

'STRANGLED BY RED TAPE'

S. V. Raju

"The Minorities Commission have been assured that the Union Government will take early steps to guarantee the independence of the Commission and its statutory character by moving forthwith an appropriate amendment to the Constitution," asserted a confident Mr. Masani at his first press conference in Delhi as Chairman of the Commission on March 23, 1978. His optimism was based on assurances he had received from the Prime Minister and the Home Minister that the recommendations of the Commission would be taken seriously and be given due weight meanwhile.

In fact, Mr. Masani took his new responsibilities so seriously that he divested himself of several other public activities including the editorship of this journal in order to do justice to his new assignment.

And yet, a mere two months later he resigned. The press statement he issued on May 29, and which has been widely reported in the press explained why. (see page 9)

On April 27 and again on May 9, Masani had written to the Prime Minister (in the absence of the Home Minister who was hospitalised) drawing attention to the sad state of affairs and seeking his good offices in putting things right. Neither letter has received the courtesy of a reply till this day.

In his April 27 epistle, which was approved by the Commission as a whole Mr. Masani pointed out that lack of staff other than a Secretary and an Under-Secretary and the absence of premises had resulted in "over 600 representations addressed to the Commission remaining unacknowledged" and that Prof. V. V. John, who was a full-time member, had to go back to Jodhpur in the absence of an office or a residence in Delhi. The letter gave fair warning "that if the present position does not change radically and Government do not find it possible to fulfil their obligation to provide or rent suitable office premises for the Commission by May 31, we shall reluctantly have to consider requesting you to relieve us of our membership of the Commission."

But something even more serious developed in

the meanwhile which precipitated the issue. This was the Government's decision to bypass the Commission and introduce the Bill on the Aligarh Muslim University in the Lok Sabha without the Commission being consulted.

The members of the Commission were furious and Mr. Masani wrote again on May 9, this time with his colleague Prof. V. V. John joining in to sign the letter. The tone of the letter reflected their disgust with the manner in which the Commission was being treated. The threat to resign now became a decision to quit on May 31. Again the Prime Minister did not apparently feel the need to reply.

Prof. John was in fact so angry that, according to an article in a weekly journal he dashed off on his own another letter on May 10 to Mr. Morarji Desai taking strong objection to another unilateral decision reportedly taken by the Union Cabinet that the Commission should have a Muslim Secretary to replace Mr. Sankaran Nair, the incumbent, who was being transferred—to nowhere in particular! Prof. John took exception not to the fact that the replacement was to be a Muslim but the implication in the decision that the "interests of the minorities especially of Muslims are not safe in the hands of the present Commission unless the Government makes timely intervention in its working." And,

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IN THIS ISSUE

Readers of *Freedom First* will want to know why our former editor resigned from the Minorities Commission? This issue carries the story. Veteran Trade Unionist V. B. Karnik critically examines the Bhoothalingam Report. What is sports medicine? Major General E. D'Souza explains. Two Book reviews plus the usual fare including one from Bernard Levin make up this issue.

FRANKLY SPEAKING...

Mr. Desai Goes Abroad

No one will grudge Mr. Morarji Desai the opportunity he had of being wined (sorry *limboopanied*) and dined in the United Kingdom and the United States. As the leader of a government elected by the world's largest democracy, he is entitled to be heard with attention and respect. And for a man whose quest for the office of Prime Minister was achieved when most men would have retired to the fourth *Ashrama* — the *Sanyas Ashrama* — the high praise showered on him by the world's statesmen must have been sweet music indeed.

And yet he could have avoided preaching and moralising, and what is more, harking back to India's ancient cultural heritage. We thought we had heard the last of such speeches with Nehru. His daughter, whatever be her other faults and these are grievous indeed, refrained by and large from this practice which made even our friends abroad bored with us — this business of 'we may be poor in material resources but rich in cultural heritage and tradition' etc.

His U.N. speech was telecast live *via* two satellites. What we saw was a half-empty hall. The resigned look on the faces of a large number of delegates was unmistakable. The live telecast must have cost a small fortune. Admittedly our foreign exchange reserves are comfortable, but is it necessary to squander, yes, squander them thus? Mr. Desai's speech, which lacked the sparkle of some of his extempore speeches, could well have been inflicted on us later through video recording. People in India would have been far happier if instead we had been gifted a live telecast of some of the football matches in the World Cup now in progress in Buenos Aires. But then football is not politics and we in India have by now become accustomed to the fact that politics is considered the most important vocation carrying perks and benefits that would evoke the envy of the Managing Director of a multinational.

Then there was Mr. Desai's instruction that his banquet in honour of British Prime Minister James Callaghan at London's Claridges be purely vegetarian though all the British guests were non-vegetarians. This fad of Mr. Desai has cost the Indian taxpayer an additional Rs. 3,000 in foreign exchange.

In New York, Atal Behari Vajpayee, true to his political pedigree, addressed a gathering of Indians in Hindi which very rightly provoked some sections of the audience to protest, resulting, according to a report in the *Times of India* (June 13), in a melee. Mr. Desai who was present and curiously was not the keynote speaker, was able to assuage feelings and restore order at the meeting. It will be recalled that soon after the Janata Government assumed office Mr. Vajpayee pandered to the Hindiwallas by speaking in Hindi at the U.N. at great cost to our national exchequer. This was not lost on the Southern voters in February 1978 who, with their votes, showed their feelings. Mr. Vajpayee is reported to have pleaded with the New York audience "not to import the

language controversy to the U.S.". Sorry, Mr. Vajpayee, it is you who did it, not they.

In our next issue, we shall carry some comments in the Western press which indicate that Mr. Desai was apparently not at his best this time. Perhaps the events within his party were weighing heavily in his mind. It will be recalled that his ingenious solution to solving the problem of who should preside over Cabinet meetings during his absence was to rule that there would be no Cabinet meetings at all during his absence!

SVR

For name's sake

In the past few days we have been receiving a number of calls from friends saying "Congratulations on your new number", not because due to post Emergency excesses we have added a new member to the family, but because the telephone department has changed our number. In direct contrast to those who make it their life's work to write to the newspapers complaining about the sloth and inefficiency of the posts and telephone departments, let me say that getting a new number has been no problem at all. On the morning of the great change, a pleasant female voice informed us that our number was being changed and in the evening another voice announced that our number had been changed. Nobody told us that our telephone ringing sound would also be changed, our new ring is soundless. The only way we can tell that someone is trying to contact us is by a hoarse croaking noise that the instrument makes from time to time. No one seems quite sure whether this is normal or not.

This confusion is understandable. The new telephone exchange building at Malabar Hill is so massive that it will take some time before things settle down there. Already the authorities have taken care of essential things such as changing the name of the small lane on which it stands to Alexander Graham Bell Marg. The old Powai road was so small that now the new name will run across its entire length. It seems a fearsome enough name to pronounce in English, one wonders what it will sound like in Hindi and whether one will be able to make a taxi driver understand in the middle of a stormy night, that one wants to go to Alexander Graham Bell Marg. Of course it is likely that the authorities would have felt the inconvenience worthwhile, since not many people will want to visit the telephone exchange in the middle of a stormy night.

Perhaps in time it will even be known as Bell Road, or Ganti Marg, just as in the case of poor Mr. Hamilton of Madras, who had an entire bridge named after him. Since the locals could only pronounce it as *Ambatan* which in Tamil means barber's the bridge now proudly bears the name of Barber's Bridge. Before that happens we hope that our phone will get its 'Ganti' back.

G.D.

A Windfall For Chandra Shekhar

Half a lakh of rupees won't fetch you even a single-room tenement in Bombay these days. But it is a tidy sum nevertheless which dyed-in-the-wool Nehru-socialist Chandra Shekhar is about to receive or has received by the time this appears.

"Profit" is a bad word in the lexicon of socialism which Churchill once debunked as the "gospel of envy". But breathes there a socialist who has refused money when it has come to him almost unearned? And if it is a reward from the State for telling on a reactionary capitalist it is indeed twice welcome.

