

THE CULTURAL VACUUM

NISSIM EZEKIEL

COMMENTING on the fact that India has the highest road accident rate in the world, a local newspaper wrote recently, "There is simply no **culture** of proper driving in our big cities."

It is the same in our small cities and towns, along the highways and even in rural areas. There are reports every day of buses and trucks overturning or falling off into ditches or crashing against a single vehicle moving in the opposite direction on a road otherwise deserted.

Use of the word **culture** in the quoted comment is a reminder of a truth generally overlooked in India. It is associated with religion, literature and the arts, not with mundane matters such as overtaking only on the proper side or walking on the pavements, or not spitting in public.

In all those matters and in a million others, it is a question of culture.

Analyses of Indian political issues have necessarily to be offered first of all in political terms. But their cultural sources as well as implications are also relevant. One may go further. Political points of view without cultural associations are futile.

What, then, needs most urgently and emphatically to be said about the present discouraging state of

Indian political life? It is that the formal functioning of the democratic machinery lacks the spirit of a democratic culture.

No utopian ideal is being demanded here, only a minimum set of inter-related values, practised with some care and commitment. What we find in their place is a base of communalism, within which is a mix of feudal attitudes, regressive social practices and ritualistic conduct. The modern super-structure is naturally very shaky, and crumbles whenever the base is challenged, as it often is, by contemporary needs.

For example, candidates for elections representing even national parties cannot be chosen without reference to their religious and ethnic roots. These must be the same as the constituency's.

At the next stage, after the elections, the successful representatives of the people take little or no interest in the problems of the people. They are concerned almost exclusively with the advancement of their own interests. Whatever their politics may be, which is a different matter, their culture is more or less the same. It has little room for independent thinking, a sense of service, organisational competence and initiative.

The result: failures in implementation, as they are compla-

cently called. From the work of small committees in sports clubs to policy-making institutions for the nation, the same kind of ineffectiveness and sometimes breakdown is observable. This is surely because our culture does not teach us how to cope with modern problems in today's world. It specialises, so to speak, in a different brand of wisdom.

In our education, to put that notion in one specific context, the **Guru-Shishya** model is no longer operative, while the teacher-student one is a mere formality. Efforts to revive the old system are exercises in futility. Similarly, efforts to put life into the new relationship, which is indispensable, seldom succeed. That is why, from primary schools to post-graduate university departments we have the externals without the creativity of true knowledge.

Some years ago an Indian journal of notable intellectuality brought out a special issue on the theme of "Waste". All the contributors were agreed on one point, whatever their main area of concern: as a people we have not the same attitude to public property and resources as we have to our own. In other words, our culture is private and personal.

We need to extend our traditional culture into the domain of public life, and I don't mean Westernisation. I mean an organic growth, a new flowering without loss of identity and roots.

A VARIETY OF COMMENT

K. S. VENKATESWARAN

1. COURAGEOUS STAND

EVEN those whose sympathies in the current imbroglio over the Falklands Islands are entirely with the British will be hard put to deny that the role played by the BBC in covering the crisis has been in the best of traditions. Small wonder, therefore, that the spirited defence of the Corporation's Chairman, Mr. George Howard, in the face of official expressions of dissatisfaction over BBC's coverage in recent weeks has been received with wide popular acclaim.

In retrospect, Mr. Howard's courageous stand and his exposition of it are neither surprising nor unprecedented. One recalls the shining example set by BBC's first Director-General, John Reith, over three-quarters of a century ago, when the Corporation, then still in its infancy, faced a not dissimilar situation.

The circumstances at that time were no less exceptional. The 1926 General Strike, which had just broken out, had begun to cause considerable alarm and hesitancy in government circles. Predictably, attempts were made to enlist the services of the BBC in propagating the official viewpoint.

Winston Churchill, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, argued that "it was monstrous not to use such an instrument to the best possible advantage". Reith, however, thought differently. "I told him", he wrote in his diary, "that I was not going to have that at all."

It is a tribute as much to the healthy restraint of successive British governments as it is to Reith's singular steadfastness and courage that not once has the BBC's right to editorial decision-making been breached or its autonomy and independence compromised.

2. JUDICIAL ACTIVISM

WITH the latest spate of orders handed down by the Supreme Court on the application of some activist groups in Bombay, the controversial governmental plan of clearing the city of unauthorised hutments seems to have come full circle.

Much as one tries to appreciate the concern that has apparently actuated the efforts of these activist groups to stall, at all costs and in all circumstances, the belated governmental move to make the city more habitable, one finds it difficult to discern any rational basis for the excessively rigid posture they have adopted in the matter.

