

A QUARTERLY OF LIBERAL IDEAS

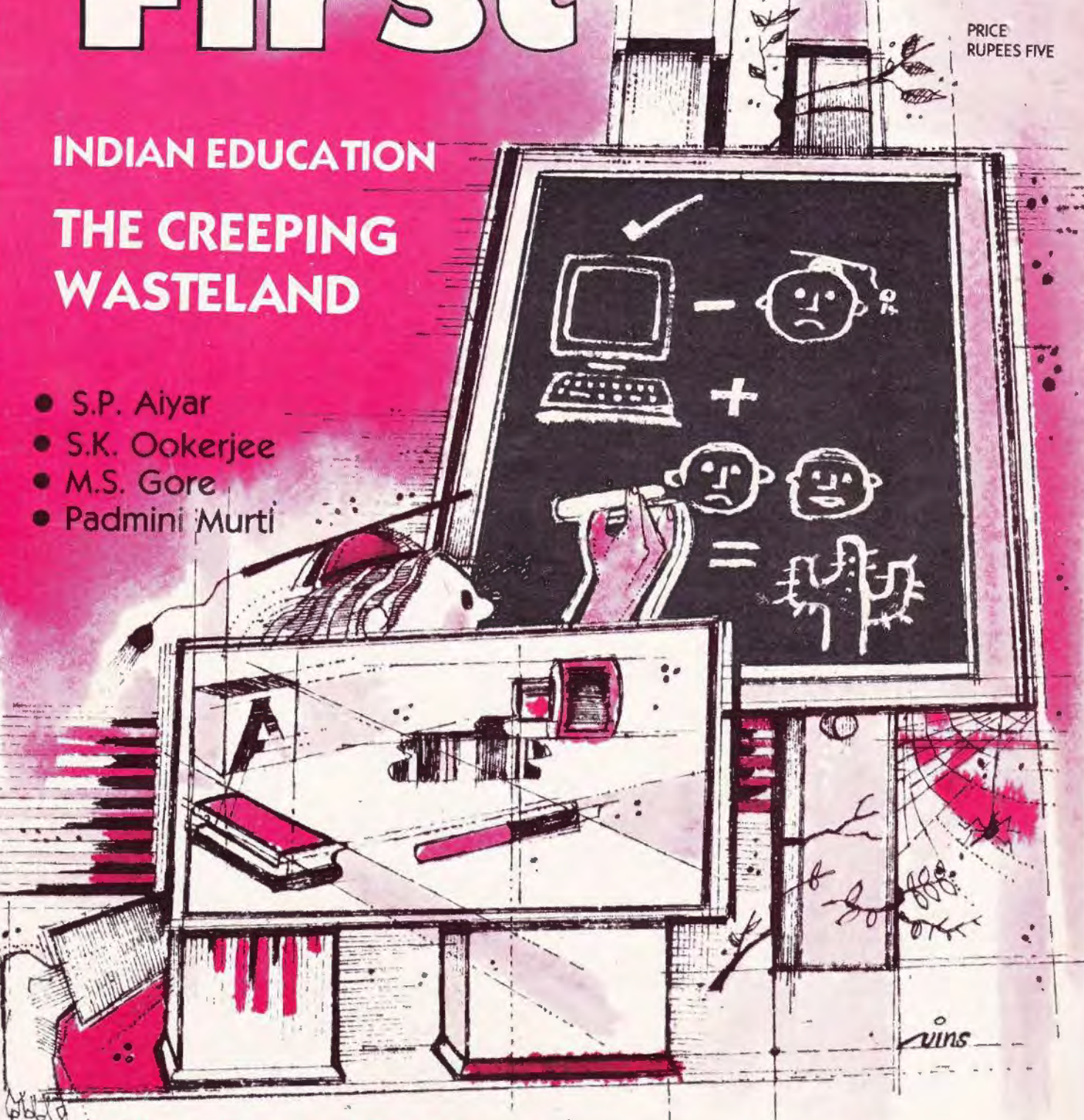
Freedom First

July 1986
No. 390

PRICE
RUPEES FIVE

INDIAN EDUCATION THE CREEPING WASTELAND

- S.P. Aiyar
- S.K. Ookerjee
- M.S. Gore
- Padmini Murti



Raids on Personal Freedom • Minoo Masani • M.R. Pai

Memories of Yusuf Meherally — Bertram Wolfe

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Freedom First

A Quarterly of Liberal Ideas

July 1986
No. 390
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Dear Reader,

With this issue *Freedom First* enters its 35th year of continuous publication, except for a period of six months during the dark days of the Emergency when it was battling the Censor for its right to publish uncensored. The victory of *Freedom First* in the Bombay High Court is now a matter of history.

We too decided to 'keep up with the Joneses' by giving this 34-year journal a face-lift with the help of modern technology – our bit to prepare for the 21st century! We hope the new look will find favour with our readers.

We begin a new column by Mr. Bhanu Pratap Singh – *The Rural Perspective*. Bhanu Babu, as he is known to many of us, is himself a farmer. He was, readers will recall, Union Minister for Agriculture in the Janata Government. We could not have had a better person to write on agrarian India.

Yusuf Meherally was a great son of India, a democratic socialist with a heart of gold. By honouring his memory, we honour ourselves.

The symposium on education which we carry in this issue could not, unfortunately, comment on the new education policy adopted by Parliament. After unsuccessfully scouring Bombay's book shops and the department of education at Mantralaya, we wrote to the Minister for Human Resource Development for a copy. As is usual in such cases, there was no reply.

We now have a copy thanks to Mr. H. M. Patel M.P. We hope to carry an analysis of the new policy in October.

The column "The Masani Viewpoint" is based on Mr. Masani's column in the *Statesman* whose permission we gratefully acknowledge.

The Editors

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With Many Voices

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

Benazir personifies a new brand of militant Pakistani nationalism.
Abdul Hafeez Pirzada,
India Today,
May 15.

The Eurowimps who condemn American counter-terrorist activities remind me of the impotent man who, unable to have sex, offers his abstinence as proof of his high moral character.

Alfred N. Smith,
The Economist,
May 3.

Give me Hollywood for six months,
and I'll rule the world.

Josef Stalin quoted in the
National Review
April 11, 1986

Is it the prerogative only of Prime Ministers and their minions to read the law to journalists? Shouldn't the latter be returning the compliment?

M.V.Kamath, *The Times of India*, May 18.

"God's Ten Commandments contain (in German) 279 words and the American declaration of independence 300. The European community's ordinance on the import of caramel sweets has exactly 25,911."

Quoted by K.P. Joseph,
The Times of India,
May 15.

Mr. Deng is not immortal, and he is 82 this year. Once he has gone to meet Marx, how can anybody be sure that China's modernisation will survive its maker?

The Economist,
May 31.

"Mr. (Rajiv) Gandhi has become a voluntary prisoner of minority communalism. The situation can only get worse for him. But he deserves no sympathy for his wanton despotism."

Sunder Rajan, *The Sunday Observer*, May 11.

You have done a lot to strengthen the Congress and there is still a lot for the youth of the country to learn from you.
Rajiv Gandhi to Jagjivan Ram,
Mid-Day,
April, 15.

We are not yet self-sufficient in foodgrains, if need and not effective demand is the criterion for judging.
M.L. Dantwala, *The Economic Scene*
April 1986.

It must be nice for Mrs. Thatcher to know that if all goes wrong she can go and stay with Reagan.

A Cartoon in *The Spectator*,
March, '86.

"Women are half the world's population, they do two-thirds of the world's work hours, but receive one-tenth of the world's income and own less than one-hundredth of the world's property."

The Lawyers Collective, April 1986.

Self-reliance does not mean we manufacture each and every nut and bolt.
Rajiv Gandhi in *Mid day*,
April 15.

"...Mr. Rajiv Gandhi is showing himself to be less interested in healing communal wounds than inflaming them, less interested in ending communal division than using them for partisan ends...."

A.S. Abraham,
The Times of India,
May 9.

Of Cabbages and Kings

Lex et Juris, The Law Magazine

Though liberal minded individuals have identified the philosophy of liberalism with the development of constitutional law and the legal system, yet not all of them are avid readers of the literature of the law. It is not often that one can read the tomes of law. The twists and turns of lengthy judgements are beyond the depths of most of us poor humans. Yet where would have Indian Liberalism been without the study of law and jurisprudence? The great names of Liberalism in India, Ranade, Pherozeshah, Sapru, Sivaswami Aiyar, are also great names in law.

It is in keeping with the time that Maneck Daver and Mahesh Jethmalani have brought out *Lex et Juris, The Law Magazine*. While we have coloured glossies on politics, business, culture and society, we have had nothing readable on law. *Lex et Juris* fills a void in the world of Indian journalism and judging by its first issue, only he who wants to be obtusely ignorant of public affairs can afford to miss this journal.

Ex-Chief Justice Chandrachud has some pertinent *obiter dicta* on the Shah Bano case. Soli Sorabjee lucidly narrates the different ways by which the Supreme Court has widened the scope of Article 21 and expanded the rights of the citizen. Ram Jethmalani raises the issue of the right of bail of persons accused of spying and wonders whether judicial prejudice will add to the totalitarian powers of the state. The gross delay in the dispensation of speedy justice, thanks to the tardiness in the appointment of the judges, the miserably poor salaries offered to the judges, the delays by the government when it is the litigant, the role of the garrulous judges, the acceptance of entertainment by judges from counsels all certainly distort the dispensation of justice. These are some of the issues that will have to be squarely faced by our members of the bar and bench and H.M. Seervai examines these in a lucid article.

Besides these there are many items of interest and it is to be hoped that this journal will have a wide readership.

— RS

The Arwal Massacre

The massacre at Arwal in the Gaya district of Bihar on April 19, 1986 which killed twenty people peacefully assembled, has once again highlighted the dangers looming large on the Indian social and political scene. Peasant castes that occupied an intermediate social status have now raised themselves, forcibly occupied land that did not belong to them and deny the demands made by the landless and poor peasants for higher wages. By forming private armies and wielding the big stick, by cultivating important people in the law enforcement agency and in the local government, they manage to legalise what is blatantly illegal, intimidate the organisation of peasants demanding higher wages, and abet in the killing of the demonstrators. That the majority of the victims belong to the scheduled castes, of course makes it easy for most others to turn a blind eye to these inhuman, horrible cruelties. Bihar of course is the paradise for these parasites but these examples will not be slow in percolating to other areas. Readers will not have forgotten the massacres of a similar nature which took place recently in Maharashtra, Tamilnadu and Andhra Pradesh.

An Unforgivable Amnesia

The fanfare drummed up by the ruling party and abetted by the state government of Maharashtra and the Centre during the centenary of the Congress has been described as being similar to the vulgar wedding of the new rich among us. This was in shameful contrast to the total national amnesia on the occasion of the 125th birthday of Rabindranath Tagore. Declaring a holiday at the last moment was all the Prime Minister could think of. A few routine programmes on Doordarshan and AIR are no substitute for a reappraisal that is necessary on such occasions.

Contrast the situation in England where

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

— Lewis Carroll



the marginalia of Kipling is ferreted out and reprinted on the occasion of his centenary, besides of course the churning out of books and what Lamb used to describe as *biblia-a-biblia*!

The contrast here is shameful. Here was a man who made an Indian language (Bengali) universally respected, brought to the nation a sense of self-respect and remained a polymath, creative to the last day of his life. Above all from the last decade of the last century, he was continually educating Indians to be self-dependant and not to be blind imitative borrowers of the west. He practised what he preached and remained one of the few universal men of our century. Yet there were no national symposia, no new interpretations, no new programmes in our official media. In short, it appears as though our government did not want us to remember the contribution of this great son of India.

After all, during the Emergency, we saw the degrading spectacle of his great poem nearly choked by the Censors. Not only the governments but the epigeoni of Tagore have betrayed him by not reminding a whole new generation of the Himalayan contribution of this great creative genius.

— RS.

Polluting Our Way To Destruction

Environmentalists have been warning us that the continuous pollution of the atmosphere will bring in a greenhouse effect upon the only planet available to us and make it intolerably warmer. The warnings have been confirmed. It has been established that there has been a gradual destruction of the important ozone layer. This used to screen off the heavy bombardment of ultra violet rays. With the layer disappearing all of us are now exposed to this deadly element and there is an apprehension that cancer of the human skin will be on the increase.

It is predicted that the greenhouse effect will have warmed up the atmos-

phere, spread drought and make sea coasts dangerous. This it does by melting the polar cap. During the last century the level of the sea has gone up by one inch; there will be erosion of sea beaches.

Meanwhile, we in India have done our bit to add to this, for the licensing capacity for two wheelers for 1990 has already been reached and the industries are eager for more production to pollute the air not to speak of an increase in accidents. As the older generation used to shake their heads. 'The Kali Yuga' is fast ripening to destroy the world'

— RS.

Who Cares For Commonsense

While the Government of India recently reaffirmed its commitment to the public sector two other countries one totalitarian (Communist China) and the other a dictatorship (Tanzania) appear to be prepared to face reality.

The Chinese are cautiously proceeding towards privatisation. Lin Shang, an unemployed youth of Beijing is now a manufacturer of crash helmets. When demand exceeded supply, Lin Shang expanded operations — with his government's support. A three-party joint venture has come into being to assist the young Chinese entrepreneur. The three parties are Lin Shang, a Chinese State agency and an American company — the first privately owned company in China which has been allowed to enter into such a joint venture with a foreign company.

Not only is Lin allowed to produce helmets; 75% of its production will be for domestic consumption.

In Tanzania, according to a report in the *Indian Express* of June 12, "hundreds of thousands of hectares of land owned by the agricultural enterprise 'Sisal' have been offered for sale to farmers, private entrepreneurs and foreign companies, due

to accumulated losses."

It will be recalled that last year, Mr. Julius Nyerere confessed that it had been a "great mistake to nationalise everything at once", since the country had neither the personnel nor the technology needed for productive operation.

In sharp contrast democratic India props up even sick units with funds from nationalised banks on the plea that closure would lead to unemployment. What our government refuses to accept is the fact that funding sick units with people's money is not only highly irresponsible but will, in the long run, be a drag on the growth of our economy. A faster economic growth will greatly reduce unemployment in the long run. But who cares for commonsense!

— SVR

Masti Venkatesa Iyengar

With the demise of Masti Venkatesa Iyengar, the world of Indian literature has lost a Nestor. Born in poverty, Masti by sheer dint of hard work, and perseverance reached the highest positions that could be occupied by a Mysorean and this in spite of his aversion to knee-bending or currying favour from anyone.

It can be said that he, more than anyone else was responsible for raising a regional tongue into a powerful language for expressing subtle thoughts, feelings and sensibilities. Some of his stories have a world classic status and they have never been bettered. He experimented in almost all

genres of literature and introduced to a Kannada public the glories of Hafiz, of the stoic philosophy of Marcus Aurelius, of Goethe as well as of the Tamil Vaisnava saints, Tagore and Kalidasa. He was catholic in his tastes but was rooted in the Indian soil.

Those who do not know the language will have to take on trust the statement that with his writing an Indian language reached very great heights in lucidity, urbanity and simplicity. It was the very speech of the most refined and educated of the native Kannadiga. It was he who encouraged and fostered the genius of

other writers, particularly of G.P. Rajaratnam, the great interpreter of Buddhism and of Bendre, the poet.

With not a whiff of egoism or vanity, Masti had to face reversals, not in his beyond days, which were days of penury but in the full maturity of his abilities. His claims in the state service were overlooked and he maintained his dignity by resigning rather than serve in humiliation.

The Chief Minister of Karnataka described Masti as the jewel of Karnataka — he is much more — he is a priceless jewel in the crown of Indian culture.

Sophia Wadia

With the passing away of Mme. Sophia Wadia, the world of Indian letters has lost one of its most steadfast friends and India one of her most distinguished "alien" citizens. Very much like Sister Nivedita, Annie Besant and Mrs. Cousins, she was born in a far off land but chose to make our country her home and got thoroughly nativised. Like the other distinguished women, she brought to this land international sensibilities and educated countless generations regarding the value of the Indian traditions whether it be in philosophy, religion or literature.

Her abiding contribution has been the regeneration of the regional literatures of India by making different regions aware

of the richness of the land and regions by encouraging promising writers, mainly through her columns in the *Aryan Path* and the *Indian Pen*, and above all by organizing conferences both national and international. Writers who would never have had an opportunity to meet fellow writers met them at these meetings. In a sense the Indian PEN was one of the most efficient of the regional associations of the international body. Like Mrs. Besant she had a tremendous vitality and generosity of heart.

Born in Colombia and educated in Paris and New York, she was at home in most international cultures and meetings. Her home was a meeting place not only for

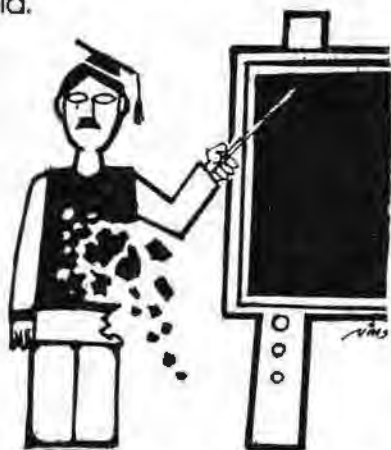
Indian writers but for international celebrities as well.

At a time when Indian writers needed support and encouragement she did single-handedly what our Sahitya Akademis have not done for them — giving them a sense of confidence, cheer and encouragement. Culturally she prepared the country for its sense of a distinct national identity and remained a pioneer in many directions. For instance, in the thirties, she had an international symposium on Gandhi's *Hind Swaraj* in the *Aryan Path*. She was testimony to what a determined individual could do for the cultural regeneration of a country.

Indian Education – The Creeping Wasteland

Recapturing the Lost Spirit of the University

Robert Gaudino wrote some years ago that the most remarkable feature of Indian Education was that the student was untouched by it. He is unable to relate his learning to life. The boredom of the teacher is quickly conveyed to the student and attending lectures is an evil which he would gladly avoid.



Forty years ago as an undergraduate I read with great interest Cardinal Newman's "Idea of a University". It led me on to the writings of others who had written with erudition on the subject. There seemed to be a striking measure of agreement on the aims of education and on what was expected of the University. The University was a retreat from the din and bustle of a work-a-day world and from the strife and conflict of society. Here, scholars could, through research, extend the frontiers of knowledge and critically examine the problems of society. Knowledge had to be related to life and those who went to the university did so not only for the acquisition of knowledge but also to be well-equipped to earn their livelihood.

This image of the university weakened in the rapid changes which followed the Second World War. But looking back at educational ideas as they then prevailed in India it was not as though the functioning of the university was in harmony with its ideals. The defects of the existing system had long been examined especially since the days of Lord Curzon. The structure of the university, its uneasy relationship with the government, the problem of autonomy, maintenance of standards, the examination system, the decision-making

bodies of the university, the determination and relevance of courses of study these and other related problems had received the attention of Committees and Commissions in the British period. During the decades that were to follow many of these problems were compounded, new problems developed, notably, the management of examinations, the politicization of the university and a steady deterioration in the ethics of university administration.

Depressing Picture

When I took to teaching in 1950 the ideas of liberal education still dominated the scene. When I look back on the situation as it then was and reflect on what now exists the differences seem striking. I had been entrusted in the very first year of my teaching with a variety of subjects including the history of the Nizam's dynasty on which there was no text-book. It was a challenging situation. Fortunately, those days there was considerable freedom for the teacher in the classroom. He could recommend the books which he considered most suited to his students. Teaching was a profession into which one entered and not merely a job one had to do. Discussion on matters academic, though not frequent was not unknown in the staff common room. Shoddy text-books and bazaar notes were undoubtedly available but it was not difficult to contrive a situation in which depending on them was unprofitable.

In contrast to this, college education today presents a depressing picture. Student motivation is low and students will not permit any treatment of a subject that is not directly related to the examination. Since question papers are set in a routine manner students know that they can get

through with a minimum of effort by reading the guide books available. The text-books prescribed are unimaginative and the teacher often resorts to the easy way of dictating notes. No skills of communication are required. Premature experimentation with objective-type questions make it unnecessary for the student to read the text-book. The student develops neither analytical power nor writing skills. Indeed, the classroom has become a gigantic conspiracy against the intellect.

Some eight-five years ago Lord Curzon said "a huge system of active but often misdirected effort, over which like some evil phantom, seemed to hover the monstrous and maleficent spirit of *CRAM*". Perhaps the charge of cramming levelled by Lord Curzon, and which is so frequently made today misses one important aspect of the problem. Memory training is important in an examination, as in life, and the ability to reproduce in concise form the main structure of an argument or the essential element in any descriptive account is an asset. Sir Josiah Stamp who has given us some of the most thoughtful addresses on education I know of, has observed: "I believe preparation for examinations may be an important step in the management of the mind if it induces conciseness, arrangement and proportion. Even the despised cramming may have its virtues in practical life for the ability to load up quickly, then unload for the job in hand, and then clean up ready for the next task, may be useful in business, where the thorough-going student, who scorns the cram, and learns as if for eternity, may find the chance has gone by him." The real trouble with the Indian student is that his memory is chaotic and takes into account

S.P. Aiyar

neither precision, nor accuracy nor relevance. If he is a student of History, his dates are often wrong and his quotations inaccurate. A welter of uncoordinated facts are sought to be stored in the mind and unloaded in the examination, often without the discipline of language. He emerges from the operation completely exhausted and convinced that the system is to blame for all his misfortunes.

For the major part of the year, students have practically nothing to do and get 'bored'. A perpetual holiday it has been said is the very definition of hell and young boys and girls in colleges seek new ways of filling their idle hours. The evil consequences of this are seen everywhere and need no elaboration.

Proliferation of Colleges and Universities

Behind this almost tragic development lie several factors of which the most important is the enormous increase in student enrolment in the colleges and universities. In 1950-51 there were only 27 universities and 798 colleges. By 1982-83 these had increased to 140 universities and 5246 colleges. Over 3 million students study in these institutions. The bulk of teaching in India is carried out at the

college level and yet most colleges are poorly equipped. The official report *Challenge of Education - a Policy Perspective* remarks: "Teacher performance is the most crucial input in the field of education - Whatever the policies may be laid down, in the ultimate analysis these have to be interpreted and implemented by teachers, as much through their personal example as through teaching-learning processes"

Yet college managements find getting teachers in various subjects a major problem. Teaching has a low priority among the professions. The government policy of reserving posts for scheduled castes and tribes has further aggravated the situation. Frustration awaits the young aspirant just out of the university. He is appointed temporarily to the post and has to appear successively for interviews for the next four or five years for the same job. The teacher gets confirmed only after the post has been de-reserved and placed in the open category. Salary scales have improved but they are unfortunately linked with an increase in the work load and the teacher is required to take anything upto 24 lectures a week. Further, teachers are required to take an M. Phil or a Ph.D. degree within a specific period of time to get their increment. This has been unfor-

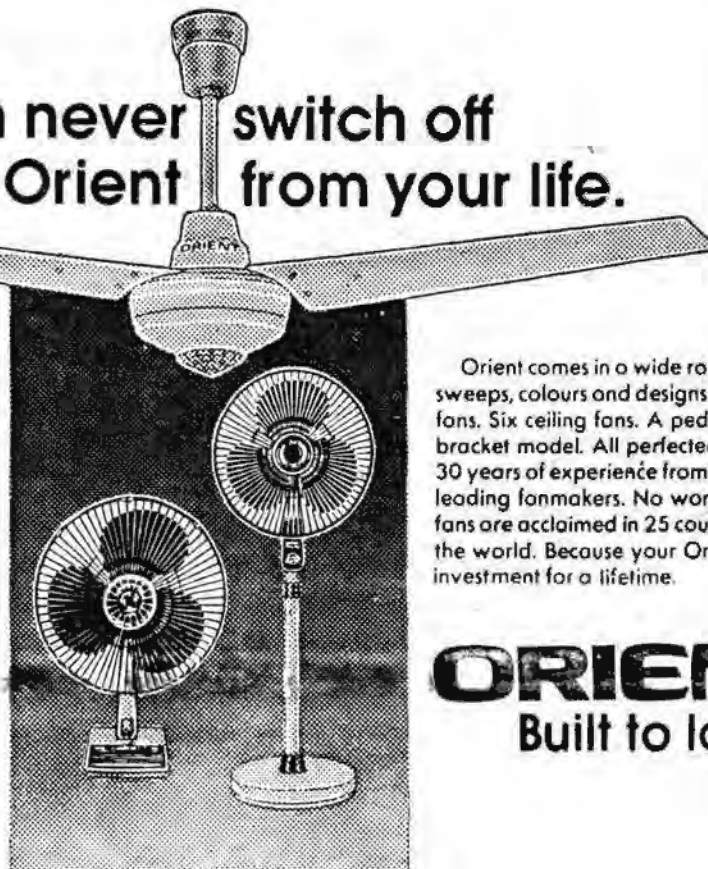
tunate and has contributed in large measure to the poor quality of M. Phil. and Ph.D. programmes. Teachers who find themselves trapped with no certainty in being continued year after year are prevented from putting in their best effort.

