

freedom first

315

A JOURNAL OF LIBERAL IDEAS

FEBRUARY 1979

Price : Re 1

EDITORS : S. V. RAJU

GEETA DOCTOR

HOW BAD IS BAD?

S. V. Raju

If reading the newspapers during the Emergency was a boring chore, today it is like reading the film script of a B-grade movie. Not that it is the fault of newsmen. They can only report what is going on in the country. Not very flattering, but there it is. The main scenerio is one of unrelieved gloom—of quarrelling politicians impervious to everything other than their own survival; of sectional groups, be it among students or labour, taking the law into their own hands as if a government does not exist and millions of people looking on helplessly, even if some gnash their teeth in frustration. And when the Prime Minister asserts that things are not all that bad, one wonders — how bad is bad?

Twenty-four months are adequate, by any standard, for the backlash of the Emergency to have spent itself. When in the first few months after the new Government took office in 1977 and a wave of unrest spread across the country particularly in urban areas, we were told that it was inevitable that feelings bottled up during the dictatorship would explode in the new atmosphere of freedom. Understandable. But what is not is the fact that the explosion shows no sign of abating.

No government in the democratic world elected with the kind of popular enthusiasm that witnessed Janata's assumption of office has been so successful in going about dissipating with such speed the tremendous fund of goodwill it had. But there is, one would like to believe, a little still left. For, even if human memories are proverbially short, what happened during the nineteen months between 1975 and 1977 has not yet been completely forgotten by the people (even if it has been by those in the ruling party). Evidence of this was provided in the recent by-elections in U.P. and Bihar and in the elections to the Municipal Corporation of Greater Bombay. There is still time therefore for those in power to turn to the task of governing the country and regaining the people's confidence.

The problem, it would appear, is a desire not to appear repressive, particularly when dealing with agitations and protest movements. Fair enough. But what one cannot understand is Government's apparent unwillingness to enforce the normal laws enacted by democratically elected legislatures. When Mrs. Gandhi declared the Emergency on the spurious ground that there was a general breakdown of law and order in the country, Jayaprakash Narayan and others rightly countered that, if that was the case, there were adequate laws on the statute books to enable the Government to meet the situation without invoking the Emergency provisions in the Constitution. This argument is equally true today with this difference. While Mrs. Gandhi sought total power, the Janata leadership is reluctant to resort even to the normal laws available to them to stem the growing climate of anarchy. This could prove costly for the country, for anarchy and chaos pave the way for a resurgence of anti-democratic forces.

Appeasement has always been counter-productive. It only whets the appetite of the appeased. The bully

(Continued on Page 4)

IN THIS ISSUE

Prof. Kirtidev Desai diagnoses the Janata Party's problems in his piece 'What Ails Janata?' We present some old wine in a new bottle under the label 'From the Word Press' which includes a nostalgic article by Mr. E. P. Thompson. Two book reviews on Pakistan and that venerable Institution 'The Oxford University Press', are some of the highlights of this Issue.

"the time has come," the
walrus said,
"to talk of many things:
of shoes—and ships—
and sealing wax—
of cabbages—
and kings—"

—Lewis Carroll



OF CABBAGES & KINGS

Who Won?

"A victory of the united bank employees movement" crowed Comrade Prabhat Kar, general secretary of the All India Bank Employees Association. Not quite, says Mr. P. F. Gutta, Chairman of the Indian Banks Association. All that has happened, he points out is that at the intervention of the Union Ministers of Finance and Labour both parties have agreed to limit the settlement to around Rs. 30 crores — as against Rs. 45 crores that would have been involved if the demands of the Union had been fully met. The employers offer worked out to around Rs. 20 crores. The matter has now been referred to adjudication.

Who won? Obviously neither. But the people have lost. And as for that little matter of who pays? — we the taxpayers and consumers of course and if need be the Security Press at Nasik which is there round the corner and can always be requisitioned!

Dearness Allowance in one's pay packet is a tacit admission of inflation in the economy. The D.A. grows as inflation worsens leading in turn to more demands, more strikes, more go-slows more lock-outs. Where lies the solution? In resorting to sound economic and fiscal policies. Who makes these policies? The Government of India. The bank strike or for that matter any strike for more pay is a symptom of the malaise affecting the economy. An aspirin may relieve a headache, but the cause for the headache is somewhere else. Unless that is treated, the headache will recur. Tell all this to a worker or an employee and he will laugh. He is interested in what his pay packet contains here and now. Economic theorising does not interest him.*

That may be so. But the fact remains that the laws of economics cannot be ignored. If they are then the relief of the public that their cheques now get past the Clearing House may be short lived. If not next year, the year after there will again be go-slows (which in any case is the general pattern agitation or no agitation); threats of strike and the whole dreary process will repeat itself all over again. —SVR.

* see page 4 for some restrictive practices adopted by bank employees

Madras when it Drizzles

In Madras you can never have a rain without having a flood. Other places like Cherrapunji have to wait until they get 366 inches of rain before anybody hears about them, but let it rain 4 inches in Madras and you may be sure that the whole country will hear about it. Why this should be so of course nobody knows, but apparently things have always been that way in Madras. In the 1670s when the Dominican missionary Friar Domingo Navarrete visited Madras this is what he had to say: "To lie that night, we went down from the Mountain (St. Thomas Mount) and took up under a tree upon the bare ground. Our rest lasted not long, for a violent shower came on, which obliged us to get into a little house, into which we felt our way. It secured us from the rain, but we had a troublesome night of it for we were engaged with the knots (mosquitoes) which never ceased tormenting us."

Much later, in the early 1970s, there was a lot of talk about a grand scheme called the "Madras Metropolitan Plan" by the Madras Metropolitan Development Authority (MMDA). It created a great deal of interest because it was the first time that anybody had thought of having a plan for Madras since the days when the foundations were dug for Fort St. George. Officials from the World Bank came and gave their opinion. There were vague hints that they were about to shower 50 million dollars worth of aid on various projects amongst which water supply and drainage figured prominently. To quote just one paragraph from those optimistic days, "The initiative taken by the MMDA for financing of water supply projects led to the approval of a pre-investment study of water supply and drainage for the MMA to be undertaken by UNDP at a cost of \$ 2.8 million. This study is likely to be taken up before December 1975 and the projects identified by this team are expected automatically to qualify for World Bank loan."

In December 1978 the amount of water which was flowing through the streets of Madras made one wonder where all that initiative had gone. Had it gone for instance into building all those pedestals for the numerous statues, that during the floods, stood out like lighthouses in the middle of the city? Or had it been used in the even more grandiose scheme to pave the bed of the Coovum river, a scheme with which the river itself steadfastly refused to co-operate?

It was difficult to say. All that can be asserted with any certainty is that it hasn't been used to rebuild a proper drainage system for Madras. The situation, which is already bad under normal circumstances, since the drainage has not been redesigned to cope with the increased pressure of urbanization in the last ten years, gets totally out of control during the rains. During such times the storm waters are also let into the drains. When these overflow, the danger to health and the resulting blockage at various points in the system can be imagined. In fact matters get even worse after the flood waters have receded, as small groups of men all over the city have to perform the horrible task of lowering themselves into the manholes and clearing the muck driven into the auxiliary drainage pipes during the floods. Cesspools linger in the low lying slum areas and the mosquitoes which plagued Friar Domingo continue to thrive and multiply.

In the circumstance one could only admire the cheerful fortitude with which people put up with the situation. During the rains, their huts, clinging to the riverside, dissolved, their roofs caved in, their belongings floated away but the people themselves waded through the water and scrambled to safety as though it were all a matter of enjoyment. At the airport at Meenambakkam, which must be the only place in the world, where fish are a flying hazard, battalions of men, wearing raincoats and hats, swarmed over the tarmac collecting fish and stuffing them into their pockets, to take home for their supper perhaps. At milk booths, of which there are now several to compensate for the lack of liquor, men rolled up their lungis and stood around drinking milk which is served boiling hot and sweetened. While urchins had the best time of all pushing stalled cars out of the water for a few rupees.

Even the police did not lose their sense of humour as I discovered on the last day of the year as I sat in a car parked in the middle of a busy throughfare.