When the clearance operations were first mooted last year, and the authorities swooped on the unauthorised pavement dwellers in a swift move during the monsoon, uprooting these pitiable souls in the most heartless fashion, the activists were doubtless justified in their crusade against such savagery. Their action then in approaching the courts and seeking a temporary injunction against further demolitions was as reasonable as it was humane.

Not so now, when the authorities have gone out of their way to take due precautions with a view to ensuring that the clearance operations conform as nearly as possible to the requirements of the law. These include serving of sufficient notice on the illegal occupants of public land, thereby providing a reasonable opportunity for the trespassers to move elsewhere on their own.

Viewed against this background, the vigorous opposition emanating from the activist groups is both meaningless and disquieting. No less disturbing are the orders passed by the Supreme Court which, though conceived in good intentions, are nevertheless bound to set a bad precedent.

Perhaps the anonymous judge who has been quoted in the infamous Questionnaire of the Law Commission, wasn't cynical when he reportedly reacted to the earlier judgment of the Supreme Court thus: "Under what law are the trespassers entitled to alternative accommodation? What will judges do if trespassers set up shanties in the spacious lawns of the Court or their houses?"

Equally pertinent seems the suggestion advanced by one correspondent in a national newspaper that if the civil rights groups and their sympathisers are so moved with concern for the hutment-dwellers, they should, for a beginning, adopt one pavement-family each to reside with them in their own houses.

Altruism, like charity, begins at home, doesn't it?

3. AMNESTY ON UGANDA

UGANDA under Milton Obote does not seem to be very different from Uganda under Idi Amin, if reports of the human rights situation in that country are anything to go by. According to detailed accounts of widespread killings and torture of civilians by the Ugandan army, received by Amnesty International recently, the extensive violations of human rights

include extra-legal executions, torture and murder of people in detention, and abductions.

Apart from liquidation *en masse* of detainees in the Makindye military barracks in Kampala and in the Katabi barracks in Entebbe, AI has received information about some specific cases of individual persecution. J. Mawange, for example, was a laboratory technician at Mulago Hospital before he was arrested in April last and beaten to death at Kigo prison, south of Kampala; so were at least two others, both civilians who incurred the wrath of the army.

Overcrowding and starvation of prisoners constituted yet another disturbing feature of the Ugandan penal regime.

In the opinion of AI, the government of Uganda had "failed to ensure respect for constitutional safeguards providing for detainees to be named, to have access to lawyers and relatives, for review of detentions by an independent tribunal and for trial or release within a reasonable period.

A searing indictment, indeed.

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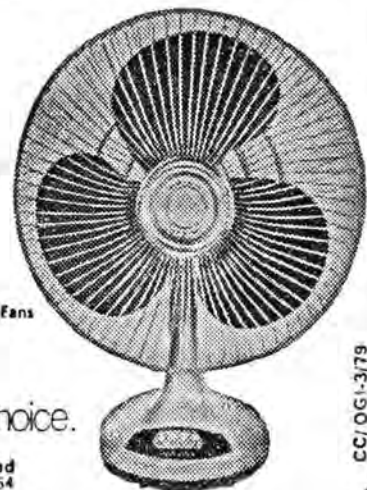
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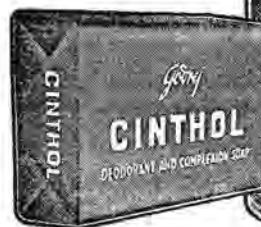
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WHY CAN'T THE WEST SEE THIS IS NO TIME TO SMILE ?

ALEXANDER SOLZHENITSYN

SWITCH on a television set in the West, leaf through any magazine or newspaper, and all you will see is bright smiles, from government leaders down to the man in the street.

Each day marks a shrinking of the island that is the western world: it is under the threat of missiles, rocked by the devilish spiral of inflation, with each of its peaceful steps shaken by bomb explosions. The world is rolling joyfully towards an abyss but the West keeps smiling. And these smiles are a habit learned in the earliest youthful years to conform with the West's social code.

American youth is expected always to respond "OK", to amuse itself all the time. Whoever formulates doubts or evinces concern is promptly called a misfit or vicious. The ferocious desire to appear happy at all times humiliates and undermines humanity.

As to us, in the East, the inertia of accumulated suffering over decades had freed us of that falsely joyful air. In the face of the camera, our faces remain the way they are in real life — downcast.

At every moment, at least one country somewhere is falling under the tooth of totalitarianism. But without understanding its horrible nature, without trying to roll it back, all that one does is send to those countries television crews to shoot films of the blood, sweat and tears to offer us afterwards a show in our comfortable sitting rooms.

Television producers — like the Dutch in El Salvador — are sending their cameramen not to elucidate the truth in all its breadth or pin down the threat hanging over their own civilization, but — as American networks did in Vietnam — to show in a tendentious and unilateral manner that one must not support the governments which are on the losing side and stuffed with faults anyhow.