Robert Gaudino a perceptive student of the Indian University wrote some years ago that the most remarkable feature of Indian Education was that the student was untouched by it. He has never experienced the adventure of ideas, the excitement that follows the discovery of inter-relations between branches of knowledge. He is unable to relate his learning to life. The boredom of the teacher is quickly conveyed to the student and attending lectures is an evil which he would gladly avoid. The phrase most frequently heard among students is 'bunking lectures'. There is a real crisis in the relationship between teacher and student which is fundamental to all education. In a profound remark Rabindranath Tagore said "a teacher can never truly teach unless he is still learning himself. A lamp can never light another lamp unless it continues to burn its own flame. The teacher who comes to the end of his subject, who has no living traffic with knowledge but merely repeated his lesson to his students can

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only load their minds; he cannot quicken them. Truth not only must inform but must inspire. If the inspiration dies out, and the information only accumulated, then truth loses its infinity".

Degrees and the Rat Race

The expansion of Indian education has far outstripped the economic and industrial development of the country and produced the phenomenon of the educated unemployed and to the steady exodus of engineering and medical graduates to foreign universities. The wastage of resources is alarming. In 1984 all the students who graduated from the Indian Institute of Technology at Madras with Chemical Engineering went to the United States. The rat race for employment within the country has produced a strange paradox. On the one hand degrees are rapidly losing their value and on the other there is a feverish pursuit of additional degrees to improve one's opportunities for employment. In a developing country the degree has a magic appeal and it has been so throughout the history of the Indian uni-

versity. However much policy makers may deprecate the close link between degrees and jobs the logic of the situation is only strengthening the link—the much talked about policy of de-linking jobs and degrees is not likely to reduce the pressure on the existing colleges and universities.

I have mentioned earlier in this article that there was general agreement among educationists at the time of independence. Today, educational thinking presents a jarring and confused world of jangled elements. Controversies abound on every aspect of education. There is no agreement with regard to either the goals of education or the strategies of educational planning. The country is not certain with regard to priorities. For instance whether resources should be diverted to the expansion of higher education or to elementary education and mass literacy programmes. The political will is lacking to take decisions that would antagonise organized pressure groups.

Some Suggestions

The new education policy includes a packaged offer to the country including

vocationalization of education, a core syllabus for the whole country with elements added on according to local needs, extension of the three-language formula, the setting up of model schools in every district of the country and the like. These constitute no more than a tinkering with the system. We are still confronted by the dangerous and tragic spectacle of having the total number of illiterates crossing 500 million by the end of the century and having the largest mass of illiteracy in the world.

In the present stage of the country's development it is necessary not only to diversify courses of study, place some emphasis on vocationalisation and the training of technicians but even more to improve the quality of under-graduate teaching which provides the base for higher education. Students should be equipped to understand critically the social and economic problems of the country and to adapt themselves to the needs of a rapidly changing world. We must, in educational policy seek to recapture the lost spirit of the university.

DR S.P. AIYAR teaches Public Administration in the Department of Politics, Bombay University

We Hate Bloodshed



The other day I was on a panel to select a 'senior college teacher. Three candidates, whose paper qualifications were the most impressive, were called for interview. The first one, who had studied at a very prestigious college, had done the Philosophy of Science for her Master's Degree. Asked about Popper's views, she said she had not studied any particular philosopher but 'only in general'. She had been the secretary of the college philosophy society. Had she read any papers before the society? No, there was no reading of papers during her time because, since the East-West Philosophy Encounter was being held in Bombay, they invited speak-

ers from the Encounter to talk to the students. (The Encounter lasted for a week). The second candidate, who had already lectured in a college, admitted she had not read any of the recommended works on the subject she taught but had relied solely on some of the poisonous mushrooms called 'text-books' that sprout overnight when a new subject is introduced. The third applicant had taken Aristotle as his special paper for the M.A. He did not know even the names of the philosopher's works. How, then, had he studied the philosopher? Only from the teacher's notes. Claiming to be very interested in Metaphysics, he yet, did not know the *meaning* of 'epistemology'. All the three emphatically stated that they had decided to pursue teaching as their life's career.

Our Students Do Not Read

what of the students? They are, naturally, pretty faithful replicas of their gurus. For a number of years I was involved in selecting students from my college to be sent up for final selection as Tata Scholars. The candidates were those who had got the highest marks in their examinations. Even those who answered other questions

quite brightly got stuck when you asked them what books they had recently read. Most of them could not mention either author or title, and those who could, usually mentioned some cheap 'novel' or detective fiction. I do not remember a single classic — either in English or any other language — ever having been mentioned. This in the oldest and one of the most reputed colleges in Bombay. Imagine the situation elsewhere.

We are kind-hearted people
and would dread to cause
any loss, discomfort or pain to
any living creature. And we
are also fond of a great deal
of talk.

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Thirty-six years of graduate and undergraduate teaching has shown me that our students do not read, they do not read because their subjects and their books do not interest them. Because they do not read, they are incapable of critical or original thinking. Because of that they are unable to carry on any serious, academic discussion in class or outside. And because they do not know how to discuss or argue a point, they do not know how to write an answer in an examination, leave alone an essay or a seminar paper. *Challenge of Education: a Policy Perspective* (brought out by the Ministry of Education in August, 1985) bemoans 'rote learning' and the fact that the 'students while away their time for most part of the year' (1.23); but, devoid of academic interest and totally ignorant of the true methods of studying, what else can they do? They can only prepare for the examinations by falling back on their powerful memories, which can function independently of any comprehension and store scraps of 'knowledge' for a short time.

A Vicious Spiral

I am unhappy and ashamed to have to say that much of what I have said above applies to a large number of our teachers too, particularly the younger set. If you think I am being unfair, let me quote from *Challenge of Education*: 'Teaching has become the last choice of the job market. We, therefore, face a paradox of having better books and research but progressively more indifferent teachers' (3.49).

Cause and effect are here inextricably interwoven. The small minority of academically-minded students, who have taken their studies seriously, seeing the bleak landscape and the unchallenging and financially unattractive nature of the profession, do not generally choose to become teachers. Those who fill the vacuum 'mould' their students in their own image. These, in due course, become teachers and the vicious spiral descends a little lower with each generation. Of course there are exceptions, many exceptions, but I am not writing about the exceptions.

Let me make it clear that I am talking about our ordinary Arts and Science Colleges, with which I have been closely connected. The situation in the professional colleges or in the University Departments or Indian Institutes of Technology is probably better, but I am not so confident that it is spectacularly better. The conditions in

the colleges of Law and Commerce are very similar to those in the Arts and Science colleges.

New Education Policy

My question, then, is does the much-advertised New Education Policy offer us any hope of improvement? I can give no definite answer for the simple but surprising reason that, in spite of making every effort, neither the Editor of *Freedom First* nor I have been able to procure the text of the policy that was approved by Parliament more than a month ago. Even important persons in the capital have been contacted, but with no success. I am left, therefore, only with skimpy newspaper reports and *Challenge of Education*, the document on which the new policy is supposed to have been based. One may assume that the New Education Policy does not deviate too sharply from it.

This document is a fairly exhaustive 116-page compendium of the symptoms of the various diseases that have long afflicted our educational set-up. Its diagnosis of the root causes does not go very deep and it is very weak on the therapeutic and remedial front, one is left with the sort of feeling one would have if a doctor were to say, 'This fever has come down; that rash must disappear; we will have to find some extremely powerful drug to bring that diarrhoea under control,' but refuses to write out a prescription. Let me give a few examples.

'The present system of education cannot be improved by marginal changes,' but 'has to be resurrected by fundamental changes in priorities, contents, methodologies and the teaching-learning process will have to undergo a radical transformation. Who can undertake this task and how it might be done are issues which need careful and immediate attention' (4.126). 'Effective steps should be taken to see that only those with scholastic interest or aptitude enter higher education' (4.83). 'Something will have to be done to change the orientation, work-ethic, knowledge and skills of the teachers who will have to function more creatively' (1.29). 'Radical instruments and organisational structures will have to be devised' (1.32).

These are unexceptionable and forceful statements, but like little Oliver, we ask for more. There is nothing more. How or in what direction are these priorities, contents and methodologies, these curricula, textual materials and teaching processes to be radically transformed? What effective steps should be taken to ensure selective admissions? What will we do about

the teachers' orientation *et cetera* and how can their present stereotyped and uninspired drudgery be turned, magically, into creativity? What kind of instruments and structures shall we visualise?

Platitudes Galore

While we wait for our answers, we are told, in advance, that 'unanticipated challenges' will 'necessitate building in an element of flexibility into the policy framework' because 'the detailed scenario of the processes of development in the coming decades is still to be spelt out' and 'the lack of clarity will be one of the more important constraints on educational planning' (4.41). This is like telling a prospective traveller that if he wants to reach his destination, he must take the right road, but, without indicating which the right road is, to tell him that he should be ready to change his course if necessary. Hardly useful directions!

When we least expect it there is a sudden revelation. If the U.G.C. is to play its 'role for upholding standards of education,' says the document (3.32), it 'must be given full support to discharge its statutory function without fear or favour.' There you have it. Without quite realising it we have hit upon perhaps the most infectious and deep-seated virus that causes our sickness — FEAR. It is not that we are entirely ignorant of the kind of medicine or surgery that is required; but medicine is often so bitter and we recoil from shedding blood. Listen to the document: 'Education has a set of beneficiaries who would lose many of their special and unjustified privileges if the education system is changed to secure greater efficiency, equity and objectivity. Should there be a change in the examination system, a lot of people will resent it because the system of private tuitions and coaching shops might become unnecessary and those who benefit from the leakage of papers..... mass copying and other practices will be put to a loss. On the other hand, this will mean much more correction of answer-books, regular class-work and innovative teaching involving considerable preparation. Many teachers will find themselves in difficulties because they will have to adjust to new curricula for which they have not been prepared either by their original training for the job or by experience' (4.25 and 4.26). The document strongly urges the delinking of jobs and degrees, but admits that if this were done 'there will be strong protests' (4.28).

We are Cowards

But we are kind-hearted people and would dread to cause any loss, discomfort or pain to any living creature. And we are also fond of a great deal of talk. So, after talking about fundamental changes, radical transformations and effective steps, we will compromise, make concessions and 'cultivate a supple spine', and things will jog along much the same as they have done since the publication of the Kothari

Commission Report twenty years ago. It is hardly possible for cowards like us to 'help the students to take legitimate pride in the national heritage and feel committed to uphold India's unity and integrity' (4.97). When we have got down to the humble but very basic job of getting our students and our teachers to read good books, to think critically, to indulge in serious discussions and to analyse and develop their ideas in speech and writing (all of which is

what higher education is for), there will be time enough to raise our heads a little higher and contemplate a system of education that 'can imbue people with the knowledge, the sense of purpose and the confidence essential for building a dynamic, vibrant and cohesive nation' (1.2).

PROFESSOR S.K. OOKERJEE recently retired as Professor of Philosophy from the Wilson College, Bombay.

Financing Higher Education

As far as I am aware, no state — whether of socialist or capitalist persuasion — accepts the responsibility of providing nearly no cost or low cost education at the collegiate or university level to all who desire to benefit by it without consideration of merit.

M.S. Gore



The proposition I am going to put forth in this paper is likely to prove controversial. It is likely to be judged as impractical, inequalitarian, anti-poor and anti-democratic. But, since I believe in the democratic process I think I should put it forth and have it discussed. If it is found unacceptable after due consideration it will rightly be discarded.

Very simply put the proposition is in two parts. First, government should not subsidise institutions of higher education — colleges and universities. It should subsidise, where necessary, the deserving but needy students. But, generally, students should meet the full cost of their education at the college and university level.

This proposition is not original. In a different way it was suggested by an esteemed and dear friend of mine, the late Shri J.P. Naik. In still another way — a way I do not approve of — it is now being put into practice by some of the State Governments including our own by allowing private professional colleges to come up on a selective basis.

The Present System

It is necessary that I first give a brief

description of what the present system of financing higher education is. While the pattern of financing varies somewhat from State to State, the general expectation is that the state government should finance higher education in a way that the individual student pays only a part of the total cost of his education. This is true whether we speak of professional colleges or the colleges of arts, science and commerce. The average cost of educating an arts or commerce student over a three year period works out to say Rs.5000-7000. The tuition fees a student is required to pay is approximately the same, but the per student expenditure is higher because of expenses on providing laboratory facilities and laboratory consumables. In the case of engineering colleges the per student cost has been worked out by the Maharashtra government to Rs. 30,000/- over the total period of four years and for a student of medicine the cost has been calculated at Rs. 1,50,000/- for a five year period. The actual fees paid by students of engineering and medicine are not proportionately higher. This means that the more expensive the course of studies you pursue, the greater is the subsidy that government and the colleges between them have to provide.

Subsidising the Well-to-do

The argument is, that education is a right of every young person and it is the duty of the State to provide it at the lowest individual cost. If not free, to the student. This is justified further on the ground that such a policy of financing

education helps the poor and disadvantaged sections of society.

I seriously question this assumption. I would suggest if a survey of parental income were undertaken not more than 30 per cent of the students would be found to be drawn from homes which could be described as lower middle class. Those that really come from "poor" families could not be larger than, say, 5% of the total student population.

If we separate the general colleges of arts, science and commerce from the professional colleges I would expect that the proportion of those who come from lower middle and poor homes would not exceed even 15 per cent of the total.

The fact is that most of the students from really deprived homes do not even complete primary education and only a small percentage of those from such poor families complete secondary school.

These statements are not based on hard data because no income-wise distribution of students is readily available. They should therefore be examined.

Primary Education the Victim

If I am right in the assumption I have made, it means that in the name of the poor and deprived the government and the institutions are really being asked to subsidise in a large measure the education of students from the middle, the upper middle and the rich families. This is particularly likely to be the case when one speaks of students of engineering and medical colleges. I see no justification for

this situation either on grounds of equity or democracy.

At the macro level one effect of this situation is that government is allowing proportionately higher subsidies for the higher education of the already privileged sections of society — sections whose children can cross the barriers of at least two public examinations at the Secondary and Higher Secondary School level. These subsidies are being provided at the cost of expansion and improvement of primary education — particularly in the rural areas. This is being done also at the cost of another important goal — viz., the vocationalisation of higher secondary or the 12 stage of education.

Deleterious Consequences

This has two deleterious consequences. It neglects the claims of the poor for good quality primary education and pushes further back the goal of universal, compulsory primary education. Further, as a result of the neglect of vocationalisation the present mode of allocation of scarce resources leads to a large and increasing number of unmotivated students who rush to general colleges because that seems to be the only way to qualify for employment.

The acceptance of a philosophy of large scale subsidisation of education by the State without imposing any limits on the number or quality of students to general colleges has meant spreading available resources more and more thinly on each institution. In respect of professional colleges, it has compelled the government to permit the starting of "private" or "capitation fee" colleges to cater to the demands of well-to-do students who either do not qualify on grounds of lower percentage of marks scored by them at the qualifying examination or because, unfortunately, they do not fit into the increasingly smaller quota of "open" seats to be filled in without reference to caste or domicile.

The Pattern Elsewhere

As far as I am aware no State — whether of socialist or capitalist persuasion accepts the responsibility of providing nearly no cost or low cost education at the collegiate or university level to all who desire to benefit by it without consideration of merit. The numbers are restricted by some merit criteria and/or the criterion of the ability of the student to pay.

In socialist countries students are chosen on the basis of well defined academic criteria, their number is small and such selected students are given free

education plus a stipend to meet their maintenance costs. In the U.S.A. and in Britain though many universities receive substantial assistance from the State the fees charged are substantially high and the universities have to depend on funds raised from their alumni and the public. Students who are academically capable and in need of assistance are given full or partial remissions in fees or are encouraged to support themselves through campus employment or employment in the community.

It is true that in non-socialist countries students who can afford to pay have an edge over those who are meritorious but poor, in that they have access to the better known institutions of national repute and their chances of being admitted are greater because they do not seek any assistance. On the other hand it is equally true that students from poorer homes rarely miss an opportunity for higher study if they are keen about it and are academically equipped for it because the more flexible pattern of organisation of higher education enables full or part time employed persons to study on a part-time basis.

Governmental Interference

The arguments against the near-total dependence of colleges and universities on government are many. In another paper written as the Prof. A.B. Shah Memorial Lecture I have brought out the undesirable administrative and academic consequences of such dependence. Very briefly stated the administrative implication is that by an inexorable logic government finds itself more and more entangled in the administration of academic institutions. But there are other consequences of their present pattern of governmental assistance. This pattern is characterised by three unstated policy thrusts, viz., that higher education must be available to all irrespective of merit considerations, that in order to make this possible the fees charged by the institutions must be low and that government must make up the deficit or at least subsidise the institutions sufficiently to ensure payment of teachers and other employees of institutions of higher education.

Apart from governmental interference in the administration of institutions it has led occasionally to interference in academic matters such as work load of teachers, the distribution of work between class instruction, laboratory work and field work.

The present pattern of assistance is also undesirable because by making higher education unrealistically cheap it encour-

ages the undeserving and unmotivated to occupy seats and this gives a false picture of how many are really involved in education. It encourages the attitude of social dependence, of seeking something without giving anything in return.

Admissions On Merit Alone

The pattern I would suggest is that in principle every student be charged the full cost of their education. This cost be worked out by the government on the basis of the expenditure incurred by it in its own institutions. The individual institutions be not allowed to charge additional or higher fees nor should they be allowed to collect donations linked with admissions. All admissions to all colleges be made strictly on the basis of merit determined either by the students' performance at the preceding public examinations or on a selection test or on a combination of both. The list of students selected together with the marks secured by them be displayed on the notice boards of the institutions.

Students who can't afford to pay the fees in full or in part should be given low interest loans by the government through public sector banks against sureties to be furnished. The interest can be waived in the case of those who repay the loan in regular instalments after completing their course of studies.

In the case of Backward Class category students, government can decide upon the degree of subsidy to be given depending upon the degree of social and economic disadvantages suffered by the individual student. B.C. students who have come from well-to-do homes may get the benefit of reservations, but not of financial subsidy. They would of course be eligible for loans as other students in the general category.

It should be possible for students to minimize their loan liabilities by i) drawing partially on parental support, ii) supporting themselves through part-time employment, iii) offering to work for a set number of years after graduation in one of several development programmes of government, iv) agreeing to work in the defence forces, v) and participating in adult literacy and such other specific programmes of high national priority.

It may be argued that the new pattern of financing higher education is likely to reduce total enrolment and may render some of the existing institutions non-viable. One answer to this objection may be that the present large number who are on the college register are not necessarily indicative of their interest in education *per*

se as may be seen by the poor attendance in classes or by the percentage of those that would pass without being aided by grace marks, moderation or revaluation of answer books. In fact, despite all these aids only about 30 to 35% of students who appear for an examination manage to pass. One may ask whether our country at its present stage of development can afford the huge wastage of institutional and financial resources involved in such low percentage of passes in any public examination.

Alternative Channels

While one may accept the right of every individual to seek to improve his life chances through education, it may not be possible for a government to provide full time institutional facilities of education for all of them. Most countries – even economically advanced ones – have found it necessary to have an alternative channel of education – whether it goes under the name of community colleges, open universities correspondence courses, or channels for improvement of qualification offered by professional bodies like the Institute of Engineers, Institute of Chartered Accountants, Institute of Cost and Works Accountants. All these channels must be stren-

ghened and it should be possible for students studying in the alternative stream to move into the institutional stream as and when they qualify and or can afford to do so in terms of the demands of time and money made upon them.

Even to-day there are a number of non-viable colleges in non-metropolitan areas in district and sub-divisional towns. The physical, teaching and library facilities available in these institutions should be fully utilized in the expansion and strengthening of national and state level programmes of distance education whether in the form of Open Universities or Correspondence Courses. These programmes require text-book lending services, periodic teacher-contact facilities and self-instruction facilities through audio and video tapes. The colleges located in smaller towns can provide the infrastructure for a programme of reaching out to non-urban areas.

Paying for One's Education

It is assumed that the per student cost of such programmes of distance education will be lower in comparison with the costs of institutional instruction through colleges and universities. But, whatever the

cost, here again the principle of a student paying for his education – whether in the immediate present or in arrears through a system of loans – must be observed.

In a system where student pays fully for his education his motivation will be maintained. In fact, as a paying client he will be more demanding of his teachers and this will help in the process of making colleges more accountable to the clientele and community. This system – where the institution is not subsidised but will charge the full fees from its students – may enable the institutions to provide better instruction and better physical facilities.

This system will make those who can afford it to pay for their education and thus release government funds for subsidising those in need of temporary assistance or for strengthening primary and secondary education which should be the first charge on government expenditure on education.

The individual colleges and universities need no longer be directly accountable to government, though their work will be supervised, coordinated and/or over-viewed through individual university academic authorities and, may be, through associations of universities and the state and cen-

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tral University Grants Commissions. Such developmental assistance as the central and state governments may give to colleges and universities should be channelled through intermediary organizations like the U.G.C. and not doled out directly by departmental bureaucracies. But on the whole such assistance would be smaller and limited to specified goals.

The initiation of such a pattern of financing higher education will involve a major change in policy as well as in the details of day-to-day operation. At the policy level the idea that a student should pay for his higher – i.e., post High School – education would need acceptance and considerable political persuasion. At the operational level the critical area will be the speed and effectiveness with which the programme of individual student assistance can be operated – both in terms of distribution and recovery of loans.

There are today about three million students involved in higher education. Assuming that about half of them will seek financial assistance, the banks will

have to be equipped and ready to cope with the needs of at least a million and a half students at any given time in addition to the effort involved in recovery of loans made in earlier years. This is a large operation. But it need not prove impossible.

