

"CARRY ON," SAID RAJAJI

S. V. Raju

THE avalanche of tributes paid to Rajaji have cut across all state, national and international boundaries. They encompass people of every vocation, of every class and of every persuasion.

This, more than anything else, bears testimony to his versatility. While I was not a witness to the funeral procession and the cremation, I could learn from the radio commentary and the eye-witness accounts of my colleagues who were present at the huge concourse of men and women who first streamed to Rajaji Hall where he lay in state and subsequently joined the procession. Most of them were poor people—men and women, red-eyed with grief, most of whom may never have seen him personally but all of whom would have read him in the pages of *Kalki*. Their Chakravarti (Tamil for Emperor), who wrote Chakravarti Tirumahan (the Emperor's son) was dead.

The moment he died, the State claimed Rajaji as its own, as if in atonement for so criminally ignoring



his advice and counsel when he was alive. For the voice of Rajaji, in the last fifteen years of his life, was one of pain and anguish at the way things were going in India.

AIR and the pronouncements by those in the establishment gave one the impression that Rajaji's public career came to an end with the award of the Bharat Ratna in 1955. They thought that by giving him his pension, they could pension him off from public life. If Rajaji had acquiesced, what a loss it would have been for the country and how different would have been the political history of post-Independent India! But Rajaji was not the retiring type. Nehru was Gandhiji's heir, but Rajaji was his conscience keeper.

It is for history and future biographers to tell us what was Rajaji's most significant contribution. I am sure many would agree with what I consider to be the most pertinent tribute paid to him by Mr. N. A. Palkhivala:

"History may regard Rajaji's most memorable work to be what he attempted without immediate success, during the last years of his life—to rekindle the spirit of liberty. Perhaps no other figure in world history, at Rajaji's age and against such overwhelming odds, tried so much, dared so much and gave so

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much to his people. We shall not look upon his like again."

And, so, Rajaji took on the role of a one-man opposition.

Four years after the award of the Bharat Ratna, Rajaji wrote in *Swarajya* (January 17, 1959):

"The single brain activity of the people who met in the Congress is to find out what is in Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's mind and to anticipate it. The slightest attempt at dissent meets with stern disapproval and is, so to say, nipped in the bud. How can realism emerge in this atmosphere? Power without wisdom is utterly terrifying and no one seems capable of resistance or even willing to try".

And, therefore, Rajaji decided that, if no one would try, he would along with those who were willing to join with him, "try". The result was the Swatantra Party. And with Masani he fashioned it as an instrument different from what was available to the people of India.

That was the time when Nehru was striding like a colossus on the Indian political scene. The only party that was talking a slightly different language was the Jana Sangh, but, then, the Jana Sangh's appeal was to communal sentiments. There was very little difference among the other parties who were merely various shades of the Congress. Communism was still monolithic and the Communist Party was critical of Mr. Nehru only to the extent of egging him on towards more 'leftist' policies.

Box of Paints

For the first time, Rajaji's Party attacked "socialism" which he described as a euphemism for Statism. "There is confusion between socialism and what is called the public sector", he wrote. "A box of paints is not a picture. All paint boxes do not make good pictures".

Inaugurating the Preparatory Convention of the Swatantra Party, Rajaji said: "Forty years ago, when I was forty years old, after twenty years' practice at the Bar, and twelve years of political life in connection with the Congress and the Nationalist Party of that time and the Home Rule Movement, I joined the Non-Cooperation movement in close collaboration with and under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi. Now when I am twice that age, I am leading a revolt against what I have come to believe to be a fatally wrong direction taken by the Indian National Congress in the governance of this great country. I have come to the conclusion that a movement for freedom, as important and as serious as the movement for independence against British rule, has now to be inaugurated against this misconceived progress of the Congress towards what will finally end in the suppression of individual liberty and the development of the State into a true Leviathan."

Under his leadership, the Swatantra Party boldly

called a spade a spade and denounced the confused thinking masquerading in the garb of socialism. To him Swatantra was more than a Party. It was a movement to inject sanity, pragmatism and morality in public life. He wanted members of the Swatantra Party to be like him—above reproach, clear-headed, principled, not interested in the immediate pursuit of power but to educate the people into giving up the false gods propagated by the ruling party.

Today, the Swatantra Party is in difficulties. While partly the situation can be attributed to developments following the Congress split, to a larger extent the Party itself is to blame. As Rajaji would have put in a simile, of which he was so fond: The architects produced a good architectural design but the contractors let the architects down by adulterating the material they used, with the result that while the basic structure has withstood the battering it received in the last couple of years, the walls and the fittings have cracked. No greater tribute can be paid to Rajaji by those whose political heirs the members of the Swatantra Party are, than to go back to the fundamentals that he and Masani so painfully put together when the Party was founded.

Mischievous Twinkle

To many of us who had the privilege of having worked with Rajaji, his death came as a blow, notwithstanding the fact that he had far outdistanced the biblical span and died at 94. Somehow, we assumed his immortality. Even a five-minute session with him was enough for me to come back mentally refreshed and morally invigorated. His memory was fantastic. I recall that, on more than one occasion, he reminded me of something I had said I would do many months earlier. More often than not, I would stare for a minute or two, and he would, with the famous mischievous twinkle in his eye, wait for my reply. Very business-like, he was absolutely clear in the instructions he gave me. My only regret was that I came to know him when he was in his eighties.

The last time I met him was in Madras in June 1972, when I was there for the General Council of the Swatantra Party. As was my practice I called on him for a few minutes, after my arrival in Madras. He was in his bed and told me that he was not feeling too well. When I started talking to him about various Party matters, he said that I had better tell all that to Masani. I informed him that I had already spoken to Masani and that I wished to unburden myself on him. He was silent for a minute or two. Interpreting his silence as a signal that I should leave I was about to depart, when he called me back and said: "Very well, what is the problem?" I mentioned to him what was bothering me, he merely interjected "Oh!" once or twice.