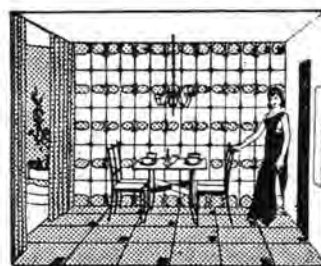
"No parking madam", one of them said politely, shooing me off into the distance. Since the keys were in the car, I avoided the buffaloes, wallowing in post deluvian bliss, missed the manic bus drivers, and quietly parked in a corner of the road a little further ahead. In a few minutes another policeman had materialised. "No Parking madam", he said even more sternly. This time I could not find the keys and looked suitably panic stricken.

Ignoring the panic, and the pleas for a five minute reprieve, he pulled out his pocketbook, still glaring. Having been told of the ruthless glee with which the Tamil Nadu Police put people into jail for even minor offences, I tensed up to face the worst. He handed me a card. For a few moments I could not even understand what was written on it until I turned to see my fierce policemen grinning, and repeating the words on the card. "The Tamil Nadu Police wishes you a Happy New Year!" GD.

A Genius for the Non-issue

Whatever may be the other faults of our Janata rulers, they have demonstrated one quality — a genius for the non-issue. It began with prohibition. The Prime Minister felt perhaps that it was the drinking habit that lay at the root of our problems. Then came Charan Singh, who suggested that our problems arose because of big industries. curb them and all will be well. The Hindiwallahs in the ruling party take the view that the question of the national language is the most important one. Solve that first. Once the South starts talking in Hindi all will be well. And now George Fernandes comes along apparently with the view that once steel and aluminium are nationalised, a happy and prosperous India is at hand. We wait with bated breath to see what new flashes of inspiration emanate from Delhi.

Or can we dare to hope that these sparks of genius have run their course and we can now expect our undoubtedly brilliant rulers in Delhi to settle down to more mundane matters—such as the governance of the country, ensuring law and order and attending to those million little uninspiring tasks which, while lacking glamour, are the salt of good and responsible government? SVR.



FOR ATTRACTIVE
INTERIORS

Silvicrete

ACC WHITE CEMENT

Readily available from the nearest
Cement Marketing Division of
THE ASSOCIATED CEMENT
COMPANIES LTD.

ACC. 5656

HOW BAD IS BAD — (Continued from Page 1)

does not appreciate logic or reason. He respects superior strength and understands a determined opponent when he sees one. It is unfortunate but true that the government and the people are being bullied by sectional groups whose lung power and capacity for mischief is out of all proportion to their real strength. When they find the rulers dither and hesitate, they acquire fresh strength. This is what is happening, particularly in the student and labour movements. Vice-Chancellors are beaten up, their rooms occupied, furniture broken and records destroyed; a minority of failures, misfits and maladjusted students hold the education system to ransom. Those in charge of administering the universities find themselves unable to cope with the problem, given the unwillingness of the Government to antagonise the student community.

The situation is most acute in the field of labour. Barring a few honourable exceptions, the large majority of trade unions in this country are either playthings of political parties or of ambitious individuals who use Unions as a springboard for personal aggrandizement. Such trade unions foster inter-union rivalries which, apart from destroying production, often lead to bloodshed. The ghastly outrage in Bombay last month when Mr. Naval

Godrej was stabbed inside his own house shocked the public. While it has caught public attention, there have been scores of incidents earlier, involving officers and supervisors who have been stabbed, stripped or beaten up by workers for no other fault than being considered part of Management. The Government looks on and does nothing. Ask any police official and he will tell you privately that he is helpless. He has instructions not to interfere!

How does one explain the Janata Government's attitude? A basic pusillanimity? The presence in the cabinet of Bandh leaders of yester-years? A fear of losing votes in the next round of elections? Perhaps a little of each?

It might sound trite, but a strong government is not incompatible with democratic governance. In fact, the basic duty of the Government is to maintain law and order. However disparate might be the ideological moorings of the constituents that make up the Janata Party, surely they cannot have any difference of opinion on the need to maintain the rule of law.

Time is running out. The people's goodwill is fast evaporating. Even assuming that the Janata leadership manage to keep together and carry on in office, 1982 is not all that far away.

RESTRICTIVE PRACTICES IN BANKS

This is not an exhaustive list, but contains only such practices as are more commonly indulged in at many offices by different categories of staff including, in some cases, supervisory officials. These adversely affect customer service either at the counter or otherwise.

1. Ceiling arbitrarily stipulated by the employees concerned and/or their union in the quantum of work to be done by an employee during normal working hours on a day e.g.
 - (a) Number of bills to be handled,
 - (b) Number of drafts to be issued,
 - (c) number of currency note packets to be counted/recounted.
2. Refusal to do additional duty/duties even when the work relating to the allotted desk is over.
3. Refusal on the part of senior employees to assist on desks like despatch, statements of accounts, day book writing, etc.
4. Refusal on the part of ledger-keeper to attend to more than one ledger.
5. Refusal on the part of clerk-typists to do typing and clerical work on the same day.
6. Refusal to work as paying and receiving cashier-composite duty—on the same day or to perform paying or receiving duty only for a part of the business hours on the counter.
7. Insistence on the part of cashier-cum-clerk that he will work either as a clerk or as a cashier on a given day.
8. Messenger refusing to do filing work and dufties refusing to do messenger's work.
9. Refusal on the part of supervising officials/clerks/cashiers to carry books, registers, vouchers, etc. even when the occasion demands, or when this would improve customer service.
10. Refusal on the part of godown-keepers to do clerical work when free from godown duty.
11. Refusal on the part of ledger keeper to himself refer to specimen signature for comparing the signature on a cheque or a communication of a customer on the plea that he need only indicate the specimen signature number to the concerned supervising official.
12. Refusal on the part of messengers to dust furniture, window panes, etc. necessary to keep premises clean.
13. Insistence that cash relating to one payment will be checked by two employees.
14. Insistence that there should be a separate employee for issuing tokens.
15. Refusing to handle customer's work after business hours even when directed to do so by appropriate authority.
16. Refusal to deliver letters locally and insistence that all such letters be posted.
17. Refusal on the part of head clerks to do some of the checking/passing duties prescribed, or simultaneously, perform normal clerical duties.
18. Refusal on the part of officials, especially at branches to perform original or clerical functions even when occasion warrants it, and refusal to work at counters especially when there is an emergency or when this would improve customer service.
19. Refusal on the part of clerks and cashiers to deal with correspondence including drafting communications.

From the Final Report of the Working Group on Customer Service in Banks.

WHAT AILS JANATA?

Kirtidev D. Desai

"If 1977 put an exclamation mark to the Janata party, 1978 put a question mark to it." So observed one Union Cabinet minister in an informal chat. Despite this rhetoric, there is an element of truth in the remark.

The year 1977 witnessed a great mass upsurge for sweeping out the emergency regime and bringing about a democratic restoration. The Janata victory surpassed even the wildest expectations of its supporters. Hence the euphoria was wild and the bafflement, pleasant. It was hailed as "the second freedom" and popular expectations ran high.

The scene changed pretty soon. Constant infighting, backtracking attempts on issues like the MISA, constitutional amendments and the anti-defection bill; the failure to check the deteriorating law and order situation, and the inept handling of the growing challenge of Indira's political comeback all these led to the rapid erosion of the popularity of the Janata party. Disenchantment has replaced euphoria and serious doubts are being raised about the future of the Janata party itself. Perhaps no other party has faced such a drastic reversal of fortunes in so short a time.

The Beginnings of the Crisis

The crisis in the Janata party has been building up since June 1977. Distribution of tickets for the assembly elections brought out ugly rivalries. Large scale changes in the U.P. list of candidates by party president Chandra Sekhar angered Charan Singh who made a crude attempt to withdraw the B.L.D. symbol allotted to Janata candidates. Yet, the Janata party repeated its March performance, in terms of seats: it won overwhelming majorities in the seven northern states; but its votes indicated a serious erosion of popular support as compared to the parliamentary elections. The June elections strengthened the Jan Sangh and B.L.D. constituents of the Janata party and they came to an understanding to share power among themselves in these seven states. This alignment created apprehensions in the minds of the other constituents. Efforts were made to undo or undermine this formidable alliance. Dissident movements in Himachal Pradesh, Haryana, UP and Bihar were encouraged by the Janata groups.