When I discussed this proposal with one of the Directors of Higher Education he said that the recovery of loans would be a major problem. I am certain that this problem would be less intractable than the problem of recovery of loans extended through agricultural cooperative societies.

The experience of voluntary bodies and educational trusts which offer such loans has not been an unsatisfactory one though admittedly they are dealing with very small numbers of students.

I should point out that my proposal is different from the present practice of allowing voluntary bodies to start private professional colleges in three vital respects. I am suggesting that all students of all colleges should be admitted on considerations of merit – whether these colleges are private, sectarian or governmental. I

am suggesting that all these colleges should charge the full fees worked out on the basis of actual costs as determined by government or a government constituted body and, further, that these colleges be prevented from accepting any donations linked to admission. The colleges may collect funds from old students or from donors in the community after the admissions are over. In fact the rule that admissions are made only on the basis of merit – subject to rules of Backward Class Reservation – can be enforced and if the list of admitted candidates is required to be notified any student who feels that he has been wrongly deprived of admission in a college of his choice can legitimately seek redressal of his grievance from a duly constituted authority. Under such circumstances the possibility of colleges extorting admission linked donations will be minimized.

PROFESSOR M.S. GORE a distinguished social scientist, recently resigned as Vice-Chancellor, University of Bombay

Text of an address to the Leslie Sawtney Programme

Women's Education – A Perspective

Padmini Murty



The new education policy has evoked much interest in academic and non-academic circles. It is surprising that this much talked about document is as yet unavailable to the general public. But for information gleaned from newspapers one is in the dark about what the new education policy is all about.

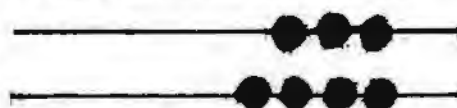
Article 45 of the Constitution directs the State to "endeavour to provide within a period of ten years from the commencement of (this) Constitution free and compulsory education for all children until they complete the age of fourteen years." This was in the year 1950. Against this background of national commitment it

would be instructive to take a look at the progress of women's education.

A Yawning Gap

There is no denying the fact that India has made considerable progress since independence in terms of enrolment figures and development of diverse educational programmes. It has however been unable to meet the nation's requirements in terms of overall coverage and equitable distribution. This is particularly true of women's education. In 1881, for every 1000 boys in school the number of girls receiving instruction was a mere 46. A hundred years later, there were 55 girls for every 100 boys receiving education. The overall literacy figures climbed from 16.67 percent in 1951 to 36.23 percent in 1981. The corresponding male literacy figures stood at 46.9 percent while female literacy figures stagnated at 24.8 percent. A yawning gap exists in male and female literacy levels in rural India (M:40.8 percent and F:18 percent). Urban India presents a similar picture. Here, however, both male and female literacy levels are higher than the overall average (M: 65.8 percent and F: 47.8 percent). Female literacy figures in rural areas varies from

an impressive 64.7 percent in Kerala to a abysmally low 5.4 percent in Rajasthan. In the Hindi speaking states of Bihar, Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh which account for 38 percent of rural families, literacy levels fluctuate between an appalling 8.99 percent and 10.17 percent.



It is time
we realised that
identical strategies
devised for
promoting literacy
among men and women
do not yield
similar results.



Elementary education is the most crucial stage of education spanning the first eight years of schooling. Yet studies reveal that in classes I-V (6-11 years) one out of every three girls is still outside the school. The drop-out rate for girls is very high. Of every 100 girls enrolled in class I, only 30 reach Class V. In classes VI to VIII (11-14 years), only 2 out of 5 girls are in school. At the secondary stage (14-17 years), 12 out of 100 girls are in school. Educational opportunities at this stage are confined to middle and upper middle classes in urban areas and to some extent rural middle class sections. Higher education (17-23 years) is mainly the preserve of the urban middle and upper middle class. Even here women constitute less than a quarter of the total enrolment. The faculty wise enrolment of women in university education shows a large number of them opting for arts, general science, education and medicine. In 1981-82, of every 100 girls enrolled, 56 were in arts, 21 in science, 13 in commerce, 3.6 in medicine and 0.7 in engineering.

Choice Dictated by Men

The phenomenon of women taking courses in arts and humanities limits their occupational choices and chances. There is no denying that these choices are dictated by the actual or expected adult role of women in our society as mothers and wives. Thus the gender based division of labour is recreated in the labour market and even the modern sectors of our economy display the characteristics of patriarchal societies. A 1980 study sponsored by the I.C.S.S.R. noted that industrial training institutes cater to men primarily. The number of women trainees in the engineering section formed only one percent of the total number of students. Women, however, formed a large segment of the trainees in the tailoring and stenography categories. Professional women have tended to concentrate in teaching and medicine. Even here the overwhelming number are concentrated in primary schools. In medicine, women constitute the majority of nursing staff and as doctors they specialise in gynaecology, obstetrics and paediatrics.

Interstate comparison of female enrolment in education indicates the uneven rate of progress. Bihar and Rajasthan have maintained uniformly low performance at all levels. Kerala leads in primary school enrolment, Tamil Nadu and Delhi at the secondary level. In higher education most states have made progress with Delhi and Kerala leading.

These statistics reveal that despite the constitutional directive and provision for free education, the number of girls seeking education increased to any appreciable extent. The drop-out rate is very high. Three-fourths of the girls in India who enrol at the primary stage leave before attaining functional literacy. The high drop-out rate cuts across state boundaries and is a cause of much concern.

Erroneous Notions

Socio-economic reasons have been primarily responsible why girls have not been persuaded to come to school and stay there until the completion of fourteen years. The subordinate status of a daughter in comparison to the son leads to disparity in the education of boys and girls. Female children by custom are expected to look after their brothers and sisters and manage domestic chores while their mothers earn for their families in the fields or elsewhere. During a family crisis such as the mother's illness the entire burden of house work falls on the daughter and she is compelled to discontinue her education.

It is evident that although educational opportunities have widened, the large majority of women have not been able to take advantage of it. It is time we realised that *identical strategies devised for promoting literacy among men and women do not yield similar results*. The reasons for this are not far to seek.

In popular imagination women look after the home and raise children, while men till the land or earn a livelihood through other means. Nothing could be further from the truth. The women's traditional role of looking after the home, bearing and caring for the children is only half the picture. Throughout the third world, women are responsible for half of all agricultural produce, putting in as many or more hours in the fields as men and still managing to wash, mend clothes, carry wood and water, tend to animals, clean the home and look after the old, the sick and the children. The rural woman spends hours each day collecting fuel and fodder from the forests. Deforestation has resulted in women having to go further and further in search of fuel and fodder. For millions of women in India the day begins and ends with the search for water.

The Plight of Rural Women

A study conducted by the Indian Institute of Rural Workers reports that three-fourths women are engaged in farming and non-farming activities in the village. A large proportion of marginal farmers having one hectare of land who constitute 50 percent of peasantry do not cultivate their land because an average annual income of Rs. 1000/- does not make cultivation economically viable. These marginal farmers lease out their land to rich farmers idle away their time and hardly lend a helping hand to women in their domestic work.

Little known facts about India

"As his beard was long and looked like a ribbon he was called Lord Ripon". "Asoka did penance and founded Buddhism". "Four Vedas were written by the Indus valley people". "Asoka invaded Ganganadu". "The founder of the Huns is Mahavir".

These are some of the answers given by students writing the Group II Services (Bachelor's degree standard) examination conducted by the Tamil Nadu Public Service Commission in January 1979. The report was placed on the table of the State Assembly.

On economics and biology some of the answers were equally peculiar.

"Canon was the only person who sounded about taxation. Slavery is a

living creature. Harboursing is an offence committed by a person in a harbour. Juristic person is the President of India".

"Our national bird crow. Teachers' day is celebrated in memory of Jawaharlal Nehru. Vaikkam Veerar is the name given to Rajaji. The fastest bird is the ostrich. Afghanistan and Baluchistan are all in Tamil Nadu. Asoka put Buddha in jail. Buddha was the founder of Jainism", according to examinees taking the Group III services test.

Some of the students wrote that Krushchev killed Gandhiji; Kosygin, President of America; Tata, Birla and Rourkela — lignite mines; Annie Besant shed blood during Nightingale freedom struggle.

The Hindu, May 11

Others migrate to cities in search of employment. Available data indicates that three out of every ten rural households in many developing countries are headed by women. Where remittances from migrant men are low or cannot be relied upon, the women are forced to become family providers. To be rural and poor is a heavy cross for a woman to carry. Another is having to bring up children while doing all sorts of domestic and farm related chores at the same time. To assume the role of the family provider means adding yet another burden on her weary back.

A National Investment

Education in order to make an impact has to bear in mind the distinctive role of women as mothers, nutritionists, health-care workers, home-makers and economic providers. The education of women has an important effect on the well-being of the family. It has rightly been said educate a man you educate a person, educate a woman you educate a family. Education must assist women in devising appropriate technology to lighten their drudgery, help in providing low cost sources of nutritive food for infants and adults. It must make her aware of the importance of nutrition for herself especially during pregnancy and lactation. It is ironic that those who provide life and continuity give themselves less and less. Education should equip women to fight inequality within the home and exploitation outside. It must enlighten women about their legal rights relating to inheritance, marriage and minimum wages. Education must provide women information about their biological and sexual roles, encourage questioning the prevailing idea that in traditional societies men take the decisions and women the consequences. Social attitudes and religious customs that have taken a firm hold over the mind have to be re-examined in the light of the prevailing times, the meaningless have to be discarded and the meaningful preserved. Education should help women in understanding her own contribution to society and enable her take her rightful place in it.

Any programme for improving female literacy must bear in mind that a general plan for education which does not take into account the specific needs of women will fail to yield any result. Socio-economic conditions in the countryside call for flexible hours and curriculum relevant to the needs of women.

DR PADMINI MURTHY teaches political science in the Thane College, Thane, Maharashtra

The Masani Viewpoint

Any Excuse Not to Work

It is not only the Maharashtra Government that has developed a penchant for declaring holidays forty-eight hours in advance. The Prime Minister copied the Maharashtra Government when he told the Lok Sabha the other day, off the cuff, that he was declaring the 125th birth anniversary of Dr. Rabindranath Tagore on 9th May 1986 as a holiday simply because some Member of Parliament had made that silly suggestion. I have great respect for the Poet, whom I had the privilege to meet personally, but does this mean that the way to honour our great men is to sit lazily at home and stop producing for the country? The logic of this action would be that, since India has produced many great sons and daughters who died a century ago, we should now have a holiday for every one of them on his or her 101st, 102nd, 103rd, 104th and 105th anniversary, and so on!

I would like to make a suggestion that 9th December 1986 should be declared a public holiday since, on that day, Rajaji was born 107 years ago. Rajaji, of course, would be the first to denounce the suggestion were he alive! Anyway, let us remove the slogan 'Satyameva Jayate' which our Government violates every day, and replaces it with the slogan 'Any excuse not to work'.

Sauce for The Goose

I was greatly moved by a letter which appeared in the *Indian Express* of 20th April signed by Mr. P.K. Sharma of New Delhi, pointing out that till 1980 Indian diplomats were allowed to marry foreign women after getting the permission of the Union Government but that since 1980 the ban has been made complete and unconditional, with the result that an officer who marries an alien has to resign from the Indian Foreign Service. Evidently, the men in the Ministry of External Affairs imagine that all foreign women are Mata Haris.

Mr. Sharma is deeply in love with a foreign girl and is faced with the cruel dilemma of either giving up the girl or giving up his job. If I were him, I would look for another job and then throw his foreign service job in the face of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Incidentally, the

head of the Ministry has been the Prime Minister who, as it happens, has a foreign wife. Isn't 'what is sauce for the goose sauce for the gander?' Obviously not. Don't ask me why.

Rajiv Gandhi's Allenitis

When I was a law student in London, I used to visit the School of Oriental Studies to learn Hindu and Mohammadan Law for my Bar Examinations. When the Prime Minister told a Muslim women's delegation some weeks back that equality of women with men is a western concept inapplicable to India, I thought he must have learnt his Mohammadan Law a little too well at the School of Oriental Studies. But his most recent statement makes me think again. Addressing the Maharashtra Centre's Conference under the auspices of the Yeshwantrao Chavan Pratishthan in Bombay on May 2, Mr. Rajiv Gandhi is quoted by the *Indian Express* of May 3, as 'cautioning' his audience against 'the alien concept of pragmatism' trying to dislodge the ideological base of India's economic progress. I always thought I knew what pragmatism meant, but the Prime Minister could not be wrong, could he? So I turned to the Concise Oxford Dictionary for guidance. That too, of course, is an alien volume but I am old-fashioned enough to trust the Oxford Dictionary in regard to that alien language which the Prime Minister speaks so well. I find that 'pragmatism' is defined in the dictionary as 'a matter of fact treatment of things' and a 'doctrine that estimates any assertion solely by its practical effect upon human interests'.

Now I think it is very wicked of the West to ask us to be practical and order our affairs in a sensible manner. We should be left alone to go further down the slippery slope of communism and State Capitalism and ruin our country, while other countries of Asia are doing places, giving their people a better life. Since at the School of Oriental Studies I do not recall any caution against pragmatism, I think the institution the Prime Minister is studying at must be the School of Oriental Despotism in which he appears to be making very good progress. His mentors are probably Mr. P.N. Haksar and Mr. T.N. Kaul. I am now waiting impatiently for the Prime Minister to denounce Western hi-tech to which he has been addicted so far. That should complete his re-education.



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The Maintenance of Freedom

The tendency of the state and its various organisations, including the police, to gather information about citizens is nothing new. Liberalism has, since its earliest beginnings, fought such practices, and has achieved significant results.

Giovanni Malagodi

The following is extracted from an article by Mr. Malagodi entitled "The Territorial and Ideological expansion of the Liberal International."

The tendency of the State and its various organisations, including the police, to gather information about citizens so as to control them more easily is nothing new. Liberalism has, since its earliest beginnings, fought against such practices, and has achieved significant results, particularly in the area of legal limitations on the powers of the State and the legal definition of the citizen's rights of privacy. All this, however, has been overturned today by two new developments.

The first arises from a combination of the growing and really terrible efficiency of the computer and its ability to centralise data from various sources, and the new and growing presence of the State in the life of its citizens, for example in the health service, social services, the ownership or lack of means of transport, school and professional life, etc. It is reckoned that in Germany today, apart from any intention of abusing these powers, there exist about two thousand items of data about each citizen.

The other new and terrible factor is electronic surveillance which enables anyone who has the necessary equipment to observe someone else's life even inside his own domestic walls. An individual's home is no longer his castle, as the English saying still has it: it is a sort of colander which magnetic waves can enter from anywhere and even from considerable distances. All this means that in one, or worse, in many State institutions, for example in various more or less secret police forces, innumerable data are being assembled on each citizen, so as to leave him in a position of inferiority in any dispute he may have with the authorities for good or bad reasons.

In addition to this the development of large businesses, particularly multi-nationals; and of banks and insurance

companies, both national and multi-national, leave the citizen, so to speak, ensnared in two nets, one public and one private. And yet a third net should probably be added to these, that of the major international criminal organisations, such as the Mafia, with access to enormous amounts of money and a systematic organisation.

Turning for the moment to the first net, that of the State or the police, it has also been justly noted that the police of different countries are now divided into different organisations more or less public or secret, and have close, more efficient and uncontrolled international links.

All this can be justified in the fight against terrorism and against organised crime, which is an excellent motive, but takes no account of the independence of the citizen.

Some time ago the American FBI decided candidly and publicly to include in its computers not only all those who had had, or had anything to do with the law, but also all those who in the eyes of the FBI appeared to be "suspect". Public reaction in the USA was so great that the FBI apparently abandoned this project, but no one can be sure that they have not pursued it in secret.



A final touch is given by the fact that in both California and Japan technicians are working on, and will soon have completed, a computer which will have, instead of ever more efficient microchips, simply suitably altered molecules. This would, it appears, enable them to construct a computer of 10 cubic centimetres capable of storing more data than any existing computer in the USA. Such an infernal device, once constructed and put eg. on the desk of the President of the United States, would give the latter more power over his people than any tyrant has ever dreamed of. In fact the danger is not limited to the collection of data. It can also be found, and perhaps even more so, in the possibility of feeding false data into the computer, or of not inserting correct data, thus giving an apparently exact, though in fact substantially distorted, picture of an individual.

What can be done? That is the problem which Liberals posed themselves (at the Liberal International Conferences) in Tel Aviv and Madrid, and the answer is political control, in a form still to be specified, for example a specialised "Ombudsman" who could guarantee to every citizen access to all the data concerning him, public and private so that he can at least check the accuracy and the relevance to the requirements of the State or of the private organisation in question. The problem that is being posed here is thus that of individual freedom in a totally new form, between a State and private organisations equipped with instruments of information and control which would have been unimaginable twenty years ago, and the citizen who wants ever greater freedom but who needs the counter-balance of public power to defend his freedom.

We have here, in fact, the traditional problem of a division of powers, but going beyond the traditional liberal concept.

The other basic theme discussed in Madrid concerned the freedom of communication media in a world of free citizens.

Here again we confront a problem which has been the object of long and bitter liberal battles against public organisations, such as different States and different churches, which until one or two hundred years ago, depending on the particular circumstances, impeded the free expression of thought and the free circulation of thought itself and of information, while for liberalism truth and human progress can only arise from the free comparison of both ideas and information. Today this principle is recognised in words in all free States and even, paradoxically, in some States which are anything but free, and which in fact exercise a censorship which they do not even bother to conceal (I am thinking for example of South Africa).

In truth, however, although the means of disseminating ideas and information are on the one hand strongly developed (post, telegraph, telephone, radio, television, satellites, etc), on the other hand they are subject to substantial control on the part of the State or other powerful State or private-run bodies, to an extent that would have been inconceivable only twenty years ago. Then if the State wanted to intervene it had to do so by means of censorship laws and openly. Now it can use more or less secret administrative measures which are extremely effective. Both undue interests of political bodies and economic interests which are, more and more concentrated in ultra-powerful hands are moving the same way. The distortion of information regarding, for example, the quality of products coming out of factories and passing through commercial organisations, is a constant danger, against which there is no other remedy than State intervention. But to make this effective it is essential to ensure that the State, and in practice this means its executive bodies, is not in its turn under undue pressure to close one eye when it should have them both open wide.

Here again what is needed is an ethical and political counterweight which could perhaps be provided by a qualified Ombudsman or by the assumption of responsibility by corporate bodies, such as for example organisations of journalists. In some countries this has already been initiated by, for example, the publication of codes of conduct.

I should also highlight, in this extremely brief outline, the major debate which has been going on over the course of the last few years, particularly within the framework of Unesco on the so-called

"New World Information Order", between the Western countries which defend freedom of information to the limit, and the countries of the Third World, which consider themselves threatened by the excessive power of the media of these Western nations, and by the weakness of their own organisations for broadcasting ideas and news.

However they do not take account of the all too obvious fact that this very weakness in part derives from and in part reinforces the substantially totalitarian nature of poor governments with more or less primitive means of communication and that where they have a monopoly they use it solely, or almost exclusively, to promote their perceived political or economic interests.

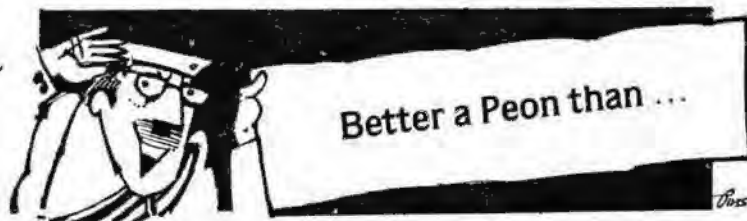
Here again the solution to the problem appears to be hard and long: it must be based essentially on the maintenance of freedom – and therefore of a genuine pluralism on the part of those who already enjoy it – and on the gradual ethical and political education, together with access to the necessary human and technical means, for those who do not yet have freedom.

But the response of the countries of the Third World, and also of many libertarian or liberal elements in the industrialised world, is to question: how free are the media in even the industrialised countries? Should one not also in these countries in-

troduce measures to prevent the concentration of the ownership of the media? To prevent the concentration of individual papers? To eliminate self-interested economic influences concerned only with profit and which operate throughout the media; that is to say above all the major multinational companies which can control them? There is some truth in this which should not be ignored, and one of the tasks for liberals is to increase awareness of such dangers and to ensure a growing legal and political defence of freedom and pluralism even in the free world.

In conclusion, there is another unfortunately visible aspect against which the only remedy is of a cultural and political nature (and in which therefore schools and universities have a major part to play) and that is the decline in quality especially in many news and comment programmes. Political sectarianism, sensationalism, the excessive compression of news and the prevalence of the visual over the intellectual on television, and to a certain extent and in a different form on radio: all this constitutes a great danger, particularly for the young who are already old enough for political responsibility.

GIOVANNI MALAGODI is the President of the Liberal International



Sir, If you want to make more than Rs. 61,000 a year without any qualification, you better join the Indian Oil Corporation as a refuelling charginan. According to the annual report of the Indian Oil Corporation 1983-84, a refuelling charginan whose qualifications are given as nil in the report draws a gross salary of Rs. 61,782!

The report further says that of the 4798 employees drawing more than Rs. 3,000 per month, 605 are peons, khalasis, drivers, chowkidars, cooks, etc. A khalasis who joined the IOC on March 3, 1970 drew in 1983-84 Rs. 57,230. A senior peon

with eighth standard qualification gets a salary of Rs. 38,284 and another peon with no qualification, who joined on October 31, 1969, gets a salary of Rs. 39,046.

Anyone who joined as an Assistant Professor with P.G. qualification in a Tamil Nadu College, whether he joined in 1962, or 1966 or 1969 would hardly get Rs. 28,000 a year today. Even to get that, he had to agitate, brave a fortnight in jail and keep shouting for wages all the time.

TIRUCHI.

S. PUSHPAVANAM,
THE HINDU, July 31, 1985

Raids on Personal Freedom

Dangerous 'Carelessness'

It is not a matter of capitalism or socialism. It is one of civil liberties of all of us. Today it may be capitalists, tomorrow it may be somebody else. Freedom is indivisible and what can happen to one can happen to another. These habits spread.

Minoo Masani

My own predilections are very much for chasing tax evaders and getting tax revenues and I have a very selfish reason for this. It is that executives and professionals like me, with very limited incomes and absurdly high taxes have suffered for the last thirty years from massive tax evasion by millionaires. In the list of income tax payers I never find the names of those who are in the highest bracket. Only honest citizens with middle class incomes are mulcted. I have no doubt that if government had done its business all these years and collected money from those who owed it, the rate of taxation could have come down very much more and it can come down even more today. I am therefore very much in sympathy with anyone who wants to collect whatever is legitimately due.

Wanted 'Investigation' not 'Raids'

How is this very worthy objective to be pursued? In civilised and democratic countries *raids* are unknown. *Investigation* is the word. When income tax or other tax authorities suspect evasion, they watch, they use their powers of detection, make enquiries and, at a certain stage, they go to the party concerned and in a very quiet, almost secret way say: 'Mr. X, we suspect that you are evading your liabilities. We don't want to make a noise; we don't want to disrupt your business if you will kindly cooperate with us by opening up your books and showing us things we want to investigate. If you do that we have no desire to interfere with the normal course of your work.' And if the investigation reveals that the suspicion was well-founded, of course proper proceedings are then taken. This is done in civilised countries which know how to collect taxes.

