

Freedom First

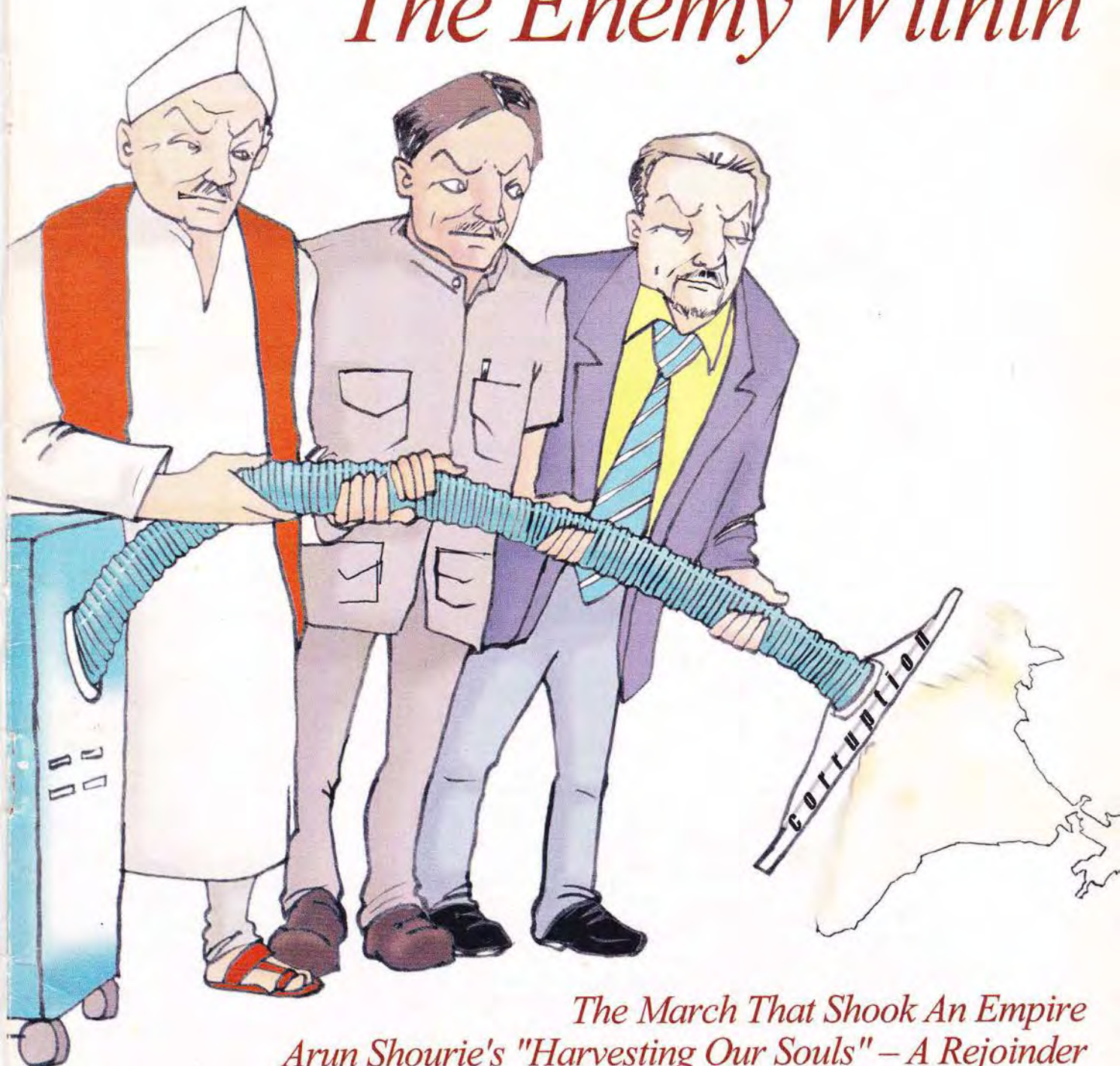
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RUPEES TWENTY-FIVE

The Enemy Within



*The March That Shook An Empire
Arun Shourie's "Harvesting Our Souls" – A Rejoinder
Sane Guruji – A Saint Among Politicians*

S. P. Godrej

June 3, 1912 – May 20, 2000

"Help Bring Our India Up - Quickly"



Mr. S. P. Godrej, Chairman of the Godrej Group of Companies, had an astonishing range of interests which included Environment, Population Control, Education, Social Welfare, the Arts, Archaeology and Heritage Conservation.

The Godrej Industrial Garden Township at Pirojshanagar in Mumbai bears testimony to the various causes the Godrejs have been promoting in the fields of Housing, Education, Health and Family Welfare. He was particularly proud of the large expanse of mangrove forest, perhaps the best on the west coast, adjoining the Godrej Industrial Garden Township which is being maintained and protected from poachers by the Soonabai Godrej Trust.

Mr. Godrej was particularly committed to the preservation of nature, wildlife and environment, linked with population control and development – as President Emeritus of the World Wide Fund for Nature-India, whose most important mission at present is to save the gravely endangered, magnificent national animal, the Tiger. He was Vice-President of the Bombay Natural History Society, President of the National Society of the Friends of Trees, Patron of the Family

Planning Association of India and a member of the Governing Board of the Population Foundation of India.

International recognition of Mr. Godrej's contribution to the conservation of nature and natural resources was the conferment of the WWF 25th Anniversary Benefactor "White Pelican" Award at the hands of Prince Philip, the Duke of Edinburgh. In 1997, he was conferred the Padma Bhushan by the President of India. Other national honours included the Indira Gandhi Paryavaran Puraskar, the Indian Merchants' Chamber Award for outstanding contribution in enhancing the image of the business community by personal service, the Jawaharlal Nehru Birth Centenary Award of the Indian Science Congress Association and the Golden Peacock Lifetime Achievement Award by the Institute of Directors.

He believed as staunchly in fair business practices as he did in the social responsibilities of business. The trusteeship of wealth was a living concept with him – wealth earned to become wealth shared for the common good.

Mr. Godrej lived by the values imbibed by him from his pioneering uncle Ardeshir and father Pirojsha who were driven by the motto of self-respect through self-reliance, reinforced by plain living and high thinking.

Mr. Godrej believed that the best philosophy was to do the best one could. According to him, there were several components to this philosophy. The first was *noblesse oblige*, which holds that those who are better off in life owe an obligation to those less fortunate than themselves. Another component was to live and let live, acquire tolerance and understanding of other people. Still another was to bid goodbye, firmly and finally, to the deplorable *chalta hai, chalta do* (let it pass) attitude and develop a rational ethos, cultivating the scientific temper.

Deeply concerned about the problems ravaging the country, particularly the population explosion, the subsequent environmental degradation and the all-pervasive corruption, Mr. Godrej used various platforms to propagate his slogan: "Help Bring Our India Up - Quickly!" Linked with this were Mahatma Gandhi's words which he used frequently to quote: "Each one of us must be the change we wish to see in the world".

A Secretary's Tribute

In the death of Shri S. P. Godrej, I have suffered a personal loss, having worked with him closely as his secretary from 1959 to 1983.

In the manner of his death, he revealed the manner of his living! Shri Godrej was very active, hale and hearty, till the end. When I once told him jocularly that he would outlive me and hit his life's century, he laughed and said that hitting life's century is no great achievement at all, if one has to live like a cabbage in one's old age!

He phoned me very recently from his residence late at night that he would like to have a long chat with me on his return from abroad! He said that he liked my article on corruption and he was happy that *Freedom First* would be holding a seminar on this subject with my article as the working paper at Godrej Bhavan on June 24th. He assured me that he would return to Bombay in time to preside over this seminar. But that, alas, was not to be.

S. S. Bankeshwar

Freedom First

Founder
Minoo Masani

Editor
S. V. Raju

Associate Editor
R. Srinivasan

Advisory Board
Sumant Bankeshwar
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Jehangir Patel
S. A. A. Pinto
Nitin Raut
Abe Solomon
Ajay Varadachary

Cover Page
Design by Creative Literati, Bangalore
Illustration by Anil Reddy

Publishers
Indian Committee for Cultural Freedom*
3rd Floor, Army & Navy Building,
148, Mahatma Gandhi Road,
Mumbai 400 001.
Phone: +91 (22) 284 34 16
E-mail: freedom@vsnl.com

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BETWEEN OURSELVES...

Is there any one among us who can touch his heart and say that he has never paid out even Re.1 as a bribe to get one thing or another done? Highly unlikely. There may be persons who may have never taken a bribe. But the fact remains that the system we have created sucks in everyone, vitiating the process of governance, and threatening to destroy civil society itself. Hence the cover feature is titled "The Enemy Within". An enemy far more difficult to beat because of the numbers involved. Yet the effort to defeat this enemy and aim towards a society based on *Dharma* must not cease. Hence *Freedom First* keeps returning to this subject time and again. We give you part one of a two-part feature.

Subscription Renewals

Please respond to the subscription reminder mailed to you by our office, and please send in your renewals. Please note that the annual subscription beginning 2000 is Rs.100. Remember to add bank charges of Rs.20 if your cheque is from a bank outside Mumbai and the cheque itself should be drawn in favour of ICCF, not *Freedom First*.

Bi-monthly Fund

Donations received so far: Rs.3 lakhs. Of this, Rs.2 lakhs was donated by a subscriber who wishes to remain anonymous. He says that his donation is in recognition of the fact that "*Freedom First* keeps alive the memory of Minoo Masani and his dedication to the promotion of liberal values."

We are Rs.9 lakhs short of the target. It is only with your cooperation and assistance will it be possible to achieve the aim of making *Freedom First* a bi-monthly beginning January 2001.

Editor

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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*

Politics pays, and crime pays slightly better. Although at times the two become indistinguishable.

Editor M. J. Akbar, *Asian Age*, July 16

Madam, in your country reports of the President's illness will put question marks about his ability to rule. Here, it will generate a sympathy wave.

A government spokesman replying to an American correspondent's complaint about getting information on the Prime Minister's illness, *India Today*, May 15

In Mr. Putin's own words "I am India's best friend". Wrong Mr. Putin! Indian democracy is the country's best friend!

Vamsi Musunuru, an NRI businessman on the Internet, June 29

Throughout history people have worried that too much knowledge will destroy us, that certain areas of knowledge are better left undiscovered as God's domain. This sounds like the high moral ground yet is no more than a variation of the Pope's position on Galileo.

Economist Swaminathan S. Anklesaria Aiyar, *The Economic Times*, June 28

It isn't just socialists who oppose privatisation. New power-hungry ministers and old greedy officials are also against it. They want to cling to the patronage that comes from running vast companies.

Columnist Tavleen Singh, *India Today*, May 15

.. by and large people regard a full-time politician as a menace to civil society.

Former finance minister P. Chidambaram, *India Today*, August 7

To me majority and minority by religious definition are meaningless. I consider the citizen of any particular country as a citizen. They are human beings first and human beings last.

Bangladeshi writer Taslima Nasreen, *Communalism Combat*, March 2000

I supported Deepa Mehta simply because I am against all kinds of fundamentalism. I believe in freedom of expression and the individual's right to express his or her thoughts in writing, film, theatre, singing, acting or in whatever medium he or she prefers.