The debacle of the Janata party in the assembly elections of February, 1978 accentuated these factional strains. The BLD group demanded a post-mortem on the defeat and asked for the removal of Chandra Sekhar from party presidentship. As days passed by, factional quarrels became more intensive and ugly. Ultimately a break came in the middle of June 1978, which led to the resignation of Charan Singh and his group from the Union Cabinet. Seven months have passed since then and it is still tension and turmoil. A series of mediatory efforts failed on one count or the other the last being the abortive Morarjibhai—Charan Singh meet

on December 4*. The kisan rally held in New Delhi on 23rd December, demonstrated Charan Singh's undoubted mass base in rural northern India and has led to further strains.

Thus the Janata party is facing to-day the gravest crisis of its existence. It is poised on the edge of a precipice as the stands of the rival camps stiffen and the communication gap widens.

The Causes

It is easy and tempting to trace this crisis to individual and incidental factors. "Morarjibhai's obstinacy", "Charan Singh's power-lust", "Raj Narain's buffoonery", "Conspiracies and plots", all these are freely aired to explain the present crisis. These explanations are not wrong; but they represent only the surface causes of the crisis.

Other major causes underlying the Janata crisis are three: (i) Incongruity between the nature of the party and the leadership style (ii) Discrepancy between the party's formal power structure and informal power balance and (iii) differences on policy orientations, political culture and style.

First, it should be realised that the Janata party is "a party-in-making". It is even now coalitional in nature. Five major political parties, with different political traditions and cultures, merged to form the Janata. The complete merger of these groups as a homogeneous entity may be a welcome goal and an ardent wish. But it is not a reality at present. The prospects of the successful management of such a party and of its eventual development into an unified one depends on the leadership style. The coalitional nature of the Janata party demands a flexible and consensus style of leadership style. This may best be achieved by promoting collective leadership, presided over by the prime minister. This is the major thrust of Madhu Limaye's consensus theory. Unfortunately, Morarjibhai has not been able to evolve such a leadership style. His personality and long socialisation as the "Sarvochcha" in the homogeneous and unified Gujarat Congress impart firmness and aloofness. His style discourages frank dialogue and he often slips into sermonising monologues. Thus despite many virtues like firmness and dignity, Morarjibhai's leadership style has been somewhat dysfunctional in the situation. This incongruity between the nature of the party and the leadership style is a major contributory factor to the present crisis.

Moreover, the prime minister and the party president have not succeeded in projecting their image as being above party factions. Impressions have grown that the Congress-O constituent is getting a lion's share in the allocation of cabinet portfolios and selections for Governorships. Destablising moves against the Haryana, UP and Bihar ministries were often traced to circles close to the prime minister. Similarly, Chandra Sekhar has also become a factional leader rather than an acceptable

* This was written in December '78

arbiter in factional disputes. Thus the two major functionaries have failed to project a convincing image of impartiality. Hence the leadership style has faulted on two counts—rigidity and partiality.

Formal and Informal Power Structures

Secondly, the formal power structure of the party did not reflect the reality of the power-balance within the party. Of the six constituents of the Janata party, the BLD and the Jan Sangh are major ones. In the Janata Parliamentary party, both the BLD and the Jan Sangh groups account for roughly one-third members each; and the other four groups account for the remaining one-third. Thus the BLD and the Jan Sangh groups are the political heavy-weights in Janata. However, all constituents are given equal representation on party bodies. For instance in the Parliamentary Board, the Jan Sangh and BLD groups have two seats out of six, while they have roughly 175 out of 303 party members in the Lok Sabha. There is therefore discrepancy between the party's formal and informal power structures like the Security Council of the United Nations, where the two super powers are in a minority of 2: 3 among the permanent members.

Such hiatus between formal and informal power structures is not bad in itself. It may even be desirable in a certain situation to give equal representation to unequal partners. It may represent the spirit of accommodation and camaraderie. However, the reality of this "discrepancy" should not be overlooked. If a formal power structure is presumed to be also informal and if actions are taken on such a presumption, the party may find itself in deep trouble. So formal power bodies should be careful and circumspect while exercising their power; they should keep in mind the reality of the actual power balance while taking decisions based on formal majorities.

In the case of the Janata, small constituents have secured the vital posts of prime minister and party president. They also have majorities in party bodies. But in real power terms, they do not represent more than a third of the party's strength. This situation is pregnant with instability. Political light-weights, who have secured formal power positions, would tend to perpetuate themselves; this can be done only by destabilising the existing power-balance and by cutting political heavyweights to size. On the other hand, political heavyweights would try to get positions warranted by their real strength. In such a situation, precipitate actions on the basis of majorities in the face of the opposition of heavyweight groups like the Jan Sangh or the BLD may prove suicidal. Thus the present discrepancy between the formal and informal power structures of the Janata party demands a lot of tact and resilience on the part of party operators. With the impending organisational elections, this gap between the formal power structure and real power balance is likely to be narrowed. But even then the situation warrants careful handling.

Significant Divergence

Thirdly, there are significant divergences between the various constituents in regard to policy orientations, political traditions and culture. Two

broad major groupings with different political traditions are the Congress and the non-Congress groups. The Congress group has inherited a tradition and style that has dominated Indian politics during the last three decades; they are nostalgic about it and try to perpetuate it. On the other hand, the non-Congress groups have fought Congress-style politics all along and they resent its continuance and dominance in the post-'77 set up. These two political styles are at present trying to tame and contain one another. The persistence of "Congress politics" even after the ouster of the Congress government irritates many non-Congress groups.

Further, there are two contending philosophies of economic development. The Janata party has adopted the Gandhian model of development as against the Nehru model. The former emphasises a rural-oriented, labour-intensive and decentralised economy approach in contradiction to the Nehru model's emphasis on urban growth, heavy industry and technology. Officially, the Janata party has rejected the Nehru model and adopted the Gandhian one. But many groups within Janata even now have lurking sympathies for the Nehru model. Efforts are made to dilute the Gandhian model. Charan Singh and his BLD followers are most vocal and insistent on pursuing the agriculture-oriented development strategy; but many in the CFD, Socialist and Congress-O groups would like to save as much of the Nehru model as possible. The Jan Sangh group is committed to the Gandhian model, but its commitment in this matter is not deep-rooted. These divergences are not merely academic polemics; they are substantive issues of political division and strain.

The 1977 elections witnessed a major clash between two contending outlooks and styles in Indian polity. In the contest the non-Congress style overpowered the Congress style; and the Gandhian strategy of development conquered over the Nehru strategy. 1977 therefore represented a break with the past and a victory for the Gandhian development model as well as the non-Congress political culture. But this break is being blurred and compromises are being made. Both Morarjibhai as prime minister and Chandra Sekhar as party president represent more of a continuity and less of a break with past traditions and culture. This has led to a lot of tension between the "pragmatists" and the "purists".

The real and deep-rooted cause of the Janata malaise can be traced to these three factors. They underlie many factional fights and tensions. Other personality and incidental factors do play a role in aggravating or containing the crisis; but nonetheless, they remain only contributory factors.

Thus many fundamental as well as incidental factors have created a crisis of the first magnitude in the Janata party. For the present the prime minister has driven out the Charan Singh group and has created a new power balance minus Charan Singh. The main base for the new power balance is the alignment between the prime minister and the Jan Sangh group. Despite tensions, this power balance has lasted for over six months; and given

the manipulation potentiality of prime ministerial power, it may last longer. Short of a shift in the Jan Sangh group's support to the prime minister, the capacity of the Charan Singh group to rock Morarji's boat is limited and peripheral.

Wider Implications

But it would be wrong to view the implications of the present crisis only in terms of a numbers game in the Janata parliamentary party. It has much wider implications. First, a sullen Charan Singh group is likely to generate a continuous spate of political confrontations; it means an endless war of nerves that may sap the composure and prestige of the Janata party. This may lead to the erosion of the Janata image and popularity. Secondly, one cannot underrate the electoral potentiality of the Charan Singh group. It is a formidable force in North India and enjoys the solid support of the farming class. In Northern India, a socio-political polarisation is fast taking place. On the one hand farmers and the middle castes are supporting Charan Singh; muslims, Harijans and backward classes are rallying round Indira on the other. Obviously Janata cannot fight Indira and Charan Singh at the same time. In a hypothetical scenario of a triangular election contest in North India between the Janata, the Charan Singh group and the Indira Congress, the outcome would be uncertain; but Janata minus Charan Singh is most likely to be wiped out. Hence, despite the fact that the Charan Singh group does not constitute an immediate threat to the politics of parliamentary majority, its importance will increasingly register as the polls draw nearer. Thirdly, this continuous infighting with the Charan Singh group may bring about the collapse of some state governments (e.g. Haryana, UP, Bihar); and the prospects for Janata, facing mid-term polls in these states with a hostile

Charan Singh group, are not very pleasant. Fourthly, the main support-bases of the Janata Party have been the rural peasantry and urban intellectuals. Alienation of either of these two groups may undermine the viability of the Janata party. Rightly or wrongly, Charan Singh has emerged as the symbol of kisan resurgence in Indian polity. The kisan rally and successive kisan mobilisation programmes in the various states will strengthen this symbolic identification of Charan Singh with the kisans. Hence the alienation of Charan Singh may lead to a serious erosion of the rural base of the Janata party.