In England there was one case where, I believe, a kind of raid took place and on that Lord Denning, a great pillar of justice,

said from the Bench:

"No one would wish that any of those who defraud the Revenue should go free. They should be found out and brought to justice. But it is fundamental in our law that the means which are adopted to this end should be lawful means. The means must not be such as to offend against the personal freedom, the privacy and the elemental rights of property."

We are all familiar with the statement that the Englishman's home is his castle. Our's evidently are bazaars where anyone can walk in and out at will. The position in India was well described by Mr. Nani Palkhivala in his recent budget speech. I am glad that that speech had the effect of at least making Delhi back down to a minor extent. Describing the manner in which raids are conducted, Mr. Palkhivala said:

"The manner is by now too well-known – a multi-pronged military-style operation, exercising powers of search and seizure, arrest and detention, in a way well calculated to bully and browbeat a docile section of society into submission. To interrogate, or continue the interrogation of, citizens deliberately into the dark hours of the night is indefensible. Setting aside a requisition order which was enforced at night, Justice Tendulkar said, 'The dark hours of the night are associated in the public mind with dark deeds, and there is no reason why the legitimate activities of the government cannot be carried out in broad daylight.'"

So, there is here a contrast in the method of how to pursue the revenues which are sought to be evaded. There is a civilised and democratic method and there

is the method of bullies and dictators. We seem to prefer the latter.

Raids are State Terrorism

It is true that on April 17 the Finance Minister beat a retreat by saying that no instructions had been issued on the manner of conducting these raids. I am not very impressed with the retraction. I object to the principle of the raids. It is an act of State terrorism which is indefensible. Mr. Palkhivala quite rightly said in his speech that rules are "periodically made and unmade by the Central Board of Revenue and the fact that they are laid on the table of the House of Parliament is a meaningless and misleading ritual." The *Indian Express* in its editorial of April 19 put it very well when it said: "It is a pity that the Government has had to come out with rules that should be observed as a matter of course in any civilised society. For example, it is shameful that raiding officials must be bound by a rule before they will permit the individual to send for a medical practitioner to attend to him if he is ill. It is also strange that a similar *firman* has to be issued on how to treat ladies and school-children. These features do not speak highly of the Government's confidence in its own officials."

There are many things happening these days which cause me concern about the carelessness of those in authority with the rights of the citizen. I call it carelessness because I do not know how deliberate it is. I think it comes from a disregard for democratic values. I will give you three examples of this which show that this is not an isolated instance and, when we protest against it, its time we did so because these bad habits are contagious and can spread.

Innocent Until Proved Guilty

The first was the Rama Swarup case

some months ago. This man was being charged with espionage of some kind. The police filled the press with libellous statements with the result that he was called a spy even before the trial had started. A kind of vindictive campaign went on as in Moscow where trials are held before they even go to court and people are pronounced guilty. This was exactly what happened. A man is presumed innocent until proved guilty. That applies to Rama Swarup, Mr. S.L. Kirloskar or any of us. But the way the press has been influenced or infiltrated by the Intelligence people is quite disgraceful. I am very glad that in the Kirloskar case my socialist friend N.G. Goray protested. It is not a matter of capitalism or socialism. It is one of civil liberties of all of us. Today it may be the capitalists, tomorrow it may be somebody else. Freedom is indivisible and what can happen to one can happen to another. These habits spread.

Denigrating the Judiciary

The second example was the lack of respect for the judiciary shown by the Prime Minister some time earlier. It will be recalled that Mr. Z.A. Ansari, Union Minister of State, made some very obscene remarks in Parliament about the Supreme Court.

The *Indian Express* of December 21, 1985 reported Mr. Ansari as saying in the Lok Sabha that "this was nothing short of judicial dishonesty and amounted to degrading the Supreme Court. The Chief Justice of the Supreme Court was too small a man to interpret Islamic law. He is incompetent to enter this field." One would have thought that this was contempt of court of the highest degree. What did our Prime Minister say? Addressing the All India Momin Conference in New Delhi the Prime Minister said: "I do not think that the statements were intended to denigrate the judiciary." This not only shows a lack of proper respect for the courts on the part of Mr. Ansari but also Mr. Rajiv Gandhi. A man who can defend such a statement from one of his ministers cannot be trusted with the liberties of our people. I think he has shown a carelessness about judicial independence which is frightening.

Carelessness About Fundamental Freedoms

But a worse indication of this trend was the Prime Minister's remark to a delegation representing six women's organisations that petitioned him against the Muslim Women's Bill. The petition, incidental-

ly, was signed by 1,47,000 women. These women who met the Prime Minister were not mere flotsam and jetsam. They had considerable mass support behind them from women, both Muslim and others. They told him that the Bill militated against the equality of the sexes. Reporting this, *The Sunday Observer* of April 20 said: "Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi reportedly feels that equal rights for women and maintenance for divorcees are 'essentially western concepts' not applicable to India."

Rajiv Gandhi's remark about equal rights for women being a 'western concept' evoked a sharp response from the delegation members who pointed out that democracy itself was a western concept and so were the concepts of a sovereign parliament, independent judiciary and responsible executive. If he did not find fault with any of them, then why should only the women be made to suffer in the name of 'Indianness'? The Prime Minister reportedly kept quiet on this."

Just think. Anything that is not convenient to the government of the day becomes a western concept to be discarded. What then are we to believe in — oriental

A Polish Joke

The emptiness and sterility of official Communist jargon have been the butt of innumerable anecdotes. The following example comes from a samizdat magazine, Nasz Glos, in Lodz (Poland); similar aids circulate in Czech, Hungarian, Rumanian, Russian and dozens of other languages of the Soviet Union and other Communist countries. True, one can equally imagine this kind of handbook being prepared for the use of Western politicians (or soldiers). There is, however, one important difference: even a much more violent satire on liberal democratic phraseology would be published freely — whereas in the Communist countries it can appear only in samizdat, and when anybody tries to share the joke with a friend, he or she risks a prison sentence on charges of 'incitement'.

The activist's thesaurus

Choose at random a phrase from section one, link it to any phrase from section two, likewise with sections three and four and you will have an all purpose speech. There are ten thousand combinations, which is enough for forty hours.

I

Dear Colleagues

On the Other hand

Likewise

Let us, however, not forget that in this way

Everyday practice proves that

The significance of these problems needs no

further justification, since

Multifarious and rich experience

The concern of the organisation, and

particularly

Higher ideological assumptions, and also

II

the performance of the tasks laid down in the programme

the scope and place of training of cadres

the constant quantitative growth and the range

of our activity

the present position of the organisation

a new model of organisational activity

the constant informational and propagandistic

safeguarding of our work

the reinforcement and development of the

structures

consultation with the work-force at large

instituting general action for the formation of

fundamentals

III

forces on us a re-analysis of

plays a tangible part in forming

requires detailed definition of

helps us to prepare and realise

safeguards the participation of a large group in the formation of

fulfils an important role in the elaboration of

facilitates to a greater degree the creation of

causes an appreciation of the importance of

represents an interesting attempt to verify

entails a process of familiarisation and

modernisation of

IV

existing administrative and financial conditions

further directions of development

a system of general participation

the positions of the participants in relation to

the tasks imposed by the organisation

new propositions

directions for progressive training

a system of schooling for cadres which

corresponds to needs

appropriate conditions for activation

a developmental model

forms of functioning. ■

Courtesy: Index on Censorship

despotism? Are we going back to Moghul Raj?

Of course equal rights for women is a western concept. The whole of the Constitution of India which we framed is based on western concepts. We got it from Britain, America and all the other western democracies. So, we are benefiting from western concepts. What about western technology which the Prime Minister speaks so much? Are we to go back to the bullock cart because everything else is western? What about the computer and the silicon chip? Discard them because they are western? What arrant nonsense!

So coming back to the recent 'raids', it is not an isolated phenomenon. It is one of many indications of a mind which is careless about fundamental freedoms. I will not put it any further because I would like to think these "off-the-cuff" remarks of Mr. Rajiv Gandhi are thoughtless, not deliberate.

An Ugly Proclivity

As I said earlier, we are against all terrorism. But the terrorism of the State is

the worst of all. This is what Mahatma Gandhi had to say:

"There is no violence as evil as the violence of the Government. All other violence can be forgiven, understood or controlled but when the Government becomes violent and dominates and oppresses the people, that is the most foul kind of violence."

And that is what is now coming to light. This is State violence of the worst kind. Whether it is legal or illegal is beside the point. It should be struck down. Mr. Pal-kinivala said at his Budget meeting that some of the provisions are unconstitutional. So is the Muslim Bill. Mr. Soli Sorabjee and other jurists in Delhi have said that the Bill is unconstitutional.

So this proclivity to indulge in unconstitutional acts till the courts pull them up and then to go for the courts and try to change the judgement of the court as in the Shah Bano case is a very ugly kind of phenomenon. It has happened in India before, during the Emergency. If we are not vigilant we will get another kind of violation of the Constitution without that label.

It should be remembered that the present Prime Minister supported the Emergency. That is another indication of what dangers we are facing.

Our concern is not necessarily with the businessmen who are involved although they deserve our sympathy, but as citizens they have rights and we want to see that those rights are preserved. One of the victims of Nazi tyranny once said something like this: 'First they came for the Jew and I did not protest; then they came for the communist and I did not protest; then they came for the liberal and I did not protest; then they came for me and nobody protested.' This exactly is what happens if citizens think that 'the other fellow can suffer, I am alright.' We are not alright. This threat can extend from one class of people to another until nobody is safe.

Thin End of the Wedge

What we are witnessing today are raids which are more in tune with the type of governments run by Idi Amin of Uganda and Marcos of the Philippines.

M.R. Pai

It is the duty of the government to enforce the law of the land. Nobody can dispute it. When there is violation of the law, and evasion of taxes the Government has to take action. In the case of the recent raids, it is not the objective but the method which is in dispute.

What are the types of offences against which this action has been taken? First, there is evasion of taxes, direct or, in recent years indirect, by way of Central Excise and Customs Duty. Then there is violation of FERA (Foreign Exchange Regulations Act). The offenders are the smugglers, the anti-social elements who cause crores of rupees of losses to the country. Newspaper interviews are given by smugglers who openly dare the government to

touch them and say 'All of you politicians come like beggars to our doors at night asking for money.' So these people are not touched.

Then there are the producers of wealth in the form of goods and services who conceal their income or evade taxes. But it is becoming more and more difficult to catch them because the administration itself is, by and large, very dishonest. That is the main reason. The people who are supposed to control this administration are either dishonest, or if they are honest, they are not competent enough to make this administration work.

The Manipulators

Then there are the producers who are the manipulators. This manipulation, par-

ticularly of foreign exchange, takes place because of government's foreign exchange policy. For instance, why should a dollar quote at Rs. 12.00 or so when it is worth Rs. 17.00 in the free market? Therefore, there is a lot of manipulation and dishonesty because of government's policy of an artificially priced dollar etc. Moreover, the government policy itself is not only confused but downright idiotic. Just one instance: You see full-page advertisements in the dailies offering trips to shoppers' paradises like Dubai, Hong Kong and Singapore and you are given a Reserve Bank permit for \$500.00 foreign travel allowance, now once in three years. Government customs department charges customs duty when people return with thousands or lakhs of Rupees worth of

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goods. But nobody has the brains to ask them how, they went out of India with \$500, they could bring back goods worth thousands of dollars! Are the other departments of government sleeping? This shows that government policy itself is confused, as well as contradictory. And the reason for this is the craze and lust for power and patronage of the politician and the bureaucrats to fix an artificial foreign exchange rate and controls. If there were to be a free market in foreign exchange, then there would be no need for these manipulations nor any need for compensatory payments. Indians going abroad buy thousands of dollars worth of goods and the relations of people who are working abroad get money here at Rs. 17 a dollar!

Today, because there is such a policy, the signature of a bureaucrat or of a politician behind him is worth Rs. 5.00 on every piece of paper where a dollar is given by the government and the country loses.

Confused Laws

Then there is infraction of law by the producer because the law itself is very confused. Take for instance the so-called Modvat. It is an excellent concept but it has been introduced in a great hurry because our bureaucrats think they know everything under the sun. They don't want to consult the people who are affected by it. Nothing would have been lost if the people who are affected like small industrialists and others had been consulted. You don't have to take their advice but you can at least consult them; find their difficulties and bring a law which is in the public interest. Now the law is so confused that for one month production came to a standstill and even today the people who are supposed to enforce the law, even the excise people, don't know how to apply the law! With such confused laws, naturally in the production process there is infraction of law.

Let me give you an idea of the hilarious situations which develop. Some years ago, in one sugar factory 2 kilos of sugar were stolen. The employee was caught and he was charge-sheeted. Next day there was a notice from the excise men charging the factory with evading excise duty on 2 kilos of sugar which was stolen by the employee! Today what has happened is that the piddling excise inspector has become more powerful than the Chief Justice of India. If he raises a demand you have to pay the money first, then you have to appeal. You don't have any legal redress.

In our productive system with this type of law, how do you expect people to comply with the law? Though wrong, people seek shortcuts in order to survive.

Then there is honest dispute over interpretation of law as has happened in some cases. It might interest you to know it is not only in the private sector but even in the public sector there has been honest difference in the interpretation of excise and other laws. Will the government raid them? If it is to be done under the present philosophy not only the board of directors of these public sector companies but the entire cabinet will also have to be arrested because they are technically responsible for the public sector in this country! This is the new jurisprudence we are developing in our haste to try to show results.

And then, of course, there is the worst category — the combination of the professional politician, the corrupt bureaucrat and the corrupt middleman, who between them manipulate the entire system. They are the worst offenders of the law.

Harassment or Golden Treatment?

As Mr. Minoo Masani rightly points out, there are no *raids* in a democracy, only *investigations*. What we are witnessing today are raids which are more in tune with the type of governments run by Idi Amin of Uganda and Marcos of the Philippines. I don't think this country is a suitable place for this type of operation by the government. In Parliament a minister said that there were some allegations of harassment, misuse of powers and unnecessary publicity and all such complaints had been found baseless on enquiry. Mr. S.L. Kirloskar, an old man of 84, was called and interrogated from 7.50 p.m. to 3 a.m. on 9th December 1985. Do you call this harassment or golden treatment? If Mr. Kirloskar has violated the law of the land you proceed against him under due process of law and punish him, but not interrogate him from 7.50 p.m. to 3 a.m.

The question I want to ask the Finance Minister, every Cabinet member and every member of the raiding party is this: if you had a father who is 84 years old would you have treated him in this manner? Was Mr. Kirloskar going to run away from the country in the morning? Interrogations are done during day-time not at night. I am not referring to the rude behaviour and other things because rudeness is something you take for granted from the Indian bureaucracy till the day they retire and in retirement wait outside the door of industrialists for jobs for themselves and

their children. This is the rule of the general run of Indian bureaucrats.

Look at the publicity as if Mr. Kirloskar was the greatest criminal of this century in this country. Now, is this the type of treatment you give to people who have contributed for generations to the economic growth of India? Our politicians are labouring under a misconception. They boast of their father and grandfather having rendered great service to the country. It is not only the politicians but thousands of citizens who have worked in the household, in the factories and elsewhere and made sacrifices for the development of the country. But they do not boast about their contributions as the politicians do

Take the case of the Voltas executives. Here is a statement by the Chairman of Voltas and judge for yourself whether this is the method to be followed in a democracy:

"During the many hours of search and over the 70 hours of subsequent interrogation (excluding 100 hours of being left waiting) which stretched into the small hours of the morning, the employees of Voltas were prevented from communicating with any person outside the Establishment and were denied the benefit of legal advice as well as the use of telephones. The interrogation was conducted, at times in an atmosphere of intimidation and stress, the employees being repeatedly reminded of the dire consequences of non-cooperation. The contents of the statements obtained from the employees under such conditions of stress were largely influenced and guided by the officials, and no copies of these statements were furnished to the employees despite their request."

I am not a lawyer but I believe you cannot proceed even against a criminal unless you have furnished him first with the charge sheet against him.

"On 17th February five senior executives called by the Excise officials, ostensibly for interrogation, were suddenly informed that they were under arrest," according to the Voltas Chairman. Is this the method that a democracy follows? These raids are the thin end of the wedge.

The advice received by a client from his solicitors and others is professional advice. It is not ethical to disclose it. These papers were seized. Even worse, the Finance Minister misled parliament by quoting some paper from the solicitor which had no relevance to the case under question! It is unfortunate that no member of Parlia-

ment has brought this up and charged the Finance Minister with breach of privilege for misleading the House.

Timid Businessmen

Look at the pressure which is being built on the business houses. According to my information, there is a case where nothing has been found but they have been lumped together with dealers and agents and others who have nothing to do with them and shown as if they are the guilty party; they are also being pressurised to give statements that they have done something wrong even though they have not done anything wrong. People are being threatened that if they don't confess to crimes they did not commit they will be dealt with. Why? Because the government must save its face. Having done something wrong, do more wrong things in order to justify the original wrong. It is unfortunate that our business people are so timid. Otherwise they would have complained to Amnesty International for violation of human rights because India is a signatory to the U.N. Declaration of Human Rights. They would have also taken action against the officers in courts of law for exceeding their brief.

Recently I was reading the Central Vigilance Commissioner's Report and was thrilled to find that there were several categories of offences by officers when they violate the rights of the citizens. If only under these the officers are charged, we will find that politicians will drop them like hot potatoes because politicians always want to save their own skin. And the officers, I am sorry to say, have exceeded their brief.

Recently, we are told, ground rules for raids have been announced. These ground rules are nothing but a charter of confession of the sins committed by the administration against the citizen. Can you imagine! Schoolboys may be allowed to go after their bags are searched! That means there have been many cases where even children have been harassed; that housewives must be allowed to have their food. That means there have been many cases where injustice has been perpetrated against them. We should have no sympathy with people who evade taxes. But if we have concern for civil liberties and the freedom of the citizen, in a democracy there are ways and ways of properly dealing with tax evasion and other economic offences, without harassing housewives and children and citizens.

I would like to draw the attention of the authorities to a *sloka* from the *Mahābhār-*

ata which means, "Even when there are a thousand cows, the little one, the calf, goes only in search of its own mother. Likewise, every action that we do comes back in search of us".

Today X, Y or Z is in power. But power is not something stable and permanent. Tomorrow they may be on the streets. And, if you brutalise the administration today, when you are in power, if you make them behave in an uncivilised manner, the same people will come and bite you in the way you have set them on the citizens today. This is something that has been repeatedly proved by history.

Crooked Politicians

And now I ask the main question: Why is it that these raids are confined only to business houses? What about the politicians? Everyone knows that the worst crooks in this country are the politicians. In fact it will not be wrong to say that most of our politicians are so crooked in their thinking and behaviour that if you drive a nail into their head it comes out like a screw!

I want to ask another question: Why is it today that the major area of violation of FERA which is northern Bihar and northern U.P. are completely excluded from the purview of this Act? Do you know that thousands of crores of textiles and electronic goods and other things are coming via Nepal from these areas? There are no raids there because the Excise or D.R.I. officer will not return home if he goes for a raid there. And he knows it too well.

There is a saying in Sanskrit: "For whom is the body not dear?" It is dear to everyone of us including Excise and DRI officers. So, there are no raids there. What is worse, there is a nexus between the politicians and the criminals in those areas. So the moment there is a raid there, political pressure will be applied on the Government.

I am not exaggerating. In a documented report by Kuldip Nayar in *The Sunday Observer* of March 16, it is mentioned that in Dhanbad area, Coal India Ltd, is looted day in and day out by the mafia gangs. In fact there is no government in this area except by the courtesy of these mafia gangs. Why are there no raids there?

Let me give you another example because the Finance Minister says "You point out the politicians. We shall catch them." It is not our function to point out corrupt politicians. The administration is paid a salary to do the job. But since they have

asked for suggestions there is a report in the *Times of India* where it says that "out of 32,442 contestants at the General Elections to the Lok Sabha and certain Legislative Assemblies in 1984-85, 30,980 only had filed reports. What about the rest? Does this not attract the attention of the government? Here is a flagrant violation of the law by the politicians. Or once again don't you read in the papers every now and then that this or that politician went to London, Moscow or New York for medical treatment?"

Has anybody asked these politicians going abroad for medical treatment where they are getting their foreign exchange? From the \$500 given by the Reserve Bank? As a matter of fact, even to accept the hospitality of a cup of tea abroad is a violation of FERA if FERA is to be strictly interpreted.

In other words, politicians are exempt from raids. And politicians in this country have a notion that they are superior, that they are above the law, that they should not be questioned. We the public are the *Kuchra* of this country who can be treated like dirt.

Two Suggestions

I would like to make two concrete suggestions: Let every politician who is an elected representative of the people, and who is in power file an affidavit stating that he does not have either in his name or his spouse's name a foreign exchange account except one authorised by the Reserve Bank of India. Let him give a statement of his income and wealth certified by a Chartered Accountant to be laid on the Table of Parliament. The second suggestion is for the public. If the government does not take any action against the politicians then it is high time that the people of this country defend democratic traditions by setting up a Citizens' Committee for Clean Public Life and collect all information about the politicians and their violation of the Law and place it before the court of public opinion. And let the politicians drag this committee to a court of law and prove the Committee wrong. It is time that the people of this country took the initiative so that democratic traditions are respected and maintained.

M.R. PAI is a non-partisan public affairs commentator.

The Evolution of the Liberal Idea

I would like to state one major and, I think historic success which liberals have fought and gained, namely constitutional rights in our political society.

Otto Von Lambsdorff

In Europe we have a number of liberal parties with a wide spectrum of political views. There is hardly, (because we are individualists) one liberal who shares 100% the views of a fellow liberal and that is true of liberal parties as well. If, for instance, we take a look at the Swiss or the Dutch Liberal party, and at the same time we deal with British Liberals, we will find a relatively wide divergence of views that practical problems impose on them: from economic policy to education, not to speak of European security.

Liberal parties are not financially strong, in most cases they are not the big parties and the Liberal International has certainly not upto now found it possible to exercise its influence in international political discussions like the Socialist International has done, and, as in Europe the conservative groups are doing to develop co-operation between conservative parties within the European community and beyond.

The Individualism of Liberals

Political liberalism in Europe over the last 100 years, has always lived with the danger of splits within liberal parties. In Germany, before and after World War I, we had two liberal parties with the result that liberalism virtually had no political influence at all. In recent years, the Free Democratic Party, the liberal political party has survived two splits since 1949. In both cases those who left and formed a new party finally ended up in political obscurity. But that has to do with the special German aspect of our electoral law that the party which does not collect 5% of the general vote gets no seat in Parliament. If you have 4.9% you have zero seats. If you have 5% in a general election in Germany you have 25 to 27 seats in Parliament.

This rule was introduced in the Federal Republic after our bad experience between 1918 and 1933 when we had 136 parties running for Parliament and almost as many in the German Parliament with the consequence that we always found what we call a negative coalition able to

topple a government but not a positive coalition based on agreement on certain fundamental political ideas. This tendency to split and to disagree certainly has much to do with the strong individualism of liberals.

Liberals stand not only for political freedom but for personal freedom as well. That makes it difficult for all of us, and I don't think one can exclude any liberal party from that consequence or insight. It makes it difficult for all of them to accept majority decisions. But we have to see that if we want to exercise influence and if we want to play a political role then we must follow the democratic rule of discussion and decision by majority. Otherwise liberals cannot play a role in politics. Without that kind of discipline which we have to learn and certainly some of our liberal friends in my own country and in other countries have to learn, we cannot do what I feel is our duty as liberals, namely, to create a platform not just for theoretical discussions but to try to bring liberal ideas and fundamental liberal aspects into day-to-day politics and participate in political decision-making.