Why don't they also send cameramen to Nicaragua to shoot films of the Sandinist pressures against Indians? But they are not allowed to do so.

Easily resigned to the situation, they go to those countries which are accessible. There, they portray each error and slightest mishap as a scandal.

One must indeed feel sorry for these governments — and 40 of them have already been swallowed — which are destined to become victims of the communists: sapped by totalitarian cliques, confronted with terror, they have to tread the path of refined democracy or face accusations that it is they and not the terrorists who are to be blamed. These accusations are made

by news media of the western world which, instead of acting like allies of those countries, is pushing them overboard into the water to let them drown.

Today, communism's triumphant advance appears with special clarity in Central America. After having yielded without resistance Cuba (and then, through Cuba's intervention, Angola and Ethiopia), after having supplied the Sandinists with money and American moral support, one may be given permission to ask other countries — Honduras and Guatemala for example — to undertake honourable negotiations with cheaters.

Thus, row after row, American pacifists are rising and marshalling their troops once again, not feeling on their shoulders the weight of Indo-China which has been so stupidly lost: no interference please, above all, don't allow a single American adviser to take a gun into the jungle! It is too early to intervene! And in this way they will hold back their government, prevent it from acting, and will retreat until, one day soon, the communists will reach the boundary of Texas.

And I can already hear their shouts: "Too late now. We cannot mobilize American youth any more. We must surrender!"

What a stroke of luck it would have been for France and Britain if there were television crews operating in 1918! Trotsky would certainly not have allowed them to take films of his army. Their cameras would never have caught him busy crushing the inhabitants of Iaroslavl or executing without trial workers mutinying in the Ijevsk and Votkinsk factories.

Rather the film crews would have rushed to Denikine and Koltschak (two leading white army commanders during the Russian civil war), and how passionately would they have brought to evidence their least anti-democratic action. Their reporting would have promptly appeased Western consciences by showing them that it was necessary not to help, but to betray, their war allies.

For years the communist regime has spared no effort to hide from our people (and the West) the true march of events in the year 1917-1922. It has succeeded completely. In the Soviet Union people know better the history of the early nineteenth than the twentieth century.

This atmosphere of profound incomprehension surrounding our revolution explains the success in the United States of a film like *Reds*. Soon, Soviet film director Bonrartshouk will exercise his talent on the

same subject and transfer — as he has promised — the hesitant and defenceless crowd massed in front of the Winter Palace into an irresistible attack of 10,000 soldiers who were not there in 1917.

The West wrongly believes that the present-day Soviet Union is a continuation of ancient Russia, while in fact the communists are eroding and destroying it. Observers have failed to see the complete rupture with all religious, cultural and national traditions and the physical extermination of millions of those who embodied them. In the 1920s the name of Russia was pronounced only with contempt or hatred, and any positive nuance led to a prompt arrest. This was the time echoing with the words of a Soviet poet:

"We have shot Russia in its big bottom
So that walking over its body,
shall rise Communism-Messiah...."

Since then, Russian culture has received a mortal wound. Will it ever rise again? As to the Russian people, as demonstrated by Western demographers, it has moved into a phase of biological degeneracy. Within a century, or perhaps even sooner, it will be diminished by one half and dissolve itself and almost vanish from the face of the earth. And this development appears irreversible.

In this respect how can one fail to admire the courage of a Carillo and a Berlinguer. They are "opposed" to the Soviet socialist model. As if Korea, China and Cuba had produced another model. There have been some 40 cases like that, and all of them apparently were not sufficiently Marxist.

Let the Eurocommunists sacrifice an additional 15 million people, build two more socialist models which all future critics, alas, will find insufficiently Marxist. (Is not the communist Manifesto clear enough about the nature of Marxism?) What is the difference of the two novel communist models? For the Italian communists the October coup d'etat, 65 years later, has stopped being the guiding spirit. For the Spaniards, it still remains so.

This coup was carried out by gangsters who from the early Leninist days deprived our people of all their rights and later seized the peasants' land (though according to the revolutionary fable they gave land to the peasants). They have turned a wealthy country into a hungry and miserable country by exterminating tens of millions of peasants. If Carillo and Berlinguer were honest they would have long cursed the October coup and erased from their party the dishonest communist label.

I would like to tell western youth, aware of the vices of their countries' social systems but also of the true nature of communism, and who are honestly searching for a "third path", to build their future. I would like to tell them that I have found a number

of failings in the Western system, above all of monopolies. This system has lost some of its features that characterize genuine and responsible freedom as it was originally conceived: the thirst for riches and pleasure has gone beyond any ethical measure.

