

WHY is there a "New Left"? A simple question calls for a simple answer: Because the "old Left" has largely ceased to appeal to those whose natural bent in politics is revolutionary, or because the messages of Marx, Lenin and even Mao Tse-tung are seen to have little relevance to western society as it now is, in the minds of those who criticise it and who turn to revolution only as a necessary evil. The philosophical advocates of violence within the New Left evidently fill a gap in that their works appeal to young men and women who are temperamentally of the Left, but who derive no stimulus from the appeal of earlier left-wing prophets.

And it is part of the problem that the older left-wing orthodoxies—among whom may be included the Trotskyists and the Anarchists, as well as the Marxist-Leninists—are aware of their own progressive failure to inspire the young; but are attempting, in some cases with success, to exploit, or gain control for their own ends, of the violent groups within the New Left.

The problem is therefore more complex than the one that existed when the Cold War was in its infancy. It is no longer a question of concentrating all study and action upon a single, monolithic phenomenon. The New Left has many faces; and behind it hoping to cash in on its new-found glamour, is the Old Left whose roots lie deeper in contemporary history.

If one's concern is with urban violence in the West, in its current phase, the most powerful influence of all is undoubtedly that of the late Ernest "Che" Guevara. The revolutionary sex appeal of the young Argentine guerilla leader is incomparable; and the myth that surrounds his name, possibly invincible. All the ingredients are there; physical attractiveness, an agreeable personality, a medical degree (indicating a concern for suffering humanity), success in Cuba's guerilla war, and not least, martyrdom in Bolivia.

Regis Debray shared with Guevara an admiration for the great leader of the Cuban Revolution, Fidel Castro. Here too is a glamorous revolutionary figure, with the not inconsiderable assets of youth (he still is in his twenties), a fair intellect, revolutionary dedication, and the special advantage of martyrdom through a trial that became a *cause celebre* and an interminable prison sentence in Bolivia. In his little work, *Revolution in the Revolution?* Debray went even further than Guevara in his revolutionary heresy.

Although Debray, in common with Guevara, was writing as an advocate of peasant insurrections, his message holds enormous appeal to rebellious students in the towns, for he utterly rejects the discipline and political control of a party. Not only has he no time for

Moscow's heavy orthodoxy, but he even rejects Mao's temporising call for a united front with non-Communist parties. For not only does he sanction violence, but he sees no possibility of an alternative course. And although he does not, of course, use the term "demagogue", he invites a charismatic figure to come forward and lead the revolution.

The rigid, disciplined, hierarchial—and, to this generation, profoundly tedious—discipline of the Party is therefore rejected in favour of unlimited power for one man. Debray's is a recipe for instant revolution, available to the first student who has the courage to pick up a stone and throw it at a policeman. Romanticism can go no further, and Utopia awaits those who adopt the course of violence.

With Frantz Fanon Utopia is again within the grasp of those who take up arms in the cause of revolution, but the starkness of the message is even greater and his Utopia is reserved for the coloured peoples of the world, for the "colonised masses" or "Natives". Fanon, too, basks in an aura of myth. He too, like Guevara, had the advantage of an early death—in his case of leukaemia at the early age of 37. He too was a doctor—a psychiatrist—and his additional symbolic distinction is that he was a black man, a French-speaking Negro from Martinique, who settled in Algeria and threw in his lot with the revolutionaries of the *Front de Liberation Nationale* (FLN).

If one may summarise and paraphrase Fanon's message in a few simple sentences, what he is saying is this: "You are a coloured man. You are oppressed. Your oppressor is the white man. Kill him". What happens *after* the white oppressor has been killed is nowhere specified. No message could be starker or more nihilistic.

To be sure, very few of the rioting students, in France or elsewhere, had ever read Marcuse—a fact that merged in some of the bewildered statements the students made. But indirectly, his influence seems to have been insidious and potent, in the sense that the youthful revolutionaries, on being told of Marcuse's views of industrial society, found in them a mirror image of their own.

Unlike Fanon and Guevara, no one could describe Marcuse as simplistic. Indeed, it is hardly possible to summarise the philosophy of this obscure, prolix and turgid writer in a few choice quotations. Nor should one do him the injustice of failing to recognise that Marcuse's analysis of the shortcomings of industrial society (in the Soviet Union as well as in the West) is often acute and even profound. Moreover, his teaching falls short of actually advocating violence. This,

however, is only a negative blessing, for he refers to violence in terms that make it seem respectable. He talks of the natural right of oppressed people to use violence, since "by doing so, they do not start a new chain of violence, but try to break an established one".

Rightly or wrongly, within these circles the message attributed to Marcuse is of the alienation of man from his surroundings in the industrial society. Marcuse is held to argue that technology has made it possible for man to pacify existence, that is, to abolish war, cruelty, ugliness and oppression. In fact, however, the argument runs, man continues to be oppressed by those who control technology, who buy his acquiescence by continually raising his standard of living. The remedies proposed by Marcuse are of paralysing obscurity. He assigns to students an elite role in promoting revolution. Hence the idolatry with which the students view the teaching.