In Chandra Shekhar's case he had literally to pursue the Government to pay him his dues. Chandra Shekhar, it would appear, was almost cheated out of his reward by the predecessor government which paid him a mere Rs. 9,000 as a reward for "giving valuable information to the Ministry of Finance regarding the House of Birlas, which led to various investigations and prosecutions" (*Indian Express*, June 10). It appears that he deserved very much more and the Janata Government has, according to its Minister of State for Finance Mr. Satish Agarwal, computed that Chandra Shekhar, the one time young Turk, now neither young nor a Turk, but the troubled president of a troublesome party, is actually entitled to an additional Rs. 43,000 which is the "value of the information" he had passed on to the state ten years ago.

If the Minister of State for Finance is to be taken at his word, Government is not only considering ways and means of "speeding up" the payment of the of rewards to lesser known informants, but is even considering a proposal to increase the quantum of the reward!

For those interested in embarking on such a career the current rate for giving information leading to seizure of smuggled gold is Rs. 40 per tola of the amount of gold seized. The increase proposed is to make it Rs. 60 per tola. We suggest that Government might also consider making it tax free — if it has not already occurred to them.

Have laws and rules which make smuggling and blackmarketing worthwhile and then institute rewards to catch their practitioners! Reminds me of the *Chor-Police* games we used to play as children. But then, compared to the system of a free economy, socialist economic thought is still in its teens.

SVR

The Seven Year Itch

According to Gail Sheehy authoress of a best-selling book on pop-psychology called "Passages", there may be a biological basis for the condition known as the "Seven year Itch" made popular in an old movie with Marilyn Monroe in it. Most divorces in the USA take place at seven yearly intervals. By that time also, every cell in a person's body would have been replaced by a new set, so he would for all purposes be a different, if not a new, human being.

Which is why, technically, a wife may wake up one morning and find out that she is sleeping with an utter stranger, one good reason at least to get a divorce. Is this why one wonders the Shastras with their usual fund of wisdom have declared that in an ideal marriage the husband must be seven years older than the wife? At least then, the renewal process will be simultaneous and therefore not so traumatic.

In the same way one wishes a sociologist of national calibre would investigate whether the periodic fuss that erupts over the membership at the Breach Candy Swimming pool in Bombay, has a biological or a psychological explanation. If I am not entirely mistaken the controversy comes up in seven yearly cycles. A long while ago there was one outburst because no Indians were allowed in the pool at all and there were notices which discriminated against dogs and Indians in the same breath. Then these rules were apparently changed and though I cannot remember whether the notices were amended to "Dogs and Indians allowed" one just did not hear about the infamous swimming pool for some time.

One reason why Indians understandably get patriotic about the Breach Candy pool is that it is shaped in the outline of a map of India. Another reason, that is sometimes maliciously suggested, is that the pool is plentifully stocked with bikini clad women, though according to eye-witness accounts, since most of these are heavily built women from the Communist countries, they are neither attractive nor friendly. It is no doubt with reference to these ladies that President Carter spoke out at a meeting in Spokane, Washington recently, and described the Soviets as "innate racists" doomed to fail in the Third World.

Though the best commentary on the latest situation has been provided by one Mr. R. N. Rustomji writing a letter to the *Times of India*. While he concedes that it is deplorable that an Indian should be prevented from joining the Breach Candy Pool, he remarks, "But how is it that no one has raised his finger against the discrimination by the authorities of the Pransukhlal Mafatlal Hindu Swimming Bath against non-Hindus? It seems whenever a non-Hindu applies for membership, his application is put off under one pretext or the other."

G.D.

A Touch of Class

In an industry that has been churning out costly rubbish, Raj Kapoor's *Satyam Shivam Sundaram*, comes like a whiff of fresh air.

To fathom the minds of our film critics would need the services of a psychiatrist. How else can one explain the uniformly poor reviews of what I discovered to be a film with a touch of class.

One suspects the hand of unscrupulous producers in spreading the rumour that it is a "bogus" picture. These producers have been feeding us with multistarrers with the heroes acting implausible roles and liberally sprinkled with "dishum dishum" and sex at its vulgar(est). And when, once in a way, a Raj

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WAGE, INCOME AND PRICE POLICY

Bhoothalingam Study Group Report

V. B. Karnik

To frame a wage, income and price policy is always a difficult task. It is difficult even in developed countries where the main object of the policy is to correct some distortions produced by temporary factors like inflation. It is more so in developing countries where the object is to correct not a few temporary distortions but the inequities and inequalities of centuries forming an integral part of the society.

The Study Group appointed by the Government of India under the chairmanship of Mr. S. Bhoothalingam was obviously incapable of handling the big task of laying down the guidelines for a just and egalitarian society or even of suggesting a more just division of the national income. That required a commitment to the abolition of the *status quo* and the establishment of a new social order. Only one member, Mr. A. N. Buch of the Textile Labour Association of Ahmedabad had that commitment. The rest were more or less the defenders of the *status quo*. They could think of only some minor changes here and there.

Even in advanced countries any effort to lay down a wage, income and price policy usually ends in establishing a wage freeze. It is difficult to control prices; and income springs from so many sources that it is equally difficult to stop it from growing. Wage, on the other hand, is easy to seize and can be controlled without much difficulty. So it is usually the wage that is controlled while prices and income remain free to soar to any height. It is this experience which made Indian workers suspicious of the Study Group and most of them decided not to cooperate with it. However, it must be said to the credit of the Group that it has not recommended any wage freeze, though the net result of its labours may tend in that direction.

The recommendations of the Study Group have met with a hostile reception. With a rare unanimity workers have expressed themselves strongly against them. They have asked the Government to reject the recommendations *in toto*. This is a hasty reaction. Some of the recommendations are beneficial. They should be supported and the government should be persuaded to act upon them. A wholesale rejection of the report will be unwise. Employers are also unhappy with it. The Group has accepted the principle of a national minimum wage which is an advance on the recommendations of the National Commission on Labour. The wage that is recommended is, however, very low, Rs. 100 a month to be raised to Rs. 150 in the course of seven years. The minimum wage paid in industry and even in agriculture in many states is much higher. It is to be hoped that the low figure recommended by the Group will not be used to bring down the prevailing wages. The Group has expressly stated that it should not "adversely affect any category of employees already in receipt of higher

minimum wage". The national minimum is the minimum below which "no employment would be permitted" in any part of the country. For the rural sector a minimum annual income of Rs. 1800 per household is recommended to be attained, again in a period of seven years.

After expressly stating that "we have not proposed any freeze in wages" the Group is of the view that "wages should gradually increase by obtaining an appropriate share in the growth of the gross national product and productivity". This is a helpful recommendation which will enable workers to get increases in wages in proportion to increase in national product and productivity. The Group has admitted that "disparities, anomalies and irrationalities" exist in wages in the organised private sector, that there are disparities in the salaries of the Central Government and States Governments and in wages in public sector undertakings. It has recommended the setting up of some bodies like the National Pay Commission and the Pay Committee to look into and remove these anomalies, disparities and distortions. It would have been better if the Group had itself recommended some steps for the rationalisation of wages instead of leaving it to other bodies which may or may not be appointed. However, the observations made will help workers and their organisations to develop suitable action for remedying the defects that have been pointed out.

The Group stands generally for collective bargaining for the settlement of wages and other conditions of work. But it has suggested some restraints. One is that the wage settlements through collective bargaining will be operative for 4-5 years". The other is that collective bargaining will take place within the margins set by "guidelines" issued by the Bureau of Incomes and Prices. There is nothing intrinsically wrong in the recommendation, but much will depend on the composition of the Bureau and the manner of its functioning. More objectionable is the suggestion for the setting up of "an independent appellate body" to which unsettled wage disputes would be referred and "whose award would be legally binding". This, if accepted, will rob collective bargaining of all its force. It would have been better if the Group had suggested arbitration instead of legal adjudication. The word adjudication is not used, but the procedure suggested cannot mean anything else.

Workers are very angry with the Group because it has rejected their demand for the extension of bonus to those not covered by the Bonus Act. They are mainly Government employees like Railwaymen and Post and Telegraphs workers. They were all hopefully looking forward to the Group, for the grant of bonus. They had the hope because the Janata Party had declared in its election manifesto that bonus was deferred wage. Some Janata Party

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THE EVIL THAT MEN DO AND THE MEN WHO CALL IT GOOD

Bernard Levin

I have written a great deal here about the horrors in Cambodia since it finally succumbed to Communist conquest in 1975, but since the horrors have not abated, I expect to go on writing on the subject. As it happens, my intention today is not simply to present the details of the latest crimes of a regime which has so far caused the death, either by direct extermination or by inhuman treatment that has led inevitably to the same end, of a number of men, women, and children that may amount by now to ten per cent of the population. (This genocide is described by the country's rulers as "the elimination of contradictions," and the leader of the Cambodian regime, Pol Pot, has recently said that there are still more "enemies of democratic Cambodia" to be accounted for, amounting in his estimate to another two per cent).