A Liberal Achievement

A question which is very often asked is, does political liberalism have a function in 20th century Europe, the United States and in Canada? I would like to state one major and, I think historic success which liberals have fought for and gained, namely constitutional rights in our political society. Without liberalism in the 19th century what we have now reached and believe in, would not have been accomplished. That is certainly to the credit of the political liberalism of our grandfathers and great grandfathers. At the same time it is responsible for the present weakness of political liberalism because none, neither conservatives nor socialists doubt that constitutional rights have to be secure and cannot be denied.

That leads to the question—what do the liberals want to do these days? Are liberals necessary? My answer is: we know that we do have many liberal-minded people in conservative and social-

ist parties who are in agreement with us whether in matters of education, human rights or constitutional rights. This has in fact been a point of discussion in my country that these liberal-minded people in other parties would not have any liberal minded influence in their parties if there had not been a Liberal political organisation. Liberal this time with a capital 'L'.

The Free Market Economy

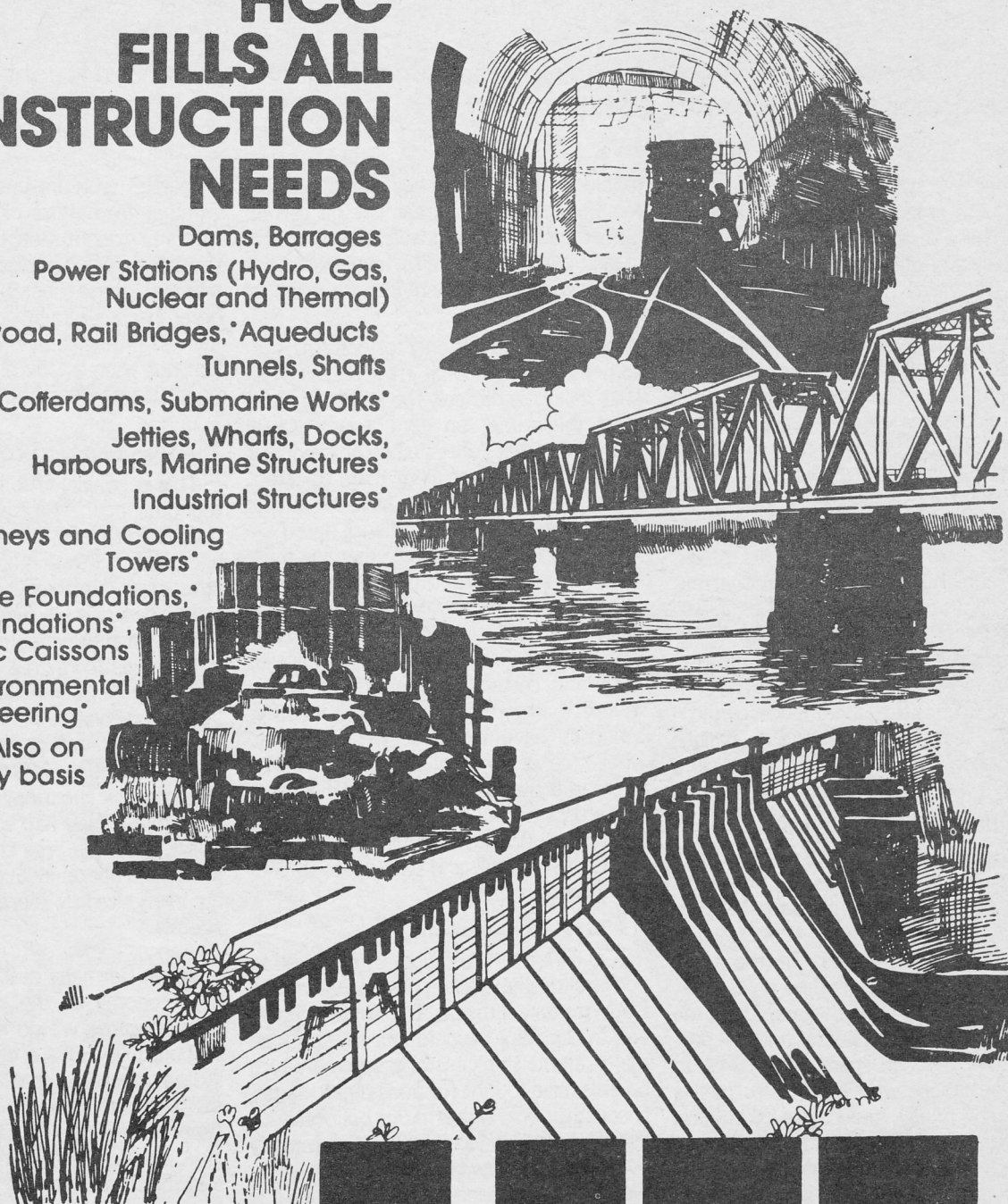
This is equally true in my own field of economic policy. Basically, liberals all over the world favour a free market economy with slight disagreements but no basic disagreement. Curiously enough, this position is described in British and US papers, as *conservative* economic policy. Everyone who stands for a free economy, for non-intervention, for non-protectionism is called a conservative in the economic sense. The truth is that conservatives and conservative parties did not have any substantial economic theory or economic policy of their own. They had to adopt the liberal policy. And the free market economy is basically a liberal idea, developed by liberals, introduced by liberals and defended by liberals.

We in Germany describe the free market economy as the social market economy because we do not deny the social responsibility of a free market economy system, because we do not advocate *laissez faire* of the second half of the 19th century. I feel that this is basically a liberal idea, a basic liberal truth. Perhaps I should add that the basic idea of a free economy in the liberal view is of course efficiency, full employment, the well-being of people and the attempt to overcome poverty. But there is in my view, more behind it. In the long run, only in a free economy can you live as free men. In my view without a free economy you will in the long run not live in a free society.

Count Otto Von Lambsdorff was Minister for Social Economy in the Federal Republic of Germany.

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Profiles of Indian Liberals

The Rt. Hon. V.S. Srinivasa Sastri

D. Anjaneyulu

"It makes all the difference in the world whether we put forth truth in the first place or in the second place."

Whatley

"The interesting question in connection with compromise obviously turns upon the placing of the boundary that divides wise suspense in forming opinions, wise reserve in expressing them, and wise tardiness in trying to realise them, from unavowed disingenuousness and self-illusion, from voluntary dissimulation, and from indolence and pusillanimity."

John Viscount Morley

The Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms, incorporated in the Government of India Act, 1919, providing for the experiment of diarchy in the Provinces, and limited Indianisation at the Centre, had the support and blessings of the Indian Liberals. But the one person who contributed most to their evolution, without himself being a personal beneficiary thereof, was Gopal Krishna Gokhale's greatest disciple and successor the Right Honourable V.S. Srinivasa Sastri.

Political Moderation

The most important thing about Sastri was that he was a true liberal — more aptly spelt with a small 'l', in his case, than a capital letter. There were quite a few leaders of the Indian Liberal Federation in their time, but not many of them who had imbibed the genuine spirit of Western liberalism and integrated it with the genius of their own native tradition. 'Moderation' was for him not merely a political attitude but an article of faith and a way of life. It could be seen in his speeches and writings, in his dealings with men and affairs alike, in his private transactions as in his public activities. Almost like Mahatma Gandhi, he had only a single code of conduct to guide him in both the spheres, though that code was not always identical with that of the Mahatma's.

After a brilliant academic career, within the limited opportunities available to him in the mofussil town of Kumbakonam (graduating with distinction, while still in his teens), young Sastri started his career as a schoolmaster. His family's poverty was proverbial, as we learn from his able and devoted biographer (P. Kodanda Rao). He could not afford even an upper cloth to cover his naked shoulders while at college, and his mother had to decline a gift of mangoes, from a friendly neighbour, for want of the resources to buy the measure of salt to pickle them with and common salt could not be accepted as a gift, according to traditional beliefs. His early flair for English speech and familiar-



ity with the Sanskrit classics, aided by an admirable clarity of thinking and lucidity of exposition, marked him out as a successful teacher in more than one school. But the comparatively humdrum existence of a pedagogue could hardly satisfy the deeper stirrings within his personality, which was drawn to the wider field of public work. The letter he addressed to his idol, Gokhale, when he attended the Varanasi Session of the Indian National Congress (presided over by the latter), seeking admission to the Servants of India Society, sets out his credentials and modest aspirations in a factual and dispassionate manner:

"I am a schoolmaster in Triplicane, with about 17 years' service. I graduated B.A., in 1888, and now am 37 years old. My age, I fear, may be against me, as I may not have many years more to give to the service of my country. Nor have I the confidence that I can do very much in the few years that lie before me. Such as I am, however, I offer myself and hope to be accepted. I don't write this letter under an impulse of the mo-

ment; but the idea has been long in my mind, and it was for this purpose chiefly that I made up my mind to come here as a delegate."

He was, indeed, accepted into the society a year or so later, Gokhale himself administering him the oath in a Calcutta residence, an event which was to remain memorable for Sastri till the end of his life. He never looked back since, financial hardships and family problems notwithstanding. He soon made a mark as a public speaker and was nominated to the Provincial Legislative Council, where he took a special interest in matters educational, the living conditions of primary school teachers, the medium of instruction in schools, the desirability of co-education and the place of religious instruction, to which he was staunchly opposed. An impenitent lover of the English language then as later, he was, however, farsighted as an experienced teacher, to plead for a switchover to the regional language as medium of instruction in schools, decades before the strident generation of language enthusiasts discovered this populist slogan. Unlike other nominated members, he kept his own counsel and chose to vote according to the dictates of his conscience, irrespective of the risk of official displeasure.

With the death of Gokhale in 1915, Sastri was called upon to shoulder greater responsibilities in the national sphere, including the Presidentship of the Servants of India Society. Before long, he was elected to the Indian Legislative Council, where he compelled immediate attention by his persuasive eloquence, strengthened by a sure grasp of the subjects coming up for discussion. The visit during the war period of the new Secretary of State for India, Mr. E.S. Montagu, marked a turning point in the public career of Sastri, as well as the political fortunes of this country. Montagu was, perhaps, the most sympathetic and high-minded and far-seeing Secretary of State for India, whose youth-

ful radicalism had not yet been soured by the inevitable disappointments that go with a political career. He was determined to do something for India, with whose state of administration he was hardly satisfied.

"Responsive" or "Responsible"

In Sastri, he found not only an able and level-headed spokesman of an influential point of view, but a man after his own heart. He was then known, and justly so, as an extremist among the Moderates, just the type that Montagu would like, in preference to the moderates among the extremists. Sastri was then in favour of the Congress-League Scheme of "Responsive" cabinet in preference to the "Responsible" executive envisaged by Montagu. But he made it clear that he would be prepared to accept any scheme which fulfilled the following conditions: 1) Elements and guarantee of progress in the scheme; 2) Substantial steps, not hedged round by stipulations; 3) Assurance of fiscal liberty; and 4) Unqualified racial equality.

Though he was not quite satisfied with some of the features of diarchy, he reconciled himself to the measure, which, he felt, was an advance on the last. There was room for improvement and his unbounded goodwill for the author of the scheme left him in no doubt about his duty in the matter. He saw a kindred spirit in Montagu and expected great things from him, if only the fates were kind. The coming into existence of responsible Ministers for the "transferred" half in the provinces (though the "reserved" half continued to be "unresponsive" and "invulnerable") and the appointment of two or three Indians to the Viceroy's Executive Council (Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru taking over as Law Member) was indeed a substantial measure of progress in the right direction. Sir S.P. Sinha was taken as Under-Secretary of State at the India Office, and after being raised to peerage, sent to India as the first Indian Governor of Bihar. Sastri had reason to be happy about all these developments, though he neither sought nor expected any official preferment for himself. He was content to be a member of the Committee to frame rules under the 1919 Act, in which capacity he did useful work. He was always heard with respect, by the opposition and the government alike, in the Imperial Legislative Council and in the Council of State.

Constitutional Methods

While he did not see eye to eye with the "extra-constitutional" methods of boycott and non-cooperation adopted by Congress

and Gandhi (who thought the government 'satanic' and its writ a 'lawless' law), he was not altogether out of sympathy with the basic ideals that they had set before themselves. He could never be diverted from his deep-rooted faith in methods of constitutional agitation, which was not for him, at least, a convenient *alibi* for personal cowardice. He was often critical of the policies of the Government, on Salt Tax, on services and on the role of the bureaucracy, which could nullify the substance of the reforms by its tardiness and prevarication. No extremist could have been more unequivocal and outspoken in his exposure of the policy of repression, then represented, among other things, by the Rowlatt Act, and not mind incurring the wrath of the government. He had to pay the price for his refusal to be silent by being passed over for membership of the Viceroy's Executive Council in favour of Sir B.N. Sarma. Hard words break no bones, was his motto, but he did not hesitate to tell the powers that be a thing or two when he felt that it was in the best public interest to do so. Describing the temper of the people (maybe after the Jallianwalabagh tragedy) at a party given by the Viceroy in his honour on the eve of his departure for England, he could say:

"We have never seen in India such a wreck of hope and faith in the government of the day. We have never seen such a total wreck of faith in the people as today."

And yet, in the course of his speeches in London, he could give voice to his unshakable faith in the ultimate values of liberty, equality and human fellowship that inspired the British Empire, transcending the boundaries of geography and nationality and the distinctions of race, colour and creed. As a delegate to the Imperial Conference, he was able to get the principle of racial equality accepted, despite South Africa's dissenting vote. He followed it by canvassing the idea in all the Dominions like Canada and British Columbia, Australia and New Zealand.

Ideals Of Empire

Sastri's resounding success in his speaking tours as "orator of the Empire" was as much due to his lofty idealism as to his unequalled mastery of the English language, which he could speak with the purest of accents and a meticulous sense of its native idiom. Even more important than this was his perfect suitability to the cause of the Empire, whose ethical foundations were being shaken by Gandhi and his mass civil disobedience in the form of

non-violent non-cooperation. By his comparative freedom from official patronage and his political integrity and personal sacrifice, unquestioned even by the bitterest of his opponents, he was found more effective than many others as a spokesman for the ideals upheld, at least in theory, by the British rulers, but really more honoured by them in the breach than in the observance of them outside of their own country. He was exploited to the utmost as an image-builder *par excellence* for the Empire by its political managers of his day.

It would, however, be too hasty of any student of public affairs to write off Sastri for the naivety of his imperial eloquence. There was an element of political deliberation, no less than of intellectual sophistication, in his attempt to put the Englishman on his honour and leave him with the choice of living up to his own built-up image in India and elsewhere or have it shattered in the eyes of the world. He knew enough of the imperial game to be able to tell his audience in Canada, in a rare fit of loud thinking:-

"Its (the Empire's) strength has been built upon our weakness, its riches have been accumulated by keeping us poor, its power in the world has been possible because we were a subject nation, and because our strength could be used, subordinated to their strength."

Indians in South Africa

It was his life-long commitment to the concept of equality of citizenship and concern for the well-being of Indians overseas that made him accept the only official position he ever occupied under the government—that of the Agent-General for India in South Africa, during the years 1927-29. During his brief stay in South Africa, which was extended at the request of Mahatma Gandhi, Sastri functioned not so much as an official representative, which he could not help being technically, at any rate, or a civil servant, which he never could be, but as a cultural ambassador of India at large. By the impact of his personality and the strength of his innate culture, no less than through his popular lectures and public addresses, he was able to project a truer and better image of India, than had so far been vouchsafed to the white citizens of South Africa.

Round Table Conference and Independence

As the spokesman of the moderate point of view, Sastri played a significant role in two Round Table Conferences in London. The eloquent plea of the Liberals

for Dominion status, within the Empire, amounting to virtual self-determination as against the Congress demand for freedom outside the Commonwealth is well-known. More important than that, he spared no pains, along with Sapru and Jayakar, in effecting the release of Gandhi and other Congress leaders and bringing them to participate in the Conference, whatever be its final outcome. Ever anxious to soften the mutual acerbities, he was prepared to face unpopularity, as in his famous apostrophe to the Mahatma at the Second Round Table Conference, which he concluded with the words:

"The circumstances demand that you should change your plans, dismiss civil disobedience from your mind and take up this work in a spirit of complete trust in us and of faith in the British people too....The British people often do wrong, the British people often take unwise courses. Nevertheless, in the long run, they come back to ways of reason, moderation and justice. This is one occasion when it seems to me that they are in their most winning and admirable mood. Take them now and victory is ours."

In disapproving of the mass civil disobedience, Sastri was, perhaps, not sufficiently aware of the hard fact that the reasonableness of his own point of view was able to register itself better on the minds of the rulers getting more and more nervous at the prospect of their being out of tune with the political aspiration of the masses.

Not that Sastri was always sustained in his hope by the actual performance of those in whom he had this touching faith. There were, in fact, more occasions for disillusionment and frustration than for growing confidence. But nothing could destroy his basic faith; it could only be tempered with a greater sense of realism. When he died in April 1946, political freedom was on the threshold, but he did not live to see the pleasant irony of India taking her honoured place next year as a Dominion within the Commonwealth under the leadership of one who was opposed to the idea of Dominion status and sounded the clarion call of complete independence a generation earlier.

On the other hand, it was lucky for him that he was spared the sorry and painful spectacle of the country's vivisection, to which he was as staunchly opposed as Gandhi himself. With Gandhi again, he believed in the sacredness of the human personality and the value of personal friendships that surpassed the boundary

of political differences. "There is nothing in the world equal to an understanding from whom you differ", he would say in cherishing his lifelong friendship with Gandhi. He appealed to world leaders to invite Gandhi to attend the Peace Conference at the end of the World War. Those who profess to follow the Mahatma would do well to ponder Sastri's advice—"Let us be the Mahatma's co-worshippers, not his worshippers."

Philosophy of Life

Liberalism, which was the ruling creed of political philosophers in nineteenth century England was not merely a plank of public life for Sastri. Nurtured as he was on the familiar classics of British Liberalism like Mill on 'Liberty', and Morley on 'Compromise', besides the scientific works of Herbert Spencer and Thomas Huxley, he was often unhappy that contemporary liberals, guiding the destinies of Indian administration, were not able to live up to his expectations of them or their own professions in this behalf. All the same, he did not quite give up his faith in some good coming out of the Liberal and Labour governments and was frankly disappointed with the unimaginative and obtuse approach of the Tory leaders to Indian problems.

Politics or no politics, Sastri was determined to be a liberal in every sense of the word. He also believed that a politician need not cease to be a gentleman, despite the countless temptations on the wayside. "Life's integrity", he observed, "cannot continue in the growing dichotomy between belief and practice", endeavoring all the time to reduce the dichotomy, to the minimum, even if he could not eliminate it altogether. He believed in equal rights for women and advocated the same system of education for them, as for men, with the provision of home science and child care, in addition. He became unpopular among his friends and relatives by advocating post-puberty marriage for girls when such a thing was considered unthinkable. He did not think too highly of the caste system, though he did not take the initiative to break it, nor could he welcome inter-caste marriages too easily, though he did not object to them on any logical ground of religion or ethics. In this, he could not help being a conservative, like many of his contemporaries, but he was never a social reactionary or religious obscurantist. If he was not an agnostic, he was not a ritualist either, and retained the classical liberal's intellectual fascination for philosophic doubt. Like Ranade, he had a rapport with Indian tradition and knew how deep-

rooted it was. He shared in no small measure an admiration of the Indian Heritage and his lectures on the Ramayana crystallise some quintessential aspects of Sastri: like Rajaji's books on the Ramayana and the Mahabharata they may well outlast their other writings, perhaps they would have no regrets in such a consummation.

Dr. D. Anjaneyulu is Associate Editor of TRIVENI QUARTERLY, Madras.



The Liberal's Credo

... much of the (political) work must be directed toward building up in the country a higher type of character and capacity than is generally available at present and the advance can only be slow. Moreover, the path is beset with great difficulties; there will be constant temptations to turn back; bitter disappointments will repeatedly try the faith of those who have put their hand to the work. But the weary toil can have but one end, if only the workers grow not faint-hearted on the way. One essential condition of success in this work is that a sufficient number of our countrymen must now come forward to devote themselves to the cause in the spirit in which religious work is undertaken. Public life must be spiritualized. Love of country must so fill the heart that all else shall appear as of little moment by its side. A fervent patriotism which rejoices at every opportunity of sacrifice for the motherland, a dauntless heart which refuses to be turned back from its object by difficulty or danger, a deep faith in the purpose of Providence which nothing can shake — equipped with these, the worker must start on his mission and reverently seek the joy which comes of spending oneself in the service of one's country.

Gokhale
The Constitution of the Servants
of India Society.



Memories of Yusuf Meherally

Bertram D. Wolfe

Yusuf Meherally, who died on July 2, 1950, was one of the founders of the Congress Socialist party and one of its best-loved leaders. Until India won her freedom, he lived alternately as Mayor of Bombay and as a resident of one of the British Government of India jails. He visited the United States twice and had many close friends in this country.

I FIRST met Yusuf Meherally in the 1930's at the home of V.F. Calverton, the editor of *Modern Monthly*. He was dressed then in a close-fitting gray linen coat of Indian cut with stand-up collar. He wore a Gandhi cap. He seemed slight, slender, frail, but full of the breath of life. Writers kept coming and going all afternoon and he held eager conversation with each of them on a wide variety of subjects: literature, art, politics, sociology, international relations, India's struggle for freedom, structural changes in America as a result of the depression, history of England's conquest and brutal domination of India, the Indian Congress party, the Congress Socialist party, the Socialist Youth movement — of which I believe Yusuf was the secretary — and a multitude of other matters. He seemed to be able to converse with anybody on anything which interested his companion and eager to question each person on any subject on which that person seemed to be informed or expert.

I spent several hours with him then, after which I did not see him again for many years. I forgot his very existence until he reappeared in New York some time in the late forties. He was already in extremely poor health, was suffering from a bad heart, and his doctors had stringently ordered him to rest and do nothing. He spent many hours of the day flat on his back in bed, but it was impossible for him to be idle. Calverton had died long before, and this time he used Louis Fischer as a means of communication with the people in New York whom he wanted to meet.

Louis Fischer was living at the Duane Hotel at 237 Madison Avenue, and Yusuf took a room in the same hotel. He had a list of people whom he wanted to meet and Louis Fischer kept inviting them to his own rooms. When Yusuf was interested enough he would then get the guest to leave Fischer's rooms and come to his. There he would lie on his bed and spend hours in ardent conversation, exposition,

questioning, and exchange of opinions. It could be truly said of him that nothing human was alien to his interest.



"How can I deny myself to anyone at any place or at any hour? There is so much to be done. And there is such joy in doing it."

Yusuf Meherally

The circumstances of his wanting to meet me touched me deeply. He said: "One of the tasks I was given when I set out for America was to bring you the greetings and the thanks of my cellmates who shared imprisonment with me. We spent many happy hours reading your *Portrait of Mexico*. We read it, studied it, and discussed it together, and I have come to thank you on behalf of all of us for the pleasure and enlightenment you afforded us in our prison cell."

"But how did you get my book in a far-off prison in India?"