Western governments are mostly run not by those who have elected them but by occult forces. Senseless capitalists are feeding with their own hands the communist monster for their and the whole world's ruin.

In the future it will be our task to determine a third, fourth or perhaps fifth road and aim at strengthening spiritual foundations of society, disregarding unsavoury economic combinations.

Yet present-day dangers have become so pressing that we do not have enough time left to determine the new directions. The conquering mouth of the second road is wide open to tear off our head here and now. One has to find time to beat it back without yielding to fear.

Things will be even more dangerous if Soviet communists make peace with the Chinese. Warning I can already be seen. If it came to pass, nothing would stand in their way.

Times, May 11, 1982

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✓ THE MIDDLE-EAST IN FLAMES

RASHMI TANEJA

UNTIL the fall of Khorramshahr, the second largest port in Iran, the war in the Persian Gulf had dragged on for several months in the southern Iranian Province of Khuzestan. It was called the "forgotten war" because of the virtual black-out of news from the battlefield. The protracted Iran-Iraq conflict, which has reached its climax with the Iranian victory along with the crisis in Lebanon, may provide the sparks that threaten to detonate the entire Middle Eastern area.

The reasons for attacking Iran now seem befuddled in the minds of the Iraqi populace. Iraq's ostensible reason for starting the war in September 1980, was to establish sovereignty over the Shatt-al-Arab Waterway and to recover the small enclaves near the Iraqi border annexed by the Shah. The real reason for the onslaught on Iran was to overthrow Ayatollah Khomeini, and thereby forestall any Iranian attempt at subversion within Iraq.

The Shiite Moslems who constitute more than half the Iraqi population posed a threat to the Iraqi authorities. President Saddam Hussein and his associates belong to the rival Sunni sect. The Shiite clergy in Iran have been clamouring for the overthrow of all Sunni leaders and their replacement by those of the Shiite persuasion.

For Iraq, the cost of the war has been high both in financial and human terms. At least 30,000 are known to have died, 35,000 taken prisoner. There has been a substantial reduction in her oil output. Saddam Hussein, leader of the Ba'ath Party, who once vied with President Assad of Syria for the leadership of the Arab world, is now out on a limb. His sworn resolve to overthrow Khomeini has boomeranged.

If anything, the war has consolidated the hold of the Islamic clergy in Teheran. The Iraqi leader's fatal blunder was to attack a revolution.

The declaration by Iraq of a unilateral ceasefire is a sign of the unpopularity of the conflict at home and the demoralised state of the army. Doubts have been raised about the President's future. The Iranian leaders have demanded his removal as a pre-condition for ending the war. Reports, as yet unconfirmed, indicate that Hussein has resigned or been ousted.

Given the unpredictability of the Iranian fundamentalist clergy, it seems doubtful that they will be satisfied by the mere concession of their demands. The malevolent **Mullahs** have threatened to export their revolution, *sui generis*, to Iraq as well as to the neighbouring Arab states who have sided with Iraq.

Recent Iranian victories have sent shock waves through these moderate Gulf countries, all of whom have sizable Shi'ite minorities. These oil-rich Sunni-ruled states in the Arabian peninsula are distinctly nervous. Each time the Ayatollah roars, a **frisson** passes through the Gulf States.

Although flushed with petro-dollars, the tiny sheikhdoms have enfeebled military defences which would crumble in the face of internal subversion or external aggression. Only last December, 70 men were arrested on charges of insurrection in Bahrain, instigated by the revolutionary regime of Teheran.

These conservative countries who have footed Iraq's war bill of \$30 billion, now have qualms about too close an alliance with Iraq. Last year, Saudi Arabia and the Gulf States of Kuwait, Qatar, Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates formed the Gulf Co-operation Council to work out a joint policy approach towards the new menace in the area. Saudi Arabia, the largest and richest oil-producing nation, can do little but inveigh against "the deadly enemy of Islam" and the "symbol of the devil".

Kuwait, situated at the mouth of the Shatt-al-Arab waterway, finds itself particularly exposed. On several occasions the conflict has ricocheted into Kuwait, when oil installations have been attacked by Iranian Jets.

These moderate Arab nations have regarded Iraq as a bulwark against the swelling torrent of Islamic fundamentalism. If Iraq were to fall, they would be powerless to resist.

The Gulf rulers are eagerly turning to Egypt for their security. Ostracised by the Arab world for signing the peace treaty with Israel, Egypt is now being courted by Iraq and Saudi Arabia. Militarily strong, Egypt is perhaps the only power, they feel, which could stem the Iranian advance.

President Hosni Mubarak has responded favourably by stressing that Gulf security is "an integral part of our security". He recognises the danger posed by Khomeini. But Mubarak would have to contend with a general reluctance among Egyptians to get embroiled in a distant conflict. Egypt has been supplying arms to Iraq, but the President may hesitate to send a fighting force.