Therefore it would be churlish and short sighted to gloat either over the mounting pressure on Morarjibhai or the growing isolation of Charan Singh. It is obvious that the Janata party cannot survive the defection of either of its two political heavyweights i.e. the Jan Sangh or BLD groups. The only way out is to bring about a genuine reconciliation on the basis of a give and take and collective leadership. It has to be recognised that the Janata party is coalitional in nature and hence a suitable leadership style should be evolved. Moreover, the Janata ethos may have to be revived and the thrust of wide-ranging political reforms and basic shift in development strategy should not be allowed to wilt. The issue is not limited to accommodating the personal power ambitions of a few politicians; it is one of diagnosing the real cause of the malaise and curing it.

This is the great challenge before the Janata leadership. They owe it to the people to prove worthy of the faith reposed in them. The tidal wave in support of the Janata in 1977 was unprecedented; hence its responsibility is very heavy. The Janata party cannot afford to fail. If it does the prospects are quite frightening.

Milton's JEANS & SHIRTS

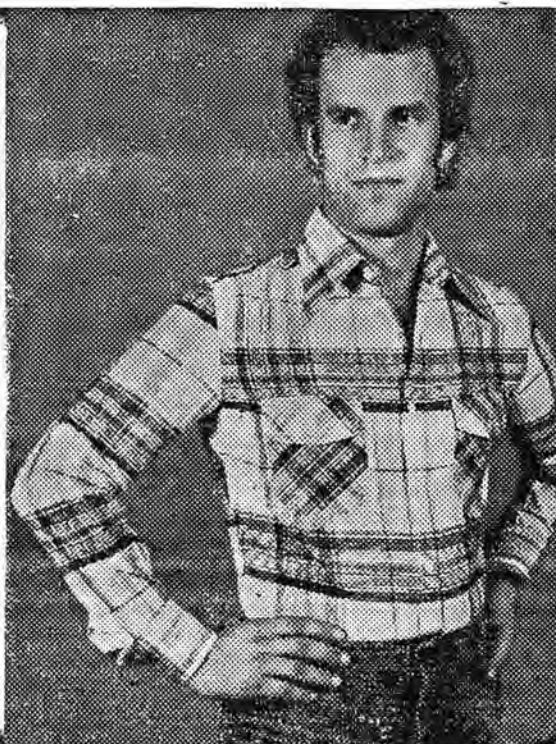
**wear to fit!
fit to wear!**



milton's limited
Mathuradas Mills Compound,
Lower Parel, Bombay 400 013

*India's largest manufacturers and
exporters of readymade garments.*

heros' ML-7



TELL US MR. MICHAEL FOOT

E. P. Thompson

Jawaharlal Nehru was a hero of Indian Independence, a man of principle, openness and democracy. How could the politicians of the West, themselves inspired by his spirit, believe his daughter would betray it? ... in a personal memoir of Nehru and of India under the Emergency, E.P. Thompson, historian and author of the making of the English Working Class, tries to answer the question put repeatedly by his Indian friends: why did the British Labour Movement abandon us? Why did Michael Foot condone the Emergency?

Early in January, 1977 I paid a courtesy visit to the palatial Jawaharlal Nehru Memorial Museum in New Delhi. My business was to exchange copies of letters which passed between my father, Edward John Thompson, and Nehru in the years 1936 to 1946.

The place was like a vast, modernised shrine. I was received not only with courtesy but with unction. My "reminiscences" (as a fourteen-year-old) of the great Founder of the Nation were reverently put on tape. As was proper.

For no one, in those last months of the Emergency, was allowed to forget for a moment the awe due to the Dynasty of Nehrus—Jawaharlal, Indira, Sanjay. In the tourist traps of New Delhi shop-windows were decorated with posters: "In support of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's 20-point programme, we offer 10 per cent discount." (Most of these shop-keepers had been Jan Sangh — Hindu communalist — supporters until the Emergency turned them sharply around).

My business was serious. I welcomed the exchange of manuscripts. But I also had another matter much on my mind—to find out how the Emergency was biting and how it was being resisted—and I wanted to shake off any possible surveillance.

After a month of moving around India, from one university to another, I was perhaps a little paranoid. At one university an outspoken member of the seminar was arrested immediately afterwards: perhaps a coincidence but my friends were not sure. At another, where my wife and I held a three day faculty seminar, we were told that two silent members of the seminar were intruders who could not be identified as university staff. And so on. We were not worried for ourselves—but might we be carriers of the plague of police attention to our friends?

That afternoon I had agreed to attend a secret meeting of opponents to the Emergency from the new Jawaharlal Nehru University in New Delhi. I must taxi here; walk there; get another taxi; and then (ludicrously conspicuous with my European complexion, grey hair and briefcase, slide into the upstairs room of a villa where about twenty young women and men, mainly graduate students, were packed on the floor.

If the meeting had been "blown" every one of them could have disappeared indefinitely into India's overcrowded and insanitary prisons—and I, presumably, could have gone on waffling around the

sub-continent unscathed. There followed three hours of the most heartening intense, undogmatic and searching political discussion I have ever taken part in.

The group had survived the first onset of the Emergency by luck and then by excellent tactics and security. At that university the Emergency had been inaugurated with a splendid coup of theatre. The campus was encircled by police at 2 a.m. and hundreds of students were thrown out of bed and paraded before a masked man (a student informer) who pointed out suspects to the police. In the following days some 400 were interviewed at the police stations. Only a score were arrested then: But interrogations and a trickle of arrests went on through the ensuing months. At the university all open politics ceased.

This group could do nothing in public and I was not silly enough to ask them what went on underground. What amazed me was the extent of their knowledge not only of India but of the world. They talked familiarly (usually ironically) about the theories and policies (or non-policies of little sectarian groups in Britain; about Althusser (they shared my dislike); about whether it was the CIA or KGB, or both, which were advising Mrs. Gandhi's security services in the latest techniques.

When a car stopped outside in the street, the lookout would draw back the blind an inch and conversation stopped. "OK—only a neighbour." Then we got going again, every now and then being reminded to hush our voices. Eventually the conversation came round to the point which it always did—in Delhi, Aligarh, Calcutta, Kerala, Bombay, Baroda — "Why has the British Labour Movement abandoned us like this? Don't people know? Why did Michael Foot support the Emergency?"

Twenty pairs of pained, angry, estranged, and very brave eyes waited for my answer. I did not have one to give.

The excuse (for there can be no possible answer) lies in the fact that Mrs. Gandhi is Nehru's daughter; and some senior Labour politicians held him in high respect, and did something,—although, in most cases, not very much—to help the cause of Indian independence along.

Many times during those weeks I reflected upon a visit paid by my father to India some thirty-seven years before. The visit, in October 1939, was in fact a peculiar political mission. Two months before it had been announced to this huge and startled nation that it was at war. In spite of the fact that

much of India was then ruled by Congress ministries, India was "declared a belligerent" by Britain, without any pretence of consultation with the Indian people. It was simply announced to those who had radios in a Viceregal statement. In the fury which ensued, a Congress declaration of "civil disobedience," and the consequent internment of many thousands of Congress leaders and activists, was expected daily.

My father was known to the Indian press as a "friend of India," and that is in fact what he was. He commenced in the 1910s as an educational missionary in Bengal; was educated by Tagore and Bengali poets (whom he presented to the West); and was further acculturated to the point of leaving the Methodist church—one of his last novels was about the Buddha. In politics he was a fluid liberal (with a small "L") and, in his last years, staunchly pro-Congress. His late-flowering friendship with Nehru was both cause and consequence of this.