Bangladeshi writer Taslima Nasreen, *Communalism Combat*, March 2000

We do not have the rule of law. We have rule by law. There are laws, but the State and the minders of the State are above the law.

Former finance minister P. Chidambaram, *India Today*, August 7

How one wishes that Mr. Paswan, Union Minister for Telecommunications will move from one department to another so that he does the greatest amount of "service" to the largest number of government servants, actually the people's masters, so that we have a government of the employees, for the employees, by the employees.

T. H. Chowdary, former Managing Director VSNL, *The Statesman*, June 28

...WHAT WAS THERE TO FIGHT OVER ?



France and Germany went to war twice, once in 1872 and once in 1914 over two bits of territory called Alsace and Lorraine because both sides said they must have Alsace and Lorraine. Ultimately they made friends. Today nobody cares a damn as to who owns Alsace and to whom Lorraine belongs because they have ceased to be of any importance. The day will come when people will laugh and say who did you fight over? What was there to fight over?

Minoo Masani

OF CABBAGES AND KINGS

Liberals the world over should be proud of the role played by the German Liberal and former finance minister Count Otto von Lambsdorff, in securing compensation for victims of the holocaust and to those who were forced to work for German companies in World War II. According to a *New York Times* report, Count Lambsdorff represented German companies in their long negotiations with the survivors' organisations.

Under an agreement signed in July, German industry and the German government will each contribute about \$2.5 billion to a fund that will pay compensation to as many as one million former forced labourers. The fund will also be used to compensate people who endured medical experimentation at the hands of Nazi scientists and some of those whose property was confiscated, says the NYT report.

The amount may look generous, but not to Count Lambsdorff. The Liberal that he is, he is angry with those German companies that refused to contribute. He said "It is a public offence that the majority of companies have not yet joined up. All German companies, including those formed after the war, should contribute to the fund. Those not burdened by the past should think about reshaping the future."

On a personal note, Count Lambsdorff who was to have delivered the keynote address at a National Symposium sponsored by the Friedrich Naumann Stiftung and the Project for Economic Education on Liberal Priorities for the 21st Century, was unable to do so because he had to be in Washington for the negotiations. We missed him at the Symposium but the humanitarian cause in which he was involved was of far greater import. He proved that Liberalism is more than market economics. It is also about human liberty and dignity, and of course about the social responsibilities of business.

*

In any war or civil unrest it is not only the soldiers who get killed but journalists assigned to report on the fighting who find themselves either gagged by their government or killed. Incidentally the statement made by some that soldiers are paid to fight and run the risk of getting killed, is one of the most uncharitable remarks that any civilian can make, to put it mildly. That is another story. My purpose in referring to this is to draw attention to the excellent work being done by the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ). In May this year they lodged a strong protest with the President of the

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



Lanka expressing dismay when that government's "chief censor" ordered the shutting down of the Tamil language daily *Uthayan* and the English weekly *The Sunday Leader*. The protest said among other things: "The Sri Lankan people have the right to uncensored, independent news and information about the course of the war and the government's handling of the crisis."

In August the CPJ in a press note condemned a bomb attack in Srinagar in which Mr. Pradeep Bhatia a photographer of the Delhi daily *Hindustan Times* was killed. Other journalists injured in the bomb attack were Irfan Manzoor, a Zee TV cameraman whose right foot had to be amputated, Habibullah Nakash, a photographer of the *Asian Age*, Reuters news agency photographer Fayaz Kabuli, Bilal Ahmed Butt, a cameraman for Asian News International, Muhammad Amin War, a freelance photographer and I. Tariq of the *Srinagar News*.

The report pointed out that "including the death of Pradeep Bhatia, nine journalists have been killed in Kashmir since 1989 when the long running conflict became a full-scale civil war."

On August 20 the CPJ in a letter to Prime Minister Vajpayee expressed alarm over the murder in Imphal the capital of Manipur of T. Brajamani Singh, editor of the English language daily *Manipur News* who was killed on August 19 when two assailants shot him at point blank range. The cause of the killing is not known. The CPJ sought the Prime Minister's good offices in ensuring a prompt and thorough investigation.

It is good to know that there is someone out there who cares.

A law that is not enforced is no law at all. A case in point is the use of the mobile phone while driving. Recently the Maharashtra government ruled that anyone seen talking on the mobile while driving would be fined Rs.500. No owner driver seems to really care. What's worse, even motor cyclists and scooterists are busy talking on their cell phones while driving even on busy roads.

Charles Peters of the *Washington Monthly* has, in his column 'Tilting at Windmills' complimented Brooklyn Ohio's Mayor for imposing a fine of \$100 plus \$45 in court costs on drivers who use cell phones, or using an electric shaver or, putting on lipstick while driving. "If you are driving, for goodness' sakes, then keep two hands on the wheel." Good advice, Wonder how well the Mayor is able to enforce the law.

*

Is our Electronic media really free. Since yesterday TV screens in Bombay city is on the blink. because Cable Operators are on a two day protest strike. Why? Because a bankrupt and profligate State government in search of money, has imposed an additional charge of Rs.15 for every TV that is catered to by the Cable Operator.

In fact this is a kind of licence fee. Many years ago the government withdrew licence fees on radio and T.V. They are bringing it back through the backdoor. They say it is easier to collect from the Cable operator than from individual TV owners. The Cable Operators went to court and their plea was turned down. In the process, no Star News, no BBC, no CNN, not even Doordarshan.

When the VSNL or the MTNL staff choose to, we can be cut off from the internet and the email. Even cell phones can be shut off if government chooses as was evident in Bombay recently.

And where radio stations are concerned, they are still a state monopoly. So let us not kid ourselves that our electronic media is free. We are at the mercy of the government, or their employees, or cable operators.

*

In this column last time I had referred to Sharad Joshi's statement that his "big mistake" was the formation of the Swatantra Bharat Party and said that I would deal with it in this issue. I would request your indulgence to allow me to deal with it in the next.

SVR

Remembering Jayaprakash Narayan



While recalling the declaration of the Emergency 25 years ago, it is appropriate to pay tributes to lakhs of martyrs who made great sacrifices to restore freedom and democracy in India. A special tribute needs to be paid to that prince among patriots Loknayak Jayaprakash Narayan.

JP had been released during the darkest days of the emergency, as the government was afraid that there would be blood on its hands if anything happened to him as his health had deteriorated in detention.

It is at a crucial meeting in Mumbai, the strategy to restore democracy was forged. This meeting attended by a dozen persons was held in the house of JP's close friend Minoo Masani. I had the privilege of attending it. JP suggested that pressure be brought to bear on the government to call general elections. Justice M. C. Chagla asked: "Even if the government agrees to the demand is there any chance of victory for the opposition in view of massive misuse of power by the government." JP confidently said: "Yes, Mahatma Gandhi always said, if there is an issue for which no solution is visible, go to the people and the Indian people will give the correct solution."

The government was compelled to call general elections, and the rest is history. Subsequently, as JP neared his end at Jaslok Hospital, in Mumbai, a close companion, the late Prabhakar Mehta asked him how he was so confident of the pro-freedom parties winning the elections. JP replied, "I have visited nearly 30,000 villages in India and have seen one quality of the Indian people. The masses may be illiterate, ignorant and superstitious but put before them the moral issue of Right and Wrong, they will invariably opt for the right moral option."

M. R. Pai

The Enemy Within

Corruption - The Enemy of Dharma

There is a belief shared by an uncomfortably large number of people that all that one has to do is to speak the magic words "liberalisation, market economy, globalisation" and we are on the road to growth and prosperity. But if character and values are absent and the predominance is venality, or, as Rajaji would have put it, *Dharma* is absent.

Freedom First has consistently held that a free economy and a free society are two sides of the same coin. We would now like to amend this to say that *Freedom First* holds that a free economy and a free society based on *Dharma*, are two sides of the same coin.

Forty years of the Socialistic Pattern of Society resulted not in social justice but in the State becoming everything and the people nothing. Those charged with the implementation of the socialistic pattern, the ruling party politicians and government servants, found themselves wielding enormous economic power over the lives of people. And they misused this power to enrich themselves. Between them they spun an intricate web of permits, licences and quotas which ensured that even for the simplest commercial activity or for availing a normal service expected of the State, the politician-government servant nexus extracted its pound of flesh. This exploitative statist regime would have continued but for the fact that the Republic of India went bankrupt - almost.

If we thought, as many of us did in the sixties, that with the removal of the statist raj exploitation of the citizen by this nexus would cease, we were sadly mistaken. The 'New Class' of corrupt politicians, corrupt officials and corrupt businessmen, an offspring of the license-permit-quota raj, are not prepared to let go the goose that has been laying golden eggs. They are, on the one hand, constantly placing hurdles in the dismantling of the statist system and, on the other, devising new and innovative ways to enrich themselves.

Corruption in India today, has reached universal proportions. If bribe takers and bribe givers are to be viewed as criminals or as enemies of civil society, then every single adult Indian is a criminal and an enemy of civil society. *Dharma* in India is conspicuous by its absence and no amount of economic reforms will deliver unless we tackle the basic issue - the restoration of character and values among our people.

This was the subject of a discussion sponsored by *Freedom First* on June 24, in Mumbai. We had invited readers to send in their contributions. The response has been very encouraging.

We are therefore covering this feature in two parts spread over this and the next issue.



"The cause of emancipation from State socialism is a great cause, not a mere political cliché. The obverse of individual freedom, viz., self control and respect for the moral laws governing social life should not, however, be forgotten. The obverse of *Swatantra* consists of the duties that arise out of freedom and is given the name of *Dharma* in the Hindu tradition...The legitimate claim to be free carries with it obligations of social justice. This should be wrought into the internal sense and conscience of the individual.

C. Rajagopalachari, *Swarajya*, July 27, 1963

Issued by the Rajaji Foundation

The Enemy Within

The Monster of Corruption

S. S. Bankeshwar

You live in a society, where everybody steals. Do you choose to steal? The probability that you will be caught is very low, because the police are very busy, chasing other thieves.

Corruption has acquired epidemic proportions worldwide, especially in developing countries like India.

According to the IMF, WB and IBRD reports, India ranks among the ten most corrupt countries in the world. It is in danger of collapsing politically and economically, and will be unable to sustain itself in the system of governance, if corruption is allowed to survive unhindered.

The World Bank Study depicts the following grim picture of what happens when corruption engulfs a country:

- Stability is undermined due to loss of government revenue, excessive spending and leakages. The costs of this instability are mostly borne by the poor.
- Foreign investment is severely constrained.
- Since corruption increases the costs of doing business and private firms bear a disproportionately large share of these costs, private firms are severely affected.
- Since corruption compromises on pollution norms, the environment is greatly endangered.
- The poor suffer the most since they get low quality public goods and public services.
- There is a negative co-relation between the level of corruption and the level of investment in the economy. This severely constrains economic growth and employment generation.
- Innumerable deaths in our country are all due to the consumption of illicit liquor; the culprits are corrupt prohibition departments in various states of our country. Similarly, fatal accidents due to faulty materials, construction equipments, consumption of spurious drugs and medicines ... are all due to the large-scale corruption in our government departments.
- Corruption is the underlying cause for the growth of terrorism and militancy in our country by artificially creating inequality and injustice that have taken a heavy toll of human lives.