Furthermore, Egypt cannot forget that it was Iraq which led the campaign to isolate her, following the peace treaty with Israel.

The Gulf countries could hardly turn to other Arab nations for protection. The radical states of Syria,

Algeria, South Yemen, Libya and the Palestine Liberation Organisation, members of the Steadfastness Front, have pledged their support to Iran and her "friendly revolution". These "rejectionist" Arabs are firmly opposed to the moderates such as Saudi Arabia, the Gulf States and Jordan, for betraying the Arab cause and soft-peddalling the Palestinian issue with Israel.

Syria, whose good offices have been used to bring pressure to bear on Iran, has not achieved much success. The Syrians are in any case too pre-occupied with repulsing Israeli attacks on their positions in Lebanon to curb Iranian ambitions.

The regime in Teheran, it is clear, is not amenable to any outside pressure. The Iraqi attack in September 1980 could not have come at a more propitious moment for the clergy-dominated regime. The war effort helped to divert attention from the spate of attacks and assassinations of Khomeini loyalists by the urban guerillas and the mass executions by the government of its political opponents.

With the opposition to the government now muted, the **Mullahs** can concentrate on the furtherance of their revolutionary ideals across the border.

How long this revolutionary zeal will last is an open question. The country's economy, which has been shattered by the war, could have a destabilising effect in the long run. For the present, the Islamic clergy is hell-bent on ousting the "Hangman of Iraq and his treasonous clique".

The United States and her European allies have kept out of the conflict altogether. Following the downfall of the Shah, the U.S. lost all its influence in Iran. Any extension of the hostilities could seriously jeopardise oil supplies to the West. With this in view, U.S. Secretary of State Alexander Haig launched in the month of May a new diplomatic initiative in the Middle East which included the resolution of the war.

Haig did not spell out how this would be achieved. Indeed, if past incoherent policies offer any guidelines, the United States will remain hamstrung unless there is a radical change in the American policy of support for Israel. Mr. Haig's weak statements may have dismayed the moderate Arab states. Under present conditions, the latter would not risk a protective American military presence for fear of further aggravating inter-Arab rivalries.

Fecund ground, then, for Soviet intervention in the Gulf? **The Russians have provided arms to both sides.** They have waited a long time for an opportunity to wield greater influence in the strategically important Gulf States. The latter have made discreet overtures to Moscow to curb Iranian expansionism.

Like other powers, the Soviet Union is equally non-plussed by the recondite universe of the **Mullahs**, although Soviet troops lining the northern Iranian borders may be a deterring factor.

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FREEDOM FIRST

Kabul Radio Shows India As "Enemy Of The Afghan People"

RAMA SWARUP

WHAT the factors were which influenced the Government of India in setting up the Indo-Afghan Commission must remain a mystery. South Bloc is fully aware of the fact that the Karmal Government has no popular base, and the most important psychological question is:

Will Afghans ever accept a leadership which has been imposed on them by Soviet troops?

Even Russian diplomats and newsmen in New Delhi informally concede that they have a grisly assignment in Afghanistan and even the most vocal boosting of the Karmal regime cannot legitimise it. More recently, the Soviets are throwing out feelers about broadening the composition of the Kabul government. In preparation for the forthcoming Geneva talks, behind-the-scenes negotiations have included talk about the eventual replacement of the puppet Karmal by a more "sober and responsible Afghan statesman".

Soviet bluster and bluff on Afghanistan did not succeed in New Delhi to quite the extent to which it appears to be succeeding now. There are many theories as to why the new Indian Ambassador in Kabul is offering a better explanation of Soviet "war aims" in Afghanistan. What is being accomplished by the Indian Embassy in Kabul blurring the distinction between Soviet and Indian strategic interests?

Indian lives are being endangered by the role of Kabul Radio in nourishing hatred in the minds of the Afghan people against India. Broadcasts of the All India Radio are being quoted in a clumsy and stupid manner to explain away worsening contradictions and tensions in Soviet-occupied Afghanistan. The Indian Ambassador in Kabul should turn his attention specifically to the causes of the anti-Indian feelings which are spreading in the bazars of Kabul and other Afghan cities. His argument in favour of promoting official Indo-Afghan ties by directly or indirectly justifying Soviet military activity in Afghanistan is not as powerful as he might imagine.

The Soviet Union is not even claiming to make a revolution in Afghanistan: Soviet hopes for a socialist transformation of Afghan society have waned. The Soviets are now using the term "necessity of choice", a term popularised by Henry Kissinger.