Books in Jail

"It started this way," Yusuf explained. "We had no decent books to read in pris-

on. I asked the jailer to lend me a copy of the Old and New Testaments. He refused, saying: 'You are a Mohammedan, you must read the Koran.' 'But I want to read the Bible.' 'No, you read the Koran.' 'If you do not give me the Christian Bible to read, I will go on a hunger strike and so will all my friends, and we will not end the strike until you give us the Bible'.

"The hunger strike began and all my comrades in prison joined me in the strike. In a few days the jailer began to worry about the situation and went to consult his superiors. They told him: 'This is impossible. We cannot let the world know that men are starving themselves to death because we refuse to let them read the Holy Bible.' So the jailer came to me and said: 'OK, here is the Bible.'"

"It is too late now," I responded. "We will not call off the hunger strike until you agree to get us all the books we want for study while in prison." He went away and the hunger strike continued. A few days later he came again and asked for a list of books we wanted to read. We put our heads together and made out a list of everything we had always wanted to read and had no time to read.

Weak Heart but Keen Mind

I gave Yusuf the books I had written since his prison days, among them my *Life of Diego Rivera* and my biographical history of the Russian Revolution entitled *Three Who Made a Revolution*. Yusuf was enthusiastic about the latter book. He attempted to arrange for its publication by Padma Press, with which he had some connection, but his growing illness prevented him from completing the arrangements.

He, in turn, gave me copies of his own writings, both books and pamphlets. He had a bad heart, which grew steadily worse, but his mind never slowed up for an instant. I urged him to do more writing and less traveling through India, less speaking at mass meetings, and less of the

other things that were obviously taxing his frail body beyond its power. Even his incessant zeal to talk with people and to question them was visibly draining his strength. He had become so frail that his spirit seemed to shine through his diminishing body like a wild bird beating its wings against a cage.

One day I arranged to take him in a station wagon which had specially deflated balloon tires in order that it could run over the sand dunes. In it we toured the entire tip of the Cape, both the inner shore of the great bay and the outer shore of the Atlantic Ocean. When we reached the extreme tip of the peninsula I explained to him that it was known as Race point, because a great tide raced around it where the waters of the Atlantic Ocean and the waters of Massachusetts Bay came together.

"Would you stop here for a while?" he asked shyly. We stopped, and he walked down to the point where ocean and bay waters came together, took off his sandals, and waded into the swirling water. When he came out, his face was lighted up with an expression of happiness that I had not seen before.

"We Indians believe that every confluence of water is a sacred place," he explained to me.

I realized then that in his spirit was a blend of socialist internationalist philosophy with the ancient faith of his own people. His reaction had not been Moslem, but Hindu, and that impulsive action gave me a fresh and deeper insight into his mind.

United Front

From Yusuf I learned the story of Masani's break with the Congress Socialist party and of the popular front experiment between the Congress Socialist party and the Indian Communist party. As a student of the international Communist movement, I was familiar with the story of these popular fronts and united fronts in many lands, but I realized there was something unique in the Indian scene which made the experiment there turn out differently.

During the early thirties after Hitler came to power, Stalin made several vain attempts to come to an understanding with Hitler. When these failed and the anti-Comintern axis developed, Stalin became alarmed and made one of his sudden turns to seek support in the League of Nations (till then called by him "The League of Bandits"). At the same time he made an alliance with France in the Stalin-Laval Pact and opened a big drive for a

popular front with Socialist and Democratic parties. Up till then the Socialists had been called "Social Fascists" and democracy and socialism were "the main enemies." Now the Communist parties offered the "hand of brotherhood" to all progressive liberal, democratic, and Socialist parties. Many of these were deceived, infiltrated, and later disrupted by this manoeuvre, which lasted until Stalin betrayed his democratic Allies by signing his pact with Hitler.

The Congress Socialist party of India was also taken in by the fair words of friendship and not only accepted the Communists into its ranks but helped the Communist party to enter into the Indian National Congress. The Indian Communists were under secret instructions to penetrate and try to capture the Congress Socialist party and above all to discredit and destroy Mahatma Gandhi. Though the Indian Socialists, Meherally among them, were as candid and unsuspecting as the socialists of other lands, yet they proved to possess an antitoxin which saved them from destruction.

The only person, according to Meherally, who sounded a note of warning that the Communists were not morally fit to enter the Socialist party or the Indian National Congress was Minoo Masani. "Minoo was in jail with the rest of us at that moment," Yusuf told me. "We spent long hours and days and nights trying to convince him but we did not succeed. He insisted upon resigning from the Congress Socialist party if it accepted the Communists into its ranks. When we failed to convince him, we decided to help him with his letter of resignation so that he would make it a really worthy document. All of us had a hand in helping him with an explanation of his reason for breaking with us."

Again I realized that Indian socialism had some strange quality missing from political life in other countries, for I had never heard of a factional controversy in which members of one faction tried to help the spokesmen of another faction to put their position as clearly and worthily as possible. I was mystified as I listened and pondered what this strange ingredient in the Indian spirit could be.

Double-dealing Communists

"Minoo was right, of course, although we did not know it then," Yusuf continued. "Some time later when I got out of prison I discovered that the Communist party was guilty of double-dealing and had constituted itself as a hostile conspiracy

within our movement. They kept up a faction of their own, slandered our movement and its leaders, secretly worked for the defeat of some of our candidates in the elections, made undercover alliances with opponents of socialism against us. Finally someone brought me copies of a secret Communist circular which they had sent out to their members, giving instructions to support reactionaries against Congress Socialist candidates in certain districts. I called a number of the top leaders of the Communist party faction within our ranks to come to visit me and I accused them of moral duplicity. Their answer was a barefaced denial. Thereupon I took out a copy of their circular and said: 'How do you explain this?'

"I was alone with their leaders; they snatched the circular out of my hand by force. 'Are you such fools, I asked, that you think you can undo a moral crime by destroying a document? Do you think I am such a fool as to trust you after this has come into my possession? Naturally I have other copies in a safe place. You have proved unworthy of membership in a socialist movement. You have proved unworthy of membership in the Congress party, and you have proved unworthy of the moral principles of Gandhiji. What you aim at is power for your Moscow masters. What we aim at is the freedom, the well-being, and the regeneration of our people. You and we cannot travel together, for our roads diverge. I give you one week to withdraw all your members from our party or we will expel every one of them.'

" 'We will not give up the Congress Socialist party,' they answered. 'It is our party now. We belong to it and we will have control of it in a showdown.'

" 'I give you one week to withdraw,' I responded, 'or we will expel every last one of you. It will be more honorable if you resign, for your continued membership in a party you do not agree with dishonors you and us. But if necessary we will expel you.' "

Once more I realized that there was some strange principle at work in the Indian Socialist party which saved them from the deadly vacillation of other socialists and liberals in other lands.

"Our National Committee," Yusuf continued, "sent circulars to all our branches and local and provincial committees throughout India, exposing the whole affair and directing the immediate expulsion of all known Communists and all those who had sympathized with them, voted with them, fellow-traveled with

them, or joined in any way in their conspiracy.

"Do not be afraid to commit an injustice," we wrote. "If anyone is wrongly expelled, he will find it easy to prove his good faith and can be reinstated, but if any morally corrupting element remains, it will corrupt our party."

"Within the time limit set by us, our party was purified."

"How many sections, branches, locals, and provincial committees did you lose as a result?" I asked, remembering how many parties were wrecked by such splits.

"We had no serious losses," he replied, "because the moral principle on which we acted was clear to our membership."

Suddenly I knew the answer. It was the influence of Gandhi within the Congress Socialist party which had immunized it against the moral corruption of the Communists. However much the Congress Socialists differed with Gandhi and he with them, they felt a kinship of moral purpose, and therefore they were close together in the questions which mattered most. No other party anywhere in the world suffered such insignificant losses as the result of this unhappy experiment of working together with the Communists.

British Rule in India

I never heard Yusuf speak at any length of Nehru or Patel, but he spoke frequently to me of his earlier relations with Mohammed Ali Jinnah, under whose tutelage and in whose chambers he had read law, and of Mahatma Gandhi, with whom he had had arguments on industrialization and socialism and other topics, but for whom he felt the love of a son for a father and of a disciple for a revered master.

Yusuf had been born a Mohammedan, and to Jinnah he owed much of his early training, but when Jinnah broke with the National Congress party and began his movement for a separate Pakistan, Yusuf remained loyal to India and the Congress party.

He spoke of his former master, Jinnah, in tones of resolute rejection but without bitterness. On the whole, Yusuf preferred to talk of things which inspired his enthusiasm rather than matters which he felt called upon to condemn.

Only when he spoke of the negative aspects of British rule in India, and of the monstrous moral corruption spread by the Stalin regime among intellectuals and workers, did I ever hear him become eloquent on negative things.

On British rule in India, he was tireless. When he learned that I had spent much of

my adult life working with the Indian independence movement in the United States, he found a fresh reason for closeness to me.

I told him stories of an earlier generation of Indian independence fighters whom I had known in the United States. During World War I some had tried to get arms and help from Germany, but their movement had been unsuccessful. Others had tried to work for Indian independence by influencing American public opinion, which in general has always been anti-imperialist.

Yusuf plied me with questions concerning earlier Indian independence fighters who had found refuge in the United States and, unable to return to the homeland, were dying in lonely exile on the West Coast of this country or in Mexico, with no prospect of seeing India again. I was particularly close to a group of Sikhs who lived on the Pacific Coast in California and who had founded an independence movement known as the Hindu Gadr party, for in the early twenties I had edited a newspaper partly owned by the San Francisco labor movement and partly by the Irish republican movement and the Hindu Gadr party.

In turn he told me much about the earlier British rule in India, about the great textile industry which India possessed when the British came and how the British crushed it, in part by competition from cheap Manchester textiles and in part by laws against native spinning. Some of the stories he told me about ordinances which provided for cutting off the fingers of people who insisted on continuing their spinning and weaving were new and startling to me in spite of my life-long interest in Indian independence.

I realized that Yusuf's picture of a once great Indian textile industry must be a true one, for my philological bent taught me to notice that many of the words for textiles in the English tongue came from India: madras, calico, cashmere, etc. Thus the frozen history of language bore witness to the truth of his incredible words. He instantly added my insights from linguistics to his arsenal of arguments in his talks to other Americans.

No Rancor

When England finally decided to withdraw from India, I watched Mehrali's bitterness suddenly ebb away. There was no rancor in him. Thenceforward he talked very little about British crimes in India, though he had spent much of his life in prison because of British rule. Now he spoke rather of the good things the Brit-

ish had contributed to Indian civilization and culture—above all, the sense of justice and safeguarding of individual and civil rights that are inherent in the British tradition. He jested about the fact that in the vast subcontinent of India there were so many peoples and dialects that often the only common language in which Indian intellectuals could communicate with each other was the "language of the oppressor." That language, he told me, opened to the Indians a great literature and tradition which might be used to enrich their own.

I teased him about the "British sense of justice" which had kept him so long in jail. He answered in deep earnest: "Even while they oppressed us, they were uncomfortable about it. A hunger strike in a British jail could get me the Bible and your book to read. In Hitler's jails or in Stalin's it would only have gotten me before a firing squad. Gandhi's whole code of nonviolent resistance to the evil of foreign rule was predicated on the unspoken assumption that the English had a better nature to which we could appeal. In the land of blood purges and concentration camps that Stalin has built, the great organized campaigns of nonviolent resistance to evil could never have started. At Gandhi's first word of protest, he would have disappeared forever from view. The English at least felt that they had to report his defiance, even while they ridiculed it and imprisoned him. And they were always terrified lest he die in one of his protest hunger strikes. That is why he taught us to hate the evil things the English did but not to hate the English, or ever to despair of their regeneration or ours."

Gandhi's Influence

As Yusuf talked to me about Gandhi, I began to realize that there was a warm bond of affection and good-humored intimacy that bound Yusuf to him in a relationship that was compounded of father and son, master and disciple, friend and friend, in unequal parts. They had obviously argued much, for Yusuf told me of Gandhi's reservations about the class-struggle aspect of Yusuf's socialism and the socialist habit of treating some classes as virtue incarnate and others as incarnate evil. The dogmatic violent amoral side of Yusuf's socialist creed had been tempered by Gandhi's philosophy. And Yusuf had his reservations on the "homespun" aspects of Gandhi's economics. But these were superficial differences, while in their hearts there was a tie of common moral principle, deep affection, and the warm bond that links a devoted disciple to a great teacher.

An Earnest Soul

When he left our shores to return to India, I helped him pack his bags and was shocked by the massiveness and weight of his baggage. He had accumulated hundreds of books, magazines, and manuscript articles, including some of mine, which he intended to try to publish in India. He had had too much baggage when he came. Every Indian, it seems to me, carries too much baggage. Perhaps because, unlike us, they are accustomed to many servants, and human labour power for personal service is cheap and plentiful in India. But Yusuf's bags were laden far more than any others with the dead weight of books. They contrasted strange-

ly with his frail, slight person. With his bad heart he could not lift the lightest of his bags. For that matter, I with my good heart couldn't either. It was as if he had tried to pack all our art, all our literature, all our culture, and all the mementos of all the men and women he had known and the places he had seen into his baggage to take them all back with him to India. I secured the help of three men in and around the hotel, and the four of us managed to get the slight Yusuf and the massive baggage into a single cab.

My last words to him were an earnest admonition that he should slacken up on his party work, his endless journeys and speeches, and endless giving himself to all

and sundry. I urged him to conserve his strength and to communicate his thoughts through books and articles.

He half promised, but then he began to talk of the great eagerness of the Indian masses to hear and learn and the great need to teach what one could. "How can I deny myself to anyone," he asked, "at any place or at any hour? There is so much to be done. And there is such joy in doing it."

I was not surprised when mutual friends wrote me from India that Yusuf's frail heart had ceased to beat. He had given it to his people to the very end.

Extracts from a reprint of the original in The Pacific Spectator. Volume VIII No. 3, Summer 1954.

"Better Government, Not More Government"

S.V. Raju

Two years ago, the London-based Institute of Economic Affairs published a 72-page monograph entitled *Pricing, Planning and Politics - A Study of economic distortions in India* by Dr. Subroto Roy, a Cambridge University scholar whose doctoral dissertation was *On Liberty and Economic Growth: Preface to a Philosophy for India*.

His monograph on pricing, planning and politics published in May 1984 received instant editorial attention in the prestigious London *Times* of May 29, 1984.

Valuable Contribution

Why this interest in a paper two years after its publication? For two reasons. The first is that as far as we can recall there has been no mention of this valuable contribution to Indian economic thinking in our journals or generally in the Indian press. We got to know of it only when Dr. Roy on a recent visit to India sent us a copy.

The second and, perhaps, more significant reason is that this monograph provides an excellent reference point to judge whether there is validity in the claims made by Mr. Rajiv Gandhi's supporters that the economic policies of his government mark a fundamental departure from the futile, if not discredited policies of his predecessors in government.

Not since the late Dr. B.R. Shenoy's superb analyses of the Indian economic

scene, have I read anything that so succinctly states the liberal economic position and its urgent relevance to India.

In the course of its editorial comment, *The Times* observed:

"A paper by an Indian economist published today....shows how Asia's largest democracy is gradually being stifled by the imposition of economic policies whose woeful effect and rhetorical unreality find their echo all over the third world. As with many of Britain's former imperial possessions, the rot set in long before independence. But as with most of the other former dependencies, the instrument of economic regulation and bureaucratic control set up by the British has been used decisively and expansively to consolidate a statist regime which inhibits free enterprise, minimizes economic success and consolidates the power of government in all spheres of the economy.

"We hear little of this side of things when India rattles the borrowing bowl or denigrates her creditors for want of further munificence. How could Indian officials explain their poor performance relative to Hongkong? Dr. Roy has answers for them. He lists the causes as a large and heavily subsidised public sector, labyrinthine control over private enterprise, forcibly depressed agricultural prices, massive import substitution,

government monopoly of foreign exchange transactions, artificially overvalued currency and the extensive politicization of the labour market, not to mention the corruption which is an inevitable side effect of an economy which depends on the arbitrament of bureaucracy."

Significant Propositions

A letter from Dr. Roy to *The Times* clarifying certain wrong impressions in the editorial (not quite relevant to this review) sets down "four significant propositions" which he has "tried to argue in the monograph"

- "1. The intellectual debate in independent India has not been a fair one: liberal critics (Indian and foreign) of the Indian Government's policies have hardly been heard, let alone listened to.
- "2. Civil government anywhere has certain functions which are indispensable to the continuation of civil life, let alone economic growth.
- "3. There is overwhelming evidence from a number of independent

Pricing, Planning and Politics. A study of economic distortions in India. (Occasional Paper No. 69; The Institute of Economic Affairs, Lord North Street, Westminster, London SW1P3LB; Price: £1.80.

sources to the effect that the Indian government's economic policies have not been conducive to mass prosperity.

- "4. The citizens of India should seek to ensure that their Government does, in fact, fulfil the duties of civil government first and foremost, and this would probably entail a retirement of the Government from inside the market-place."

Liberal Agenda

In the concluding part of his monograph, Dr. Roy attempts solutions to the problems of our economy. As a liberal I cannot agree more with him than when he affirms that "only a set of radical changes in policy can put the Indian economy on a path to higher prosperity within a free and healthy body politic." And what are the changes that Dr. Roy advocates in his "Liberal Agenda"? The changes he recommends rest on the basic premise that the "ultimate ends of economic advice in India are to seek to bring about mass prosperity under conditions of individual freedom." In this context it would be interesting to recall that the Swatantra Party's statement of policy was entitled "To Prosperity Through Freedom."

Indian foreign policy will have to change says Dr. Roy. "If the liberalisation... is to be effective, a truly independent yet prudent foreign policy may be required to accompany it." India's Soviet tilt according to Roy arose because Indians perceive USA as an ally of Pakistan and China. If India mends her fences and concludes no-war pacts with these two countries, it would enable India to draw away to some extent from the Soviets. Here one could disagree with Dr. Roy. Many, including this writer, believe that the Soviet tilt is basically caused by the Nehrus' admiration for the Soviet Union. In fact in the monograph itself there is this quotation from a speech by Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru:

"If the future is full of hope it is largely because of Soviet Russia and what it has done, and I am convinced that, if some world catastrophe does not intervene, this new civilization will spread to other lands and put an end to the wars and conflicts on which capitalism feeds."

Nehru and Socialism, Ed. V.B. Singh, Government of India, Ministry Information and Broadcasting, Publications Division, Delhi, 1977, p.67.

Foreign trade should be liberalised. "A major economic transformation from a closed and protectionist economy to an

open one which harnessed India's advantages" would be of immense benefit and spur economic growth.

Public sector enterprises should be privatised. "There is no economic reason why the Government of India should be engaged in commercial or merchant banking and insurance or in industry from steel, machine tools, ship-building and fertilisers to wrist-watches, hotels and beer."

The pricing of agricultural output should be exposed to the free market and competition among farmers encouraged.

Instead of producing beer, the energies of government ought to be directed towards taking "effective precautions against the monsoons and improvements in the efficiency of the systems of civil and criminal justice."

There are other reforms that form part of Dr. Roy's "Liberal Agenda". They include such matters as introduction of vouchers for primary and secondary education; assessment of the benefits from and costs of subsidies to higher education; and end to the government monopoly of radio and television; revision of pay scales of government servants to make them competitive with the private sector; and decentralisation of public

spending decisions.

Need For Hard Decisions.

Dr. Roy fears, and rightly too, that politicians, government officers and public sector unions would oppose any reduction in government intervention in the economy "for fear of losing rents and sinecures of the *status quo*". But the attempt has to be made nevertheless if India is to shake off the fetters that prevent her people from emerging out of the present morass.

Dr. Roy concludes with what ought to be a commonsensical proposition if only our rulers would shed their blinkers of a hazy 'socialist' dogma and have the courage to take hard decisions:

"The simple secret of a stable and prosperous polity is to create institutions which harness the universal pursuit of individual self-interest, and not ones which pretend that men are selfless saints. A polity where this fact is acknowledged would not have to depend for the viability of its institutions on mere exhortation, as the institutions of the Indian Republic seem perpetually fated to do, even while the competitive pursuit of self-interest is everywhere manifest."

The Essential Difference

Bhanu Pratap Singh

Laissez-faire is not the same as competitive free enterprise and Rajiv Gandhi's policies are not inspired by the ideology of the erstwhile Swatantra Party. Rajiv Gandhi is still clinging to the dead body of socialism, whereas the Swatantra party had unequivocally repudiated it long ago. Rajiv Gandhi is still talking of improving the public sector performance through managerial efficiency; the Swatantra Party would have scrapped (or privatised) most of it, leaving only those which are important from the point of view of the defence of the country, or in which the private sector was unable or unwilling to perform.

Also, Rajiv Gandhi's liberalisation ends at the thresh-hold of the farm sector. Even now no farmer may instal, without obtaining a licence (which imposes crippling levies on him) even a small *hulliar* to convert his paddy into rice; and if he makes

rice by hand-pounding, he is not allowed to transport it to consuming centres. The Swatantra Party stood for a free and prosperous peasantry, as well as for honest competitive free enterprise. Their outlook was not fragmented, as is that of Rajiv Gandhi - liberalisation for industrialists and controls for the peasants. It should also not be forgotten that the Swatantra Party was formed to save the farmers from cooperativisation of their holdings which had become a craze with Nehru. It is on that account, that the Swatantra Party with the support of the peasantry had returned the largest number of members to parliament than any other single party has done hitherto. It is also significant, that not one of these was returned from the metropolitan towns, where the industrialists could exercise maximum influence.

Communism and Atomic Death

In spite of Gorbachev's boast, there can be no real openness in the Soviet system. It is simply not compatible with the system, and when it comes to the point, the rulers in the Kremlin will be ready to sacrifice as many human lives as may be necessary, to keep the openness from becoming real.

Christian Brügger

The Soviets may not like the connection of these two ideas to be made, but there is truth in it. The name of Chernobyl will be in men's minds for decades, if not longer, and we may as well begin by thinking about it objectively.

In the last years, the word has gone around that atomic death was something which was only a risk in the West, that it was one of the consequences of extreme capitalism, the unabating thirst for profit. Those who have spread this word have been putting the matter in entirely the wrong terms, and they have at the same time been sapping one of the characteristics of the West which precisely reduces the possibility of atomic death — and not only atomic death, but all forms of pollu-

tion and also of war itself: the fact that in the West the opposition can always make itself heard.

From this generalisation to Chernobyl is not so great a jump. I do not intend by combining the ideas of Communism and atomic death to say that what happened at Chernobyl was because the Soviets are technically or technologically incapable. They do not, it is true, have the same nuclear capability as there is in the West, but that is merely quantitative. There is a possibility of accident in a nuclear reactor anywhere — even though it may be greater in the Soviet bloc than it is in the West.

In any case, we do not really know where the Soviet Union stands in the matter of nuclear technology. It is only possi-

ble for experts operating in the open society to give accurate information about this to the public; they cannot get the relevant information from offices of state in the closed society. The socialist system makes it impossible for lessons to be learned from the Chernobyl disaster, and this is something which applies to both East and West.

There is something contradictory in this; for no political system has an interest in making nuclear catastrophes occur. This is a universal truth. But as far as the closed society is concerned, as we see it in the Soviet Union, this is merely theoretical. The system itself is based on a combination of force and untruth, and the point about this is that it cannot be applied

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to one part of society and not to another. There can be no sector in the Soviet Union which is exempt from this rule, and this also has to include the nuclear sector. Whatever happened at Chernobyl was so surrounded with untruth, that *nobody* except those immediately responsible knew for days what had really happened. This could only be possible in a closed society. The mistakes were such that, if this had happened in the West, say at Three Mile Island in the United States, then there would have been a major scandal at the seat of power – and this is plainly impossible in the Soviet Union.