However, I have today a purpose wider than merely to rehearse the crime committed by the Cambodian communists against that country's people, crimes which perhaps have no true parallel in history. But before I get on to my principal themes, I have to say a little more about the crimes themselves.

The victorious Khmer Rouge have turned Cambodia not just into a prison, but into a charnel house, and their blood-lust is not yet sated. Indeed, it actually appears to have got worse. In 1977, a Stalinist purge among the rulers took place; many former members of the new ruling class were killed, and others managed to flee; reports suggest that the victorious faction have made the rigours of Cambodian life even more terrible. In the serfdom that is now the rule throughout the country, labour is compulsory for everyone more than six years old (that is not a misprint for sixteen); they work for at least ten hours a day. There are no schools, there is no private life, no postal system, naturally no possibility of movement from the place of residence assigned and no choice of work; sexual relations outside marriage are punishable by death; while thousands starve, the country's rulers are exporting rice, the staple food; doctors and the possessors of other desperately-needed skills are indiscriminately sent as agricultural serfs, while the people die for lack of treatment.

And still the horror intensifies. The practice of Buddhism, for instance, is now in itself forbidden on pain of death, and many Buddhist monks have been exterminated by the Khmer Rouge. Individual atrocities, described by refugee eye-witnesses, are as dreadful as anything the world has ever seen; one of the Khmer Rouge's favourite methods of murder, for instance, is to bury the offenders up to the neck in the ground and then beat them to death with clubs. And this account, based on reports by a group of refugees who managed to escape into Thailand, is in no way exceptional.

At the appointed hour, 268 men, women and

children set off on the long and dangerous trek... But the villagers had only walked a few yards... when machine guns opened up on them from the darkened hamlet. Apparently, one of the villagers who had remained behind had betrayed them. The Khmer Rouge made no attempt to capture the fleeing peasants or give them a chance to surrender... the shooting continued for half an hour... By morning, the survivors had regrouped... Less than 12 hours later, one group was attacked again when it stopped to scavenge for food. Exhausted by the pace and famished, Lamout Chhuon's 15 year old daughter had climbed a tree to pluck some hanging fruit. As she reached for it, a Khmer Rouge sniper's bullet cut her down, and a hail of automatic rifle fire and M-79 grenades tore into those who gathered round her fallen body... of the 268 peasants who had set out... only 50 survived the attempt to escape from Communist Cambodia.

The next passage is not for the squeamish; but for those who can face it, here are two still more recent accounts of the behaviour of the Cambodian forces, this time in raids across the Thai and Vietnamese borders respectively.

Thirty one Thai villagers, including babies and women, were hacked to death by Khmer Rouge troops... women and children, including small babies, had been decapitated. Many had been tortured. Men had been castrated and poles were protruding from the bodies of women.

So much by way of an account of conditions in Cambodia. But there is a general conclusion now to be drawn. It is often said that there is no cruelty, no oppression, that is without its defenders or condoners. Brezhnev's Russia and Vorster's South Africa, Chile and Cuba, Burundi and East Germany — all have their attendant sycophants in free countries, and propaganda machines, run by those in a position to tell the truth, daily pour out lies. But surely, you may say, Cambodia must be the exception to this terrible truth; though Amin's Uganda regularly escapes discussion in the United Nations General Assembly (fierce lobbying was carried out last time the question arose, by representatives of the "Third World" to ensure that the proposed debate did not take place), surely none can be found to speak well of present day Cambodia, to deny the truth about what has happened and is happening there, to claim that it is anything but a crime against humanity?

How little you know of the lengths — and the depths that human beings can go to. For in Britain itself there is a voluble and tireless Friend of Communist Cambodia, who calls it "democratic Kampuchea", speaks of the "liberation" of Phnom Penh by the Khmer Rouge, and insists that "we should be careful not to jeer at the social experiment being

conducted in Kampuchea". (Try reading that sentence aloud, replacing "Kampuchea" by "Auschwitz".)

He is called Malcolm Caldwell — Dr. Caldwell, to give him his academic due — and he is a "Lecturer in South East Asian Economic History" at the School of Oriental and African Studies, which is part of the University of London. Dr. Caldwell is tireless in his praise for Communist Cambodia, inexhaustible in his denials of the truth about it, unsparingly generous of his time in writing to magazines and newspapers which have promulgated that truth, to insist that Cambodia is a peaceful democracy and that the only people killed by its present rulers were justly condemned. Nor is Dr. Caldwell the only defender of Cambodia. There is also Mr. James Fenton, lately of the *New Statesman*, whose line is not, like Caldwell's, that everything the Cambodians do is splendid, but that, although much of it is not splendid at all, it is in the first place the fault of the Americans — "It was America that set the process going in Cambodia" — and in the second place must be seen in context. The Cambodians, you see, are frightened of the Vietnamese and the Thais; well no wonder they therefore exterminate a tenth of their own population. And though you and I (and indeed Mr. Fenton) deplore the methods they use, we must remember that, as he puts it, "The practice of beating people to death made sound sense in an economy where bullets were scarce".

Now I did not introduce this topic today merely to parade Dr. Caldwell and Mr. Fenton for your inspection. For the truth is that, as I suggested above, there is a Caldwell — or there are several Caldwells — for every tyrant, every murderer, every oppressor or torturer, who acts in the name of a political creed. Only last year there was a man called Butz — an American scientist — on the loose in London, insisting that the *entire* story of the Nazi extermination of the Jews as a fake, that no Jews were exterminated, and that only a handful died, more or less accidentally.

The lengths to which the defenders of the indefensible will go, and the techniques they will employ in the defence, vary widely, of course. Not long ago, for instance, the Very Reverend Lord Macleod of Fuinary (a former Moderator of the Church of Scotland) observed in an article in *The Scotsman* that "East Germany is a democracy". Lord Macleod, of course, is not to be compared with the Caldwells and the Butzes; in truth, he is nothing worse than a fool (though when you consider the number of people who have been shot, drowned, electrocuted, blown to pieces by mines or savaged by dogs, trying to set out of "democratic" East Germany, you must also recognise the fact that between "fool" and "foul" there is only a single letter's difference). All I am saying is that there are different degrees of willingness to praise evil or to pretend that it is not happening, and some will go further in that praise or pretence than will others.

What is it that drives men and women into

claiming, like Dr. Caldwell, that genocidal Cambodia is democratic Kampuchea, or, like Mr. Butz, that the Nazis killed no Jews? What leads people for whom the truth is available, and who run no risk by espousing it, to espouse lies instead — and not merely espouse them, but in some cases even believe them?

I do not know. But I know that Tennyson should have made a few exceptions when he said "We needs must love the highest when we see it," for some of us, it seems, love only the lowest, and in the case of the Caldwells and the Butzes and their like the lowest they love is so terrible, so indefensibly and almost unimaginably terrible, that it seems impossible to explain their behaviour except by some semi-tautologous argument to the effect that they cannot be held responsible for their actions. But if we cannot understand what moves them, we can nonetheless learn from them. We can learn a necessary lesson about the frailty of human reason in the face of an assault from the dark forces that are somewhere within us all, mirroring the dark forces in the world. Something in Mr. Butz *needs* to believe that the Nazis killed no Jews; something in Dr. Caldwell *needs* to believe that Cambodia under the genocidal dictatorship of the Khmer Rouge is Kampuchea under democracy. Whatever that need is, it is stronger than the facts and more tenacious than the evidence.