It cannot be an attractive fantasy for Indian policy-makers to develop a pro-Soviet tilt to such an extent that the Indian Ambassador in Afghanistan pursues the Soviet line more zealously than the Soviet themselves, whose "realpolitik" approach may lead them to specially disguise their military failure by making overtures such as a proposal for a broad-based national government.

We must tell the Kabul regime in clear terms:

- * India does not feel amused by being described on Kabul's media waves as "a standard bearer of international communism".
- * India has a friendship treaty with the Soviet Union with limited options on either side, but these do not involve any support for Soviet expansionism.
- * There is no linkage between our dealings with the Karmal regime and the entangling political and economic relationships that are the consequences of Soviet ideological hegemony.

The prestigious International Institute of Strategic Studies has made a sober appraisal of the significance of the Soviet-imposed Kabul Government:

1. The Karmal government has failed to improve its popularity.
2. It has accomplished little to show its ability to control or run Afghanistan.
3. Its political concessions have not produced the desired results.
4. The Soviet military activities have not met with success which would improve prospects for the regime's future.
5. The Karmal regime is "without a base of domestic political support", and armed opposition remains "active".

As a review of major strategic developments in Afghanistan, the analysis is likely to have considerable influence on those who were hitherto impressed by the Karmal regime's professions of socialist legality.

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Western Peace Movements Influenced By The KGB

SHANTI SAROOP BANSAL

THE Soviet intelligence service KGB exerts a direct influence on and provides capital for Western European peace movements via the economic contributions that are channelled through the contacts of Soviet agents. This is maintained by former KGB Major Stanislav Levchenko who now has been granted political asylum in the U.S.

The Soviet leadership has — in close co-operation with the KGB and the military intelligence service GRU — worked out a strategy in detail for how the struggle in Western Europe against NATO's planned deployment of medium-range missiles is to be supported with cash amounts and inspiration from Moscow.

In addition to actions against the youth of the schools, described by Denmark's Communist Youth organization in a so-called "Catalog of Ideas for the Peace Struggle", disinformation is also to be used on the Soviet model.

A West German newspaper recently received a letter, (apparently) written by NATO Secretary General Joseph Luns to U.S. Secretary of State Haig in Washington. The letter, which was a counterfeit, had been manufactured by peace groups with the aim of scaring and confusing the German public. The Danish peace movement, including the Communist Youth Organization and the Co-operation Committee for Peace and Security is operating on the same lines.

The fight for peace is bound to be a fight against Imperialism and the U.S. as well, it is said in the Catalog.

The Catalog also raises the question of how the peace committees can be developed. The answer runs as follows:— Several local peace committees have been bogged down in long discussions of rules, and of whether they should be affiliated to the Co-operation Committee or not. There is only one advice. Drop these discussions. Let practice show which one of the national committees is best in uniting the peace forces and in fighting the military buildup.

"A way in which people can be made interested in the first general meeting of a peace group is 'the leatherneck action', described in more detail in the third section. When a group of American leathernecks have made an assault on active students in the school

council and on popular teachers, people are invited to the first meeting of a new group which is to fight against foreign troops on Danish territory and against compromises for armament."

Various happenings can be carried out at the same time, for instance by declaring the school in a state of emergency.

"People are asked over the loudspeaker installation to seek cover in air raid shelters, special newscasts are retransmitted, rooms for special subjects are locked up, etc."

The peace groups are recommended to use NATO's own material against NATO.

"It can in fact be profitable to use some of NATO's own propaganda material," it is said. "People can thereby learn to argue against it, and it is often so foolish that a more thorough reading of it will lead to the opposite of what was intended. Such material can be requested from the Defense Information and Welfare Service."

The Catalog also includes advice as to how one can get American military uniforms.

"Pants and a jacket can be obtained at a total price of 90-120 kroner and can be bought at the American Surplus store. The leadership of the Communist Youth organization in Copenhagen has procured a couple of uniforms which can be borrowed."

The Communist Catalog — with its many instructions for production of terror, fear, chaos, shock and confusion (to use the catalog's own words) among youth of the schools — finished with these words: "Have a good time."

Uffe Thorndal, Chairman of the Progress Party's group in parliament, wants that the Soviet contributions to Danish peace movements be brought to light.

In letters to Minister of Foreign Affairs Kjeld Olesen and Minister of Justice Ole Espersen, Mr. Thorndal refers to information from former KGB Major Stanislav Levchenko who has confirmed that KGB grants economic support to the "most radical circles" in the movements. He asked the two Ministers to make public the knowledge they may have concerning the economic basis of the peace movement.

BOOK REVIEW

POVERTY: *An Interdisciplinary Approach.* Editors: B. Sarveswara Rao and V. N. Deshpande. Madras Institute of Development Studies, Somaiya Publications, Bombay. Pages 296. Rs. 125.