Corruption is the single major factor in keeping India poor and backward, despite having the best of human and natural resources.

The ultimate source of corruption is the availability of opportunities for kickbacks, government restrictions, regulations, licenses, permits and trade restrictions, such as very high tariffs, import quotas, subsidies, price controls,

multiple exchange rates, foreign exchange allocation schemes and government-controlled provision of credit which create endless opportunities for corruption, which, in fact, is a tax on the poor. The bribes paid by the manufacturers are passed on to the consumers.

Corrupt politicians spend more funds on items on which it is easier to exact massive kickbacks, for instance, the import of armaments, aircraft, large-scale investment projects ... rather than on education, health, well-digging, road building, afforestation, fisheries ... which not only promote economic growth to a greater extent than the former, but also provide employment to millions of our unemployed illiterates. Low economic growth is the direct result of massive corruption, thus lowering private investment. Heavy investment on population control measures will yield spectacular and rich dividends in the long run.

Corruption prospers when there are endless opportunities, institutional inefficiencies, such as political instability, weak and corrupt legislative and judicial systems. All these weaknesses feed upon one another. Once corruption is ingrained in the system of governance, it is almost impossible to get rid of it.

Liberalised Corruption

Our present pseudo liberalisation has only led to liberalised corruption. This pseudo liberalisation, which has resulted in the loot of crores of rupees from our public, mostly poor people, in the last five years by bogus non-banking finance and other fly-by-night companies is a new '*Avatar*' of our Permit-Licence and Liberalisation Raj. In recent times, scams have been mushrooming with lightning speed. Rightly has it been said that monopoly plus discretion minus accountability is the worst kind of corruption which erodes the development of countries, especially developing countries like India.

A clear distinction should be made between well-organised corruption and chaotic corruption; the latter is more sinister with more disastrous and deleterious effects than the former.

Organised Corruption

In the case of well organised corruption, entrepreneurs know exactly how and whom to bribe, how much to offer to get things done and obtain the desired favours. They are confident that payment of bribe at least guarantees that

The Enemy Within

the desired favour will be obtained. The required amount of bribe and appropriate recipient of the bribe giver are well known in advance. Under such a system, a corrupt bureaucrat will take a clearly defined share of a firm's profit; the bribe taker has in fact a vested interest in the success of the entrepreneur's firm.

Chaotic Corruption

In the case of chaotic corruption, entrepreneurs simply do not know whom to bribe to get their work done. The result is that they go on bribing several officials without any guarantee that they will not face any further demands for bribes or that their work will be done or the desired favour will be granted or the bribed bureaucrats will fulfil the promises made!

When multiple bribe takers demand bribes from the same entrepreneur without any co-ordinating bribe-level understanding among themselves, they are bound to make excessive demands. The result is that entrepreneurial activity comes to a halt. Chaotic corruption is hence more sinister and dangerous than well-organised corruption.

In South Korea, two former Presidents received very harsh sentences for taking bribes from business tycoons. One was sentenced to death and the other was given a sentence of 22 years in prison. They were given just a week to appeal. The entire trial took just six months. No mercy was shown to them at all. South Korea has shown us the way to deal with corrupt officials.

In India, such a trial would have taken two decades or more! Even if convicted, our corrupt politicians would still claim that they have won in the 'People's Court' which is 'superior to our Supreme Court', as they are elected as MPs or MLAs and allege that the trial was politically motivated. A standard defence of our corrupt politicians!

"Honest" Corruption

This pertains to a Minister (now dead, whose record as the Union Minister for the longest time in office is yet to be broken) who indulged only in honest corruption. Needless to mention his name. This minister always took right decisions, which nobody could find fault with. Once, a proposal was accepted by this minister for a contract from a party. He noted on the application - 'Sanctioned' and asked his Personal Assistant (PA) to contact the party concerned and demand a bribe of Rs.50,000/- (now worth Rs.50 lakhs). The party concerned paid only Rs 25,000, promising to pay the balance amount later. The minister was furious and added "Not" before 'Sanctioned' and asked his PA to contact the party again to collect the balance amount. The party quietly paid up the balance amount. The PA went back to the Minister and informed him that the balance amount had been received. The minister was pleased and added a 'e' after 'Not'. His final remark was 'Note - Sanctioned'. This is what is called 'Honest Corruption', as this minister had taken a right decision!

SSB

If this cancerous growth of corruption, pseudo liberalisation, and naked nepotism in the name of 'social justice' is not checked in time, India is bound to disintegrate like the erstwhile USSR.

When my friend, the late Shri H. V. Kamath, the stormy petrel of Parliament, launched a virulent and blistering attack in our Parliament on the Congress (as was his wont), exposing the magnitude of corruption in the highest seats of power, and warned that corruption was always due to the institutionalisation of the *quid pro quo* syndrome in the highest seats of power, with all checks gone and accountability vanishing, the late Prime Minister, Smt. Indira Gandhi intervened and said that corruption was after all a global phenomenon.

You live in a society, where everybody steals. Do you choose to steal? The probability that you will be caught is very low, because the police are very busy, chasing other thieves. Even if you get caught, the chances of your being caught and punished severely for a crime that is so common are very low. Therefore, you steal! By contrast, if you live in a society where theft is very rare, the chances of your being caught and punished are very high. So you choose not to steal.

It is said that the bribe giver is as guilty as the bribe taker. True, but not always so. Every one of us is guilty of bribing some one or the other in an emergency to get things done. Suppose a person very close and dear to you is very seriously ill, and you are unable to get a railway ticket, will you not buy your railway ticket by offering a bribe to the reservation clerk? The bribe giver is therefore not always as guilty as the bribe taker.

Venality, institutionalisation of the *quid pro quo* and corruption at the top levers of power, as the late Shri H. V. Kamath rightly pointed out in our Parliament, have unfail-

Structured Corruption

The Prohibition Department is among the most corrupt in states which have imposed Prohibition. Police stations have a complete list of the names and addresses of all illicit liquor distillers and illicit liquor dens in their respective jurisdiction, as monthly 'haftas' are regularly collected by them. An occasional raid here and there is all pre-planned, and the illicit distillers and illicit liquor bar owners are all informed well in advance about the impending 'raids'.

About two decades ago, in view of the galloping inflation, the monthly 'hafta' was raised by our 'law-enforcing authorities' by 50% unilaterally. The illicit liquor distillers and illicit liquor bar owners resented this 'illegal', 'arbitrary' and 'unjust' surcharge and went on an indefinite 'Bandh'. 'Bandh' by illicit distillers and illicit liquor bar owners!

Our 'law-enforcing authorities' surrendered after two weeks and withdrew their 'surcharge'. The illicit liquor distillers and illicit liquor bar owners then ended their 'Protest Bandh' and resumed their normal business with renewed vigour!

SSB

The Enemy Within

ingly destroyed many republics in the world in the past.

The moral of this story of corruption is that the monster grows stronger and stronger in proportion to the growth of laws, rules and regulations, which give scope for making money by unfair means. The main reason for corruption is to get around burdensome rules and regulations, apart from an ineffective and corrupt legal system. Such laws, rules and regulations which give endless scope for making money by unfair means should be done away with. Mere change of government will not end the menace of corruption. The low economic growth is the direct result of unmitigated and widespread corruption in all our government departments.

A Nation of Fixers?

Is our country a nation of Fixers, Scamsters and Gangsters?

Fixing Cricket Matches, fixing Cricket Selection Committee, fixing the Board of Control for Cricket, fixing selection of Test and One-Day Cricket Teams, fixing Merit Scholars in S.S.C. & H.S.C. (by coaching institutions), fixing gullible people (who constitute the majority in our country) by fly-by-night companies, fixing innocent patients by fake doctors, bogus 'babas', 'saints' (who claim to 'perform miracles') and charlatans who claim to cure all incurable diseases like

Asthma, Cancer and AIDS by 'Himalayan Herbal treatment', the proliferating tribe of scamsters, gangsters and crooks who fix our nation itself ... (the list is endless!).

Who says that India is a poor country? Ours is a very rich country (although inhabited by poor people) with huge resources and a great cultural heritage. Which country in the world can boast of three Fathers? Father of the Nation, Mahatma Gandhi, Father of the Underworld Dons, Father of Scamsters, and let's not forget that Fodder of the Nation!

I can't help quoting the sarcastic comments of the late Don Haji Mastan of the underworld:

"Condemn all scamsters, gangsters and underworld Dons during the day, but establish good relations with them and fall at their feet at night. Without their money and muscle power, nobody can be a successful politician. This is the philosophy of all our politicians, irrespective of the political parties they belong to, with a very few honourable exceptions, of course!

MR. S. S. BANKESHWAR is a regular contributor to *Freedom First*. This is an extract from his paper circulated to participants at the June 24 Seminar.

A Report of the Discussions

A Sociological Analysis

Sudhir Kakkar who has done considerable research for the last 30 years on the psycho-social aspects of child-rearing has drawn a comparison between the upbringing of the male child and the female child. Since the Mahabharata, the begetting of a son was the highest duty of a woman. That bias continues even now, but in a very damaging form. Kakkar contrasts western upbringing of children with our traditional upbringing. In the West, he says, socialization and discipline are two important factors in the upbringing of children. Socialisation means becoming members of a social group, becoming aware of responsibilities to the social group, in other words, the seeds of citizenship, the seeds of relationships, and of course social discipline.

In our tradition, whatever socialisation there may be, comes much later in adulthood, not in childhood. Protective indulgence sums up the upbringing. The male child is given

no work, the female child is given a lot of work. Somewhere between the ages 10 and 12 the male child becomes a little boisterous. And then comes the role of the father as the controller or the disciplinarian. It is then that he has to face an autocratic father. During this transitional period he begins to realize that the style of the senior has to be authoritarian. And our society is authoritarian. Our social systems and our feudal systems which we have inherited, over the centuries, have made us hierarchical. On the other hand the female child is trained to be a good woman, a good wife, a good daughter-in-law. Three positive objectives. There are no such positive objectives for the male child who turns out to be a spoilt brat.

The Nehru state apparatus is really a product of this male child upbringing - where he wants patronage and power but consuming, with the use of that power, the resources of the community. The new class of criminals in our society are not the sons of the poor. They are the sons of the rich and powerful, who believe that society and government owes them a living.

We are reverting to our past ways of the *sauda*, the *pindaris* and *thugues*. Lord Bentinck in the 1830s wiped out *thugues* in central India in six months. Our *pindaris* and *thugs* are multiplying fast and have spread into the system itself.

Speed Money

In practically all big companies, state-owned or privately owned, the purchase department is the most corrupt one. Your bills are held up for over three months, unless you pay a speed money of 2%. You would naturally prefer to pay this speed money to get your bills passed, or else, you will end up paying bank interest on your overdraft at the rate of 18% for three months.