In October 1939 my father flew to India with an unofficial brief to act as a kind of go-between—to visit all sections of Indian opinion (and some British), to talk, carry messages between people who had been carried beyond talking-distance with each other: the Viceroy, Jinnah, Sapru, Ambedkar, the Congress Working Committee. My father hoped that civil disobedience could be called off or at least postponed; and that, as *quid pro quo*, the British would make an explicit declaration of intent as to Indian independence after the war.

The meeting in Wardha was with Gandhi and the Congress Working Committee. The atmosphere throughout India was cracking with tension: everyone expected arrests to commence.

My father was invited to meet the full Congress Working Committee.

"It was a charming experience, abounding in kindness and goodwill ... On my right sprawled Kripalani, the All India Congress Secretary. He is a Sindhi, a man of strikingly handsome appearance; with his black hair and clear-cut features and spare athletic body he looks like the hero of one of Byron's wilder romances, as if he had just arrived leading a horde of Tartar bandits. Then came Rajagopalachari, Premier of Madras. To his right was the Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, the only one seated on a chair, because of a recent illness ...

"In a corner sat Pattabhi Sitaramayya ... with his bristling whiskers and upright carriage, looking like an extremely fierce Struelpeter hare, but with a mischievous twinkle that took away all the fierceness ... To my left sat Sarojini Naidu, the poetess, a brilliant orator and brilliant and witty woman—somewhat apart and critical of her brethren, coming in with disconcerting reminders and disrespectful thrusts at 'the Oracle' (Mr. Gandhi), and next to her Jawaharlal Nehru, more cheerful than he had any right to be.

"From time to time he guided our talks, saying perhaps: 'Could you give the Working Committee some idea of war conditions in London ...?' The Working Committee unlike British circles, believed the war was going to turn into a distinctly nasty war, and their interest in world affairs was profound and alert."

It turned into a war far nastier than even Nehru or my father supposed. Civil disobedience, postponed for a while, was eventually declared, and the great British round-up took place. That Working Committee was split up into a dozen jails. My father, back in England, busied himself with the chores of solidarity—meetings, letters and articles, more meetings.

Communication was not easy. Few of my father's letters got through, and, if there were replies, these must avoid all public topics. In January 1941 Padmaja Naidu, the daughter of Sarojini, was able to send out a little news, gathered from Mrs. Pandit (Nehru's sister), then jailed near Allahabad. Nehru then was in Dehra Dun jail, sharing with Ranjit Pandit (his brother-in-law) "very cramped quarters in what used to be at the time of the Mutiny the gallows house of the jail ... which Mr. Amery (India Secretary) gaily described, as his 'private quarters'."

It was at this time, strangely, that the friendship between my father and Nehru took on a more personal tone. My father sent books—histories, poems—some of which got through. "Ranjit left me yesterday after a full year", Nehru wrote in December 1941:

"A year together in jail means something much more than outside. We are together all the time, night and day, within a few feet of each other. Ranjit looked after our little garden and I was his willing but inefficient assistant. He used to spot out and tell me the names of new birds that passed Dehra Dun. Often, when the seasons changed, we would watch the migratory flights of geese to or from Tibet. And then he would talk about ancient history or Sanskrit literature and drama or Kashmir or the Marathas. Now that he is gone I am alone and I have to support the burden of the garden he made. But I am not unused to being alone. Here in this jail I once spent seven or eight months all by myself with no companion."

"Remember," my father wrote, "I am your friend, and when I say that I say it without reservations. My sword, such as it is at your service." Then letters were forbidden altogether.

Between 1942 and 1945 I can find nothing, except a brisk note from Indira, December 1943, saying that her father had received his books, and passing on a message: "Tell him that I often think of him and of the bond of friendship that ties us. Such bonds have helped me greatly not to allow 'black thinking,' as they call it in the language of prison, to find a home in my mind."

The war ended. Nehru, released from his "private quarters," was plunged into the complex agitational and diplomatic tasks of ensuring the transition to independence. I returned to England to find my father, furious at his enforced inactivity, dying with hideous slowness from cancer. As his sixtieth birthday came up, in April 1946, I knew that he had only a few weeks to live. I asked him if I should let Jawaharlal know. He told me to mind my own business. Nehru had far more important matters to attend to. But I thought this was my business, so I sent an air-letter to India.

Sooner than I conceived possible, a letter came back. My father read it, propped on his pillows, in the evening hours when his mind was cleared of drugs. It was a letter with the warmth of an Indian wind, thanking him for his work for India. My father let the letter drop on to the sheet: "Oh Lord, now let thy servant depart in peace." Several days later he died.

There was a letter also for me, in the same generous terms. From this moment, I suppose, stemmed my "deviation."

I have often been told, at that time and subsequently, by British and by Indian friends, that Nehru was a patrician, and, worse, a representative of "bourgeois nationalism." In his last years, as excellent historians like Professors Gopal and Barun De have shown, he became more autocratic, distanced from reality, dreamy, and arbitrary in his measures.

In India in December 1976, it was scarcely possible to mention Nehru's name with approval, among opponents to the Emergency, without calling down instant suspicion. Had it been safe to talk to me after all? The Nehru name had been confiscated by Indira and Sanjay. Sanjay was flying into provincial airports to be feted and garlanded: if the garlands weren't on time, then the provincial government would be overthrown. Mrs. Gandhi and her son were teaching the Indian people to turn their backs on Nehru's name.

But I was unable to turn my back on that past. Nehru remained for me much as my father described him in those notes of 1939:

"Sarojini Naidu probed me as to why I cared for Nehru so much. I said, 'He calls out my maternal instincts.' She was very struck by this. She said, 'He does that with the whole of India. Everyone wants to help him ...'

"Everyone who gets close to Nehru is attracted by him. You see men's eyes following him: as he runs in that boyish manner of his: and as his face lights up with that smile. He is desperately lonely: the poor fellow has no family life," Sapru keeps saying."

I have even meditated upon the heresy that if Nehru was a representative of the "progressive national bourgeoisie," then there is something to be said for that article. One would have to go rather far back in British history to find an article of that quality: to find persons willing to undergo years of imprisonment, and to emerge with unflagging, intellectual vitality and with so little bitterness.

India is a country with very old intellectual and cultural traditions; with long working-class and peasant histories, in which generations of activists have struggled and suffered; a country which engaged in an extraordinary protracted, and self-disciplined struggle for independence and identity, using every tactic known to democratic politics—and inventing some new ones: whose national leadership (whether bourgeois or not) was of a personal and political stature to compare with any other nation whatsoever.

India is also a country which has adopted deeply within its life notions of democratic practice and participation. Nor can I agree that this happened

despite Nehru and that Congress Working Committee. Late in 1939 the British authorities would gladly have purchased Indian support for the war by trading any kind of spurious, multi-cameral, quasi-democratic solution: so many seats for Sikhs, Parsees, Christians, Muslims, Princes: perhaps a literacy qualification here, and a veto there.

Nehru conveyed the flat negative of Congress in a letter to my father (11th November 1939) which he intended to be for the public record:

"We are deadly in earnest and we mean exactly what we say — indeed we mean a little more than we say... So long as we suspect that the aims of the war are imperialistic, we shall keep far away from it, and we shall thus serve not only ourselves but others who want to pull out of this war from the old ruts. In India it is essential that real power passes to the people. We do not want it. The Congress can be ignored. Let there be an election for this purpose. And a Constituent Assembly to be summoned later to draw up India's constitution. This must come from the widest mass franchise".

This was the ticket that took the Working Committee to their separate jails.

That Meeting in New Delhi was one of a score of such experiences (with individuals or with groups) that my wife and I met with in the winter of 1976/77. Wherever we went, our generous hosts, of many political persuasions, sooner or later managed to convey to us their profound concern. In Calcutta, which had managed to keep Sanjay at a distance, the atmosphere was more relaxed: not even Mrs. Gandhi could silence the discourse of that Paris of the East. Here also we met prisoners on provisional release from jail. They told us about the high mortality rates, worst of all in the women's block. They told us also about the way in which political opponents — Christian Socialists, followers of J. P. Narayan, CPM, Naxalites — had discovered solidarity and compassion.

Not for the first time, we were given this message: "I was imprisoned for nine years under the British", said a Praja Socialist MP. "I never thought I would have a word to say for your people. But the situation today is ten times worse than in those British Emergencies. People disappear in silence; no one can defend them or ask about them; they die without record. When you get back, tell the Prime Minister ... Tell Mr. Foot ...