THIS book brings together papers read in three workshops at various centres in the South during 1974, 1975 and 1976. The delegates were mainly from the South. A substantial summary of the discussions following the presentation of the papers has been provided. There is also an evaluation of the workshops by Mr. C. T. Kurien, Director of the Madras Institute of Development Studies, and an Epilogue by one of the editors, Mr. V. N. Deshpande. The whole enterprise was in co-operation with the Indian Council of Social Science Research.

In addition to Economics, the disciplines represented are Philosophy, Anthropology, Geography, Sociology, Psychology and Nutrition.

The three major section headings are: Who are the Poor? Regional Planning for Attack Against Poverty, and Indicators of Rural Levels of Living.

In his Evaluation, Mr. Kurien makes the following incidental but not insignificant observation:

"... not all participants had interest in and competence for inter-disciplinary discussions. The comment of one of the participants that there was a spirit of a 'bus-man's holiday' was probably meant in good humour, but certainly there was a lot of late-coming and early-leaving. . . . And some of those who observed discipline did not hide the fact that they were bored. A more careful selection of participants must be done if there are to be future meetings for inter-disciplinary dialogues."

Even the grim subject of Poverty, it seems, does not prevent our inter-disciplinary Conference participants from being indisciplined or bored. The choice of delegates was careful enough, judging from the notes on them inevitably included in the Conference report.

It is less important that the workshops were dominated by economists or that some disciplines were not represented. It is the spirit that matters at such meetings, not some utopian parity of interests. Dr. Kurien points out that there was considerable preparatory work and ample notice was given to the selected paper readers. In spite of this, some were late and others withdrew "at the last minute".

Some of those who wrote the papers, and presumably submitted them in time, "did it more as an obligation to be discharged than as a creative exercise of academic effort".

Papers were submitted to the participants in advance of the workshop dates, but many turned up without reading them. Mr. Kurien is right in commenting that these were not marginal features of the workshops but reflect the general lack of discipline and responsibility in our academic community.

The specialist reader is likely to agree with the official evaluation of the papers collected in this book. None of them makes a "path-breaking contribution". Some are good, "though perhaps not remarkable". What was achieved was "inter-disciplinary width but not inter-disciplinary depth".

The general reader, on the other hand, (which means the non-economist), will certainly understand better the complexity of the answers to the question Who are the Poor? He will benefit, unquestionably, from acquaintance with the problems of Regional Planning for Attack Against Poverty.

The three Statements of the Participating Social Scientists, which appear at the end of each section, along with the Summary of Discussions, is likely to broaden his perspectives and intensify his concern with Poverty. If he doesn't have it already, in some degree, he will not read the book in the first place. The reviewer recommends it from that point of view.

The editors of *Poverty* and Mr. C. T. Kurien of the Madras Institute of Development Studies can only be commended for a singularly valiant effort in the circumstances.