The Enemy Within

They are getting elected to various elected bodies as people's representatives.

Why is our democracy electing such people? For the simple reason that such people can, in a controlled economy, deliver what the people want. The people choose people who can deliver.¹

If we want the delivery systems to be effective we have got to deal with the problems of the deliverers, in other words, the link between the politicians and the bureaucrats. I refer to India's second largest slavery system which is the power of the politicians - to transfer civil servants. Today that is big business. It is not just a transfer. Every post has a price. This must be stopped. We can learn from other democracies. In such democracies politicians do not have the right to transfer summarily. If you want to transfer somebody, you have to approach the Civil Service Commission. This Civil Service Commission idea must be developed here too. The politician must be deprived of this right to transfer, because they have turned this into a slavery system.²

Kakar's socio-psychological study applies to India of the last several centuries. Whereas the problem of corruption we are talking about pertains to the more recent past - probably the last thirty or forty years. If India was so bad for the last several centuries, then the moral stature of India in the last several decades, before the forties and fifties is inexplicable. Also worth considering is the fact that we have given a lot of authority to people who are not basically well-to-do. That authority is being misused to fill the gap between their earning and their expectation. Simultaneously the external pressures exerted on our youth, like religion and parental influence are absent. The notion of sin, the fear of God, that something wrong done now, will have to be paid for later, has also gone. So neither parent nor religion is held in awe any longer. Anything that serves one's immediate greed is what is acceptable.³

I don't think our culture has been more authoritarian than, say, the patriarchal culture of the earlier Romans, where a father could send his son to death under the law; nor has our culture been more authoritarian than that of 18th century France where a father could send his son to the Bastille. So let us not draw a simplistic relation between the kind of socio-cultural ethos that is built up in society and authoritarian behaviour. In my view corruption, put in economic terms

emerges when there is more demand and less supply of goods. In such a situation all of us become unwilling victims or participants in corruption. If I want a railway ticket for very urgent reasons, I am not going to hesitate passing on a five rupee note to somebody who could get me a ticket for the day I want to travel.

The real solution is to bring about certain kinds of institutional changes; changes in certain kinds of legal procedures to reduce corruption. Talking about changing human character and education are long term processes. What we need in the short term are more drastic measures to curb corruption.

In 1969, when I was at Army HQ, I was given the task of quantifying annual confidential reports, so that we could put it on the computer, and the human element could be eliminated. A problem that faced me was, how do you quantify 'integrity' on a scale of 1 to 9? Because if you get a rating of 7 points, it implies that your integrity is still being doubted. Either you have it or you don't have it.⁵

State of Mind

Sometime in the mid-seventies, I found myself in Delhi, telling a senior politician, that the assumption politicians make when an official differs with them is that he must be in someone else's pocket. He shot me down immediately, and said, 'Modi saheb, aap nahin jante, is desh mein har baat ke liye sauda. (In this country everything is negotiable). That sir is the state of mind. Now the most neutral English translation of the word 'sauda' is exchange. You scratch my back, I scratch your back. This is the state of mind which is almost universal.'⁶

Regarding the state of mind of we Indians, our uppermost feeling is one of insecurity. Hence we hoard things; we build a house to last a hundred years. We never make a house for our living. No Indian enjoys his own earnings. He wants to leave it for his children, because he has very little confidence in them. We have developed this feeling of insecurity because we have been almost continuously ruled by outsiders for well over 1000 years. We need to change this mindset and help our children develop a feeling of security - not by amassing wealth through corrupt means, but by encouraging them to learn to earn and stand on their own feet.⁷

Loss of Credibility

There is the example of Mr. Chandrashekhar, the Municipal Commissioner of Thane. The moment the public find that the man is honest, that he means business, that he cannot be bought over by local politicians or is not afraid of the local goondas, they go all out to topple him. One has only to drive through the streets of Thane to see for himself the change that this honest Municipal Commission has wrought. A dirty city has been transformed into one

1. Mr. D. Moddie
Mr. Sanjay Kher
Mr. Asim Kher

2. Prof. V. K. Sinha

3. Maj. Gen. E. D'Souza

4. Mr. A. D. Moddie

5. Mr. Satish Sahney

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that is better than the cleanest part of Mumbai. There are no encroachments on the roads and footpaths; no garbage piled up on the sides awaiting pickup up municipal trucks; no policemen enforcing this because the citizens having discovered how good public hygiene is, are themselves enforcing the law not merely obeying it. So it is a question of credibility. One of the reasons why corruption is thriving, in my view, the fact is, the state has lost its credibility - its elected representatives and the bureaucracy are treated with contempt.

Always a Corrupt Society

The fact is we were always a corrupt society. In Moghul times, a man's salary was fixed, taking into account the money he would make by way of bribes. If he had more opportunities for bribery, his salary was less. If he had fewer opportunities, his salary used to be more. This is a well attested fact.

Secondly, when we go searching for a bridegroom for our eligible daughters, we want to know the salary of the prospective bridegroom. The answer generally and very innocently given is that his salary is Rs.50 and his 'other' income is Rs.250. In other words corruption is regarded as an ongoing process of social living. It is not that corruption has cropped up suddenly. What has happened is that opportunities for corruption have increased and as the French have it 'it is opportunity that makes a thief'. An old Hindi proverb says that the halwai always licks his fingers. And Kautilya says that in the pond, you cannot prevent the fish from swallowing water.

Dr. R. Srinivasan

Too Many Laws

The two issues involved here are : One, we know there is corruption; and the second, what do we do about it. To answer the first, reduce the authority of the executive. The more authority you give them, the more scope you provide for corruption. We must understand that the administration that we inherited was designed in the background of the 1857 uprising. That uprising changed the attitude of the British who from then on then viewed us with mistrust. Therefore all their laws and procedures are full of checks and counter checks. If you look at some of the accounting rules for instance. That was the beginning of the babu raj. All that happened in 1947 was only a transfer of power - from the white man to the brown man. Rules of business remained. And those rules of business encouraged more corruption, became stumbling blocks to perform even simple tasks. So if corruption is to be tackled, the first step will be to throw overboard all the old rules of business, and limit the authority of the executive.

Take Municipal Laws for instance. Why is it necessary

* Mr. S. V. Raju

* Mr. Satish Sahney

* Maj. Gen. E. D'Souza

* Mr. A. V. Gopalakrishnan

to get a plan approved by the Municipal Corporation? The responsibility should be that of the Architect who has to follow statutory guidelines when drawing up plans for a building to be constructed in Mumbai. If there is a flaw, that Architect has to be taken to task and suitably punished under the law. India is the only example where, after Independence, the civil services have multiplied and have become all pervasive. In all developed societies, the bureaucracy is small.⁹

If you examine which are the countries which are most corrupt and which have the least corruption I find that the best are countries with small populations like New Zealand, Denmark, Sweden, Finland, Canada and Norway.¹⁰

When a Person is Caught

I am an Advocate. I took to legal practice, after serving in a public sector undertaking for a number of years. In the course of service I have, on several occasions accompanied CBI officers when they conducted raids. I have been personal witness to what happens to a person when he is trapped, and the manner in which our legal system breeds corruption when this happens. If a person is caught red-handed, the CBI immediately refers the case to the Prosecution Wing which will suggest whether the person should be prosecuted in a court of law, or face departmental enquiry if he is a government servant or freed if there is no case. Here is where the opportunity for a corrupt practice arises.¹¹

The person is taken into custody under the Delhi Special Police Establishment Act. The fact is that the Central Bureau of Investigation CBI does not have an Act of its own. The Delhi Special Police Establishment is actually of Second World War vintage (the CBI is a post-independence creation). It had a small office in the home ministry, and was created to prevent war-time corruption involving defence force contracts and the like.

Of Cronje and Us

In a recent BBC Question Hour programme a very interesting question was raised by a member of the audience in regard to Hansie Cronje. There was a certain admiration for Cronje for admitting that he had done something morally wrong; that, at least he had a conscience. This led to a question by a member of the audience. Okay Cronje made this admission. How come, in the whole of Indian society, not just in cricket, in the last fifty years, nobody has admitted that he has taken a bribe, has done anything wrong - neither politician, bureaucrat, nor businessman nor anybody who 'fixes'. How come? And the answer was - It is not that there is much of a difference between Cronje's wickedness and ours. The difference lies in the fact that Cronje lives in a society where he knows he cannot get away with it for very long. In our society, we are sure that in 99% of the cases we can get away with it, so why confess?

Mr. A. D. Moddie

The Enemy Within

In so far as the sanction to prosecute is concerned it is provided in the Prevention of Corruption Act. This again is a source of corruption, because this is a bureaucrat's creation to protect himself. Again a procedure handed down to us by the British. An officer is protected from prosecution for anything done in the course of duty – even murder. So the sanction to prosecute, from the appointing authority is a bad section. This should be deleted.

Because my appointing authority and I share the booty. Naturally he (my appointing authority) is not going to give the sanction to prosecute. Recently, the Bombay High Court let off a minister involved in the Chate Classes case* on the technical ground that no sanction was obtained from the Governor to prosecute the Minister.

The Farce of Suspension

In the case of a departmental inquiry, when a person is accused of a misdemeanour and is suspended, for the first three months he is given a subsistence allowance which is, 50% of the wages; after 3 months, there is a further review which may go on for another six months, and if it continues,

We are all Culpable

It is at the cutting edge of administration that corruption hurts the common man most. It is in his everyday life - whether it is at the post office, or the railway station that corruption hurts. It is poverty which is hurting us more, because everyday we are being hurt by corruption.¹³

Corruption that affects the poor people is much worse. This morning, while traveling to this seminar the taxi driver and I got talking. 'Do you own this taxi', I asked him. He said 'yes'. I asked him 'do you have to get it passed through the Regional Transport Office every year', he said 'yes'. He said (this is a translation of his reply in Hindi 'Sir, I bought this new diesel car from the company. When I took the taxi to the RTO for passing, the officer reeled of a list of defects in the new car. I told him that it was not my fault but that of the manufacturer. However I asked him to give me in writing all the defects in this new car and I would take it to the company from whom I bought this taxi. The officer replied that that was necessary. He said that the official fees was Rs.60.00 plus tax to have the car passed. I understood what the fellow wanted and paid Rs.300.00 (the bribe he wanted) to get the taxi passed. Now this is the level at which corruption hurts people and affects their lives.¹⁴

Corruption, is a low-risk, high return enterprise in our country. There is neither peer pressure nor legal pressure

this allowance, is raised to 75% of the subsistence allowance. I know of several cases where people have been getting this allowance for years together - 10 or even 15 years. During this period they start their own business – even though there is a rule that you should not have another employment and after the proceedings are over – if he is exonerated and taken back into service, sometimes with full back wages, he immediately goes in for voluntary retirement or resigns, and goes back to running his own business - yet another breeding ground for corruption.