No doubt the Prime Minister and Mr. Foot had their diplomatic difficulties. No doubt "private representations" were made. The fact remains that through the length and breadth of Emergency India the media pumped out the devastating news that Michael Foot had endorsed Mrs. Gandhi's regime. He may have been misreported. If so, has he made a full, public, plain apology to the Indian people for this error?

An hour before I left for the airport, in January, 1977, Indira Gandhi came on the radio to announce that an election would be held. The taxi driver had not yet heard. "Ah, good", he said, "ah, good."

I supposed that it would be an exercise in public relations, a rigged election controlled by Youth Congress thugs. My Indian friends had warned me to expect exactly this. The opposition would be

tempted to show themselves, and then, after the "election", the doors of the jails would close on them again.

Then, cautiously, people began to lift their heads, and another small, but remarkable, event took place. Mrs. Gandhi sallied out, in New Delhi, to hold the first great open-air meeting of a triumphant campaign. The attendance was poorer than she had been given to expect. And then, when she was in mid-speech, some hundreds, and then thousands in her audience simply turned around and offered her their backs. The news got around India, by train, and car, and bullock-cart. From that moment, the election was fought in earnest.

Janata India is a mess, but the shedding of Emergency remains a hopeful and momentous episode of our time. India is not an important, but perhaps the most important country for the future of the world. All the convergent influences of the world run

through this society: Hindu, Muslim, Christian, secular: Stalinist, liberal, Maoist, democratic socialist, Gandhian. There is not a thought that is being thought in the West or East which is not active in some Indian mind.

If that sub-continent should be rolled up into authoritarianism — if that varied intelligence and creativity should disappear into conformist darkness — then it would be one of the greatest defeats in the human record, sealing the defeat of a penumbra of other Asiatic nations. If the society remains open to the active mind and to the self-organisation of the working people — then things will be difficult, very difficult, but they will be unpredictable and creative things.

That is what the true Nehru tradition is about. Mrs. Gandhi, may I offer you my back?

— *The Guardian*

THAT SITUATION DESIRED SO AVIDLY BY US ALL: THE TOTAL INCAPACITY FOR SELECTIVE THOUGHT

Dennis Barker

The 1,037th annual general meeting of the Words Incongruous, Nonsensical and Drivelling Association (WIND) was held this week in the Great Hall of the Worshipful Company of Word Corrupters, Cheapside.

In presenting his report on the past year, the president, Mr. I. St. J. Blownup-Nothing, said: "1978 has been a most successful year for your Association. Words and phrases of little precise meaning, but with a self-inflated air of enormous importance, have, at an even faster rate, continued to penetrate not only casual conversations between individuals but also the BBC and what is termed the quality press, previously thought of as hinderers of our progress rather than examples of it. We are one stage nearer the situation desired so avidly by your Association; the total incapacity for fine and selective thought.

"As the old year drew to a close, the Confusion and Balderdash Industry (CBI) produced a phrase which must be new to many of our members, but which obviously has many potentialities in helping to produce that sought-after state of affairs in which all public issues are discussed in words so vague, puffed-up and inaccessible that no one can ever be quite sure what is being talked about, or whether useful agreement has been reached or not.

"This phrase was used more than once on the BBC (Better Before Corporation) and is: 'Reformed pay comparability.' This has all the hallmarks of being one of the most welcome and successful of our phrases, being long, droning in timbre and likely to leave 99 per cent of casual listeners entirely unaware of what is being mentioned — i.e. new differences in pay, or better differences of pay, or more socially or economically realistic differences in pay between one man and another.

"Notice how, by cutting out the need to use any of the latter phrases, the expression 'reformed pay

comparability' makes the whole argument resemble a boxing match in a pea-soup fog between two opponents who are in different halls.

"Many other phrases held their own in a good year. I shall keep my address short, no more than sixteen hours and a quarter, but I wish especially to mention the following:

"Meet with. I am extremely pleased to report that this expression is now almost standard practice at the BBC, such as in the sentence, 'The Government met with the TUC today to try to reach agreement on the Government — TUC pay policy.' One has only to write the sentence, 'The Government met without the TUC today...' to see how nonsensical the first expression is, and how cunningly and unnecessarily the word 'with' has been inserted with no benefit whatever. All who assisted in popularising this word, on an ongoing basis, have my congratulations.

"Ongoing. Some of our members have limited enthusiasm for this word, pointing out it is fairly short and does give some idea of its meaning. I am fully alive to these dangers, but on the other hand must point out that it is a *cliche* — always a point in its favour — that it puts two words together which would be better apart ('going' and 'on'), and that it really conveys no more than the already existing and perfectly adequate word, 'continuing'.

"Actually. I am afraid this word can be useful in emphasising a certain counterpoint, as in the sentence, 'He appeared to be an intelligent man, but actually all he had was a self-interested cunning.' But usually the word can be used with delightful effect to imply a spurious incandescence to sentiments and happenings of total banality, e.g., 'I prefer kippers to bloaters, actually.' 'I live in Cleethorpes, actually.' 'Actually, I think Beethoven a far greater composer than Marty Winkle.'

"Outburst. I am delighted to report that — so much was this word used in 1978 in its new and corrupted sense — almost any political or social pronouncement that does not actually send people to sleep by its torpor is described in these terms, e.g. 'Mrs. Margaret Thatcher, in an astonishing outburst yesterday, said that a Conservative government would be better than a Labour one.' 'Mr. Enoch Powell said yesterday that there were immigrants in Great Britain. His outburst immediately brought protests from...'

"Has got to be. A really bumper year can be reported for this expression, disc jockeys being among our most diligent supporters by the constant use of such sentences as, 'The Punk Bunk Hunk's new number, Blank the Pope!, has got to be the biggest

hit this year.' Of course, it hasn't got to be, it simply may be, if enough people buy it. Similarly the expression, 'Fred has got to be the tallest man in the room,' means, if it means anything, that Fred will be stretched on the rack if necessary, if he is not already the tallest man. It is woolly phrases like this, debasing language and people's confidence in it and themselves, that our association seeks to promote, and at which it has had such a successful year. Actually, 1979 has got to be even more resonant."

The vote of thanks to the president by the vice-president, Mr. J. C. Constant-Conference, is still going on.

— *The Guardian*, December 30, 1978.

TOTALITARIANISM'S APPEAL

The continuing reverence in the Soviet Union for Stalin, reported the other day in a dispatch to *The Times* from Moscow, is not a unique outburst of nostalgia. In Spain, rallies are held to honour Franco, and Hitler continues to hold a place in the hearts of some of his countrymen. What drives people to long for leaders whose rule was distinguished by the cruel suppression of freedom?

Hannah Arendt offered typically perceptive answers to this troubling question in her book, "The Origins of Totalitarianism." She wrote of the feeling of rootlessness and loneliness in modern society. Deprived of the ties that once bound communities, many people feel adrift and seek other bonds, which often turn out to be less benign. Given a choice between frightening anarchy and reassuring discipline, they are only too likely to choose the latter. For such people, even the hand of a Brezhnev may seem too light.

Any system that imposes thoroughgoing discipline draws strength not only from the personality of a supreme leader but also from some total vision, ideology or faith. A set of rules, consistent even to

the point of absurdity, can be highly alluring to those in search of perfect order.

History shows how dangerous the temptation is; but an antidote exists. Miss Arendt wrote: "Totalitarian propaganda can outrageously insult common sense only where common sense has lost its validity." Where it retains validity, as we like to think it does in this country, the person who is able to match the claims of an ideology or a ruler against day-to-day realities will not succumb easily to all-encompassing promises. A touch of skepticism, bred by life's experiences, is a healthy safeguard against all kinds of salesmanship.

In a Chaplinesque way, common sense exposes the absurdity of doctrines that purport to explain everything, and of men who aspire to control everything. The totalitarian experience has amply confirmed the observation that absurdities of thought give rise to atrocities of action. Common sense may be undefinable, but it is nonetheless invaluable; it pays tribute to the disorder that we call liberty.

— *The New York Times*, reproduced in the *Herald Tribune*, December 18, 1978.

THAILAND FEARS VIETNAM

SPR. S. The Thai Government is afflicted with a growing fear of the resurgence of Vietnamese chauvinism. In attacking Cambodia, the Vietnamese have espoused a cause which they feel is appreciated outside the Communist world. They think they will not be accused of aggression if they put an end to as dreadful a regime as Phnom Penh.