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EDITOR'S IMPRESSION OF VIETNAM

ON the eve of his departure from Saigon, after a six day visit to the Republic of Vietnam, Mr. M. R. Masani told the Vietnamese Press: "The predominant impression which I take with me from the Republic of Vietnam is one of stability, strength and high morale". Mr. Masani visited Vietnam at the invitation of the Vietnam Council on Foreign Relations.

In order to get a better understanding of the current situation, Mr. Masani had a talk with Mr. Tran Van Lam, Minister for Foreign Affairs, and met other Vietnamese officials and non-officials.

Mr. Masani, who was briefed by Lt. General Nguyen Van Minh, and General Hung, the hero of An Loc, and

flown to An Loc by helicopter, said it was a privilege to visit An Loc and pay his homage to the gallantry of the men of the A.R.V.N. who had defended it against the Communist aggressors. He also visited the village of An Thanh in the Province of Kien Hoa to study the Rural Development Programme.

Mr. Masani congratulated President Thieu on his firm stand against a patched up peace which was full of pitfalls and dangers to the freedom and security of the South. "Mahatma Gandhi always said he wanted genuine peace, but not the peace of the grave-yard", observed Mr. Masani. He hoped that any agreement that might emerge from further talks would plug the various loopholes in the earlier effort.

There were a large number of people in India who sympathised with the people of South Vietnam in the fight they had been putting up for their freedom and appreciated the valuable contribution they had made towards maintaining the freedom of other countries in South East Asia against Communist expansion, Mr. Masani added.

Our editor who was entertained during his stay in Saigon by the local Indian community, was glad to be told that they were treated very well here and had developed a loyalty to their country of adoption.

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Soon after the meeting of the Council and before leaving Madras, I called on him once again. He blessed me and said that I should not be disheartened with the present fortunes of the Party. "Carry on", he said "and keep the 'old guard' of the Party together," as he feared that "they all wanted to quietly fade away".

I was perhaps the happiest man in Madras that day to have been blessed by him. But as I came out I had a nagging feeling that I was not going to see him alive again.



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IN THIS ISSUE

S. V. Raju, who watched Rajaji at work throughout the last decade evaluates Rajaji's role and tells us of his last message.

The Editor has returned greatly heartened from a brief visit to South Vietnam, including a helicopter flight to An Loc, still under enemy fire.

In our February issue we had anticipated that one unfortunate outcome of President Nixon's visit to Moscow would be a crackdown on the Russian dissidents on account of the meretricious respectability given by the visit to the Kremlin. This has not taken long to happen, as Mr. Chatterjee's article shows.

Freedom First helper, Mani Meherhomji, gives us a peek into the life of an aging Bombay prostitute.

Bombay journalist Leslie Daniel retrospects on the controversial youth camp at Malavli and calls for more such ventures.

A. G. Noorani contributes a book review and theatre critic Geeta Doctor reviews Girish Karnad's latest play.

STRANGER IN THE NIGHT

Mani Meherhomji

"I WAS very nice when I was young. Even now I am not so bad..."

The red hair of yester-year has diminished into a dull rust with streaks of grey. The small black eyes are embedded in sallow, sunken cheeks. Her lips and nails are painted a bright red and a cheap cluster of pearl earrings embellish her ears. The earrings don't match the yellow pink and mauve flowers that adorn her lapis lazuli blouse or her black tafetta skirt worn bohemian style. An archaic gold clip assures her blouse will not tear asunder at the seams of her once succulent breasts. A chintz blue strap attaches a small toy watch to her left wrist. Her white rock-n'-roll shoes are remnants of the early 50's when she was in her prime and men came to her as easily as money comes to ministers.

I first saw Janet* when as a little girl I went to Bandstand every evening to play with my friends. Janet came with a girl about nine years old who had brown hair and clothes the worse for wear. Years later I'd spy her on the road but our acquaintance barely extended beyond a smile. Then one day she asked me for some money. I gave it to her and she started to unburden herself. When I voiced an interest in writing about her, she readily agreed. She had 'so much' to say and I had promised her some money for the interview but she failed to keep the appointment. I had given up when about two weeks later she came to the office, profusely apologizing for her previous absence and telling of her dire need for cash.

Rubbles, Bangles and Beads

The interview began with her denying she had ever been a prostitute. When we told her we weren't interested in interviewing Florence Nightingale, she weakened. She treated each question with suspicion often interjecting her remarks with "why do you want to know all this" and frequently veering off the subject. But in subsequent interviews, enticed by offerings of two handbags, crystal beads, a bangle, hair band, earrings and slacks for her daughter—all hand-me-downs, she opened up and spoke of many things, most of which are publishable.

Janet's first encounter with sex was at 16, while a dance instructress at a notorious Colaba dance school. "A customer took me to his room, gave me some drinks and then it happened. I felt very repulsive, (sic) because I didn't really want to do it, but I had to. He paid me about thirty or forty rupees. I spent it on food. "I couldn't get any other job. Not much education.

* Names have been changed throughout.

I ran away from school to meet them (men). I started smoking and drinking heavily. I became really bad. My daddy wanted to beat me. They didn't want me staying at home.



"I went to hotels. I used to start at eight or nine in the night, sometimes in the morning, in the afternoon, depends on when you meet somebody. Sometimes if they have their own room, we go to their room. It's safer in the room because the man is scared to come to the hotel in case the hotel is raided. If a man takes you to a room for this purpose, he says 'Do not wish me on the road.' They look down on you, yet they enjoy you. They want teenagers. There are men who take women in cars for sex. If we do not please them they push you out.

"There was a man when I was young. He told me if you come to my room, I will pay you one hundred rupees before taking you there and when I take you there, there will be another man who will take our photo when we are having sex. Why? Because he wants to keep it as memory of the women he has slept with. I didn't go. I got scared.

"I know prostitutes who take blue pills. I know of one who takes morphine injections. She can't stay without it. It keeps her up. She's got nerve trouble. Without it she's an insane woman.