The Times, London, May 10, 1978

Good Roads do most to
develop the country and
**CONCRETE
ROADS*
ARE BEST**



*with **ACC CEMENT**

SPORTS MEDICINE

Maj. Gen. E. D'Souza, PVSM (Retd)

Today, sports is a big business in every sense of the word, and to survive in this fiercely competitive world requires not only skill but perfect mental and physical fitness. Sports has permeated into practically all facets of life. It has infiltrated into big business, politics and it is a money-spinner as well. Today, one hears of such an outstanding footballer as Pele being honoured by no less a body than the United Nations. Now to survive in this arena a sportsman, whether he is a footballer, chess player, cricketer, hockey player, gymnast, wrestler or athlete must be physically and mentally in top condition. Thus, the pursuit of sport in whatever garb, sedentary or active, needs a scientific approach. One of the essential sciences is sports medicine of comparatively recent origin.

In India today, we have hardly one such Centre tucked away at the National Institute of Sport, Patiala, available to the few sports-minded individuals who attend courses or coaching camps. In the rest of this vast country of ours, such a facility is unknown.

Bombay has done it again, living up to its traditions as *Urbs Prima in Indis* and a major centre of sports in the country. Precisely at 7.15 p.m. on Monday, June 5, 1978, on the lawns of the famous suburban medical centre — the Balabhai Nanavati Hospital, Vile Parle — was declared open possibly the first State or City Sports Medicine Centre, by no less a personage than Shri Vasantdada Patil, Chief Minister of Maharashtra, in the presence of eminent sportsmen, sports organizers and sports medicine doctors. Although we in India are late starters in this scientific approach to sports, it is nevertheless nice to think that Bombay, with its varied interests in sports, has given the lead.

In the past, lack of sports medicine or attention to it, has resulted in some major disasters in international competitions because of pulled muscles, fatigue, injury or what-have-you. There are examples galore. Take our triple jumper, Henry Rebello of Bangalore who was poised to strike gold in this event in the 1948 Olympics. He missed the boat when he pulled a muscle at a critical juncture and had to bow out of the arena; there was no sports medicine doctor to attend to him or guide him. Our football teams — juniors and seniors — bedevilled with injuries, have lost crucial matches in tournaments like the Merdeka; had there been a sports medicine practitioner available, the end result would, perhaps, have been different. On the hockey front, on which one can speak from the "inside" as it were, there have been numerous cases where the non-availability and proper handling of our hockey players by experienced medical practitioners in sports medicine has been felt. Charles Cornelius, that excellent goalkeeper, and Michael Kindo, a great hearted full back, were not available for the National team because injuries sustained by them on the field were mishandled. The case of Charles is too well known. Michael Kindo had to be dropped from the Montreal Olympics team, where his inclusion

was a must, as he was made to play too early after an injury sustained during the coaching camp. Then there is the classic example of Govinda who fractured his clavicle in the European warm-up matches prior to the Montreal Olympics. Not only was he included in the final 16, but he was forced to play in the all-important tie against Australia. Had there been a sports medical practitioner available, the tale would have been different. In the recently concluded Fourth World Cup Hockey Tournament at Buenos Aires where India took sixth place, the four players called in at the last moment were not checked for physical fitness by a sports medicine doctor and, as a result, Ashok Kumar and Sayed Ali became passengers. Can we afford to take such risks in the international arena? Today, on the eve of the Asians, the inclusion of that great hearted middle distance runner Naib Subedar Shriram Singh of the Services lies in jeopardy as he is suspected to be suffering from some sort of lung ailment which has interfered with his training. This condition may well have resulted because of improper diet coupled with the fact that he has over-run himself — a condition which would never have arisen had a sports medicine specialist been available. We have all heard of ace broad jumper Yohannan's foot problem. Shivnath Singh of the Services is another case in point; in 1975 he was running barefoot on cinder tracks and the condition of the soles of his feet had to be seen to be believed. It was because of a senior service officer who "ordered" him to run shod that his international status is what it is today. Had a sports medicine doctor been on hand, such an "order" would never have been necessary.

But what is sports medicine? Is it related only to the treatment of injuries sustained during training or in matches, or is its scope wider? It is, in fact, all embracing and covers both physical and psychological areas. There is, therefore, a need to educate all sportsmen and women and the sports-loving public about this science. The handout on Sports Medicine spells out the answer clearly, viz. "Sports medicine is specialized medical knowledge as applicable to various sports. It initially gauges the potential of each individual and narrows down the spheres for which that individual is best suited. The aim, thereafter, is to preserve health, improve performance and render help in acute injuries as well as chronic ailments to which sportsmen are susceptible. Sports medicine is an adjunct to the coaches' efforts. None is entirely dependent on the other. But the combined inter-dependent efforts can lead to perfection". In simple terms this would imply that sports medicine begins from the day a potential sportsman is selected and ends after he or she covers himself/herself with glory.

The responsibility for consulting a sports medicine centre or specialist should be that of the individual on the one hand and the Federation/Association/Club on the other. An individual genuinely interested in sports events which make severe demands on the mind and body like athletics, soccer,

basketball, hockey, tennis, boxing, wrestling, sky-diving and so on, must first check whether he/she is mentally and physically adapted to participate in such an event, e.g. pulse rate, heart, lungs, muscles and so on. Only a specialist trained in sports medicine and to whom all modern aids are available can decide the sphere/s for which he/she is best suited individually. Obviously an individual with a high pulse rate and low lung power will never make a great long distance runner! Having decided his or her suitability through physical and psychological tests, the Federation/Association/Club takes over. Before an individual can be called to a coaching camp for specialized training, it should be mandatory for him or her to be placed in the hands of sports medicine doctors to decide on physical and mental fitness based on the norms for that particular sport. Only then should the individual be permitted to join the camp for intensive coaching. Thereafter, between the coach and the sports medicine specialist, a detailed record should be maintained of the physical and psychological factors, deficiencies and remedies. Should an individual prove to be unfit and the nature of his ailment be such that no improvement is foreseen, he should be dropped without pity or remorse. Thereafter, the same sports medicine doctor must continue with the individual for as long as possible and, in the case of a team, until the end of the competition.

For a sports medicine centre to be successful, three ingredients are necessary, *viz.* dedicated and qualified personnel to man the centre, the latest equipment for carrying out tests and financial backing without which the activities of the centre will come to naught.

To ensure dedicated and qualified personnel, our medical colleges should encourage games like the Grant Medical College, Bombay, did in the days of yore and the Armed Forces Medical College, Pune does today. Knowledge and participation in sports will certainly be a valuable asset to a budding doctor hoping to specialise in sports medicine. Dr. Owen Pinto, one of the convenors of the Bombay Sports Medical Centre Association, was a 400 metre National runner of repute; hence his dedication to sports medicine. Likewise, Otilia Mascarenhas, a Women's hockey player of National repute and a graduate of the AFMC, is now doing a course in sports medicine in Germany. There are many others. As Bombay has taken a lead in this field by creating a Sports Medical Centre, there is no reason why Bombay or Pune University should not have a Chair in sports medicine. There can be no doubt that a medical undergraduate who is a sportsman will have a desirable background to branch out into sports medicine.

Equipment and accommodation are synonymous. Both cost money. But the lack of either should not deter one. We Indians are highly innovative and therefore we must be prepared to resort to improvisation. Where this is not possible, sponsors should be found to provide specialized equipment and accommodation. If sponsors are forthcoming for mountaineering expeditions, sports tournaments, motor racing, tennis grand prix and sailing expeditions, it is certainly possible to get sponsors for a

prime basic like a Sports Medical Centre. Mr. Wankhede, the great sports enthusiast that he is, highlighted the urgent need for funds; if he was able to wheedle out funds for the BCA's prestigious Wankhede Stadium, it is on the cards that he will rise to the occasion for Bombay's Sports Medical Centre. The Chief Minister set the ball rolling with a donation of Rs. 10,001.00. The Nanavati Hospital Trust has donated space and facilities for this project. It is now up to all sportsmen, sports-lovers and sports associations in Bombay to come up with donations. As most sportsmen/women belong to the lower and middle income groups, each should be made to pay an annual fee of, say, Rs 5/- towards this Centre. This would make them eligible for tests and treatment. Associations and Clubs likewise could contribute annually. Eminent specialists could well offer their services as consultants. Only then will such a Centre thrive and be beneficial to individuals, State and Nation.