In Delhi, they say, if an officer's term of deputation is over or he has to revert to his own State, which is not a very happy situation for some. The officer concerned tries to get himself suspended! By so doing his reversion to the state cadre is kept in abeyance. For six months he will get 90% of his salary, he can retain his house and everything else he is entitled to, and during that time his children would have completed their education. If he wins the case, there is continuity of service. This means he will get his promotions ex-post facto!¹²

and so its practitioner makes easy money. Once I asked a clerk, when I was forced to grease his palm why was he asking for a bribe. He said, 'Sir, I have a smart son but I don't come under the Reserved Category. If, instead of scoring 95% in his qualifying examination he secures 85%, I won't be able to secure admission for him on the basis of his marks into a medical course. But I would still want him to study medicine, and that would need lots of money. That is why I am collecting money for him. In our country also, we have created, constitutionally, an inequitable society. Nearly 70% of the seats in Maharashtra's engineering colleges are for the reserved category. Where will a boy who comes from a middle class family and who does not belong to the reserved category go if he has to spend Rs.2 to 3 lakhs to get admission? It is a vicious cycle. When the boy graduates his first priority is to recover the amount spent on his education, by fair means or foul. That's how we rationalize, and that's how we get our work done.

And it goes on. We all are guilty – of giving money some time or the other to get our work done and do nothing to change the system. How many times have we got up to resist and say no, I am not going to pay the money? What I am trying to say is that if society has to change, the mindset of even the givers has to change, not just the takers.¹⁵

Delhi is the fountainhead of corruption in our country. It is one of the first places to combine both political power and economic power in the hands of the state. Thus you have the spectacle of industrialists and businessmen making frequent visits to Delhi, having their liaison or 'public

* Mr. Sahasr Sahney

Mr. Ashok Karnik

Dr. B. N. Colabawalla

Dr. Nagraj Hulgoi

The Enemy Within

relations officers' in Dehi to wait on ministers to get their work done. This is what Rajaji aptly described as the licence-permit-quota-raj. I have seen the ugly face of corruption in the course of my business and I must say that I have largely escaped unscathed, and probably poorer for that reason. And I don't regret that. Successive governments in our country have not done anything about it. It is no use comparing ourselves with the rest of the world and say that everybody is corrupt and so it doesn't matter. We have a reason to get ourselves rid of corruption in this country, because if we don't, we will pay a very high price. Indeed the cancer of corruption in our country has reached a terminal stage.. It has affected all parts of our body politik. No section of our society whether it is the judiciary or the army or the education system has been spared. Business people, like us, are the most corrupt in one way or the other – by watching corruption take place under our very nose and not doing anything about it. On the contrary we have contributed by being a part of that system. There is no question about it. All of us are corrupt. What do we do about it?¹⁶

Loss of Values

Indeed the main reason for corruption in our society is a general shift in our values system. Though some form of corruption may have always existed in India, I think the real decline began around the 70s and since then the slide has been downhill. Until the 50s and the 60s people generally regarded, knowledge and "respect from those whom you respected" as the desired virtues, followed only by craving for name and fame. Therefore, you'll find that the most coveted professions during the early days of independence were the noble professions i.e. teaching, journalism, law,

Technology's Uses

Technology may come to our rescue in reducing considerably, opportunities for corruption. Computerisation of land records for example. Recently there was a report of the Collector of Dhar District in Madhya Pradesh having made available information on a computer and a person appointed to operate the computer. This computer operator gets paid by the farmers who come to him for information. He is not being paid by the government but by those who seek information. He charges anything from Rs.5 to Rs.10 for information ranging from weather forecast to land records, title deeds, disputes over properties and similar types of information. Earlier, even to get the smallest kind of information, the farmer had to go to the Tehsildar's office and bribe the clerk. Now with information on-line it will soon reduce the unofficial income of a whole lot of babus

medicine, fine arts and, of course, the civil service or the armed forces

These professions brought you respect from the society but not much money. But then, in those days, money was not considered so very important. In fact amassing wealth was considered rather vulgar.

Today, money has become the sole criteria of one's success & achievement; and as they say where there is money there is corruption.

I have my own theory on this. The British colonised us but the Americans, with their fast food & Cola culture, have 'colonised' us. Until the 1950s & the 1960s most Indians went for higher education to England for liberal studies - and studied subjects such as literature, social sciences or medicine etc. The idea was to gain knowledge that also imbued values that made you a better human being. The shift came in the 1970s when young Indians started going to the US for higher studies in management, marketing etc. and the sole aim became gaining qualifications to make more money.

Of course the other factor has been the corrupting influence of TV. People saw in their own homes how the other, more privileged people lived and that induced the desire to become like them. Aspirational frustrations often lead people to look for ways to make quick and easy money. The commercialisation of TV also promoted crass consumerism, creating artificial needs, which in most cases, people found difficult to fulfil - leading them to look for ways for easy & quick money.¹⁷

in the tehsildar's office. A blow, albeit a small one at corruption. A small beginning but a beginning nevertheless.¹⁸

I may add that one of the areas where corruption takes place at the police station level is at the point of registration of crime. Where the officer in charge of the police station may minimise the crime, may forget to write a date in the first information report, all for a price. Now if every police station is on line and if the Superintendent of Police is also on line, all you have to do is go to the same place pay say Rs. 5 for recording the complaint. Once this is done the complaint is on record, you cannot tamper with it. The money that a police officer or an inspector would take for omitting a name from the FIR is eliminated. This is something which we should do.

Another important point is that decentralization and technology will also help accountability. Because through decentralization, the people would know who is responsible

¹⁶ Mr. K. H. Subramaniam

¹⁷ Mr. Kunwar Sinha

¹⁸ Mr. S. V. Raju

¹⁹ Mr. Satish Sahney

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for something and it would be easier to control corruption, because you will get to know who is doing it and hold him to it. This is not possible in a large centralized state even with computers.²⁰

There is an impression that information technology and computers will solve a major portion of corruption. It is not so. I will give an interesting example in a lighter vein.

Value Education - Differing Views

According to a study 5 to 15 is the age where value education in schools is most important. I speak from a little experience because the number of schools that call you to speak to children on value education and from the responses you get from the children, I get the impression that they are very very receptive. But what happens once they go home. In today's economic conditions, both the husband and wife are forced to work. We must have some sort of programme to ensure that values are inculcated in the schools and supported in the homes as well.²²

Value education in schools is not going to get us anywhere. Because who is going to give this education. Some of our textbooks are quite sub-standard and taught by teachers who probably don't believe in what they are teaching. In some cases the teachers are themselves corrupt and without values. And schools teach values by rote – unless the school itself can provide a role model and at home another role model, the child is not going to learn anything – because what he sees and what he reads and what he is told contradict each other. We are becoming a value-less society.²³

Very often the value education syllabi drawn by a particular State government or Board of Education is largely religious education, with a bias towards the majority religion. So when the Maharashtra government introduced a GR on value education, that was what they called it, the examples which they gave, or the kind of references or role models which they presented, were all taken from Hindu scriptures and Sangh literature. When there was a protest from the minorities, the government glibly stated that the minorities were free to have their own models – so Muslim schools would have Islamic models and Christian schools would have Christian models. This kind of 'value education' will merely communalise the whole system.²⁴

Corruption is like pornography. Both are attractive. And this is a big problem. Especially for children. I do not

The PWD awards 5% over the contract tendered amount to any contractor who does work on Malabar Hill. Now this 5% over the tendered amount is a rule which was introduced by the Britishers over 100 years ago when Malabar Hill was a place where no contractor wanted to go. Even today, 5% over and above the tender amount is being paid, written specifically as '5% Malabar Hill work', and awarded to every contractor who works in Malabar Hill.²¹

agree that schools cannot teach values. I think that most of the good values which I have, are what I learnt, besides my family, in a missionary school. I don't think children have religion. It does not matter whether it's a Hindu school or a Muslim school or a Christian school. It's adults who have religion and have messed it up.

Creating Crooks

I have been teaching Masters of Management students for the last 23 years and I can give concrete examples of what is happening. If a management graduate becomes corrupt, or manages to get admission by paying a capitation fee or a donor fee, then he has to recover about Rs.7 lakhs from day one when he takes up employment. He has to first worry, like a doctor who has given a capitation fee, how he will recover his money? In other words from day one we have a potential crook on our hands. To avoid this, we in the institute of management studies where I teach came out with a system under the stewardship of one Mr. Lakhanpal. Mr. Lakhanpal was a Secretary of Education in the government of Maharashtra. He was a very transparent, absolutely upright and a very efficient person. He came out with a system called Centralised Entrance Test (CET) and he put a very responsible person in charge a Mr. Pradeep Dagli, Director of the Citizen's College, Nagpur. This system functioned with an accuracy of 98%. There was not a single court case which the CET governing Board did not win. I am aware because I was associated as a lawyer, giving legal inputs and as an educationist, academic inputs. This was the position till last year, when the last coalition government in the State asked the Director, Professor Mr. Pradeep Dagli to do something which was unethical and which he was not prepared to do. So he was immediately relieved and asked to vacate his quarters in 17 hours and go back to Nagpur after having stayed in Bombay for 28 years! When I made a big noise, I was accused of bias. Mr. Dagli was transferred, the Education Secretary Mr. Raja too was transferred and dumped in the sewage and water project department. A new person took over.

This happened last year. And this year, the CET was not held. A whole academic year has been lost. Also lost was transparency in admissions because there have been no advertisements in the papers. So a practice introduced to prevent corruption and which achieved for three consecutive years, a corruption-free management degree course entrance examination has been abandoned. And there has been little public protest.

N. K. Dhondy

²⁰ Dr. Sonal Shah

²¹ Mr. Sanjay Kher

²² Maj. Gen. E. D'Souza

²³ Dr. M. P. Kamekar

²⁴ Prof. V. K. Sinha

FREEDOM IS THE GIFT OF GOD - THE RIGHT OF
EVERY NATION. YOU MAY CLAIM IT. BUT IF YOU
CLAIM IT BY ANY MEANS THAT ARE REPUGNANT
TO GOD, IT WILL NOT BE A BLESSING TO US.

— MAHATMA GANDHI



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If I am asked to define or characterize a good Indian, it is a very difficult question to answer. If we can propagate the image of a good Indian as being one who is incorruptible, who has many positive values, I think that is going to help a great deal. Let me give you an example. I am a good Brahmin. The concept of a good Brahmin is one who doesn't take alcohol, doesn't gamble, is committed to studies, etc. And that's how the child grows up. Not any more probably. And that's how he remains free from certain vices. There is a great part which religious institutions can play in developing an aversion to corruption. A senior colleague of mine has now joined the Brahmakumaris. He has given up alcohol. That may not be important but he has stopped overcharging patients! So religion can play a very crucial role in metamorphosing people. And we need to create an image of the good Indian, and we can all aspire to be that good Indian. In this the media, the schools, the religious organizations can play a useful role. I think this is one of the positive strategies one can think of.²⁵

So far as the remedies are concerned, there are several. One is education. Of course we will have to take precautions so far as the teaching of moral values, and the text books for study are concerned. I think both the Kothari Commission, and the Report on the New Education Policy have referred to this. This task should be left to experts. And we should take care that this does not get a religious colour and is not misused by religious leaders.²⁶

Thanks to my school-going children I get many opportunities to interact with a number of their friends' parents. My children and their friends, are in the age group 7 or 8 and they study in the Bombay Scottish School, near the Muslim-dominated Mahim area, I have heard them say, 'Uncle, please drive the car a little faster - I don't want to pass through this dirty area.' I was taken aback and asked one of them 'why is this a dirty area?' And he said, 'because my father said so'. Now this is the kind of attitude that parents display in front of their children. And when I have had the occasion to interact with these parents, I have found that it is not prejudice which is the dominant problem, it is the inability to decipher and understand the issues involved. And when I, in my limited way, tried to have a little meaningful talk with them, I have found them open to change - it is just that they do not get the right vehicle or the right people to explain things to them in a coherent manner. And therefore they willingly accept the information that they read or hear from their own sources. So there is need for small groups of people who would be able to disseminate the right kind of information in a more rational manner.²⁷

Decentralisation

I agree that decentralization is one of the methods of reducing corruption. In the West, corruption is much less compared to other countries because they have a high element of decentralization. If the people at the village panchayat level have the power and the resources to take a decision on say, building a bridge, there may be some amount of corruption, but not to the extent where a babu sitting in Delhi passes an expenditure for a bridge which was never built.