"One Anglo-Indian pros is a big drunkard. She's always robbing men's wallets and wrist watches. First she takes him to a room and makes him drunk. Gives him beer and he's fast asleep. She carries a thread and

needle with her. After he's asleep, she pulls out the wallet, takes out the money, throws the wallet into the garden, stitches up the money in the hem of her dress and runs away in a taxi. She got Rs. 2,000 once.

"Another time a stupid hippie was robbed by her. He reported her to the police. He's trailing her. Now she wears a wig and goes about. She says she's Bombay's Elizabeth Taylor. She takes tie-pins, wallets; eats in big hotels. Even ate a seven course meal ats. Buys her morphine at.....

"Some pros' put hashish in cigarettes. The men become doped and don't even know about it. Another drug given to make them dozey is Spanish Fly. Put it in a man's glass and he'll never leave you. Mostly women from Bangalore and Madras do this.

"There is one pros who takes customers to a restaurant and gets them drunk. Then she orders a parcel containing a box of chocolates, cigarettes, jam, packet of tea and keeps it near the cashier and goes to sit down on the table with her customer. She has already told the cashier to charge all this in the refreshment bill. She tips the cashier. The man's so drunk, he pays the money. If he asks how come the bill is so much, the pros says, 'naturally, we ate chops this and that'. Whilst leaving, she goes up to the cashier and says: 'Oh where is my parcel which I left here?' and the cashier hands over the parcel to her."

Janet plied her trade in the lucrative areas of Colaba and Warden Road. She says she never operated from a brothel or kept a pimp. "I was good looking. As I walked I used to get men. I was very pretty. The pimp hits you hard if you don't pay him. One girl got a black eye like that.

"There are women pimps too. They get good money. Depends on how many women she supplies. Sometimes she makes two hundred to three hundred rupees a day. If the pros gets two hundred rupees a night, the pimp gets fifty rupees plus the money for the taxi and cigarettes etc."

"During Christmas, pros' charge extra because they want a new dress and other things," said Janet, though last Christmas she wore an old blouse with red frills which she tacked up with white thread and which she then coloured red with a crayon. "I made a blue frock for Christmas. A lady friend did it for me. I bought the material in a sale, one rupee for two yards. It has Chinese writing at the bottom in blue. I gave one half to Harriet (her daughter) and kept one half for myself. Have you got glare glasses?" she asked me, "My eyes burn in the sun. I can't face the sun. When I open my eyes, all water comes out."

Blue Baby

"I have three brothers and one sister who's in England. I have no contact with her. One brother is

in a mental home. Two died. Sister is also not happy. She married three times.... Harriet is the daughter of Larry O'Casey, a travelling salesman. Casey wanted to abort Harriet as people would laugh at him. I took whiskey neat and nothing happened. My uterus is very firm. Harriet was born a blue baby. The doctors gave her an injection in the heart, an only way to survive. She even got rash because of my going with men. Casey was a very dirty man. She got rash due to my bad behaviour.

"Before Casey I lived eighteen years with a Welshman. He ill treated me. Later said I was too old for him. My age is 55. I had my first daughter by him. He wasn't concerned for her.

He wanted to give her away to the orphanage because she was born out of wedlock. She was a very pretty child. Her name was Jean Carol. She died and when she was laid out in the coffin, he went and got drunk. He was very sad. Then Tom was born. He's on the ship. I gave him up for adoption. Now he's in New Zealand. He must be about 21. He left when he was eight or nine."

London Town

With the Welshman, Janet left for England where he deserted her for a younger woman who had children. "I was caught by the London police as I was roaming around with a baby late at night begging. I was put into a place to rest in the night. In the morning I was freed. Eventually I went back to that man (Welshman). I took the police to his house to show them that he was my guardian who brought me there. He took me back. Then we all came back to India. He died of cancer. She (the younger woman) got all the money. I got nothing. Age came against me."

Prostitution begins with starvation, poverty and no education, according to Janet. But "Once it gets into your blood you can't give it up. But now nobody wants me. I'm old. I'd be satisfied if somebody would give me something. I make money by begging because no one will give me a job. I go up to a car and ask for some money. I go to church to pray to God and to see my child sing in a church choir every Sunday. I talk to her for a few minutes. My daughter knows I was a prostitute. She didn't like it at all. She told me that if I would go on this way, she wouldn't recognize me as her mother and cut me away from her. That's why I gave it up because I didn't want to lose her affection. She's all I got now. She's so pretty. She looks like a doll. She looks like an American. They make her Mary, Mother of God, in a play they do every year. They put aside ten rupees every month for her from time to time. They'll give her the money when she's eighteen. She wants to be an air-hostess. She's very pretty..."

CRACKDOWN ON DISSENT IN RUSSIA

A. Chatterjee

THE problem of dissent within a communist state was never satisfactorily explained by Marx. The later exponents of the art—Lenin, Trotsky et al—used the strongest pejoratives to dismiss opposition as either madness or the remnants of a bourgeois-nationalist mentality. Such opposition, it was agreed, had to be crushed unequivocally to protect the fledgeling revolution.

After the initial euphoria of the 1971 Revolution, it became clear that Marxist dogma could not offer a nostrum for all political, economic and social problems. When more than one opinion existed on any issue, the Party line was considered the "official" and only truth. Dissent came to be treated as a challenge to the Soviet system and a direct affront to the "dictatorship of the proletariat". Such an attitude to opposition helped devour thousands of "children of the revolution". Indeed many of the founders of the Revolution—Trotsky, Bukharin, Zinoviev, Kirov—became victims of their own contorted logic and were eliminated as counter-revolutionaries, revisionists, diversionists. The Marxist vocabulary expanded to accommodate categories of dissenters.

Catchwords

For the official Soviet attitude towards one of the fundamental human rights, a look at the relevant provision of the USSR Constitution (1936) would be helpful. Article 125 states:

In conformity with the interests of the working people, and *in order to strengthen the social system*, the citizens of the USSR are guaranteed by law:

- Freedom of speech
- Freedom of press
- Freedom of assembly including holding mass meetings
- Freedom of street processions and demonstrations.