The Bombay Sports Medical Centre proposes to start its activities on a modest scale with a weekly special OPD to be attended by a Physician, General Surgeon and Orthopaedic Surgeon. Facilities will also be available to render emergency service to individuals injured in the cause of sports. But here lies the problem. Whereas the Nanavati Sports Medical Centre can cater to the suburbs, say from Bandra to Bassein, what happens to sportsmen in South Bombay where most of the action takes place? Could not a similar Centre be established at the JJ or Nair Group of Hospitals? The third service that the new Medical Sports Centre proposes to provide for all sportsmen/women, is an initial check-up with case history at a flat rate; this will be an invaluable source of information to the coach and a lasting record for the individual. And as the facilities expand, there could well be a Sports Medical Journal highlighting various aspects of sports medicine. The success of this centre could well be the beacon for other such centres to be opened throughout the State and Country, e.g. in Pune, Bangalore, Trivandrum, Hyderabad, Madras, Calcutta, Lucknow, Gwalior, Delhi, Jullundur and so on.

Once the inescapability of Sports Medical Centres has been established, it should be made mandatory for every National team playing in international competitions, to have a sports medicine specialist-cum-physiotherapist included. His involvement should commence from the day players are selected as probables and end when the final whistle is blown. It would not be outside the realms of credibility to include the sports medicine specialist in the Selection Committee where he could comment on physical and mental fitness of players not only in the selection of the contingent, but of players for each match.

To conclude, Bombay has taken a big leap forward in the promotion of sports in this great metropolis by opening a Sports Medical Centre, and all those involved deserve to be congratulated. It is hoped that the message will spread throughout the country.

WHY MASANI RESIGNED

Statement to the press by Mr. Masani issued on May 29 on relinquishing charge as the Chairman of the Minorities Commission.

"I give up the Chairmanship of the Minorities Commission on May 31 after a brief period of three months instead of the period of three years for which I had accepted the office on an honorary basis with great zest and the expectation of being able to do something worth while for the country. I do so with a great deal of disappointment and sadness. I do not desire to embarrass the Government for whose leaders I have considerable regard but, in view of the garbled reports which have been appearing in the press mostly from Delhi, it becomes necessary in the public interest to state briefly the reasons for my action.

Most of these reasons have been set out in my letter to the Prime Minister on April 27 on behalf of the entire Commission and in the joint letter of resignation effective May 31 which Professor V. V. John and I wrote to the Prime Minister on May 9. Both these letters have remained unanswered to this day.

THREE ASSURANCES

The basic reason for my action is that three major assurances which were given to my colleagues and myself when we responded to the Government's invitation have not been honoured.

Of these the first was that Government would consult the Commission on all relevant matters concerning the minorities and give considerable weight to our recommendations. On the very first occasion, however, that arose for such consultation the Commission found itself ignored and by-passed in connection with a crucial matter concerning India's largest minority, namely, the Bill which was proposed to be introduced in Parliament to amend the Aligarh Muslim University Act. As far back as March 30, 1978, I had as Chairman of the Commission written to the Education Minister mentioning the Commission's involvement in the matter and expressing the hope that the Commission would be given an opportunity to make their recommendations to the Government before any Bill on this subject was introduced in Parliament. No reply was received to this request. On May 5, 1978, Members of the Commission were surprised to read in the press that the Education Minister had announced in the Lok Sabha that a Bill had been prepared and would be introduced in Parliament within the next few days. There was ample time between March 30 and May 5 to consult the Commission without delaying by a single day the introduction of the Bill.

The second assurance was that the anomaly that existed as a result of the Commission being created by order of the Executive while the Commissioner for Linguistic Minorities was a statutory authority recognised in the Constitution would be

removed at the earliest possible moment by a suitable Amendment to the Constitution by which the Commissioner for Linguistic Minorities would be replaced by the Minorities Commission, which would thus become an independent and permanent statutory body. We were assured that an Amendment to this effect would be introduced in the Budget session of Parliament. We were therefore pained and surprised to find that no such Amendment has been tabled either as part of the Forty-fifth Amendment to the Constitution or otherwise. It is thus clear that the anomaly to which we had objected will continue for some more time to come.

The third assurance was that the Commission would be independent of the Executive of the day and would be master of its own affairs. Quite to the contrary, the Commission's functioning has been hamstrung by its being treated, despite the Commission's requests, as an "attached office" of the Home Ministry. The Commission have found themselves faced at almost every step by some rule or the other which came in the way and the need to secure the sanction of somebody or the other in the Ministry of Home Affairs, the Finance Ministry or the Ministry of Housing. The result is that at the end of three months the Commission find themselves without any office premises or adequate staff. It would almost appear as if in the eyes of the bureaucracy our crime was that we took our duties so seriously. Sad to say, the Commission has in its very infancy been strangled by red tape.

The manner in which the Commission have been trifled with and their needs ignored does not reflect that concern for the Commission's success or for the interests of the minorities which we had been led to expect.

The cumulative effect of these events has been the sad conclusion to which I have come that conditions do not exist in which I can fulfil the tasks I had undertaken three months ago and that my continuing as Chairman of the Commission in these conditions would make me a party to damaging permanently and irretrievably the credibility of the Commission, which I consider to be a matter of some national importance.

Despite these handicaps, the Commission have managed to produce a definitive report on the Aligarh Muslim University (Amendment) Bill and I would like to express my gratitude to my two colleagues and to the Secretary and the miniscule staff of the Commission who have all co-operated with the greatest team spirit in making it possible for the Commission to make this major contribution towards the protection of the cultural life of India's biggest minority.

WORLD NEWS

"A WORLD SPLIT APART"

Cambridge, Mass., June 9 (WP):— Exiled Soviet author Alexander Solzhenitsyn came out of seclusion yesterday to denounce Western Society as similar to the Communist world in its suffocation of spiritual life.

In a bleak and powerful speech at Harvard University's commencement, Mr. Solzhenitsyn called for a "spiritual upsurge". Spiritual life, he said, had been lost in both the West and the East.

The 1970 Nobel Prize winner had come from his rural Vermont home to deliver his first major speech in three years. He entitled it "A World Split Apart," but it could as well have been called "The Decline of the West".

"Truth seldom is pleasant — it is almost invariably bitter", he first said, and he emphasized that he spoke as a friend and not an adversary. Then he launched into a scathing attack on Western society.

Soviet-style communism was "zero and less than zero", he told the Harvard audience, "but should someone ask me whether I would indicate the West such as it is today as a model to my country, frankly I would have to answer negatively. No, I could not recommend your society in its present state as an ideal for the transformation of ours".

He deplored contemporary man's loss of "the concept of a Supreme Complete Entity which used to restrain our passions and our irresponsibility". Materialism, sharp legal maneuvering, a press which invades privacy, "TV stupor" and "intolerable music" all contributed to making the Western way of life less and less a model for the world, he said.

"The forces of evil have begun their decisive offensive, you can feel their pressure, and yet your screens and publications are full of prescribed smiles and raised glasses. What is the joy about?"

"A decline in courage" Mr. Solzhenitsyn said, was the most striking feature of the "spiritual exhaustion" of the West. He went on: "To defend oneself, one must also be ready to die; there is little such readiness in a society raised in the cult of material well-being".

Mr. Solzhenitsyn denounced Western politicians and diplomats for weakness in dealing with Moscow. He attacked the notion that moral criteria should not be applied to politics. "On the contrary", he said, "only moral criteria can help the West against communism's well-planned world strategy".

Kremlin officials, Mr. Solzhenitsyn said, laugh at American "political wizards" for their naivete in world politics.

In a passage that brought some hisses as well as scattered applause during the speech, Mr. Solzhenitsyn criticized the U.S. protest movement against the Vietnam War.

Speaking on the heart of the campus which,

like many others, was the scene of angry student demonstrations against U.S. involvement in Vietnam, Mr. Solzhenitsyn said that Vietnam had been "a warning and an occasion to mobilize the nation's courage". But the anti-war movement "wound up being involved in the betrayal of far eastern nations, in a genocide and in the suffering today imposed on 30 million people there".

Mr. Solzhenitsyn accused the Western press of publishing secrets, making heroes of terrorists and reflecting more clearly than any other part of society the "hastiness and superficiality" that he called "the psychic disease of the 20th century".

The crowd of close to 20,000 graduates, alumni and friends applauded frequently as his long speech was translated into English by Irina Alberti. He was hissed on a few occasions, mostly from the area where the class of '78 was sitting.