SHANKAR RAJ

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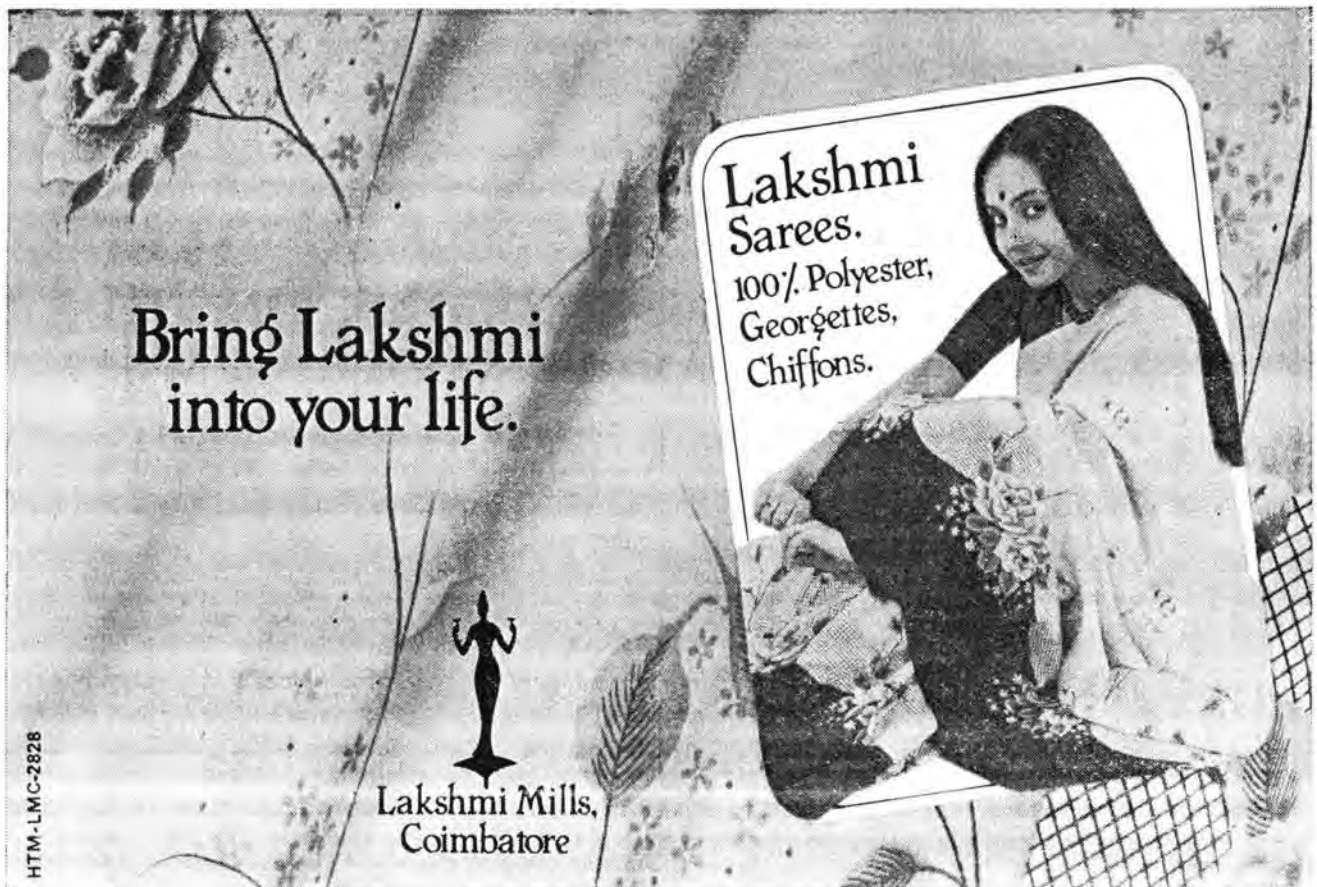
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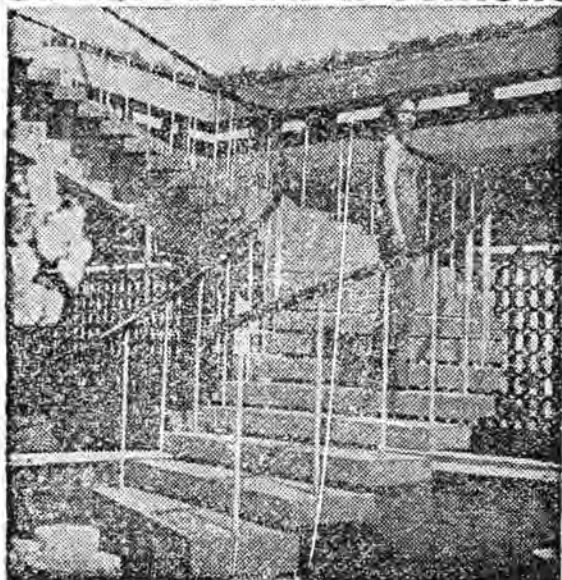
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India's silence on Afghanistan and its recognition of Kampuchea are among the prices it has had to pay for Soviet backing of its own dubious causes, such as its claim to the whole of divided Kashmir.
—*The Economist*, March 27.

The man who is above butter is beyond argument.
—*Encounter*, July 1981.

Socialism has become a kind of shop-talk for intellectuals, for those who refuse to take account of the facts.
—*L'Après-socialisme*, Grasset, 1980.

I take it to be a general rule that in any one country at any one time there are rarely more than a dozen minds capable of understanding the Soviet phenomenon and of translating what they know into politically usable terms.
—*Encounter*, July 1981

In the Soviet Union people know better the history of the early nineteenth century than the twentieth century.
—Alexander Solzhenitsyn in *The Times* (London), May 4.

No matter how extravagant the First Lady is she cannot be extravagant enough for forty-eight million Philipinos.
—Imelda Marcos quoted in the *Guardian*, May 11.

I am a frail woman but do not know why BJP and Marxist leaders are after me.
—Mrs. Indira Gandhi quoted in *Indian Express*, May 6.

It was Czechoslovakia — in the heart of Europe — which Chamberlain described as a small far-away country of which Britain knew little after a century and a half of fighting on the borders of India.
—Henry Kissinger at the Royal Institute of International Affairs, (London) on May 10.

Mrs. Gandhi appears to be under a self-sustaining spell of inevitability.
—K. R. Sunder Rajan in the *Sunday Observer* (Bombay), May 16.