But the Thais, on the other side of Cambodia, do not see the issue in these terms. They feel that the Vietnamese are merely flexing their muscles for the next target — which is Thailand. This impression is accentuated by the extent to which Vietnam

has recently been integrated into the Soviet military bloc and the ease with which its leaders can now call upon military aid from Moscow.

The regime in Cambodia is indeed horrific, but so in a different way is the regime in Hanoi. Surely nothing more clearly exemplifies this than the flow of refugees from that unhappy country — the whole problem of the 'boat people'. Vietnam is not coming to Cambodia as a liberator, and there are already signs that it plans to annex parts of Cambodia when it wins the battle. This too is regarded as a dress rehearsal for Thailand.

— *Swiss Press Review*, December 18, 1978.

Book Review

The New Pakistan

by Satish Kumar; Vikas Publishing House Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, PP. 387; Price Rs. 95/-.

There was a time when Pakistan was a major preoccupation of Indian diplomacy. During this period there was a spate of books on Pakistan and on India's relations with that country. Kashmir, Canal Waters, Refugees, Evacuee Property and a host of other problems cropped up and defied solution. Gradually, most of these issues either got settled or faded out by the efflux of time. Then came the Bangladesh war which, in more than one sense, cut Pakistan to size. The task of building up the residual state fell to the lot of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, whom many acclaimed as Pakistan's Man of Destiny.

Bhutto had no illusions about the enormity of the burden he had to shoulder. In a broadcast to his countrymen on Dec. 20, 1971, he declared:

"I have come in at a decisive moment in the history of Pakistan. We are facing the worst crisis in our country's life, a deadly crisis. We have to pick up the pieces, very small pieces; but we will make a new Pakistan."

How Bhutto redeemed this pledge, and how, after reaching the pinnacle of power, he over-reached himself is the theme of the present book. In fact the book could easily bear the alternative title: The Rise and Fall of Bhutto.

The author of this interesting study, Professor Satish Kumar, worked as a Policy Analyst in the Ministry of External Affairs of the Government of India, for five years. He wrote a regular column on Pakistan Affairs in the *Hindustan Times* of New Delhi. He also visited Pakistan and interviewed many important political leaders, including Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and Khan Abdul Wali Khan. A major part of the exclusive material used in this book is based on that visit.

Though he had assumed power as the President and Chief Martial Law Administrator, Bhutto's first task was to get rid of the Martial Law shackles. Then there was the ticklish problem of cutting loose from Bangladesh and excluding it from the future constituency of Pakistan. Bhutto knew well that there was no use ignoring the fact that Bangladesh had wrested its independence and had to be treated as a sovereign state, but he persisted in the myth of a united Pakistan for a long time and even issued a warning to other countries against "any precipitate act" of recognizing Bangladesh, breaking diplomatic relations with some of them and even taking the extreme step of quitting the Commonwealth. He was a past-master in such dramatics.

His political manoeuvring was more spectacular. He brought about a facade of national consensus by announcing on 6th March a Tripartite Agreement between the Pakistan People's Party, the National Awami Party and the Jamiat-ul-Ulema-e-Islam, under which a time-table was agreed upon for the convening of the National Assembly and for the lifting of the Martial Law. But differences soon arose between the PPP and the other two parties

in regard to the implementation of the terms of the Agreement, particularly in regard to the appointment of the Governors in the NWFP and Baluchistan and in regard to the duration of the Martial Law and the vote of confidence in Bhutto's government. Bhutto tried to placate the Opposition parties by announcing the end of the Martial Law on April 21, instead of August 14, as decided earlier. But with a view to minimise the role of the Opposition in national politics, he decided to include Khan Abdul Qayyum Khan, President of the All Pakistan Muslim League, in the Central Cabinet as Minister for Home and Frontier Affairs. Everyone knew that Bhutto and Qayyum Khan were poles apart in politics, and that the only factors common to the political programme of their parties had been the need for a strong centre and hostility towards India. It suited Bhutto to have this potentially dangerous political opponent on his side for the time being. Another significant step which Bhutto took was to order the premature retirement from service of more than 130 officials under Martial Law regulations. Simultaneously, Provincial Governors also announced the premature retirement of sizeable numbers of officials in the Punjab, Sind and NWFP. These steps were ostensibly taken to "tone up the administration", but it was really meant to get rid of officials who had stood by the Yahya regime and whose continuance could not be tolerated in the changed circumstances.

The most outstanding achievement of Bhutto during this period was the promulgation of a new constitution for Pakistan on the basis of an understanding with the opposition parties. He also succeeded in forging the Simla Accord with India which he acclaimed as a great diplomatic victory for Pakistan. Meanwhile, things had begun to go awry. His erstwhile colleagues and confidant Mian Muhammad Ali Kasuri had broken with him and had joined the Tehriq-e-Istiqlal party of Air Marshal Ashgar Khan. In fact the whole Opposition had ganged up against Bhutto and had formed a United Front. They started a civil disobedience movement in protest against the high-handed actions of the ruling party, in particular against the summary dismissal of the democratically constituted governments of NWFP and Baluchistan composed of NAP and JUI elements. Pakistan was from then onwards riven by faction fights and intrigues of the worst type. Many heinous crimes including political murders were committed or condoned. One of the victims of such political killings was Khan Abdus Samad Khan Achakzai, affectionately known as the Baluchistan Gandhi in pre-Independence India.

These and various other developments are detailed by Professor Satish Kumar in this book with the characteristic acumen and diligence of a Special Correspondent. The book is essentially a study of the political trends in Pakistan during the period under review. No particular attention is given to economic or industrial policies or trends. There are two chapters dealing with Pakistan's relations with its partners in the Sub-Continent, especially with India.

These clearly reveal that Bhutto, the India-baiter, had learnt nothing from the past and took every opportunity to denigrate India whenever possible.

In an epilogue, the author traces the circumstances which led Bhutto to order a General Election in Pakistan and the steps he took to ensure that his party would return to power. It is a mystery why a shrewd man like him should have resorted to devious methods, e.g. arranging for unopposed returns or rigging the elections, when he could have easily secured a comfortable majority on the strength of his popularity and standing with the masses. Like Richard Nixon, Bhutto wanted to be doubly sure of his success and had to pay the penalty for his folly. But unlike his American counter-part, the Pakistani leader had to stand trial for his misdeeds. The question which every one is asking is "will Bhutto survive?" this greatest crisis in his life.

K. V. Padmanabhan

THE OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS: an informal history by Peter Sutcliffe. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978. xxviii + 303 p. £ 6.75.

In the long drama of the cultural history of the world, the role of books can hardly be overestimated. Starting with the rock books and the clay books, papyrus and parchment, we have now paper books, talking books and visual micro-forms. In this evolution, the invention of printing and the production of printed books constitute an important landmark. Earlier, books had to be inscribed by hand, and we have the picture of how, in the western world until the mediaeval period, this important work of producing written manuscripts was done in the cloistered precincts of the christian religious houses. A part of the cloistered complex was set apart and reserved specially for the scribes to transcribe manuscripts and this part was known as Scriptorium. Until the advent of printing, Scriptoria played a prominent role in the production and reproduction of cultural materials. Their decline began with the development of the University of Paris and the growing need for text-books and the increasing demand for cultural materials. First, the lay scribes, outside the religious houses, supplemented the efforts and then when printing began, they were supplanted gradually by the printing presses.

Among the early printing presses, the universities founded in France evinced considerable interest and led the way. In England, Oxford and Cambridge were not far behind. Human yearning for the advancement of learning, aroused as the result of European Renaissance, was reflected in the growing demand for books. Oxford had a number of scribes, illuminators, bookbinders and booksellers in the early part of the fifteenth century. In the later part of that century, however, among the immigrants from Germany there came over to Oxford an individual who knew the new art of printing. His name was Theodoric Rood and in 1478 he brought out his first book printed at Oxford. Thus

began a story of a press at Oxford associated with the University of Oxford.