After being expelled by Soviet authorities in February 1974 and spending a year in Switzerland, Mr. Solzhenitsyn bought a residence in Cavendish, Vt., where he has lived in almost complete privacy for three years. His wife has said that he writes 13 hours each day.

Yesterday he said that the world was at a major turning point. He ended his speech with an appeal for a renewed sense of obligation to God and society. "No one on earth has any other way left but upward", he said.

Lee Lescaze, in the *International Herald Tribune*,
June 10-11

'DISCS' MAKE PEOPLE TALLER AT NIGHT

The discs in the spinal column, which cause so much agony when displaced, make people taller when asleep and permanently shorter as old age creeps on, a scientific study suggested yesterday.

The discovery, by scientists working for the Arthritis and Rheumatism Council, may one day help to conquer low back pain and arthritis of the back.

Dr. Alice Maroudas, head of the chemistry section of the bone and joint research unit at the London Hospital, and Professor Malcolm Jayson, professor of rheumatology, Manchester University, have been studying the ingenious load-bearing mechanism of intervertebral discs.

They found that people put on a third of an inch in height overnight because the discs, which consist of a network of fibrous material with a soft, semi-fluid core containing water, act as a resilient osmotic sponge.

During the day the discs are subjected to high pressure and water is slowly squeezed out; but at night the water returns, making the spine longer. Weightlessness experienced by astronauts had resulted in their returning from space two inches taller than at blast-off.

As people get older more water is squeezed out during the day. *The Times* London April 29

Reviews

THE GREAT CLASSROOM HOAX And Other Reflections on India's Education by V. V. John, Vikas Publishing House Pvt. Ltd., 1978, 229 pages Rs. 60/-.

The best thing about V. V. John's writing on Indian education is his unwillingness to be taken in by its shams. To this accomplishment we owe the title of his present volume of essays published in recent years, some during the troubled period of the Emergency, some even later.

As the essays, always readable and sometimes thought-provoking, have generally appeared in newspapers, they are unpretentiously journalistic. In education this is an ambiguous attribute, but it has the advantage, essential for India and the times, of providing us with topical criticism by someone as well seasoned in post-secondary education, as he is in the ways of Indian educational administrators, teachers and students.

Mr. John's experience is, however, almost entirely at college and university level. Though one can hardly blame him for this, it does reduce the value of much of his criticism, that only a minute proportion of these essays deals with Indian schools where millions of our children are formed or misformed, and tens of thousands of our teachers operate to the doubtful advantage of their pupils or themselves.

For one basically concerned with educational values (for even where he is flippant he is so concerned) it is a pity that these values should be limited by being exemplified within the comparatively small range of the college or university years. Even the essay that gives its title to the book is a 'hoax' perpetrated in a college classroom. The option to 'attend' does not arise in schools, but is just as worthy of consideration for all the good that school education does our students. When Mr. John alludes to schools in "Ten, Plus Two, Plus Three", it is on the "Plus Two" rather than the "Ten" that he concentrates. In "Search for Identity: A Future for Public Schools" he is wise, sensible and attuned to the country and times when he says: "Public schools could with advantage shed the non-essential features of their traditional functioning, and propose to themselves a new role as model, progressive secondary schools". But these are evidently passing thoughts occasioned by a chance invitation to speak and do not reveal his essential credo.

This credo lies elsewhere in essays that make the present volume provocative: in "Letter to a Vice-Chancellor" published on 12 November, 1976: "What use is peace on the campus if there is nothing else on the campus?"; in "The Great Class-room Hoax: 'The first question should be whether so much class-room lecturing is necessary or useful'"; in "Ten, Plus Two, Plus Three": The real case for the Ten, Plus Two, Plus Three pattern is in the use of the two-year course as a means of raising our academic standards"; and in "The National Policy of Education": "University men are not receivers of instruction, but are people in search of knowledge". Though the range of such observations is limited, the voice is always authentic. Mr. John asks for the right emphasis. Get down to the heart of the matter, he

exhorts a manifestly lethargic public, and find out what it is that is essentially wrong. Put that right, and the rest will follow as night, day.

There are moments in this collection in which V. V. John rises even higher than the enunciation of educational values. Though this is more generally through a timely quotation than by original insight, the sheer relevance of the quotation to us today confers a measure of originality on it. Thus in "A Role for Academics" he quotes Ralph Nader's father: "When I passed the Statue of Liberty, I took it seriously"; and again, in "The Road Not Taken" on our neglect of the essentials of Basic Education, he quotes Plutarch (at second hand through a Unesco publication): "The City is the best teacher". These are occasions — and they are all too rare — when truth is seen to be larger than educational truth.

The man who emerges from this book has, for India, unusual qualities. He is obsessed with the need for excellence; he is indignant about waste, more particularly, the waste of time; he is plainly concerned with social justice and with freedom. He is witty, though sometimes alas! also facetious. Yet one may predict with regret that this admirable collection will make small impact on the public to which it is primarily addressed. This is so partly because Mr. John's solutions are not nearly as admirable as his analyses. His advice to the Government on how to ensure acceptance of the three-language formula is a case in point. "No one will be recruited in the service of the Union Government except as a chaprassi (facetious again!) unless he knows two Indian languages and a world language". His point is taken: no incentive to learning in India is as effective as the promise of good employment. But Mr. John's advice is formally imperfect and practically dubious. What if the candidate chose Malayalam and Oriya as his two Indian languages, and Spanish or Russian as his world language? Such a choice would meet Mr. John's requirements, but would do the student and India little good. As English is the only world language that is economically profitable in India, Mr. John ought to call one more bluff, avoid the claptrap of 'world language' and opt forthrightly for English ... The second reason why this book will make a smaller impact than its wisdom deserves is that, for the times, Mr. John has the wrong tone of voice. His occasional facetiousness apart, he is urbane and liberal. He belongs to an age, the forties, in which this tone of voice was generally understood and liked. It no longer is. And so, one more readable book will remain more or less unread.

MURIEL WASI

"THE AMENDMENT — CONSPIRACY OR REVOLUTION" by Rajeev Dhavan. PP. 148. Wheeler Publishing, 1978, Allahabad.

Rajeev Dhavan in "The Amendment — Conspiracy or Revolution" is in a dilemma. While he condemns the 'moral ineptitude' of the 42nd Amendment, he is oddly enough neutral about its constitutional validity.

The book itself is brief (148 pp) with illustrative cartoons and highly priced at Rs. 35/-. It is

aimed at the layman and sets out to fill a lacuna on work on this topic. But Dhavan's style, though non-legal, is somewhat exaggerated. It contains numerous careless errors, seems hastily written and lacks in-depth analysis. What is extremely useful, however, are the Appendices — an apt aid to further reading.

The first chapter titled 'The Decline and Fall of the Indian Constitution' implies that earlier the Constitution rose to great heights! Issues discussed include whether the Constitution was to provide an enduring framework or merely provide an interstitial arrangement subject to the whims and fancies of the government.

When the Constituent Assembly itself became India's first Parliament in 1950-1951, and enacted the first amendment dealing with agrarian reforms, it was not merely a 'repair job' but the first of a series of Parliament/Judiciary confrontations over the issue of basic features of the Constitution, unamendable by Parliament.

Unfortunately Congress Parliaments chose to amend the Constitution repeatedly to "protect the future of the Indian people" (pp 5). In discussing the amending process (pp 7) Dhavan is not technically correct because he states that an amendment needs the support of 2/3 votes in *both Houses of Parliament* while Act 368 lays down that it must be passed by a 2/3 majority in *each House of Parliament*.

The blame for failing to implement the government's 'socialist' goals cannot be laid at the door of the Supreme Court. A representative sample shows that the Court interfered with only 16.83% of property cases. Nor can the Constitution be blamed. The former led to a venomous attack on judicial independence and the latter culminated in the stifling 42nd Amendment.

Undoubtedly such an Amendment which left the Constitution in shambles could only be passed during the Emergency. Spadework for its justification included the circulation of an "underground document" advocating a Presidential form of government and the appointment of the Congress sponsored Swaran Singh Committee whose major proposals were incorporated into the Amendment. Clearly exposed is the farcical nature of the one "dominant political party sponsored" national debate on these provisions.