This, at first sight, would appear to be a liberal bill with full scope for individual dissent. The catchwords, in italics, limit the freedom to laudatory gestures, since any opposition to the Party policy could be interpreted as an attack on the "social system". Such dissidents would be labelled as

...enemies of the people, agents of the bourgeoisie, Trotskyist-Bukharinist spies and diversionists, who try to overthrow the existing socialist regime in the USSR...

—Vyshinskii, quoted in Guins, *Soviet Law and Soviet Society*.

Although the Revolution was designed to guarantee the individual's rights and freedoms, subsequent decrees and amendments distorted the spirit of the constitution altogether. Soviet citizens are now ruled by Stalin's Constitution of 1936 which guarantees all rights and freedoms with carefully-worded phrases about "strengthening social systems." Corresponding penalties can be found in the RSFSR Criminal Code. Article 70 forbids "agitation and propaganda aimed at subverting the Soviet system"; Article 190/1 punishes deliberately false fabrications slandering the Soviet state and social system"; Article 190/3 penalises "violation of public order". These are three popular Articles used by prosecutors for indicting dissidents.

In August 1968 Russian tanks clanked through the streets of Prague to crush Dubcek's abortive attempt at humanising Czechoslovakia. Four days later, eight men and women stood up in Moscow's *Red Square at Noon** and unfurled Czech flags and banners expressing solidarity with the Czech people and Dubcek. One of the slogans read: For Your Freedom and Ours. This book, written by a poet and a mother of two children, provides a vivid insight into the mechanics of dissent and retribution in today's Russia. The writer, Natalia Gorbanevskaya, was one of the eight people who decided to express their horror and anguish in a public way. The flags and banners had barely been unfurled when unidentified men and women swooped down on the little group of demonstrators. The men were beaten, the flags and banners torn and all the demonstrators were hustled off in cars for interrogation. Most of the passers-by were indignant; they hurled rude epithets and repeated phrases from the *Pravda* announcements.

Kangaroo Court

Of the eight, one woman with a history of three demonstrations, recanted her role by saying that she was there by chance. Five of the remaining seven were indicted for violating the public order (Article 190/3 of the RSFSR Criminal Code) and dissemination by word of mouth of deliberately false fabrications (Article 190/1). The trial was held *in camera* with a partisan judge, doubtful evidence and witnesses, and at a low level of legal sophistication. The five were found guilty and sentenced to exile or forced labour for periods varying from three to five years. In his final plea before the Court, Vladimir Dremlyuga said:

* Gorbanevskaya Natalia, *Red Square at Noon*, Andre Deutsch, London, pp. 288. £2.95

According to me, all the happenings... came about because there is no right to criticise the government. I went to Red Square, and would go anywhere, so that this might one day become legal. I shall in future continue to voice my protest by all available means.

The fate of the other two—Victor Feinberg and the author was different and more terrifying. Feinberg was immediately placed in a "special psychiatric hospital", while Natalia was treated as an out-patient for a year. She wrote the book during her last year of freedom. She was arrested in December 1969 and placed under psychiatric "care". These "special psychiatric hospitals" are run under the supervision of the KGB and their complete control over the individual makes them a Kafkaesque nightmare. KGB colonels, with doctor's coats over their uniforms, screen the potential "patients". Natalia writes:

'Delusions about reforms' are mentioned in the experts' report among the grounds for a diagnosis of schizophrenia. Thus any private dissent from the existing system, any statement about the need to alter or improve it will be interpreted as 'delusions' if they should wish to pronounce you insane.

There is no protection for the individual once he is declared insane. It is left to the psychiatrist to declare the patient fit to re-enter society after appropriate treatment. This generally involves sessions to break the patient's will so that he will recant his crime.

The book is a remarkable document. The investigation and the trial are given in complete detail. In addition, there are reports from the *Chronicle of Current Events*, an underground paper issued since 1968. The memoranda and open letters submitted by various sympathisers calling for a halt to the trial are also included. Through it all, one is aware of a powerful sense of courage and conviction in the minds of the demonstrators and their sympathisers.

The spirit of the book can be summed up by Alexander Ulyanov's observation that there will always be, somewhere in Russia, ten men who are willing to stand up and risk their lives if necessary for the sake of truth and justice. Ulyanov, Lenin's brother, was executed after an unsuccessful attempt to assassinate Czar Nicholas II.

In Russia, a small group of committed believers in the struggle for constitutional civil rights have organised a clandestine Human Rights Committee. Their ranks include many people who have suffered in labour camps at one time or the other. The bulk of them are writers, poets and artists, though some scientists have also participated in protest activities. The Human Rights Committee is crusading for a Soviet society which will permit freedom of speech, criticism and the

rights guaranteed under the constitution without the inhibiting qualifications. Most of their protests are in the form of small demonstrations of mainly symbolic value, since they are arrested rapidly and rarely enjoy the sympathy of passers-by.

Signature campaigns, pamphlets and open letters are used to publicise protests—including protests against arrested protesters. A hand-to-hand communications network is maintained to circulate manuscripts, unpublished novels, proscribed literature and the *Chronicle*, their mouthpiece. Manuscripts are regularly smuggled out of the country to keep the outside world aware of what is happening. Internationalisation helps prevent the authorities from excesses (liquidations à la Stalin), since a noted person's disappearance would cause a commotion.

There are also a few internationally recognised men like Sakharov, Solzhenitsyn and Rostropovich who are outspoken critics and intercede on behalf of the dissidents. Their eminence makes them relatively inaccessible and the authorities have not challenged them. Not yet, at least. Sakharov and Solzhenitsyn went to the extent of giving interviews to *Time* and *Newsweek* reporters and aired their views on Soviet persecution, anti-semitism, censorship and Stalin's crimes. Twenty years ago this would have been unimaginable.