In spite of Gorbachev's boast, there can be no real openness in the Soviet system. It is simply not compatible with the system, and when it comes to the point the rulers in the Kremlin will be ready to sacrifice as many human lives as may be necessary to keep this openness from becoming real. This has always been the case, and the secrecy observed in the case of Chernobyl shows that nothing has changed.

The fact that Chernobyl was ever known about in the West is because of the direction the wind happened to be blowing on that day. It brought the nuclear cloud out to the West, where radioactivity is regularly measured and where the figures are not – cannot be – hidden. If the wind that day had been blowing from West to East, it may well be that we would have known nothing. Somewhere in the small print of the press, some day in the future, there would have been a little article saying that dissident circles in the West claim that there was a nuclear accident at Chernobyl... The Soviets do not need a valid reason to close any part of their country to foreign tourists, and the Ukraine has been closed before. Anyone who put a question-mark up to this would have been accused of being a rabid anti-Communist, and back the West would go to its usual habits, many of them centred on the anti-nuclear movement – in the West.

Precisely this must have been the main aim of the Soviets in keeping the accident so secret. They were prepared to retire into complete secrecy, and when the first enquiries came from Sweden they said there was nothing wrong. When continuation of this was impossible, they made information available as late and as sparsely as they could. And the tragic thing is that for those *inside* the Soviet Union, there was even less information. Those most immediately concerned knew least. We can

compare this with the hourly comments which were issued in America at the time of Three Mile Island. This is the difference between an open society and a closed society.

The tragic thing in this particular case is that people in both kinds of society – those in the Soviet bloc and those in the West – were in the same boat. Compared with those in the West, the Soviets chose to do virtually nothing about the danger confronting their own people. How little, then, would they have done if there had been no one to make a fuss, because *nobody knew*? And the question can be shifted to the political sphere. The importance of verification in any kind of nuclear disarmament measure becomes of the most crucial importance possible, in the light of the secrecy with which the Soviets tried to surround the events of Chernobyl. After this, there can be no mutual basis for confidence. The Americans are well enough aware of this, but their European allies have not been so sure.

We have to think of the hard lot of the Soviet citizens nearest to the accident. But there is also the lot of those countries nearest to the Western border of the Soviet Union. Most of these are in fact Soviet satellites, and they have been treated as such in the matter of the supply of information. The Nordic countries, particularly Sweden, will feel that the cavalier way in which they have been treated is a continuation of the systematic way in which the country's territorial waters have been breached by the activities of Soviet submarines during the last few years.

As far as Soviet policy itself is concerned, we no longer need have any illusions about what Gorbachev has meant by openness. We can assume that he did mean something, and that it is in the in-

terest of his rule that things in the Soviet Union should be made more efficient. It is inherent in the system – this we have already seen – that inefficiency goes unperceived. This is part of the wages of secrecy. Where the government needs to know what is going on, there must by more openness: from local instances to higher instances to the centralised ministries in Moscow. But where it is in the higher interest of the Soviet state to have secrecy, then there will be no openness. To a degree, and to be fair, both these elements have been at work in the Chernobyl accident reaction.

Before concluding, I must return to those unfortunate Soviet citizens who live in the area around Chernobyl – and this includes the populations of the large cities of Kiev and Minsk. They have been provided with singularly little information, much less than has been given to foreign journalists in Moscow and thus relayed to the West. People could have been saved from some of the consequences of radioactivity if they had been given the right information at the right time; but it has seemed to be Moscow's policy that a little more radioactivity was worth the price of avoiding discontent – which will probably come about anyway. Because those people will find out the truth.

Radio Liberty – broadcasting in Russian – may be financed by the United States, but it works in the interest of real openness – not the phoney openness put forward by the government in Moscow. Those who listen in the West often praise the quality of the information which is provided by Radio Liberty, and we are told that it is singularly exempt of slanted information. It emanates from within the open society, and it is not pro-Soviet. That is not its function. Its function is to tell the truth, and this is why the Soviets have been so particularly irritated by its activities in the days which have followed the Chernobyl disaster. We cannot condemn Radio Liberty, because we too believe that the people of the Ukraine have the right to know what has happened to them and what precautions they ought to take.

This is not the first nuclear accident in the Soviet Union. There have been others before. But then luck was on the side of the Soviet authorities. The sites were farther inside the country, and no radioactivity escaped to the West, to be commented on by the busybodies of the open society.

Teacher caught copying

A teacher was caught red handed while copying at the Master's examination at Krishnaji Rao Pawar College in Dewas in Madhya Pradesh.

College officials said Mr. Sharafat Ali, who had been entrusted with invigilation work, was also taking his Master's examination.

More than 100 students have so far been caught copying at this college, the officials said.

Times of India, April 6

Courtesy: Swiss Press Review

Vietnam – The Loss of Liberties

The war in Vietnam was brought to a close with the Paris Peace Agreement in 1973. South Vietnam was a military dictatorship and the North, a communist totalitarian state. The Americans withdrew leaving the people of the South to the not-so-tender mercies of the northern communists.

The communists promised, as is their wont whenever they have sought to suppress free peoples everywhere, a heaven on earth. What is the reality today?

The Paris-based Vietnam Committee for Human Rights in a press release on March 3, 1986 paints a grim picture — a picture of living hell.

Article 11 (Chapter IV) of the 1973 Paris Peace Agreement affirms that both parties will:

— achieve national reconciliation and concord, end hatred and enmity prohibit all acts of reprisal and discrimination against individuals or organisations that have collaborated with one side or the other;

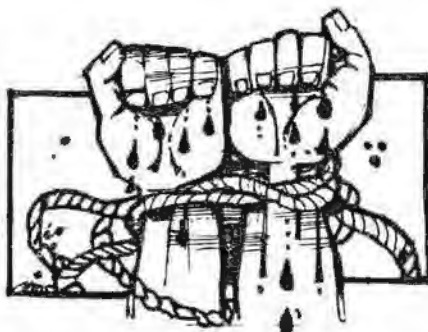
— ensure the democratic liberties of the people: personal freedom, freedom of speech, freedom of the press, freedom of meeting, freedom of organisation, freedom of political activities, freedom of belief, freedom of movement, freedom of residence, freedom of work, right to property ownership and right to free enterprise.

• However, despite this Agreement, and despite Vietnam's obligation to respect the principles embodied in the United Nations Charter and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the Hanoi authorities continue to violate the fundamental freedoms and human rights of its citizens.

After 11 years, the human rights situation is as follows:

Inside Vietnam:

— 500,000 political prisoners are detained without trial in more than 150 camps and prisons all over Vietnam. 65,000 prisoners were executed in re-education camps from 1975-83. In December 1985, in the province of Long An (South Vietnam) alone, the police arrested 6,100 people and sent them to concentration camps for re-education.



— Religious communities are the target of constant harassment and discrimination. The Government has dissolved the Unified Buddhist Church, arrested and detained without trial high-ranking Buddhist leaders such as Venerable Thich Quang Do and Thich Huyen Quang, Thich Tue Si, Le Manh That, the Nuns Thich Nu Tri Hai, Thich Nu Hue Khong. Catholics (10% of the population) and protestants are also victims of discrimination. Jesuit priests such as Le Thanh Que, Nguyen Cong Doan and Do Quang Chinh are in prison under extremely heavy sentences ranging from 5-15 years imprisonment plus 5 years loss of civil rights. Catholic Father Nguyen Van Ly is condemned to 12 years imprisonment, and Mgr Nguyen Kim Dien, Archbishop of Hue, is under house arrest and constantly harassed and interrogated by the police. High dignitaries of the Cao Dai and Hoa Hao communities are also victims of discrimination, harassment, torture and imprisonment.

— Intellectuals are also victims of frequent and arbitrary arrest, detention and interrogation and their families are regularly harassed by the police e.g. the cases of writers Doan Quoc Sy, Hoang Hai Thuy, Nguyen Dinh Toan, or the poet Nguyen Chi Thien (winner of the French Pen Club Freedom Prize, and the Danish Pen Club Prize), detained for the past 27 years in prisons and camps in North Vietnam.

— 2,200,000 ethnic tribes people from the Central and Northern highlands have been forcibly evacuated from their traditional mountain homes and deported to uncultivated, insalubrious lowlands to which they are physically and socially unsuited.

Outside Vietnam:

— In addition to its military occupation (approximately 200,000 soldiers), Viet-

nam is now in the process of colonizing Cambodia. 1 million Vietnamese civilians have already settled inside Cambodian territory. As 65% of the active population of Cambodia are women, half of whom are widows, the policy of settlement and the encouragement of mixed marriages form part of the Vietnamese Government's policy of colonization.

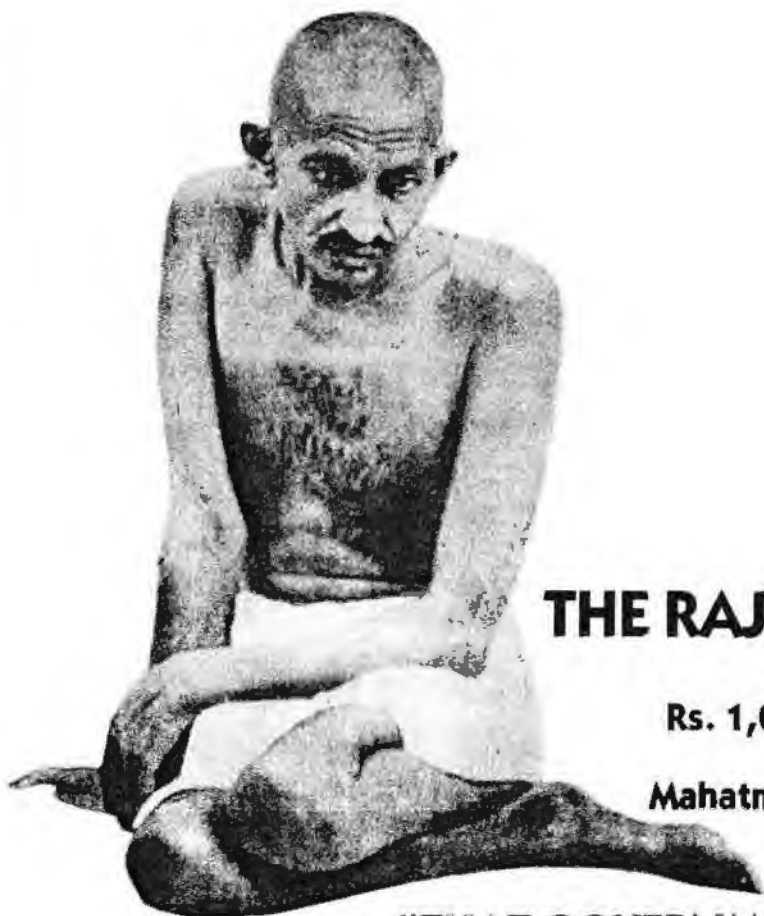
— the recent drastic rise in the price of postage stamps in Vietnam (a 10 gramme letter costing 22 piasters in 1984 now costs 162 piasters) is a direct violation of the Universal Postal Union's Charter, and considering that the monthly average wage is 150-300 piasters this amounts to a form of censorship. It is prejudicial to the overseas Vietnamese community (1.5 million refugees) who find themselves literally cut off from news from their relatives at home. Letters are also frequently censored.

The Vietnam Committee for Human Rights calls upon international opinion, and particularly upon those Delegations now participating in the present Geneva meeting of the United Nations Human Rights Commission, to raise their voices in support of the Vietnamese people by calling upon Hanoi to cease all violations of human rights in Vietnam, particularly by

- liberating all political prisoners and religious leaders imprisoned for the non-violent exercise of their conscientiously held religious beliefs.
- closing down once and for all the re-education camps all over Vietnam;
- ceasing all acts of reprisal and discrimination against the people of South Vietnam;
- ensuring, protecting and promoting the democratic liberties stipulated in the 1973 Paris Peace Agreement.

We call upon the Secretary General of the United Nations Organisation to ensure the respect of fundamental human rights among all Member States, and particularly to investigate the situation of human rights in Vietnam. We urge the United Nations Human Rights Commission to consider this as a matter of high priority, and appoint a Special Rapporteur to inquire into the situation of human rights and fundamental freedoms in Vietnam.

Courtesy: Exchange



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- ★ Every Indian Prime Minister has publicly affirmed that his or her government follows policies advocated by Gandhiji.
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To mark the 107th birth anniversary of Mr. C. Rajagopalachari, we invite young men and women (in their twenties) to comment on Gandhiji's enunciation of what he considered to be the ideal government.

The essay should be between 1500 and 2000 words.

It should be typed or written in clear handwriting.

The last date for submission: September 30, 1986

Awards: FIRST PRIZE: Rs. 1,000; SECOND PRIZE: Rs. 500

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143, Mahatma Gandhi Road,
Bombay 400 001

Soviets Disfavour Fall in Oil Prices

The Soviet Union is the biggest oil producer in the world. It is also, of course, like the United States, a major consumer; and much of its exports go to East European and other Communist states, where it can charge prices which have only a minimal connection with the international price. The Soviets have in fact been seen to be exploiting their economic relationship with other Communist countries for many years, and in other commodities besides oil. Unfair barter arrangements concerning oil and other goods have also been made by the Soviet Union with many developing countries, particularly those which have at one time or another during the past quarter century been under Soviet control.

So it seems particularly ironic that the Soviets now claim that the price of oil has been pushed down by the West in order to harm, or "plunder", the developing countries. The truth, is, of course, that the United States is also a big oil producing country—and although on balance the Americans welcome the descent in the oil price they are also affected by the same basic issues which affect the Soviet Union. And they have more both to win and to lose, since oil is one of the basic costs in the United States economy, and a low oil price means a lifting of one of the most basic inflationary pressures. This is good for continued prosperity. But on the other hand the oil industry in the United States is an important economic branch, and its health is seriously affected by the low oil price. Many small oil firms have gone out of business.

The United States would like to see stability in the oil markets, and it is certainly true that economic disruption in the oil producing states is against American interests. Large debtor nations like Nigeria and Mexico find it difficult to service their loans to American banks, which puts the banks themselves in danger. And the oil states of the Middle East, which are less radically affected because of their smaller populations, are amongst America's leading trading partners, and economic austerity there affects many American firms.

But the Soviet Union now claims that the third world as a whole is harmed by the drop in oil prices and that this has

been engineered by the West "in neo-colonial style". The truth is that for the vast majority of third world countries, which are not oil producers, the drop in the international price of oil is about the best thing that could possibly have happened. When the price rose so strongly in the mid-seventies many of the third world countries which had achieved a small measure of economic advance thanks to the efforts of their peoples saw this wiped out almost overnight. In recent years it has

looked to many of these countries as if they would never be prosperous again, that the future held no hope in store. Now, once again almost overnight, they see a glimmer of prosperity on the horizon after all. For them too, the main cause of inflation has suddenly gone away, and it looks as though modest economic progress is once more within their grasp.

Why should the Soviet Union pretend the opposite? The only answer we can give is that the propagandists in Moscow have orders to portray the Soviet Union as the natural friend of all developing countries. But they are making a crass mistake in the oil context; only the oil producing countries will lose out through cheaper oil, and these make up only one or two of the developing countries.

Courtesy: Swiss Press Review

Chinese Imperialism

The following is an extract from a statement by His Holiness The Dalai Lama on the occasion of the 27th Anniversary of the Tibetan National Uprising Day.

These days the Chinese, forced by self-interest, are conforming to international norms of behaviour by adopting policies that are less dogmatic. This is to be praised and welcomed. In Tibet, too, there has been some liberalization of Chinese policies, some efforts to improve the economy of the people and, unlike in the past, a little more interest in the culture of the Tibetan people. However, for the past thirty years or more the Chinese have looked down on the Tibetans as objects of slavery and oppression and intentionally deprived them of the precious opportunities for proper education. Now under the pretext that Tibetans are not competent large numbers of Chinese, mainly under the guise of skilled labour, are being brought into the major towns of central Tibet. Especially in parts of Amdo and Kham large numbers of Chinese are continually setting up agricultural settlements in the more fertile areas and places where there are better facilities. The native inhabitants, the Tibetans, are being pushed away to remote areas and being forced to live as nomads.

No matter how convincing the temporary nationalities policy may appear, it will be extremely regrettable and dangerous if the very basis of a distinct culture — the people — are made to disappear without a trace. Similarly, while they say that they are improving the schools in Tibet the

Chinese are taking to China many young Tibetan children on the ground that there are better facilities there. Here, too, there is the danger that eventually these children will forget their way of thinking and living. The parents and the children themselves must make every effort to remember and preserve their distinctive traditions wherever they are. All of us must take serious note of these dangerous developments.

I would also like to add a word of caution about the new Chinese economic policy for Tibet. Apart from liberalizing the economic system in Tibet, since 1980, China has recently invited foreign capital investment in Tibet. This is welcome, if it will lead to an improvement in the standard of living of the common Tibetans. But for the last 27 years there has been a systematic exploitation of Tibet's natural resources. More than anything else, Tibet was made the source of raw material for the economic development of China. If the present trend continues and also if the Chinese hastily and haphazardly plan the economic development of Tibet to meet their overall modernization target without taking into consideration the conditions of the country and the needs of the people, there is the danger that not only economic chaos but ecological disaster will befall Tibet.

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The Ellora Festival

S.I. Clerk

The Ellora Festival (March 27 to 30) organized by the Maharashtra Tourism Development Corporation (MTDC) and the Maharashtra Films Stage and Cultural Development Corporation may be described as quite a success. For one thing, it was right in the open grounds outside the Ellora Caves with the magnificent Kailas temple all floodlit as the backdrop. In its own way, Nature too favoured the festival as the sky was moonlit to add to the festive spirit.

To their credit, the authorities were able to attract some leading musicians and dancers as well as some promising upcoming youngsters. Thus, the veteran vocalist Malikarjun Mansur lighted the traditional lamp and opened the Festival with the raga *Nand*. Even today his voice is striking in its rich resonance which is remarkable for he is over seventy-five years. He was followed by Alarmel Walli's Bharata Natyam. Her Varnam was very impressive.

On the second night Parveen Sultana left quite an impact with her *khyal* in *Kalavati*. This was followed by a short *tarana* in *Hansadhwani*, a *thumri* in *Mishra Kafi*, a *Meera bhajan* and *Mishra Bhairavi* as the grand finale. Preceding Parveen Sultana was Nath Nerulkar whose *Shyam Kalyan* was indeed a well-studied recital. The session ended with an Odissi recital by Anandi Ramachandran. While she has mastered the relevant technique she has yet to shed the influences of her guru, Kalucharan Mahapatra.

On the third night there was the sensitive *Yaman* on the flute by Devendra Murdeshwar. This was followed by an Odissi recital by Sutapa Dasgupta. This was sheer delight for, her movements were ever so flowing and sensitively graceful. Her *Abhinaya* and *Pallavi* were the hallmarks of her recital. Her performance was followed by a sarod recital by Zarine Daroovala. Her gradual 'working out' of the raga '*Chandranandan*' was a joy for any serious student of classical music and of sarod.

On the last night Sucheta Bhide-Chapekar offered a rather out-of-the-ordinary Bharata Natyam in that it reflected her strivings to 'integrate' Bharata Natyam into the rich Maharashtra cultural heritage. Thus the Marathi/Hindi words of her songs and one of her items was actually

based on the famous *Natya Sangeet* from *Manapman*. The purists may not approve of Sucheta but the Hindi/Marathi words of the songs accompanying the dances did make for greater understanding and joy.

The second half of the evening was devoted to a grand sitar performance by Shujaat Khan, son of Ustad Vilayat Khan. His *Yaman*, *Shyam Kalyan* and *Jog Kauns* turned out to be the memorable grand finale of this year's Ellora Festival. At least twice his voice accompanied his sitar revealing a facet of his genius.

The Ellora Festival was started only last year and already plans are afoot for the next one to be scheduled from 26th to 29th March, 1987. This year's Festival was beset with problems relating to the microphone and lighting. The Kailas Temple too could have been better floodlit. After all, the various performances take place in an open air theatre and the authorities ought to seek some real professional expert advice on the lights and the

acoustics in order to do full justice both to the artistes and the audience.

The main purpose of holding the Ellora Festival towards the end of March is to attract off-season tourists to some of our historical spots. While overall, the 1986 Festival was fairly well-organized, Nature would seem to oppose the idea. For Aurangabad (where we were staying during the Festival, commuting to the Ellora Caves site every evening) during the day was burning hot forcing one to stay indoors.

Festivals like this one at Ellora should be held regularly in Maharashtra just as the Khajuraho festival is now a regular feature in Madhya Pradesh and has become an international attraction. However the organisers might consider holding these festivals when the weather is salubrious. These festivals offer much needed "platforms" to our budding artistes. Such festivals held at Elephanta, Ganpati Pule etc. can be of significance in several ways.



The Rural Perspective

Bhanu Pratap Singh

It should be a matter of concern for all thinking Indians, that over the years, there has been an almost total breakdown of communication between the rural masses and the decision-makers of our country. No doubt, there has been much debate and writing on agricultural and rural development, but totally without the participation of the supposed beneficiaries. Tall claims have been made of successes achieved. But very few have taken the trouble to examine these claims, in the context of our rich potential, or even the progress made by our neighbouring countries, in South East Asia. Further, no worthwhile evaluation has been made of the impact of whatever little progress that we have achieved, in the lives of the three fourths of the population which lives in our villages. Government publicity has been so powerful and one-sided, that the few dissenting voices that have tried have proved to be cries in the wilderness.

The main reason for such a situation is that between Mahatma Gandhi and Rajiv Gandhi, the political culture of the country has changed so completely that those who should have played the role of crusaders have turned into courtiers. M.L.As and M.Ps, who owe their seats in the legislatures mostly to rural voters dare not talk about rural problems at their party meetings, because they have realised that their leaders, who have now acquired the status of masters, have no use for such talk.

Over a period of time, through a process of elimination of the conscientious from politics, the quality of legislatures has also changed. Very few study problems in depth, because they know that qualities other than studiousness now pay greater dividends in politics. The rural masses today are more voiceless than they ever were. While the literacy percentage in the rural areas remains shockingly low, less than 30%, the standard of education has gone down so much that even those

who have had the benefit of some education, are as ignorant, as are the uneducated ones. Perhaps the prevailing ignorance and illiteracy suits our rulers best, because taking advantage of these, they can easily sway the masses at the time of elections.

Our growth rate in agriculture has been amongst the slowest in South East Asia.

Our per capita availability of foodgrains during the last five years has been no more than what it was during the 1961-65 period. The only success that we can claim is that during the last two years we have not imported foodgrains. But our import bill for vegetable oils and sugar exceeds the amount that we paid for import of foodgrains in the past.

The average per capita real income of farmers has declined, while that of the rest of the nation has gone up. The share of agriculture in national income, which used to be above 50% has now become less than 33%. Though the number of persons engaged in agriculture has not declined significantly the share of nearly 66% population engaged in agriculture is no more than that of the top 10%.