In discussing the actual Amendment, Dhavan classifies the 59 clauses under major headings. He seeks to justify the "new secularism and socialism" in the basic philosophy of the constitution. But mere insertion of the word 'secular' in the Preamble cannot suddenly revolutionise the secularistic principles which have always been the basis of our system. Nor can socialism be ushered in when the Right to Property remains a Fundamental Right.

Once and for all the supremacy of Directive Principles over "each" Fundamental Right is established. Dhavan does not bring out sufficiently the damage caused thereby on our enjoyment of Rights or Parliament's right to amend any part of the Constitution without any challenge from the law courts. Other draconian features include Art. 31-D on anti-national activities and the concept of Fundamental

Duties. The latter are sought to be justified by the author on the basis of Hindu and Gandhian philosophy. Fortunately both these clauses have been deleted by the Janata Government.

The attack on the judiciary culminated in the curtailment of the powers of the High Courts, creation of a system of tribunals outside the courts and the appointment of a different kind of judges by the government. Not satisfied with the declaration of Emergency on non-existent grounds, the Congress Government sought to have the right to declare 'partial' Emergency in any part of the country!

The Centre's right to send Armed Forces to any State without the latter's consent seriously upset the Federal balance.

Dhavan presumes that before the Supreme Court ruling on the Golak Nath and Keshavananda cases Parliament had the uncontrolled power to amend the Constitution (pp 79). In fact judicial review has always been the basis of our Constitutional process. The amendment made Parliament the plaything of the Executive — its privileges were non-existent and quorum restrictions were inapplicable.

One cannot agree with Dhavan's "two ways of looking at the amendment" (pp 81). It only assumes "ominous proportions" and was certainly no "pick me up" for the Constitution. A rotten egg cannot be rotten in parts, it must be dispensed with totally.

An excellent overview of the manner in which Parliament kow-towed to the Executive is given in the Chapter "Parliament's Lame Duck Session." (Unfortunately its quality is marred by incorrect footnotes at the end). It clearly reveals the undue haste with which the amendment was propelled into law. It was introduced into the Lok Sabha — October 25, 1976 — became law December 18, 1976 and the pusillanimity of most congressmen in the face of a 'grim Executive'. The stance of individuals like Krishna Kant and P. G. Mavlinkar and the speeches made stand out as oases in a barren wasteland. The voting on the Bill in the Lok Sabha was 366 to 4 and in the Rajya Sabha 196 to 0.

One of the major promises made by the Janata Party in its election manifesto was the deletion of the 42nd Amendment completely. In practice politics has really caught up with the Amendment. That the 42nd Amendment is useful to any government in power cannot be denied — And the Janata Party's 1/3 strength in the Rajya Sabha precludes the passing of any Amendment not acceptable to the major opposition.

Piecemeal attempts to remedy the damage done have been made through the 43rd and 44th Amendment Bills. Contrary to what Dhavan says (pp 123) it was the 44th and not the 43rd Amendment Bill which sought the deletion of Art. 31-D dealing with anti-national activities. The recently introduced 45th Amendment Bill turns the wheel a full circle. But it is unlikely that the unrepentant major opposition belonging to the Indira Congress will agree to proposals like Referendum and enumeration of the Constitution's basic features.

There is nothing 'revolutionary' about the

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WAGE INCOME & PRICE POLICY

(Continued from page 4)

Ministers had also made declarations to that effect. If bonus is deferred wage, why should it be denied to them, they argued, when their wages fell short of the living wage standard and when many of them who were doing work of a nature similar to that done by others were getting it. The argument is irresistible. The Group has not dealt with it. It is on that basis that workers covered by the Bonus Act have secured a minimum bonus even from concerns making losses.

The Group has rejected the demand with a bland argument stated as follows: "Logically, bonus related to profit... is suitable only in industries producing for the market in reasonably competitive conditions. It is not suitable in the case of organised activities, industrial or others where the profit motive does not operate at all or where the profits are induced, influenced or otherwise affected by public policy and largely used for the community welfare. Thus, it is unsuitable in government services and similar activities, including the Railways, Posts and Telegraphs, public utilities, financial and other institutions". It is difficult to accept this argument if bonus is deferred wage. If bonus is denied, compensatory benefits in the form of wages or other amenities must be provided to those whom it is denied. The privileges enjoyed by them such as leave over and above those enjoyed by workers getting bonus can be taken into consideration in computing the benefits to be provided. To deny bonus without some such compensation is contrary to the requirements of social justice.

The Group is aware of the fact that "fairly large numbers" of workers in Railways, Posts and Telegraphs and Ordnance factories "are engaged in activities closely similar to those in industry in the private and public sectors". They at least should have been held entitled to bonus, but the only recommendation made in their case is that where their real wages are found to be clearly out of line" with wages of similar workers, corrections should be made. A Pay Committee is suggested for the purpose. This will give little consolation to the workers concerned.

On the general issue of bonus, the Group has suggested its substitution in course of time, by long term benefits like retirement pensions and unemployment relief to those who become temporarily unemployed due to a closure. But a variety of retirement benefits, like gratuity and provident fund and even pension in some cases, are already available to workers. And what workers need very badly in the course of their service is ready cash. That is why bonus is so attractive to them. Improvement in wages might have attracted them. But the Group has not suggested it. In effect its suggestion is: "we recommend the continuance of the existing system" on the ground that "the bonus system has become a part of the industrial way of life in India", and that "it will not be practicable to give it up until the economy reaches a higher level of productivity and well-being". This verdict of the Group will disappoint all those who were eagerly looking forward to it to recommend the abolition of bonus.

The recommendations about prices are of a routine nature. The importance of "stabilisation of the cost of living" is accepted, but the usual mea-

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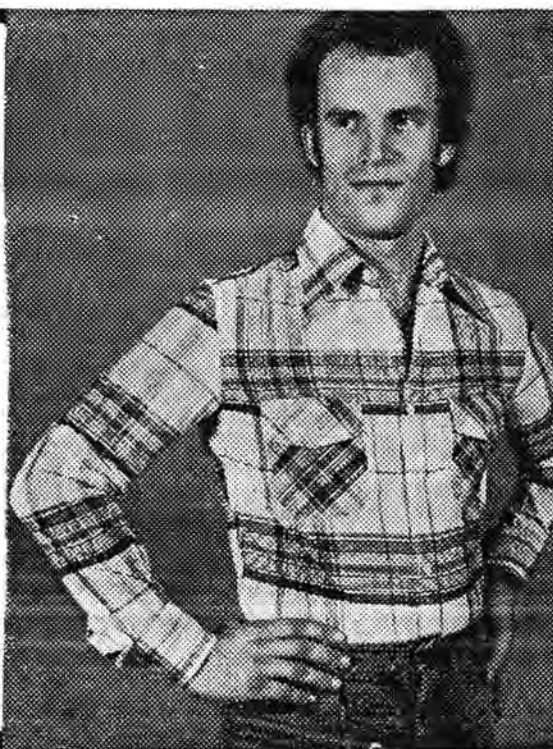
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STRANGLED BY RED TAPE

(Continued from page 1)

Prof. John added: "In a joint letter with the Chairman of the Commission, I have already tendered my resignation from membership of the Commission. I wish to add that I feel more strongly on the points I have raised in the present letter than on what has been stated in our joint letter."

It was therefore a matter for some surprise when Prof. John issued a public denial that he had resigned, even though Mr. Masani had never said that he had done so. As a highly respected member of the academic profession, Prof. John might have honestly felt that the resignation had not become effective in the absence of its formal acceptance by Government, but he did not say so. According to a report in the *Hindustan Times* of June 4, Prof. John had sought to play the role of a good samaritan. In a reference to the goodwill efforts of Prof. John, Mr. Masani observed in the course of his reply to a question put to him by *Sunday* weekly that the "accord bid" was really efforts by the bureaucrats to *samjhao* (mollify) Prof. John "with platonic assurances which I found utterly unconvincing" when Prof. John tried to induce Mr. Masani to "desist from the course on which we had decided." The effort was to persuade Mr. Masani to address yet one more letter to the Prime Minister.

Editorials across the country have applauded Mr. Masani. New Delhi's *Hindustan Times* observed on June 1: "One can only congratulate Mr. Masani for his decision to resign rather than cling to office to which he could do no justice. The message for the Government is clear: it cannot take all men for granted."