Repercussions of Détente

The Soviet leaders were alarmed by the "Prague spring" when open discussion, relaxed censorship and exchanges with the West seemed to jeopardise the totalitarian communist model. In view of the East-West détente, co-operation treaties in space exploration, nuclear energy, environment, massive wheat import and purchase of Western/Japanese technology, Kremlin leaders must be worried about repercussions. They fear that the dissidents might mock the communist model for depending on degenerate capitalists; they fear the sight of protests in Red Square being broken up by plainclothesmen in full view of Western businessmen; they fear friendly contacts between dissidents and Western technicians.

This fear of the dissidents tearing at the Soviet state has probably caused the authorities to over-react. It seems a new witch-hunt has been launched. Last year, the aged Pyotr Yakir, a veteran of Stalin's labour camps, was arrested and is believed to have been tortured to reveal the identities of the editors of the *Chronicle*. Yuri Galanskov, imprisoned since 1967, died in November from negligent treatment of ulcers. Five Buddhist monks were arrested in the Buryat ASSR for organising a religious group with alleged Zionist ties. Apart from arrests, other tactics are being used to suppress dissidents. In December, Valeri Chalidze was allowed to go on a lecture tour of the USA. In New York, an embassy official informed him that his

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ENCORE FOR MALAVLI

Leslie Daniel

HOWEVER one looks at the Malavli Youth Festival, the indisputable fact strikes one that it was a commendable organisational achievement. Whether the purpose for which it was organised was achieved is no doubt debatable—achieved that is in all its aspects, for the aim of the organisers was to combine intellectual discussion with healthy zestful entertainment. That was a flaw not so much in the set-up as in the thinking of those behind the Sneha Yatra. More correctly, it was a misjudgement of the mood of youth. Bar this the festival was a creditable production.

Much has been said about the festival, but comments have been biased pro and con, some erring on the side of generosity, others heavily underlying their opinions with unconfirmed facts. Yet it must be conceded that Malavli was essentially geared to cater for youth and youth got what it wanted.

The adult viewpoint seems to be blind to the yearnings of youth and the tempo of their thinking, and even the sponsors of the Yatra to some extent fell into the latter pitfall, for even they did not realise that during the holiday spell, the youngsters were essentially in a holiday spirit, a spirit of fun, and the holidays were to them a time to forget studious activity. The planned discussions were too reminiscent of the lecture room and nothing could entice them to participate in talks and debates. They looked upon Malavli as a venue of enjoyment, an extension of the holiday pleasures, a picnic and a release from the cloying atmosphere of the city.

The bout of holiday fever, therefore, proved far from conducive to intellectualism and dampened enthusiasm for discussions and debates. In this regard the efforts

of the organisers were unfruitful and their aim poorly fulfilled. That should in any way have been expected. It wasn't, and hours which could have been gainfully utilised were lost in frustrating endeavours.

Savour Life

Because of this, however, the Sneha Yatra, cannot be underscored as a failure, a waste of time and effort. Far from it. The festival provided the participants with three days of entertainment, camp-style living and opportunity to savour life independently away from the comforts of home, without the supervision and molly-coddling of parents and guardians. For many it was the first time away from authority, when they had to make do with such facilities as were available and uphold the moral and social principles in which they had been indoctrinated. It must be said to the credit of the great majority of these youngsters that they acquitted themselves very creditably. If there were any instances of untoward behaviour among those who attended the musical assemblage, it was only to be expected, as it must be in any social set-up, leave aside one where watchful eyes were absent. Stray incidents of misbehaviour have been magnified beyond sensible proportion, although no one can unreservedly testify being a witness to indecency or moral laxity. It is merely a case of "I know someone who knows someone, who knows someone." And there the matter rests.

The musical score was just what the youth wanted and needed to relax and to enjoy unrestrictedly. In the home the music which the young favour and find pleasure in is criticised and decried as a weird

CRACKDOWN ON DISSENT IN RUSSIA — Continued from page 7

citizenship had been terminated and he would not be allowed to return to Russia. Chalidze had been working for the Human Rights Committee. This form of deportation was in Solzhenitsyn's mind when he refused to leave Russia to receive his Nobel prize. Jewish dissidents—like Yuri Stein and Yessenin-Volpin—are being encouraged to emigrate to Israel.

There is a straw in the wind, however, that some change is in the offing. According to a Soviet handout, at the fiftieth anniversary celebration of the USSR, Party Secretary Brezhnev said:

An advanced socialist state has been built in the USSR...the state of the dictatorship of the proletariat gradually developed into a socialist state...The time is coming to complete the work on

the text of the constitution of the USSR that would reflect the basic changes in the country's life.

The new constitution is expected to be promulgated in 1976. It is too early to comment on its form.

Till then, the Soviet state can intimidate dissidents with an arsenal of cunning tactics. What chance did Natalia Gorbanevskaya have when she unfurled her little Czech flag in Red Square? Is it worth-while for Pyotr Yakir to struggle to keep his head during torture? Sakharov agrees "struggle is really useless and senseless. Nothing will change." But the struggle is inevitable, Sakharov continues, "Because for us, it is not a political struggle; it is a moral struggle. We have to be true to ourselves."

cacophony of wild and bizarre sounds, in the same manner in which the original jazz was condemned by the sedate and social elite and the long-haired (figuratively) of the early decades of this century. So the youngsters were given an opportunity to "have themselves a ball." The festival was a prolonged evening at a disco, with the number attending multiplied manifold, and the music an unending stereophonic L.P. They loved it and they lapped it up. It was their kind of food nourishment.

But that was not all. The programme gave many youngsters, nursed in western traditions and habituated to modern rock and soul, their first experience of Indian music. They were slow in appreciating it, but once the Indian entertainers got into the swing, their music caught on their listeners and they found rapport with the audience. Today there are more youth appreciative of the nuances and niceties of Indian music than there were before the Malavli music festival, and there are more of them tuning their radio sets to Indian programmes.