The story of this press and its role in advancement of learning is remarkably interesting, and, last year, on the occasion of the celebration of the quincenary of the introduction of printing at Oxford, the same has been told to us in an illustrated history by Nicolas Barker, entitled: *The Oxford University Press and the spread of learning, 1478-1978* (Oxford 1978). Here is another work which covers the period after 1860, somewhat complementary to Barker's work but with primary emphasis on the structural development of the world-famous organisation. The narrative is woven round some of the outstanding personalities who contributed to the development of the Oxford University Press between the years 1860 and 1945. There is a Prologue and also Part I covering the history of the period before 1860, told very succinctly but remarkably well, and there is an Epilogue, wherein the author briefly surveys the developments after the Second World War. The main narrative is based primarily on the archival collections of the Press files, letter books, minutes and such alike original source materials.

In the constitutional history of the Press, the author has dealt, in details, with the problems relating to the relationship between the Press and the University and between the central organisation and its branches. He has also analysed the problems of management, marketing and financial control. But apart from these topics, which have been analysed, so competently, in their historical evolution and in relation to certain outstanding individuals who influenced the course of events, the author has attempted an overall view of the output of the Press. As it is stated in the blurb, despite its episodic approach the work is a study in continuity. Starting from the early editions of the English divines, the Press was called upon to meet the demand for the Bible. The demand for standard classical and English Texts had to be attended too and then there were the various series, also. Some individual works have been treated specifically. For instance, the story of the famous *New English Dictionary* is well told and so also of the numerous other Oxford dictionaries. These along with the *Companions* and other outstanding works have all contributed to make 'Oxford', as has been well said, synonymous with 'English' and mark out Oxford University Press as a great British institution. In publishing distinguished works in various fields of knowledge and undertaking commercially neglected unremunerative publications, it has made its own distinctive contribution to the advancement of learning and the cultural heritage of the world. It is but appropriate, therefore, that on the occasion of its quincenary, such works as this, competently executed, record the human endeavours, behind the scenes and over the centuries, which has made O.U.P. today what it is—a world famous acronym.

D. N. Marshall

Investment Decisions

by Minoo R. Batliwalla, Asia Publishing House, Year of Publication, 1978; Pages 512; Price Rs. 75/-

From the point of financial analysis of financial statements, the Balance Sheet assumes significance, if only, they are viewed in terms of funds. The Balance Sheet for example is a statement of funds, assets representing investments. An asset is an investment or a commitment of resources with a view to recovering the funds over a period of time in the form of cash flow. It is this time dimension that distinguishes investments in a capital project from the operating expenses.

The new book *Investment Decisions* by Mr. Minoo R. Batliwalla is a good addition to the library of any money manager as it would certainly assist in equipping the skills of proper appraisal of investments. After reading one feels that the book could have been given a managerial approach which would help to-day's money managers. Perhaps, this could have been achieved by putting less emphasis on pure mathematical aspects given elaborately in the book.

The chapter on post audit of investments would have also been helpful with an analysis of the actual events and happenings after the decision has been taken. This would have helped the business manager in his future corporate planning.

Despite the above inadequacies, the book is a useful addition to the publications on Financial Management.

M. D. Kale

Unofficial Ban

Chitegu Chinte, a political satire in Kannada by Director, Shri Sathyu, lampooning our politicians is perhaps the most entertaining film ever seen by us in the last decade excelling even *Lanchavata* and *Bhrastachar* of the great Hiranayya (Jr) or *Kissa Kursi Ka*.

The unofficial ban on this excellent film — full of humour and satire — has disappointed, puzzled, even shocked us indeed. Since the Karnataka Government dare not officially ban this film, it has brought pressure on both the producers and the distributors of the film to cancel the shows throughout the State! How? Both the producers and the distributors, we understand, were adequately compensated! Overnight this film was taken off the screen from all cinema theatres in Karnataka and replaced by old Hindi films! Shri Sathyu could have fought a legal battle if there had been an official ban, but he is now helpless as there is no official ban!

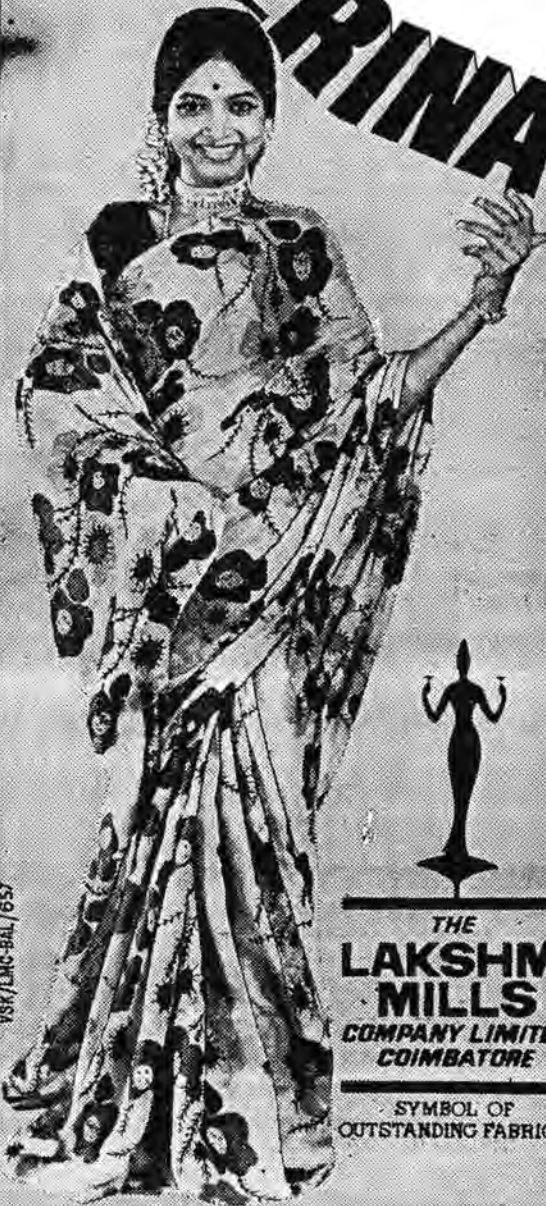
We hereby request all those who love freedom, especially cultural freedom to protest against this unjustified, unwarranted and unofficial ban on this excellent film and this kind of assault on our cultural freedom.

We request Bombay Doordarshan to screen this film for educating both our politicians and voters.

Sheela Sumant
Sheela Chandragiri
B. S. Sudhir

A CHARM FOR THE CHARMER

Lakshmi's
BALLERINA voile sarees
Enchanting. Wear for work
Wear for fun. Around the town.
Around the picnic spots.
Any where and BELLERINA
will please you every wear
Made from 90s & 100s
pure imported cotton.



WITH MANY VOICES

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

—Tennyson

While the Soviet Union had stood by India whenever it faced threats of aggression the U. S. had almost always sided with the opposite camp.

—External Affairs Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee, *The Times of India*, December 28, 1978.

As Aesop counseled in the tale of the shepherd boy and the wolf, liars are not believed even when they tell the truth.

—*New York Times*, cited in the *Herald Tribune*, December 7, 1978.

India is doing fine but its Government is not.
—*Indian Express*, November 1, 1978.

"I am counting my months in Rashtrapati Bhavan. Living in Rashtrapati Bhavan as President is nothing but simple imprisonment".

—President Sanjiva Reddy,
The Times of India, December 11, 1978.

"Blackness has become a certificate to kill with impunity."

—President Julius Nyerere, *Indian Express*, December 11, 1978.

"Sometimes it pains to know the things happening around me. After all I am responsible to the nation".

—President Sanjiva Reddy,
The Times of India, December 11, 1978.

"The telegraphic address of the National Union of Railwaymen is 'Beware, London'."

The Guardian 26.1.1979

Jimmy Carter, if he's lucky, may have a Merry Christmas, but he is clearly not going to have a Happy New Year.

—*Herald Tribune*, December 18, 1978.

No nation, of course, deserves congratulation for letting anyone emigrate.

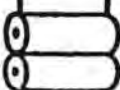
—*New York Times*, cited in the *Herald Tribune*, December 7, 1978.

If too many here cried wolf, it was because of the Soviet habit of passing off many a wolf as Little Red Riding Hood.

—*New York Times*, cited in the *Herald Tribune*, December 7, 1978.

The Laotians and Cambodians make curious bed-fellows: about all they agree on is that the only good Vietnamese is a dead Vietnamese.

—*Time*, October 9, 1978.



**To create
a good impression
use West Coast Paper
for writing
printing
packaging
and many other uses**

WEST COAST PAPER
Shreeniwas House,
Hazarimal Somani Marg. Bombay 1