Information

Another is the need to have legislations like the Right to Information. The Right to Information movement started from a rural area in Rajasthan. And that did bring about a certain check on the bureaucrats. This is another way of reducing corruption.

Simplifying Laws

Another is the fact that many of our laws and regulations need revision. I think we need a Benthamite revolution here like in 19th century England when a number of laws were scrapped. And this was where the Utilitarians who were the first great liberals of the modern times, worked towards reducing and simplifying the laws.

We would now have to devise certain certain non-institutional devices, specific steps by which we can try to reduce corruption. The Fabians did an excellent job in that respect. Though they were half-socialists, they were always very specific very concrete, taking up specific issues, specific goals of reforms, and then bringing about the desired changes.²⁸

Public Servants

I would like some rules be made in the area of recruitment to our administrative services. Along with interviews and written tests, some moral norms should also be worked out - something that Kautilya had advised us in his *Arthashastra*.

Birbal's Wisdom

Emperor Akbar was convinced that corruption could be weeded out. And he said this to Birbal. One day Birbal pointed out to a man and said he is the most corrupt in your regime. Let's see if you can correct him. Akbar accepted the challenge. He put the man whom Birbal described as being the most corrupt, next to the river, and assigned him the task of counting the waves and to report to him every evening. Birbal said, 'Badshah, I can assure you, that within a week you are going to receive many complaints, regarding this man's actions. Birbal was proved right. Within a week, shipowners came to the Badshah and complained that this man was charging them a levy because the ships which ply across the river disturbed his counting! This story is only to illustrate my feeling that there is little hope of corruption being eliminated.

Sanjay Kher

²⁵ Dr. Nagraj Huiigoi

²⁶ Dr. Usha Mehta

²⁷ Mr. Sanjay Kher

²⁸ Prof. V. K. Sinha

The Enemy Within

Another area for reform is our electoral system. Unless that is changed, and changed fundamentally, I think it will be very difficult to stop corruption. I would say that as much as we would like to give some moral education to our children, to our youth and also to our governments, we should also give some orientation to our parliamentarians. And of course they need to be educated, both in procedures of Parliament, as also about the country, and some lessons in ethics before they are sworn in as Members of Parliament.

Even the Judiciary is becoming corrupt. Our hope that so long as we had an independent and incorruptible judiciary, the picture was not so dismal is fading. We need to consider how to make the judiciary more responsible. There is also need to deal with the conflict between the judiciary and the executive. The two need to complement each other and not be in conflict as a recent judgement and government's reaction have unfortunately shown. At the same we have to see that the judiciary is independent of the executive, and, that the judgements passed by the judiciary are respected and implemented properly.²⁹

We seem to be agreed on two suggestions: one, reduce the power and the number of the bureaucracy; and second, decentralize governance and administration. This by itself is not enough. The message has to be conveyed to the politicians that this means good politics. How is this to be conveyed? Only one chief minister in India is pursuing it. And it is extremely important for the intellectuals and the media to follow what is happening in Madhya Pradesh. I think there should be a sustained campaign to give practical examples that this is good politics. In other words, we need to tell the politicians 'you the politicians can only survive and get the votes if you follow this.'³⁰

A Panel to Examine Allegations

We feel terribly frustrated, when we hear about corruption. The media comes out with all kinds of stories about someone being corrupt, then nothing is done to follow it up. We get the feeling that everybody gets away with it. And most of them do get away with it. When Mr. Khairnar comes out with allegations, without any evidence you get the impression that everybody in the government is corrupt. When the next government comes we feel that this government too is corrupt. A third government takes over we feel they too are corrupt. I would suggest that if we have a panel of people, jurists, for instance, who can examine allegations made about important people and come out with prima facie evidence of their guilt, or otherwise, we can publicize this fact in an objective manner. Then the people will know what is. So I would suggest a committee of such luminaries, which is basically impartial, which is not

necessarily anti-establishment, be set up to examine the allegations and share their findings with the people for whatever they are worth.³¹

Indian Liberal Group

The Indian Liberal Group (ILG) will, among other things organize small panels of experts who can speak rationally and with some authority on various subjects. The ILG has among its members lawyers, doctors, businessmen, industrialists, chartered accountants, business executives and others. And what it plans to do is this. Every time a major issue arises, the ILG, through these specialised groups study such issues, and the ILG will circulate these as widely as possible.

Secondly, we feel that we need to put before the people and the younger generation in particular role models of men and women who are symbols of honesty, integrity, and courage who have spoken out against societal evils and injustices disregarding populist considerations and planted the seeds of a healthy civil society. The Indian Liberal Group plans to publish their profiles beginning with Raja Rammohun Roy. There are so many of them - some very well known others not so well known, all over the country. This is the kind of value education that the Indian Liberal Group has in mind.

As for information technology Information, as Liberals, we are all for the maximum use of modern science and technology. Technology is, as we all know, a double-edged weapon. It can be used for good or for evil. We must put technology to use in combating corruption. And there is so much information available on the Net. For instance the website of Transparency International offers nearly 200 sites on "transparency" as also on corruption.

This is what the Liberal Group is trying to do. Inform - in its efforts to help restore character and values in public life. We must move towards that goal, however idealistic or utopian it may sound. We do not want our children to say, *Sab kuch chalta hai*. (Everything goes.) We want them to say, *Sab kuch nahin chalta hai. Sab kuch badal sakta hai* (Everything is not OK). We can change things).³²

(to be continued)

Participants in the June 24 discussion on Corruption

Dr. B. N. Colabawalla • Major General E. D'Souza (retd.) • Mr. N. K. Dhondy • Mr. A. V. Gopalakrishnan • Dr. Nagraj Huilgol • Dr. M. P. Kamerkar • Mr. B. K. Karanjia • Mr. Ashok Karnik • Mr. Sanjay Kher • Dr. Usha Mehta • Mr. A. D. Moddie • Mr. S. V. Raju • Ms. Kashmira Rao • Mr. Satish Sahney • Ms. Sonal Shah • Professor V. K. Sinha • Mr. Kunwar Sinha • Dr. R. Srinivasan

²⁹ Dr. Usha Mehta

³⁰ Mr. A. D. Moddie

³¹ Mr. Ashok Karnik

³² Mr. S. V. Raju

1

The No.2
is where
it belongs...
in its place.

TOTAL READERS (in 000s)	All India	West Bengal	Calcutta
1. The Statesman	987	889	582
2. The Telegraph	968	665	448
1. The Sunday Statesman	1546	1422	867
2. The Telegraph (Sunday)	1463	1102	668

READERSHIP IN KEY CATEGORIES - WEST BENGAL (in 000s)

	Monthly Household Income		Graduates/ Post Grad.+	Urban	Rural	Industrialists/ Businessmen	Professionals/ Senior Executives
	Rs 5001-8000	Rs 8001+					
1. The Statesman	274	330	533	790	99	38	93
2. The Telegraph	171	258	374	599	56	31	72
1. The Sunday Statesman	429	504	768	1159	262	54	123
2. The Telegraph (Sunday)	288	390	581	919	183	49	90

READERSHIP IN KEY CATEGORIES - CALCUTTA (in 000s)

1. The Statesman	172	235	350	-	-	35	63
2. The Telegraph	121	176	243	-	-	23	47
1. The Sunday Statesman	271	346	494	-	-	51	86
2. The Telegraph (Sunday)	188	238	328			40	56

Source - Indian Readership Survey 1999*

With the truth so readily available, why do some people still want to know where the No.2 is? Is it because the No. 1 is now so completely out of sight that they can't see if it is ahead or behind? Or is it because the flip side of being unputdownable is to delight in being put down?

The Statesman
Eastern India's leading English daily

* The Indian Readership Survey is the only one to which The Statesman subscribes. It does so for several reasons: a) IRS is the first continuous readership survey in the country. b) Those who use research findings to make advertising decisions commission IRS. c) IRS reports comprehensively on all major media in the country. d) It is the only survey that gives the complete readership picture in West Bengal.

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you taste the sunshine - you taste the mountain breeze.

you taste the full dark poetry of pure coffee.



COORG COFFEE IS COORG COUNTRY

The March that Shook an Empire

Prem Vaidya

I want world
sympathy in
this battle of
Right against
Wrong.
Sardar Mahatma
5.4.30

Gandhiji's message for world sympathy on April 5, 1930,
before breaking the Salt Law on the early morning of April 6.

One day in 1984, thirty six years after India attained freedom, someone in the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting suddenly realised that we did not have worthwhile and purposeful visual records of our freedom struggle which could be regarded as part of our national heritage.

So, the then powers that be decided to produce documentary films on some of the more important milestones in our freedom struggle.

I was assigned to produce and direct half-a-dozen films, covering a 104-year period from 1857 to 1916. One of them was Gandhiji's Salt-Satyagraha in 1930.

While researching source material, writing the script, and during the filming, I re-traced the same route, stayed at the same locations where Gandhiji had camped overnight and gathered

information concerning that historical event which I would like to share with readers of *Freedom First*.

The period was the 1930s. India's economy was in ruins. The revenue derived from the people was out of proportion to their income. The average income was less than two pence per day – a Paisa. And we had to pay heavy taxes. Twenty percent of the revenues

was raised from land revenue derived from the peasantry.

Cotton grown in India was sent to England to be manufactured into cloth, imported back into India and sold at enormous profit. British trade and industry prospered at the cost of Indian trade and industry.

While British ships used salt for ballast and dumped it on India's shores, we had to pay tax on salt.

The salaries paid to English officials in India was the highest in the world! Remittances to England by the Indian Government for military stores, equipment and arms was large – between \$125,000,000 to \$150,000,000.

We, native Indians were politically powerless. The tallest of us had to bend before foreign authority. The right of free expression of opinion was denied. The national press was muzzled.

In a population of 30 crores, only one male in nine and one female in 144 could read and write. And this, after a hundred and fifty years of British rule.