The expectations with regard to attendance were more than fulfilled. There was, at any given time, a floating population of around five thousand, the resident crowd being in the region of three thousand. Catering for a crowd of this magnitude was no small chore. Accommodation comprised of bungalows and tents and those who chose neither made themselves comfortable in the shamiana. The canteen service was capably managed and the tariff was surprisingly reasonable, some items of food being cheaper than those prevailing in the neighbouring cities and towns and in Bombay. Not in the more expensive or classy establishments, but in the common man's restaurant and eating house. And there was never a shortage of food as such. Not only were the rates moderate, but portions were generous, more than enough for youthful appetites. That's something to write home about.

Off-Colour

What did however upset most of the crowd was the off-colour language interspersed in the compering. This was uncalled for and unnecessary and in bad taste. If it was meant to gain rapport with the crowd, it was directed at the wrong audience, and had the reverse of the effect intended. Rather it gave critics of the Yatra something with which to point their fingers at the youngsters, and say, "I told you so." This apart, the crowd took everything in its stride: The cold, the discomfort whatever came their way. It was all part of the fun. Nothing went beyond their expectations, nothing below. They were out to enjoy themselves and they did. That is why they came to the holiday

camp at Lonavala by train, by bus, by scooter and motor-bike and even push-bikes. They streamed up the hill on their pilgrimage of pleasure, in the scenic environment amidst the green and bracing hills of the holiday resort. They spread themselves over the venue of the function, where the banner of the Sneha Yatra fluttered in the cold wind waving a welcome to them. It was their festival, their day of music and song.

Melting Pot

Will there be another Malavli? There is no reason why there should'nt. Occasions such as this give youth a chance to be on their own, to learn to rough it out, to look after themselves, to justify the confidence their parents have in their honesty and integrity, to mix with each other irrespective of considerations of class, creed and caste. Here the angularities of social status and communalism are ground down by youth's zest and enthusiasm for life.

Let those who have passed the stage of enjoying robust, rumbunctious fun and those incapable of getting the most out of life criticise, but the shows for youth must go on. Here's to another Malavli.

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HAYAVADANA: POEM TO INCOMPLETENESS

Geeta Doctor

REVIEWING a play by Girish Karnad is inclined to make you feel like the man who goes out for dinner and enjoys himself thoroughly until the bill turns up. Then he starts complaining about the food.

His latest play "Hayavadana" is no exception. As produced for the first time in English, by the Madras Players it was a brilliant success; the unusual theme, the songs, the folksy framework, the humour and the pathos all blending together under the imaginative direction of Yamuna Prabhu and Lakshmi Krishnamurthy to provide a truly entertaining evening. And yet in retrospect we cannot help wondering whether we have merely been dazzled by the novelty of it all and whether it is not true that Indian audiences are so starved for plays that they will devour anything that is placed before them.

"Hayavadana" which was published in 1971 and won the award for the best play of the year already has many admirers as it has detractors. The one will only praise Karnad for the ease in which he once again tackles a complex theme such as—Is it the head that rules the body or the body that controls the head?—and actualises it in vivid dramatic terms. While the other side will only accuse him for the shallowness of his treatment and the structural vagueness that invariably plague his plays and make them a web of loose strands which he abruptly ties up together in the last scene.

The central story in Hayavadana is fairly simple. It is told to us by the story teller or Bhagavata who presents this play within a play by cosily taking the audience into his confidence. Devadatta and Kapila are the closest of friends even though Devadatta is a dreamy, intellectual Brahmin and Kapila is his direct opposite, the brawny effervescent son of a blacksmith. Devadatta falls in love with and subsequently marries Padmini, the woman of his dreams, only to find that as time goes by Padmini has eyes only for the virile Kapila. Circumstances lead Devadatta to the temple of Kali where he offers his head in fulfilment of an earlier pledge. Kapila grief stricken with remorse and guilt when he discovers Devadatta in this state severs his head also. Padmini arrives on the scene and finding both men dead importunes Kali with her lamentations until the Goddess appears, very irate at being disturbed, and instructs Padmini to close her eyes and press the heads to the bodies. Eagerly Padmini does as she is told and the two men spring up alive. Only there has been a slight accident, in her haste Padmini has changed the heads, Devadatta now has Kapila's body and Kapila has Devadatta's. The question now

is who should get Padmini? It is on this tantalizing note that the first act ends.

Bitter Rivals

The second part which resolves this crisis is naturally perhaps not half as good as the first. After their initial surprise the two friends become bitter rivals. Devadatta has no doubt that Padmini should belong to him as it is he who has made the marriage vows to her, but Kapila, who has Devadatta's body, feels that she should go with him, particularly since the child she is about to have will really be his child. The unhappy trio consult a sage who gives the verdict in favour of Devadatta and the disappointed Kapila leaves for the forest and is heard of no more.

At first Devadatta and Padmini are very happy, he exulting in his newly won strength and she feeling satisfied in having got the better half of both men. A son is born to them. Time passes and gradually we find that Devadatta's body is reverting back into his old one. Padmini starts dreaming of Kapila and one day finds herself before his hut in the forest with her son who is also his son. The drama ends swiftly with the inevitable confrontation between the two men who fight until they kill each other. There is nothing for Padmini to do but commit Sati.

This story is framed within the story of Hayavadana who though he is the titular hero of the play supplies only an incidental interest and also provides a somewhat too obvious symbolism to the main story. He appears at the beginning of the play as an unhappy creature with a Horse's head and a man's body seeking to be a complete being. And at the end we see him again having attained completeness. He has now become a complete horse. It was no doubt inevitable that he should come back in the last scene but whether it was necessary to tie up the two stories in such an elaborately clumsy knot is a debatable matter. In this scene Padmini's son who has all through been an imaginary figure suddenly materialises as a pesky brat who by asking Hayavadana to laugh accidentally teaches him to neigh and thereby completes his transformation. Somehow after the thrilling duel which was superbly executed in a mock Kathakali style and after the poignancy of the scene where Padmini commits Sati the horse-play at the end is tedious and somewhat embarrassing.