The message of the "new inspirers of violence" turns up, in one form or another, in the posters, pamphlets, speeches, resolutions or news-sheets of revolutionary left-wing groups, whether of students or adults, in various western countries. The international New Left, which these groups collectively constitute, lacks either coherence or unity, except in destructiveness. One point is clear: inchoate and frangmentd though it is, the New Left, drawing its inspiration from the prophets of violence, has become a major threat to civilised life in advanced industrial societies.

—Based on an article in *The New Left*, published by International Documentation and Information Centre.

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another 40,000. Thus, a strong political, para-military army well entrenched in the rural bases has got ready, to be supported by a large number of government employees who have been nursed and fed through-out the UF regime with an indulgent hand.

Another significant trend is the attempt to build up a satellite group of parties as a militant alternative UF. Bhupesh Gupta, MP, in his statement on January 7 charged Promode Dasgupta of "wanting a bogus United Front of the CPM and some satellite organisations who would do the CPM's bidding". E. M. S. Namboodiripad also announced a policy of building up a "front of all militant forces" in West Bengal in order to "fight the Chief Minister".

These straws seem to indicate that so far as the CPM is concerned, it might be coming to the conclusion that it has taken out as much juice from the UF Ministry as possible, and, there being not much of juice left, it might be more worthwhile now to play the dog-in-the-manger role as a matter of revolutionary tactic for the time being, biding for the ripe moment to withdraw.

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conference held under the auspices of the Programme, included Mr. Jayaprakash Narayan and Mr. N. A. Palkhivala, who presided over the meeting, Mr. Arvind Mafatlal, Mr. G. L. Mehta, Mr. K. Sundaram M.P., Mr. Ramakrishna Bajaj, Mrs. L. Sawhny, Mr. S. P. Godrej, Mr. Johan Bowman, Dr. R. C. Cooper and Mr. M. R. Masani M.P. The meeting decided that certain proposals should be made to companies for their consideration and implementation. The first of these proposals was that each company should work out and adopt a Statement of Objectives which would spell out the obligations it accepts towards its shareholders, employees, consumers, local community and society in general. A model statement was adopted at the meeting. It was felt that to give weight to such a commitment a general purposes clause on these lines should be included in the Articles of Association of a company. Another proposal was that, in order that there should be a way to test the extent to which an enterprise was living up to its obligations, a company should submit itself every few years to a social audit to be carried out by a team of experts and social workers and scientists to review the company's non-commercial activities and to report on the part the company played as citizen.

This movement to promote a greater awareness of the social responsibilities of business took a step forward when the group which had met in September met again on January 3 in Bombay with Mr. J. R. D. Tata in chair. It was noted that leading companies in the Tata group had convened extraordinary meetings to alter their Articles of Association so as to provide for the acceptance of social responsibilities of business. Four companies from the Bajaj group also proposed to incorporate a statement of objectives in their Articles of Association. More companies are expected to follow suit. The meeting decided that a further study of the concept of Social Audit was required and a study team should be appointed to define the concept and make detailed proposals in regard to the terms of reference, the scope of such an Audit and the nature and qualification of the team that should be entrusted with the work. Other topics were also discussed such as the creation of employees' shares in the capital structure of companies, concrete expression of concern for consumers and the rural people and the training of employees in active citizenship and principles of democracy. The Programme would continue to function as convenor of the group until a new and permanent organisation to further the concept of social responsibilities of business could be brought into existence.

With Many Voices

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

For the new year and the new decade, one threat which stands out is that of a nuclear war between the Soviet Union and China.

—*Guardian Weekly*, January 3.

Presidents, Governors, Mayors—all follow what has become a contemporary political maxim: when in doubt, appoint a commission.

—*Time*, January 19.

One man's wage increase is another man's price increase.

—Harold Wilson, *The Observer*, January 11.

Socialism means, in fact, all power to politicians.

—P. Spratt, *Swarajya*, January 17.

The Indian situation can be described in a single word, poverty: The poverty of politics and the politics of poverty.

—B. G. Verghese, *Hindustan Times*, January 18.

Many an international mischief has been born of good intentions.

—*Thought*, January 17.

To the Editor,
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Unfortunately, human nature is not good at learning by example.

—Arnold Toynbee, *Observer*, London, January 25.

The trap of low-savings and foreign exchange scarcity will continue to hold us.

—Asoka Mehta, *Times of India*, January 26.

Larger and more diverse than Europe, India has forged and preserved a degree of political and economic unity that Europeans still only dream of.

—*New York Times*, January 26.

Mrs. Gandhi would have to buy support regardless of the price she has to pay.

—*Thought*, January 24.

Democratic socialism can be achieved through Gandhian means without hurting or hitting any one.

—Morarji Desai, *Free Press Journal*, January 27.

Giving and receiving aid can create bitterness even among friends.

—B. R. Bhagat, Foreign Trade Minister,
Financial Express, January 28.

We have wasted many years in search of excuses for our failures.

—Pran Chopra, *The Citizen*, January 24.

The bureaucrats both in the States and at the Centre, multiply at the rate of six per cent a year.

—V. B. Pandit, *Sunday Standard*, January 25.