George Orwell, of *Animal Farm* fame and a British officer employed in the colonial service wrote that he saw the dirty work of the Empire at close quarters. "The Empire is a despotism with theft as its final object", he wrote. He resigned from the Empire's service.

The Congress Working Committee members met in Gandhiji's Sabarmati Ashram at Ahmedabad on February 14 and 15, 1930 to give shape to a Civil Disobedience Movement. According to a Secret Police Report, the following were present at this meeting: Jairamdas Daulatram, Alimchandani, Pattabhi Sitaramayya, C. Rajagopalachari, Dr. Satyapal, Jawaharlal Nehru, Pandit Motilal Nehru, Vallabhbhai Jhaverbhai Patel, Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, Sardar Sardul Singh, Prakash, Jamnalal Bajaj.

Gandhi was given *carte blanche* to start the Civil Disobedience as and when he wished and in the manner he chose.

On February 15, at the daily evening prayer at the Ashram, Gandhi addressed the inmates:

"The time for sacrifice has come. You must observe non-violence and strict discipline. You will receive your orders. It is a sin for you to continue on the land

of the 'Zalim Sarkar'. But as you are here, we must bravely face every trouble and difficulty. If you are oppressed, bless your oppressors. Be ready for action. I warn you finally that only those who are ready for the fight need stay in the Ashram. My Ashram was started with the object of preparing you for the struggle for *Purna Swaraj*.

Gandhi published his manifesto - an eleven point programme for *Swaraj*. These included: Total prohibition; reduction in land revenue; abolition of salt tax; reduction in military expenditure; reduction in the salaries of senior officials and other economic measures that would help the masses.

Writing in *Young India*, his English weekly, Gandhi observed: "There is no article like salt, outside water, by taxing which the State can reach even the starving millions, the rich, the maimed and the utterly helpless. The tax constitutes, therefore, the most inhuman poll tax the ingenuity of man can device".

Webb Miller, Foreign Correspondent of the United Press of America, wrote in his book '*I Found No Peace*':

"M. K. Gandhi, a wizened, 104-pound Hindu lawyer, inspired millions of undertert, illiterate, unarmed people to defy the power of the greatest empire in the world.

"He cleverly made the salt tax the spearhead of his attack, because it affected every one of India's 350 million people. He claimed that that tax was unfair and ubiquitous and should be abolished because hundreds of millions of poor Indians each require as much salt to live as the prosperous few. Thus the

incidence of the tax weighed much more heavily on the poor. The salt tax was an important source of Government revenue, as unauthorized persons were forbidden to make salt from sea water".

On March 2, 1930, Gandhi wrote a letter to Viceroy Lord Irwin:

"Dear Friend,

I hold British rule to be a curse ... British rule has impoverished the dumb millions by a system of progressive exploitation and ruinous expensive civil and military administration which the country can never afford ... I respectfully invite you to pave the way for immediate removal of those evils and thus open a way for a real conference between equals. If my letter makes no appeal to your heart, on the 11th day of this month, I shall proceed with my workers of the Ashram to disregard the provisions of the Salt Law ..."

Incidentally, Gandhi had this letter delivered to the Viceroy by a young British Ashramite, Reginald A. Reynolds, who believed in India's cause and in non-violence, and who, as Gandhi put it: "Providence seems to have sent to me, as it were, for the very purpose".

Before Reynolds carried this letter to the Viceroy, Gandhiji insisted that he should read it carefully, as he did not wish to associate him unless he was in complete agreement with its contents! It was symbolic of the fact that it was not merely a struggle between the Indians and the British, but for a rightful human cause. Reynolds carried the letter.

Lord Irwin replied regretting the course of action contemplated by Gandhi. Gandhiji was visibly upset and said, "On bended knees, I asked

for bread, and I received stone instead".

At 6.30 on the morning of March 12, 1930, Gandhi set out from Sabarmati Ashram, Ahmedabad, on his historic march which was to shake an Empire. It was to be a march from Ahmedabad to Dandi, a distance of 380 kilometres, a deserted village on the shores of the Arabian Sea.

Gandhiji selected 78 *satyagrahis* from different parts of India and also from Nepal and Fiji. They were all active members of the Sabarmati Ashram who had gone through a regimen of strict discipline and who tried to follow the principles of truth and non-violence in their daily life. The age of the *satyagrahis* varied from 16 to 60 years, the eldest being Gandhi himself.

Through hot and dusty roads, the perspiring *satyagrahis* marched 16 kilometres each day. Gandhi's energy at 61 was amazing. At sunset, on reach the camp site, he would spin cotton for an hour, write his daily diary, hold prayer meetings and retire at 9 p.m. Get up at 4 a.m., for writing letters. At 6 a.m., there used to be a call for morning prayers and the march commenced precisely at 6.30 a.m.

News of this great march reverberated in many parts of the world. A German doctor drew a picture and sent it to Gandhi, with a note which said: "A humble fellow pilgrim is praying for him and his work every morning and evening."

"God guard you" was a message from New York, from the Reverend John Holmes, a young minister of the Church of the Messiah. He asked his congregation to pray with him for the success of the march. He said that he was



A study of Gandhi in a smiling mood at Karadi camp, in Gujarat, during the Salt Law defiance campaign in 1930. In his hand, he carries a salt cellar.
(Courtesy: Navjivan Trust).

reminded of Christ's march from, Galilee to Jerusalem to face death and glory (Span, Oct.1982, p.25).

On March 19, 1930, Gandhi and his party left Borsad and reached Ras village. At his prayer meeting, he took Indian officials, who were loyal to the foreign government, to task. He said: "Loyalty to a State so corrupt is a sin, disloyalty a virtue." His words had the desired effect. In Borsad district, 60 village officials, who were responsible for revenue collection, resigned and Ras village promised 500 volunteers! It was in this village that Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel was arrested. Gandhi asked the 5000 assembled at this meeting to go and manufacture salt at Kanakpura. He said, "Salt is a necessity which can be easily had at a very small cost of money and labour, but we are required to make heavy gifts to the Government for getting it. Liquor is poison, yet the Government deals in it to make profit of twenty-five crores. Things like this show that this

Government is devilish and it is our duty to break it and I have come to invite you to do so."

On April 1, Gandhi reached Surat and addressed 80,000 people on the banks of the river Tapti. Before his address, Kalyanji Vithalbhai Mehta announced the resignations of 163 Indian police patels from the talukas of Bardoli, Olpad, Jalalpore, Chorasi and Mandvi.

Incidentally a correspondent covering the march, reported that there was no salt tax in Daman, in Portuguese India, where salt was sold at 2 annas per maund. Daman was near Pardi in British India. Import of Daman salt into India was subject to tax.

On April 5, Gandhi and party reached Dandi which Gandhi called "My Haridwar". Before entering Dandi, Gandhi was very particular that all his companions wore Khadi. "I will not like anyone entering Dandi in foreign clothes," he warned.

The 385 kilometre Great March came to an end on the 24th day. That day the whole world held its breath, as it were, to see what Gandhi would do. Dandi, a hamlet with a population of 450, was host to 12,000 pilgrims. It was here, in a written message, Gandhi appealed to the people of the world: "I want world sympathy in this battle of Right against Might"

At the evening prayer meeting on the beach, at Dandi, Gandhi said, "Tomorrow we shall break the Salt Law. God willing, I expect with my volunteers to commence actual civil disobedience at 6.30 in the morning. 6th April has been to us, since its culmination in Jallianwala massacre - a Day of Penance and Purification. We, therefore, commence it with prayer and fasting. I hope the whole

of India will observe the National Week commencing from tomorrow in the spirit in which it was conceived. I am positive that the greater the dedication to the country's cause and the greater the purification, the speedier will be the glorious end for which millions of Indians consciously or unconsciously are striving".

After the meeting, Gandhi warned his followers: "People who are afraid of the government action may please go away. Persons who are willing to go to jail, ready to face bullets and even if horses are made to trample on your head; only they should come with me tomorrow morning. God help them, let the Truth win".

On April 6, 1930, at 3.30 a.m., Gandhi and his followers got up. Among them were male and female, young and old. Many of them, including some of the children had not slept that night. Gandhi was markedly solemn. There was chanting of morning prayers at 4 a.m.

At 5 a.m., Gandhi and his followers proceeded to the seashore. Someone asked Gandhi, "Are you going to take a sea bath?"

"Certainly, since I have to start *Dharma-Yudha* (the epic war) that has to be after a bath", he replied and plunged into the sea. Along with him were many of his followers.

After the sea bath, Gandhi and his followers searched for the right place where the sea water, during the tides, get deposited in slops and then becomes dry-hard crystallized salt. At one such place, Gandhi stopped. With him were Ms. Mithuben Petit, a Parsi lady, Kalyanjibhai, Keshavrao Deshpande and Mohanlal Pandya among others.

Solemnly, he bent down, picked up a fistful of God-gifted salt in an act of defiance. At once, all around there were thunderous roars:

"Namak ka Kayda Tod Diya" (The Salt Law has been broken)

The whole country was waiting for this moment. It was a signal for the people of India to launch the Civil Disobedience Movement to break the Salt Law and defy the British rulers. In the words of Nehru, "Salt suddenly became a mysterious word, a word of power". All over India, women came out from the seclusion of their homes and joined the salt satyagraha. Peasants refused to pay land revenues.

In the South, C. Rajagopalachari led a salt march to the beaches of Vedaranyam. The District Magistrate had issued an order that the villages along the route should not supply food to the volunteers. The people defied the authorities by preparing food at night and hiding it on trees and bushes. After covering a distance of 240 kilometres, the satyagrahis reached Vedaranyam on 30th April. When they picked up symbolically a handful of salt, they were arrested.

In the North West Frontier Province, Khudai Khidmatgars led by Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan staged a peaceful demonstration. At Peshawar, armoured cars and machine guns killed many demonstrators. But the people remained defiant. A platoon of Gharwal Rifles was ordered to open fire on the peaceful Pathans. The Garhwalis refused. They were court martialled.

As government repression increased, Gandhi called it "*Goonin Raj*" and asked the people to answer this organized hooliganism with greater suffering. He sent a letter to the Viceroy which said,

"God willing, I will raid Dharasana Salt Works". Gandhi was arrested at midnight of May 5 and removed to Yerwada jail to be detained there under Regulation 25 of 1827, to "suffer imprisonment during the pleasure of the Government".

The vibrations created by this movement reached the freedom loving people of America. Rev. Holmes wore a Gandhi cap to his pulpit to tell his congregation:

"This cap today, like the Cross yesterday, is a spiritual symbol – the symbol of Gandhi's triumph over the power of the sword of disciples' promise of fidelity to him, and of the victory of freedom which waits upon their cause."

Sarojini Naidu carried Gandhi's plan to raid Dharasana Salt Depot with 2,500 non-violent volunteers. The salt pans were protected with barbed wires. Four hundred policemen armed with lathis and 25 rifles stood ready. The satyagrahis went forward, column by column, towards the barbed wire. The policemen charged into the marchers and struck them on their heads with their steel-tipped lathis. Not one of the group raised even an arm to defend himself or herself. They fell sprawling, unconscious, writhing with pain, broken skulls and shoulders. The clothes were covered with blood. There was no fighting ... no struggle ... no resistance ...!