Of course the ready excuse for this would be that the light hearted last scene would be in keeping with the folk play spirit. In fact it would be quite unfair to judge this play on the basis of a typical Western drama with its action building up to a climax, for



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MIRATIPP NOLA

Karnad emphatically states that it is his intention to imitate the style of the Bayalatas and create a continuous flow of varied incident which will keep his audience in a constant state of anticipation. To this extent the play is a success in that it moves forward in a series of little hops each of them prefaced by a song or a word of explanation from the Bhagavata who played his part to perfection, for he was pleasantly chatty without being garrulous always at hand to explain the action without intruding into it. But even the Bhagavata could not bridge the leap from the high water mark of Padmini's Sati scene to the serio-comic difficulties of Hayavadana's dilemma.

The play depends so heavily on the authentic creation of a folk play atmosphere that we cannot help but wonder how it would fare in the hands of someone less conscious of this element. Perhaps the greatest achievement of the Madras Players was their ability to bring out the folk-play aspect. In Madras with its background of music and drama it was possible to supply the play with the traditional background that it required. And to audiences only too familiar with the ritual of invocation and the presence of an orchestra at a typical dance performance, it was not only natural but fitting that the play should begin with an invocation to Ganesha and that the two choruses should sit on either side of the stage and supply the action with information at the crucial points.

The production also deserves praise for the simple

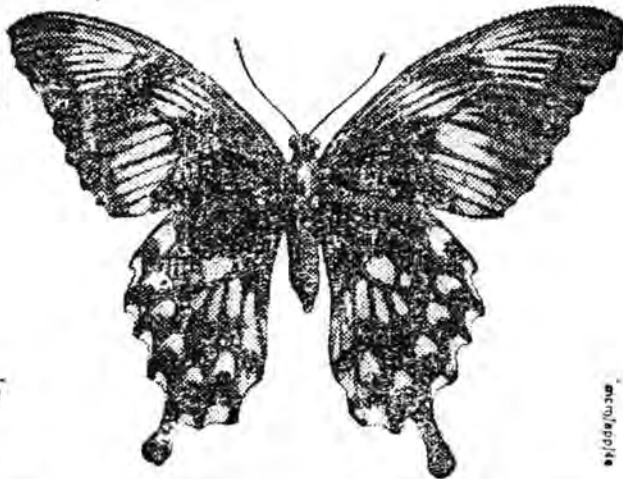
effectiveness of its stage settings with its arrangement of straw mats to provide multiple entries dominated by one carved portal towards the back of the stage which was at one moment the entrance to Padmini's house and at another the altar at which Kali appears. It also succeeded very well in portraying complicated action by simple suggestions such as the rhythmic scene in which the trio ride out into the countryside or the young parents watching their son grow up. But perhaps the best illusion is created by the superb acting of the two men after they wake up with their heads interchanged. It is entirely possible to believe that this transformation has actually taken place and it is the excellence of this acting alone which gives credence to the subsequent events in the story.

It has been suggested that Karnad is more interested in exploring a theme than in exploring character which may explain why Padmini who is the bone of contention between the two men has been dealt with precisely as such, a juicy attractive morsel, but a morsel all the same. One cannot help but accuse Karnad of being the typical male chauvinist when it comes to female characters and Padmini has not been exempted. She appears a common flirt when we first see her being courted by Kapila on Devadatta's behalf and later in the play the only distinction she seems to be able to make is a sensual one. Of course she redeems herself by the supreme act of self sacrifice at the end

(Continued on page 14)

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Review

The Subverters of Liberty

by J. Bernard Hutton; W. H. Allen; £2.50

NOT for nothing do Communist pronouncements inveigh against anti-communism. For, this approach reflects a very fair appraisal of the totalitarian character of the creed and an understanding of the unscrupulous tactics it teaches its adherents. The "anti-Communist democrat" shows little appreciation of these. But his attitude receives fortification, alas, from anti-Communists who have nothing positive to contribute and whose understanding of Communist parties and States is dim. Not for them the significant differences that mark out Yugoslavia, Poland, Russia, China and Rumania, the great neglected one. Nor for them the hard facts. They prefer visions of conspiracies.

For a good sample read Mr. Hutton's book. A former member of the Central Committee of the Czech Communist Party, he works now as a journalist in Britain. The subtitle of the book claims that this is "the first full exposure of the Communist plot to undermine the Western way of life." It purports to be an exposé of "the army of undercover subverters."

One must not question the author too closely about the sources of his information. Trust him, he knows. "In this book, I present evidence that has been checked and counterchecked, and emanates from Soviet, Red Chinese and Western files. I expose the pattern of a world-wide conspiracy that threatens the peoples of the free world. I trace the birth of the Soviet fifth column, and reveal how selected Russian and Chinese communists have become leaders of a small

army of undercover subverters. I show how they are assisted by selected Western communists to bring about demonstrations that develop into violent rioting, terrorism and guerilla warfare; how strikes, hijackings, kidnappings and inflation are brought about by studied planning and action; how powerful forces are striving to destroy the Western way of life."

He himself seems to have quite a squad, if not an army, of informers. "I take this opportunity to express my profound thanks to all those behind the Iron and Bamboo Curtains who helped me obtain documented facts from secret files, but who must, obviously, remain anonymous; and to the various Western security agencies and officers who helped me obtain, check and counter-check my facts. Without their valuable assistance I could not have written this story, never before told, of the men and women who are 'the enemy within'."

Proof?

Now, how can one evaluate a book of this kind? How can one appraise the worth of the many directives sent in code to which the author gained access and which he flaunts in the book? Be it the spread of student violence in the Western countries, black power in the U.S., hijacking by Arab terrorists or the disturbances in Northern Ireland, the hands of Moscow and Peking are both responsible. Proof? The directives.