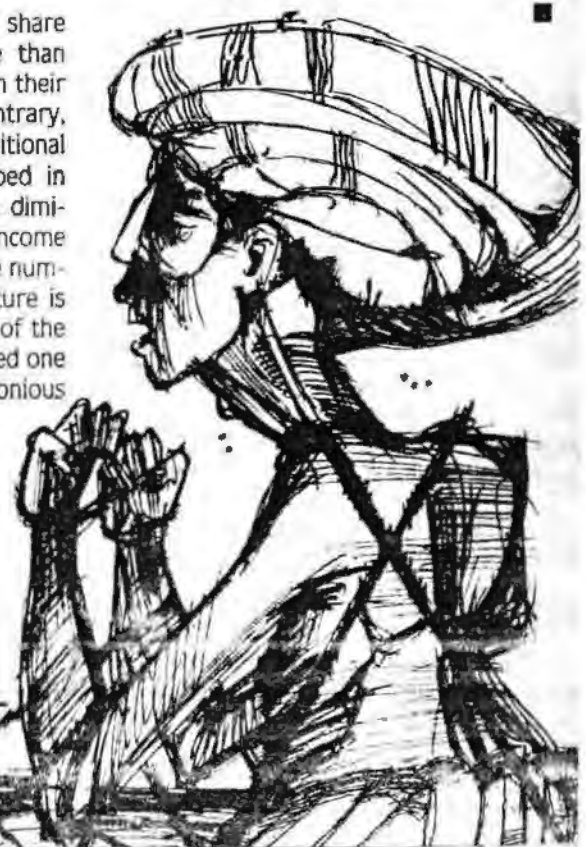
At the end of the VIIth plan, the share of agriculturists will be no more than 25% of the national income, though their numbers will not decline. On the contrary, our Planners are hoping that additional work force will mostly be absorbed in agriculture and allied services. The diminishing share in the national income without proportionate decline in the number of persons engaged in agriculture is bound to lead to the pauperisation of the peasantry. If this trend is not checked one can forget the evolution of a harmonious

society in India. Sooner or later the pauperised peasantry will come under the influence of Naxalites, or such other elements.

Such a situation was not inevitable had we made honest efforts towards fuller realisation of the vast potential of our agriculture. The increasing pauperisation of the peasantry is the direct result of the policies initiated by Jawaharlal Nehru and pursued by his successors. Even now, according to the noted economist Michael Lipton, if agricultural and industrial products of India are evaluated at international prices, the share rates between agriculturists and the rest will get reversed. The growing poverty of the rural masses is mainly due to the pricing policy of the Government.

It is in the national interest for a faster economic growth and evolution of a harmonious society that present-day leaders should cease to treat rural India as their colony.

If India is to grow faster economically and if we are to evolve a harmonious society, our present-day rulers should cease to treat rural India as their colony.



Free Press in a Democracy

"...True democracy can only thrive in a free clearing-house of competing ideologies and philosophies – political, economic and social – and in this the Press has an important role to play. The day this clearing-house closes down would toll the death-knell of democracy. It is not the function of the censor acting under the Censorship Order to make all newspapers and periodicals trim their sails to one wind or to tow along in a single file or to speak in chorus with one voice. It is not for him to exercise his statutory powers to force public opinion in a single mould or to turn the Press into an instrument of brainwashing the public. Under the Censorship Order the censor is appointed the nurse-maid of democracy and not its grave-digger. Dissent from the opinions and views held by the majority and criticism and disapproval of measures initiated by a party in power make for a healthy political climate, and it is not for the censor to inject into this the lifelessness of forced conformity. Merely because dissent, disapproval or criticism is expressed in strong language is no ground for banning its publication, for as Sir Maurice Gwyer said in *Niharendu Dutt Majumdar V. The King Emperor*, (1942) F.C.R.38(51), "hard words break no bones...and there are certain words and phrases which have so long become the stock in trade of the demagogue as almost to have lost all meaning". But there are permissible limits to dissent and disapproval. The voice of dissent cannot take the form of incitement to revolutionary or subversive activities, for then instead of serving democracy it would subvert it. It is here that the censor's real role begins; for though it is not for him to stifle all dissent and protest, it is certainly his duty to see that dissent and protest do not overstep the permissible limits.

From a Judgement by Justices Madon and Kania in the *Freedom First Censorship Case*, February 10, 1976.

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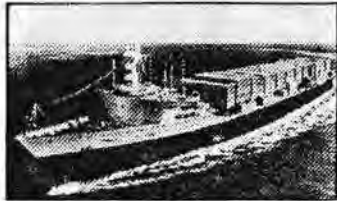
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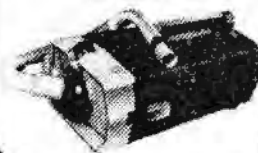
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Book Review

BUSINESS AND THE ENVIRONMENT
by M.S. Patwardhan, Popular
Prakashan, 1986; Pp. 226; Rs 125.

**INDIAN ECONOMY: EMERGING
PERSPECTIVES** by Ramkrishna Bajaj,
Allied Publishers Private Limited,
1986; Pp. 194; Rs. 125.

Indian economic policy, during the last two years, has certainly undergone a dramatic deviation from its socialistic moorings. This quantum liberalisation in so brief a period, coupled with the emergence of a new political leadership, has created an aura of expectation and introspection as to the performance of the economy.

The books under review, viz. *BUSINESS AND THE ENVIRONMENT* by M.S. Patwardhan and *INDIAN ECONOMY: EMERGING PERSPECTIVES* by Ramkrishna Bajaj are both products of this fever of transience. The importance of these two books lies primarily in their authors. Mr. Patwardhan has been the Managing Director of the National Organic Chemical Industries Ltd. for the past eight years while Mr. Ramkrishna Bajaj, for over a generation now is one of India's leading industrialists. Both have therefore vast and intimate knowledge of the character and nuances of India's industrial structure and policy. Besides both the authors are ex-Presidents of two of the most important chambers of commerce in the country, and may hence be considered the spokesmen of the private corporate sector.

Given the similarity of authorship and of the themes analysed, the two books compel comparison. Mr. Bajaj's *INDIAN ECONOMY* is, of the two, the more orderly work. Written more like a text book, it covers the entire gamut of areas and issues in economics in its five parts. Mr. Patwardhan's book is a medley of articles published in leading newspapers, and journals over the last five years; yet it is the more erudite of the two. The number of issues dealt with are fewer but they reveal greater sophistication of analysis and considerable, if haphazard, research.

Mr. Patwardhan begins with a brief overview of the Economy during the Indira years and follows it with a speculation of trends in the text fifteen years. The overview chapters are followed by a detailed analysis of the structural problems of Indian industry and industrial policy.

The high cost structure of Industry, the regime of controls, the obsession with 'Bigness' *per se* rather than with restrictive practices, the foreign exchange crisis, the resource crunch, each of these is dissected with penetration. Patwardhan admits that regional dispersal of industry and insistence on small scale are both laudable goals but argues that the present policy attempts to achieve these at a very high opportunity cost. The insistence on regional dispersion into no-industry areas forces on companies huge expenditure on standby power and on luxuries like courier services, thanks to the poor infrastructure in these areas.

Again the desire to achieve self-reliance through import substitution has given the economy a built-in monopolistic structure and protectionist culture which has in turn bred all-round obsolescence and inefficiency. The fondness for small-scale and the virtual anti-big complex has led to an uneconomic fragmentation of capacity as also to endless controls and delays in implementation. Together these have pushed up the cost of industry internally and made it entirely uncompetitive internationally. In the context, subsidies will not help export promotion, argues the author. The entire structure has to be corrected to yield efficiency. Compelling equal attention is the problem of research and development. Lack of technological upgradation will erode even the low cost labour advantage of the LDCs.

Mr. Patwardhan's merit lies in the fact that he does not stop with criticisms. Each problem is countered with pragmatic if 'rightist' solutions. His pet suggestions include removal of impediments to capacity utilization, disallowing cuts on Plan investments in power and transport and completely avoiding investment in capital intensive, long-gestation industries where we do not have any special economic advantage and where surplus capacity exists in the world (e.g. steel and aluminium).

Besides industrial policy, the book also includes essays on the Chinese economy, Indo-Gulf trade, role of a chamber of commerce, study of economics and an entire section on management. But Mr. Patwardhan is at his best when he analyses industrial policy. His article on the 'Role of Depreciation in Resource Generation' and another on 'India's Petrochemical

Strategy' are especially commendable. Indeed the latter is a cut above the rest of the book (which is journalistic) and reaches the status of a research paper.

An astounding feature of the analyses is the sense of history. 'Perspective' is a key quality required of a manager according to Mr. Patwardhan and he seems to have it in abundant measure. His sensitive analysis of technology (chapter 18), his observations that a consumer revolution is inseparable from an open society and that the sellers' market is on its way out in India, all show a subtle and encyclopaedic mind.

These advantages apart, the book, as has been said before, is basically journalistic. Quite a few articles are already overtaken by events. Its value is unlikely to outlive the eighties. The categorising of articles into three haphazard parts is puzzling. Indeed a good few articles could have been jettisoned or simply clubbed under a separate part as 'Miscellaneous'. Finally, Mr. Patwardhan's suggestions are harshly capitalist and he barely sees the horrendous ills of the system, far less questions its dualism and injustice.

Mr. Bajaj on the other hand, shows much more social commitment, and expectedly so. Indeed he has a whole section on the Social Commitments of Business.

However, with respect to Industrial Policy his arguments and his suggestions are remarkably similar to Mr. Patwardhan's and hence do not merit repetition.

Unlike Mr. Patwardhan's, the entire manuscript has been written for publication as a book. The arrangement of chapters is therefore more methodical and there is less repetition and overlapping. The Section on 'Links Abroad' has a fund of information. Besides, he has a detailed section on Trade, an area which Patwardhan has largely ignored.

What stands out, however, is Mr. Bajaj's commitment to larger social issues: Poverty and unemployment. Indeed he boldly admits that the chief premise of Indian Industrial Policy viz. economic growth and its trickle down effect has proved false.

Yet, when it comes to answers, Mr. Bajaj staunchly sticks to the chorus 'Vive Le Secteur Prive'.

Lata Janardhanan

Emerging From Poverty: The Economics That Really Matters by Gerald M. Meier, Oxford University Press, New York, 1984. Rs. 160.

Since the mid-forties the international community has been concerned with the problems of mitigating the pains of poverty and raising the totally inadequate living standard of more than 2 billion peoples of over 100 developing countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America. In spite of the efforts of these developing countries and international agencies, these problems have remained persistent. It is now, imperative to review the development record of the last forty years to know what has gone wrong with the development policies adopted by the poor countries; what policy changes were adopted as a result of the interplay of development experience of the poor countries and the thinking of the development economists; and what are the appropriate policies that should now be adopted to make these countries 'emerge from the depths of poverty'.

The book under review is an excellent attempt to answer these questions by explaining the development economics in simple and non-technical language. With unusual clarity and range, the author—a

Professor of International Economics at Stanford University (USA)—has offered a retrospective appraisal of the development record of the last forty years giving a prescriptive analysis of the urgent policy measures to be pursued by the developing countries for accelerating their development processes. The author's retrospective analysis of what has happened in the developing countries and how scholars and statesmen have analysed these happenings, is a story, which is both exciting and disappointing.

Divided in three parts, the first part of the book audits the record of the development efforts of poor countries since World War II and provides a critical assessment of people's expectations, governments' response, achievements and disappointments on both economic and political fronts.

However, efforts to achieve economic development have produced political disorder, decay and instability in the poor countries where "Ethnic and class conflicts, military juntas, the dominance of unstable leaders, corruption among civil servants, *coup d'etat*, insurrection and guerilla warfare have continued to char-

acterize political underdevelopment" (p. 99).

In the second part of the book the author has analysed the evolution of ideas relating to development from Adam Smith and J.S. Mill to the recent school of dependency and neo-Marxists. In the developing countries the progress of events has shaped ideas and ideas have shaped the reality of development. The author, unfolding the changing views of the development strategists and economists, has explained 'Old Growth Economics' the early development economics of the 50s, the subsequent revision in development strategies of the 70s and the ideas of recent (radical) scholars like Lewis, Prebisch, Myrdal, Singer, Baran, Amin, Cardoso and others. He concludes that the future course of development will depend upon combining the values of the economist's role as the 'trustee for the poor' and that of 'guardian of rationality'.

In the last part of the book, Prof. Meier has looked to the future beyond the neo-classical economics, specified a number of policy issues and derived policy implications for some of the most troubling problems of development.

P.M. Bora

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RITWIK KUMAR GHATAK by Haimanti Banerjee; National Film Archives of India. Pp 103; Rs. 30.

The book under review – a monograph – offers a fairly comprehensive 'picture' of the life and work of Ritwik Kumar Ghatak (1925-1976)

The book begins with a biographical sketch: birth, parents, family, childhood, his inherent talents in drawing and music; adolescence in the Calcutta of the '30s, obtaining his B.A. Degree in 1948. The Second World War and its effect on India, the Bengal famine, the Quit India Movement, the Partition of Bengal, all these left quite an impact on him and led to the birth of a committed artist – in poems, story writing, theatre and finally cinema where he came in contact with leading film makers – Mrinal Sen, Tapan Sen, K.A. Abbas, et al., and so on to his film *Bedeni* (1951), *Nagarik* (1952-53) followed by *Ajantrik* (1958) and *Bari Theke Paliye* (1959), among others. Most of these were flops at the box office except for *Meghe Dhaka Tara* (1960), almost all cases of repeated public rejection. This led him to a mood of alienation and suicidal withdrawal.

He was only 36 when he gradually retired from the Bengal film scene "physically and spiritually". He joined the Pune Film Institute as Vice-Principal in 1964-65 where he made some short films. After leaving the job he made a few documentaries and two unfinished feature films but was affected by severe illness and had to be hospitalized in the Calcutta Mental Hospital. But then during 1972-76 even while battling with death he was still at the height of his creative genius and evinced tremendous stamina and energy.

Ghatak in main "grew up with a film heritage essentially romantic and escapist in nature" of the late 30s and early 40s, the golden age of the New Theatre. He also inherited a tradition of musicals by Debaki Bose. However, he was exposed to IPTA and quasi Maoist influences and became a deeply committed artiste. His films acquire a dynamism as they are with an objective reality juxtaposed against romanticism. But then above all, his films evince his vision and the fact that he was far ahead of his times, both in his approach and in his technique. Thus, in his hands for the first time in Indian cinema sound became a deliberate part of the entire structure of the film.

Though his films flopped at the box

office and were rejected by the public these were due to no fault of his and he refused to compromise. "But idealism fought a lost battle against a mundane, commercialized reality". He was basically an idealist totally dedicated to his muse. His contribution to the evolution of modern Indian cinema is now being recognised and appreciated almost a decade after his death. "His greatest contribution to Indian films is the thread he picked up from the earlier lower-level materialist culture to weave into Marxist culture today." He refused to join the bandwagon or bow to the box office. Suffering and feeling frustrated throughout, he hit the bottle which certainly made things worse. It is the tragedy of a wasted genius.

While the monograph under review analyses the individual films, one misses an overall evaluation of Ghatak's metier. No doubt, to an extent this is done in the 'Resume'. However, a more meticulous treatment in this context would have further accentuated the reference value of the monograph.

S.I. Clerk

WHY I AM NOT A CHRISTIAN and THE FAITH OF A RATIONALIST by Bertrand Russell; Pp24; reprinted by The Indian Secular Society; Rs. 5.

The Indian Secular Society has published this small booklet comprising two essays "WHY I AM NOT A CHRISTIAN" and "THE FAITH OF A RATIONALIST" by Bertrand Russell. Highly provocative and controversial as they are, they reflect Russell's non-conformist outlook. However it is difficult to fall in line with Russell's intellectual perception of life, morals and the universe.

Russell disputed the existence of God and the contentions of the Church that "...the existence of God can be proved by unaided reason ...". He further writes: "If everything must have a cause, then God must have a cause," as a rebuttal to the theory of first cause. But the thought that the creation of human existence cannot but be attributed to some Divine Existence which can by itself be the commencement of first cause, has apparently never crossed Russell's mind.

Russell further argues: "There is no reason why the world could not have come into being without a cause, nor on the other hand, is there any reason why it should not have always existed. There is no reason to suppose that the world had a

beginning at all. The idea that things must have a beginning is really due to the poverty of our imagination." This, coming so soon after Russell quoting the Indian's view .. that the world rested upon an elephant and the elephant rested upon a tortoise, and when they said 'How about the tortoise?', the Indian said 'suppose we change the subject' cannot but be seen as a failure on the part of Russell to rationalise his argument.

If human fallacies are what have created the world as it is today, it by itself is no ground to discard the theory of a Divine Creator. The Divine Creator cannot be expected to nurse his creation as parents cannot be expected to guide adult foot-loose children. Therefore it is difficult to go along with Russell when he says "it is a most astonishing thing that people can believe that this world with all its defects, should be the best that omnipotence and omniscience has been able to produce in millions of years. I really cannot believe it. Do you think that, if you were granted omnipotence and omniscience and millions of years in which to perfect your world, you could produce nothing better than the Ku Klux Klan, the fascist, and Mr. Winston Churchill"? Ku Klux Klan and the fascist yes, but to equate them with a great Statesman like Churchill is nothing but an irrational argument.

Speaking on religion, Russell no doubt has a point when he stresses the gulf between practice and precept of the various religions. We know from experience that very few rationalists and atheists have the courage to rebel against the Laws of the Divine Creator, especially during adversities. Strict adherence and consistency is impossible in any sphere of life.

Russell's contention that, "historically it is quite doubtful whether Christ existed" is made perhaps with blissful obliviousness that centuries hence perhaps the existence of Russell himself may be doubted in spite of the fact that hi-tech devices of today can freeze moments of the present for posterity. In the centuries gone by only the scriptures, rudimentary records and word of mouth were links between the past and the present. To doubt such epoch-making events like the advent of Christ may perhaps put the entire past in a twilight zone.

Reading this booklet one concedes Russell's right to his opinions but then the reader is also entitled to opine otherwise on Russell.

Nitin G. Raut

In Brief ...

THE GOVERNOR: SAGE OR SABOTEUR—A collection of Essays; Roli Books International; Pp. 176; Rs. 95.

This highly-readable volume of essays has made a timely appearance, what with the institution of Governor coming in for spirited public discussion in recent months following the disgraceful manner in which Mr. Jagmohan, the former Lt. Governor of Delhi, has chosen to respond to the searing indictment passed against him by the Supreme Court. Even earlier, the events in Andhra Pradesh and Jammu & Kashmir brought that august office into sharp public focus, and it is just as well that a debate has been initiated on the subject.

The contributors to the volume have backgrounds which are as diverse as they are distinguished: Soli Sorabjee, the eminent lawyer; Govind Narain, L.P. Singh and Dharma Vira, former Governors who were also administrators of remarkable dedication and integrity; E.M.S. Namboodiripad and P. Upendra, leaders of two opposition parties who hold strong views of their own, coloured obviously by their respective experiences; and Sunanda Datta-Ray and Tavleen Singh, journalists who have brought to bear considerable perspicacity in their reportage and analyses of political events. The essays are as interesting as they are instructive, and make for compelling reading.

BRIGHT PROMISES, DISMAL PERFORMANCE: An Economist's Protest by Milton Friedman; Harcourt Brace Jovanovich; Pp. 393; \$4.95.

TYRANNY OF THE STATUS QUO by Milton & Rose Friedman; Harcourt Brace Jovanovich; Pp. 182; \$10.95.

The cause of democratic capitalism has found few modern exponents as vigorous and articulate as Milton Friedman. These two books (one co-authored with his wife) continue the excellent work done by the Nobel laureate over the decades. The first is a collection of Friedman's *Newsweek* columns which address such diverse topics as inflation, the consequences of over-regulation, the role of state agencies, welfarism, international trade, tax reform,

etc. The second advances the interesting thesis that there is, in every government, an invariable tendency to reverse the declared policies of its leaders (whether left or right) within a few months of their assuming office. The 'iron triangle'—consisting of the direct beneficiaries of laws, the bureaucrats who thrive on them, and the politicians who seek votes—always asserts itself to preserve the status quo and frustrate far-reaching reform. "A new administration," say the Friedmans, "has some six to nine months in which to achieve major changes; if it does not seize the opportunity to act decisively during that period, it will not have another such opportunity."

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL REPORT 1985—AI Publications, London; Pp. 359; Price not stated.

Covering the human rights situation in some 123 countries around the world, this report seeks to draw pointed attention to the savagery practised by man over man. Of particular interest to readers in India is Amnesty's assessment of the happenings in this country, especially in the troubled State of Punjab, where some of the most frighteningly draconian laws have been made applicable in recent months. The report gives the lie to many of the claims trotted out by official agencies, and is therefore essential reading for all those concerned with human rights and the rule of law.

THE RISE AND FALL OF BRITISH INDIA by Karle de Schweinitz, Jr.; Methuen (Distd. by BI Publications, Bombay); Pp. 275; Rs. 100.

Schweinitz, a professor at the Northwestern University in Illinois, addresses himself to the task of examining the impact that coercion as an instrument of British imperialism had on Indian subjects. "Whatever caused imperialism," he says, "its agents coerced subject peoples in varying degrees and thus depressed the latter's sense of well being and/or freedom." While there can be no quarrel with that proposition, it is an equally undeniable fact that even non-imperialist governments, including some democracies, exert coercive influences on the ruled, albeit in a subtle fashion. To the extent, therefore, that Schweinitz's analysis assumes coercion to be peculiar to imperialism, it is debatable.

AN ATLAS OF BRITISH POLITICS by Robert Waller; Croom-Helm; Pp. 205; £ 16.95.

Conceived as a complementary volume to Waller's earlier *Almanac of British Politics*, this atlas offers a deep insight into such interesting aspects of British life as the spread of unemployment, housing, car-ownership, education, vocations, voters-patterns, etc. regionwise. The regions covered include the South-West, the South of England, Greater London, Central England and East Anglia, the West Midlands, the North Midlands, the North West, Yorkshire, the North of England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

Much of the data is based on the results of the 1981 census and the 1983 General Election, and the information contained is therefore fairly current.

JUDGES AND THE JUDICIAL POWER, ed. by Rajeev Dhawan, R. Sudarshan & Salman Khurshid; Sweet & Maxwell/Tripathi; Pp. 340;

JUDICIAL JUSTICE: A Focus Towards Social Justice by V.R. Krishna Iyer; Tripathi; Pp. 164; Rs. 85.

Justice Krishna Iyer, rightly or wrongly, occupies a prominent place in the judicial history of post-independence India. It is not entirely surprising, therefore, that some of his admirers decided to bring out a volume of essays in his honour and roped in such contributors as Lord Denning, Prof. J.A.G. Griffiths, Lord Scarman, Alan Peterson, Neil McCormick, John Bell, Archibald Cox and Robert Hardgrave, Jr., among others. Indian contributors include, apart from the three editors, Jagat Narain, Upendra Baxi and K.M. Sharma. As is only to be expected of such volumes, it is a mixed bag.

The second book is based on the three lectures delivered by Justice Iyer at the Campus Law Centre, Delhi University, in April 1985. Those familiar with the learned judge's pronouncements over the years will find nothing new or novel about these lectures—the same litany of complaints against the judicial system as it exists today, the same tortuous 'analysis' of current legal problems, the same call for 'radicalisation' as a panacea for the present ills, and so on—all these couched, of course, in that odd, convoluted style of his which is guaranteed to put off even the most sympathetic reader.

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