The *Times of India* of May 31 took up the three issues which had impelled Mr. Masani to resign and felt that "the government which had held out the Commission's formation as evidence of its intent to give the minorities — all minorities — a fair deal, owes it to the public to explain what went wrong and why". Commenting specifically on Government's failure to consult the Commission on the Aligarh Muslim University Bill, the editorial wondered whether Government's failure to consult the Commission was because it was afraid that the latter might make recommendations which were more radical and more acceptable to the Muslims than it was prepared to carry out?

For the *Indian Express* of May 31 Masani's was a "justified protest". "Few developments have showed so clearly," said the editorial, "why public confidence in the Janata Government in New Delhi is being steadily eroded than the manner in which the Minorities Commission ... has been treated. Mr. Minoo Masani merits high praise for resigning from the Commission on the issue. Such principled behaviour is required of men in public life..."

The *Statesman* also of May 31 drew attention to the Government's rejection of a suggestion made by the Janata Working Committee that the Commission's recommendations "shall be binding on the Government". Pointing out how the initial objections to a non-Muslim Chairman had disappeared, the editorial commented: "Mr. Masani's clarification that he would not operate as an arm of the

executive open to official direction and influence and that the Commission would function like an Ombudsman with quasi-judicial powers is responsible for removing fears and winning minority support."

Whatever is done now, the credibility of the Minorities Commission has been badly damaged by Government's behaviour. And, as Mr. Masani put it "the Commission has in its very infancy been strangled by red tape". Perhaps this might be the right moment to go back to what the Janata Party had promised in its Election Manifesto in March 1977, viz., the setting up of a Civil Rights Commission. As a writer put it in a recent article in the *Indian Express* of June 6: "What the imperatives of social justice demand at present is a comprehensive and powerful Civil Rights Commission... to ensure that the non-justiciable goals set forth in the Constitution in its chapter on Directive Principles of State Policy are vigorously pursued, besides safeguarding the rights specifically laid down for the disadvantaged section of the population". In other words, a statutory body that protects the civil rights of all citizens irrespective of caste, creed or community.

A TOUCH OF CLASS (Contd. from page 3)

Kapoor or a Satyajit Ray gives us a classic, the upstarts in the industry move all out to ensure that moviegoers' tastes do not improve.

Satyam Shivam Sundaram is not a classic. That is so, not because Raj Kapoor is incapable of producing one, but because he had to walk the tight rope of fashioning a thing of art with an eye on the box office. This explains the veritable forest of bosoms and the various states of (un)dress in which Zeenat Aman appears.

And yet, both sex and love are delicately portrayed without offarding the senses.

A boy falls in love with a voice and half a face. When the other half is revealed he refuses to accept it as the same person. He believes a beautiful voice must be encased in a beautiful body? This is basically the theme spread over 17 reels. And that is my complaint. Raj Kapoor should reduce the length of his movies.

Joker failed at the Box Office, though it can hold its own with the best from the West. SSS too might fail at the Box Office. But that is more a reflection on the average filmgoer than on Raj Kapoor.

Recommended viewing for readers of *Freedom First*!

THE AMENDMENT (Contd. from page 12)

Amendment. We are merely reaping the "political whirlwind" it left behind. It is a representative result of the political culture of our leaders. And the culmination of a series of attempts to destroy the base of the Constitution. No Janata-led compromise can really solve the problem.

The book evokes mixed reactions. But one can recommend it, if for nothing else, for the fact that there is a generally readable work available on a topic which contributed to the political upheaval of 1977 and will test the credentials of the Janata Government in the days to come.

NAWAZ MODY

Letter

Any student of world affairs may well begin to wonder whether democracies are running out of good leadership and what are the causes for such a happening. Jimmy Carter's first year in office has been a damp squib. His energy programme is in shambles and he is being asked to soft-pedal the human rights issue. U.K. is rapidly becoming a third rate nation whilst France narrowly missed going 'communist'. So far as India is concerned the Janata government has totally failed on the socio-economic front.

The greatest failure of most democracies appears to be on the economic front. Falling growth rates, rising unemployment and increasing numbers of strikes, lockouts and lay-offs are the order of the day. But is this state of affairs not to be expected? Politicians in all democracies are mostly drawn from the field of law. A few decades back this was a desirable state of affairs but not any longer. Today what is needed is effective management of the social and economic fronts. What one needs are "managerial/technocrat" politicians capable of understanding, diagnosing and solving problems and not politicians interested in rules, regulations and passing of laws.

HOMEYAR JAL TAVARIA

WAGE, INCOME & PRICE POLICY (Continued from page 13)

asures suggested again of increased agricultural production and extension of the public distribution system and the like are not likely to prove more effective than before. Thus prices will remain free and non-wage incomes will also remain free.

On this point the only labour member of the Group, Mr. A. N. Buch has made a suggestion which is bold and in conformity with the task that was entrusted to the Group. He has suggested a ceiling of Rs. 2000/- a month on all incomes, wages and non-wages earned and unearned. The figure suggested by Mr. Buch can be regarded as illustrative. What is important is the acceptance of the principle that without a ceiling on income, a wages, income and price policy will have little meaning. The Group has suggested a ceiling of Rs. 6000 a month on wage income. It has however expressed the view that "the threat of a limit on income will be a disincentive to work and enterprise". With the expression of that view the Group had practically negated the suggestions that it has made on the issue of a ceiling on incomes.

As stated earlier some of the recommendations made by the Group are useful including those made towards the end about social security, pensions and housing. But on the whole it has failed to tackle the main problem that it should have tackled, namely, the problem of redistribution of the national income. The way that it is distributed at present, is at the root of the poverty and the misery of the people. What is needed is therefore a massive transfer of income from a small minority at the top to the large majority at the bottom. It is a pity that the Group did not pay any attention to this basic problem of the national economy.

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

—Tennyson

"The civil servant in New Delhi today has taken up his own motto: UNCTAD — Under No Circumstances Take Any Decision."

— N.C. in *Mainstream*, quoted in *The Statesman*, April 2, 1978

"Chief Ministers cannot fight political plotting and poverty at the same time."

— *The Economist*, March 27, 1978

"There seem to be a number of Christopher Columboes setting out from the United States to discover Africa for the first time. It's been there for a long time."

— British Prime Minister James Callaghan quoted in *The Times of India*, June 2, 1978

"Sycophancy need not be imposed; it can be self-imposed."

— *The National Herald*, quoted in the *Statesman*, May 21, 1978

"I am a reactionary because I refuse to be a hypocrite. But only a self-confessed reactionary can be a revolutionary."

— Subramaniam Swamy, *India Today*, June 1-15, 1978

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"You can always find 2,000 people in Egypt to be ministers. But you can find only 10 or 15 to be newspapermen."

— Mohammed Heikal in the *Herald Tribune*, May 31, 1978

"It is a Joke to call Cuba nonaligned."

— Jimmy Carter in *Time*, June 5, 1978

"If there was oppression during the 19 months of the Emergency, there is depression today."

— Rajmohan Gandhi, *Himmat*

"I am not in politics just because I like being an MP."

— Margaret Thatcher, *The Times*, May 10, 1978

"I spent the whole day in Washington and nobody asked me to resign."

— Menahem Begin, *The Guardian*, May 8, 1978

"Bhakti in religion may be a road to salvation of the soul. But in politics Bhakti or hero-worship is a sure road to degradation and to eventual dictatorship."

— Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, quoted by H. R. Khanna, Chairman, Low Commission, in the *Statesman*, May 3, 1978

"In the constitutions of some countries there is no Opposition. In the Soviet Union, Opposition ended in 1922".

—Leonid Zamiatin, former chief of *Tass* and member of the Soviet Communist Party central committee, quoted in *The Statesman*, May 21, 1978

"I ceased to be a man, an individual, after I became Prime Minister."

— Morarji Desai, quoted in the *Indian Express*, June 9, 1978

"The theologian may indulge the pleasing task of describing Religion as she descended from Heaven, arrayed in her native purity. A more melancholy duty is imposed on the historian. He must discover the inevitable mixture of error and corruption which she contracted in long residence upon earth, among a weak and degenerate race of beings."

— *The Times*, London, March 23, 1978