Fortunately for the Indian reader there is a Chapter entitled "300,000 Died!" which helps him to decide. It is on the genocide that was perpetrated last year in Bangladesh.

The author's two page resumé of the events leading to the Pak army's crack-down is sympathetic to Bangladesh. He does not mince words. Pak troops *did* embark upon genocide.

How did the Pak rulers come to take leave of their senses? It is on this point that the author has a strikingly original contribution to make, a contribution which enables the reader at least in the sub-continent to form a fair opinion of the book.

Mr. Hutton writes: "There is little doubt that Pakistan became involved in this horrifying bloodbath because of the clever manipulation of its politicians and populace by Red China and Soviet Russia."

"For many years Red China's master-subverters have been operating in West Pakistan, which Peking considers its own zone of influence. Russian subverters meanwhile were operating in East Pakistan and India. Both communist countries were competing for influence over this divided territory. They employed the usual subverters' tactics; guerilla groups were formed and trained, arms and explosives were smuggled into guerilla bases, religious conflicts were sharpened and every smouldering grievance was fanned into flames of violent revolt."

HAYAVADANA - Continued from page 13

but this is a negative gesture and by this time there is little else she can do. This only re-inforces the conviction that though Karnad has a marvellous propensity for creating brilliant dramatic situations on the stage, he has not yet mastered the art of finding a satisfying conclusion to them. He begins in a bold impressionistic style which is well sustained by a fluid handling of the language which even in translation sounds well, but towards the end he invariably resorts to a fussy mechanical ending that leaves the audience with a certain sense of disappointment.

"Hayavadana" begins with an invocation to Ganesha who is hailed as the "single tusked destroyer of incompleteness". Could it be that Karnad has to apply once more to Ganesha before his work attains completeness or is it that art by its very nature can only be a search for perfection, always with an element of incompleteness?

The Chinese were operating in both wings; in the East "to usurp the control of their Russian master-subverters" who were there.

"The man placed in charge of Peking's 'Operation East Pakistan' was Jeje Khan. He had previously been master-subverter in Karachi, where he had posed as a prosperous businessman since 1963. His opposite number in West Pakistan was Abdul Hind, who posed as a prosperous exporter while he operated a parallel subverter network to Khan's. Each man, under guidance from Peking, controlled approximately seventy undercover subverters whose activities they coordinated. Each undercover subverter commanded a network of thirty-five to fifty subverters, giving a total of between five and seven thousand trained undercover subverters!

"While Khan's network sowed hatred in East Pakistan towards West Pakistan, Hind's subverters in West Pakistan whipped up bitter hostility against East Pakistan."

The rest is history or rather a Hutton story. Proof? Why the directive, again.

"The following passage is a coded Peking directive transmitted in May 1971, and seized in June 1971 from one of Abdul Hind's network agent:

"All arms and explosives supplies must be distribut-

ed quickly to our specially trained guerillas in Bangladesh. It is imperative that all previous consignments of armaments made in Czechoslovakia are also distributed. This will later serve a purpose of considerable political significance.

"East Pakistani guerillas and West Pakistani troops must now be brought into open conflict."

What about the "subverters" in India? "In Pakistan and India they have concentrated all their efforts behind this directive. Their unceasing fomentation of trouble in East Pakistan and on the Indian-Pakistani border has led to the recent crisis. War between Pakistan and India became inevitable, and the precise role Moscow and Peking have adopted towards the combatants is of headline importance.

Alas, the roles are not set out clearly: Do we understand that the Mukti Bahini was trained by Moscow or by Peking? And how come that despite these disclosures Sino-Pak entente remains undisturbed? But one must not ask questions. One should read Mr. Hutton's directives. This is the kind of parody of Communist plots a Communist might write. A pity Mr. Hutton's past experiences should lead him astray into a world fantasy.

A. G. NOORANI

music in his ears

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—Tennyson.

Great literature can come out of great suffering, but Solzhenitsyn is not an argument for the existence of concentration camps.

—Leopold Labez in *Survey*, Winter 1972.

CIA sans America is as ridiculous as America without Columbus.

—*New Age*, December 17.

The threat to the United States is not coming from Vietnam; it is sailing from Murmansk.

—British General Sir Walter Walker in
U.S. News & World Report,
December 18.

I would no longer label myself a socialist — I am not a Marxist Leninist or a Communist — I will call myself a liberal.

—Academician Sakharov in *Newsweek*,
November 13.

The banning of *Moscow's Hand in India* proves precisely that Moscow does have a hand in India.

—Khushwant Singh in *The Illustrated Weekly of India*, December 24.

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Sugar which was one rupee a kilo when Mrs. Gandhi came to power, is now difficult to obtain at Rs. 4.

—D. F. Karaka in *Current*, December 30.

Our Parliament is the most expensive, resource consuming institution we have established to exercise our sovereignty.

—Romesh Thapar in
Economic & Political Weekly,
December 23.

History may regard Rajaji's most memorable work to be what he attempted without immediate success, during the last years of his life, to rekindle the spirit of liberty.

—Mr. N. A. Palkhivala quoted in *Times of India*,
December 27.

Nothing shines more in my memory than a reproof from him (Rajaji) for, as American Ambassador, being excessively inclined to socialism.

—Mr. Kenneth Galbraith quoted in
Times of India, December 28.

Officers of Chase Manhattan report being told by a high official that the man who heads their office in Moscow should not speak Russian.

—*U.S. News & World Report*, December 18

The annual meetings of India's ruling Congress Party are an incongruous mixture of Woodstock nation and revival meeting.

—*Time*, January 8.

I've had a wonderful week; I've had a fight every day.

—Prof. Sidney Hook quoted in *Time*, January 1.

I've always been out of step, a premature Marxist, a premature anti-Communist.

—Prof. Sidney Hook quoted in *Time*, January 1.

It begins to seem at least possible that important political results have been achieved by the controlled use of air power.

—Stewart Alsop in *Newsweek*, January 29.