The sight of such brave, non-violent behaviour of the satyagrahis and the British brutality against them evoked universal admiration. Webb Miller, of the United Press of America, reported:

"In 18 years of my reporting in 20 countries, I have never witnessed such harrowing scenes as at Dharasana. Those struck down, fell sprawling, unconscious. The survivors,

without breaking ranks, silently and doggedly marched on until struck down".

His dispatch on Dharasana appeared in 1,350 newspapers throughout the world. Senator Blaine read the text of Miller's story into the records of the United States Senate.

About 90,000 satyagrahis from all over the country were sent to prison. In spite of all the armed might behind it, the Raj was losing its grip on India. Louis Fisher in his assessment of the impact of the salt march on the Indian political scene said: "The British beat the Indians with batons and rifle butts. The Indians neither cringed nor complained nor retreated. That made England powerless and India invincible".

The documentary film, *The Great Salt March* was released in 1985 in 14 languages.

MR. PREM M. VAIDYA, a documentary film maker, was with the Films Division of the Government of India.

The report that British Prime Minister Tony Blair's son was reprimanded by the police for being "drunk and incapable" is not at all surprising news from a country where the Rule of Law means that no one is above the law, and all are equal before the law. Two years ago, Prime Minister Blair recounted an incident of a pilot who ordered him to switch off his cellphone as the P.M. answered a call from the Queen, just as the plane was about to take off. The pilot said: "I don't care, who it is, mate, rules are rules. Switch it off."

Contrast this with the virtual hijacking of a plane by disrupting the route schedule by some elected representatives of the people in India recently, with the active assistance of the Minister!

M. P. Pai

Sane Guruji

A Saint Among Politicians

V. C. Phadke



Pandurang Sadashiv Sane, popularly known as Sane Guruji, was a unique freedom fighter. His achievements in the different fields of politics, social work, education, literature, peasants and workers movements, and youth were truly amazing.

Born in a large family of seven children, with meagre means, on 24th December 1899, at Palgad in Ratnagiri district of Maharashtra, Pandurang had to strive hard to complete his education by depending on the generosity of the rich people of Dapoli, Aundh and Pune. When he secured his B.A. degree in 1922, he was awarded a fellowship by the New Poona College and Tatvadnyan Mandir of Amalner where he eventually obtained the M.A. degree. Although qualified for professorship, he preferred the modest job of a teacher and Hostel Superintendent in the Pratap High School, Amalner, in 1924. He resigned in 1930 to join the civil disobedience movement launched by Mahatma Gandhi.

Sane Guruji's participation in individual satyagraha and other

True Religion lies in loving the whole world – Sane Guruji

independent movements was rewarded with imprisonment for varying periods, resulting in his spending almost half his active political life in the jails of Amalner, Dhule, Nasik, Yerawada and Tiruchirapalli, between 1930 and 1945. He managed to evade arrest for nearly 10 months to work underground during the 1942 Quit India Movement. He wrote and circulated secret bulletins against the government and helped young freedom fighters. Ultimately, he was arrested along with other great leaders at Mushak Mahal in Mumbai in April 1943.

As Guruji was a steadfast follower of Gandhiji, he undertook fasting on five occasions for various social and political causes. The Harijans were unjustly denied entry to the Vithal temple of Pandharpur for centuries by the orthodox Hindus. The greatly anguished Guruji first went on a hectic tour of Maharashtra which lasted six months, to protest against such stark injustice and then began his fast unto death at Pandharpur in May 1947 to persuade the custodians of the temple to open the temple doors to the Harijans. When Gandhiji made a telegraphic request to him to end the fast, Guruji refused to oblige the Mahatma by informing him that he had promised lakhs of people at hundreds of places that he would end his life if the Vithal temple was not made open to all, and hence he

could not act against his conscience. He broke his fast after 10 days when the temple was opened to the Harijans. Guruji went on his last fast for 21 days to expiate for the ghastly assassination of Mahatma Gandhi on 30th January 1948.

Guruji, who was a restless fighter for the principles of liberty and equality, took a leading part in the movements of farmers, workers and students for redressal of their grievances. He was the President of the Mill Workers Association of Amalner and presided over district and provincial conventions of students' unions and farmers' rallies. He preferred to work as a humble volunteer instead of as an office-bearer at the first rural session of the Congress party at Faizpur in Maharashtra in 1936, because he always kept himself away from party politics and the citadels of power. He constantly refused to accept any post of political power. He played a key role in establishing the Rashtra Seva Dal, a youth organization which was considered the rival of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS).

When Subhash Bose was debarred by the Congress bosses from contesting the presidential elections for three years, Sane Guruji had the courage to protest and leave the Congress. Later he joined the Forward Bloc and became the first President of that party's Maharashtra branch.

Very few freedom fighters of India had time, talent and tenacity to contribute to literature. But Sane Guruji, who was an emotional idealist and prolific writer, enriched Marathi literature with his memorable contributions through novels, short stories, poetry, biography, autobiography, drama, essay and translations. His '*Shyamchi Aai*' (Mother of Shyam), published in 1935 broke all records of editions (over 30 editions) and sales in Maharashtra. Incidentally, the film, based on this immortal novel and produced by Acharya Atre, won the President's gold medal in 1953, the first year it was instituted.

Sane Guruji who loved children, translated some classic short stories and novels from English, Chinese and Tamil literature. Most of his non-fictional books are translations of writings of great persons like Mahatma Gandhi, Pandit Nehru, Tolstoy, Tagore, Will Durant and Dr. Radhakrishnan. Almost all books were penned by him in the jails of Maharashtra. When he was in Tiruchirapalli jail, he translated '*Kural*' the Tamil epic of Tiruvalluvar, from its English version by S. S. Aiyar. He wrote down Vinoba Bhave's lectures on the *Bhagvad Gita* delivered to the inmates of Dhule jail in 1932. The '*Gita Pravachane*' proved to be a classic commentary written in lucid Marathi. As an eclectic par excellence, Guruji collected innumerable legends and ballads and became the first critic of subaltern studies in Marathi.

Although a gifted journalist whose topical writings also carried contents of eternal value, he started and edited, not so successfully, some periodicals. But he is remembered most for his weekly '*Sadhana*' started on 15th August 1938. The aims and objectives spelled out by Guruji in the following words, exhale the

essence of Liberalism:

"We have to bring in a new era. All must practise restraint. Freedom does not mean licence. It means responsibility. We must understand and respect each other. The flowering of culture and humanity need a broad outlook and extensive sympathy. Our aim is to destroy enmity and inequality, to understand problems of workers and farmers, to convey the beauty and generosity of different religions and cultures, and to describe the brave achievements of science".

Guruji was publicly felicitated at Mumbai in 1946 for his life-long social, political and literary works. A purse of Rupees One Lakh received by him on that occasion was promptly given away for social causes.

He was elected to the highly honoured post of the President of the Akhil Bharatiya Marathi Sahitya Sammelan at Pune in 1949. He proposed in his presidential address a novel concept of '*Antarbharati*' which aimed at integrating the relations between provinces and between the provinces and India. It also desired founding of '*Vishwabharati*' for developing relations between India and the world, based on temperance, sympathy and broad outlook. This concept, rooted in the Indian tradition and culture, explains the meaning of Indianness.

For Sane Guruji, motherhood was the symbol of unmatched love and compassion. His extreme love for his own mother was extended towards Mother India and Mother World. His natural tendency was to live intensely, to long for that which is noble, grand and charming, and to follow the religion of love. He declared in his famous stanza that "true religion lies in loving the whole

world". His pious soul never thought of himself or his near ones. Vinoba Bhave rightly described him as the last saint in the divine traditions of Dnyaneshwar and Tukaram.

By the middle of 1950, Guruji thought of ending his life, as he could no more bear the sight of the power-hungry politicians, corrupt bureaucrats, the miserable plight of the common people and the large scale destruction of the principles and values he cherished most. He ended his life by taking an overdose of sleeping pills. He breathed his last on 11th June 1950. He was 51.

PROFESSOR V. C. PHADKE is retired professor of Political Science and a regular contributor to *Freedom First*.

Translations by Sane Guruji, in Marathi:

Short Stories & Novels

Thomas Hardy – Mayor of Castlebridge
Victor Hugo – Les Miserables

Non-fictional

Pandit Nehru – Discovery of India
Will Durant – The Story of Philosophy
Writings of Kropotkin
Leo Tolstoy – What is Art?
Essays of Sister Nivedita
Sister Nivedita – Religion & Dharma
Dr. Radhakrishnan – Kalki, or the Future of Civilisation
Mrs. Krishna Hutheesingh
Prof. Henry Amil – Amil's Journal
Dr. Henry Thomas – The Story of the Human Race.

Some important biographies, written by Sane Guruji, in Marathi:

G. K. Gokhale
Lokhitwadi
Sir Ashutosh Mukherji
Ishwarchandra Vidyasagar
Shishirkumar Ghosh
Benjamin Franklin
Rabindranath Tagore
Vinoba Bhave
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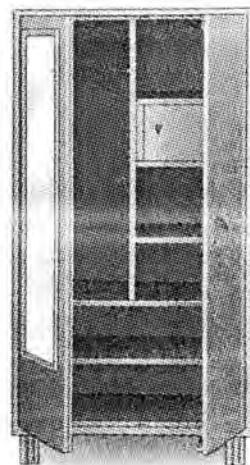
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Arun Shourie's "Harvesting Our Souls"

A Rejoinder

Louella Lobo Prabhu

Dr. Louella Lobo Prabhu describes herself as a "Liberal Catholic". All those who have been following her column in *Freedom First* will heartily concur that her views are 'Liberal' and her outlook is indeed 'catholic' - not so much in the religious sense but in the broader sense, as the Concise Oxford Dictionary tells us, "of wide sympathies, broad-minded, tolerant." I have known Louella for four decades and more when she I and were comrades-in-arms in the Swatantra Party and I can personally vouch (if such testimony is needed) that her commitment to Liberal values is total.

She is also a devout Catholic, but not an uncritical one, as the Mangalore clergy including the Bishop know. She carries the description "Liberal Catholic" with ease, and, even with pride. She is highly regarded by the Catholic hierarchy and her advice often sought on secular matters.

In recent months she has been much agitated by

the violence against Christians of all denominations and worried that the secular fabric of our society - perhaps the one lasting legacy of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, is being torn asunder. But nervousness has been added to her agitation when she finds many in the ruling group spreading "hatred against the minorities" more so when it is a person of the stature of Arun Shourie.

Insight, the fortnightly which Louella edits (first with her husband the late J.M.Lobo Prabhu) single-handedly these last forty years and more, carries in its issue of 30th June, 2000 a rejoinder to Arun Shourie's book "Harvesting Our Souls". *Freedom First* does not dabble in religious disputes. But we do sit up and take notice when a minority which has been living in close harmony with the majority for hundreds of years, suddenly feels vulnerable and threatened. Space constraints prevent us from publishing the rejoinder in full. We share with our readers, extracts. - Editor.

The dust-jacket of Mr. Arun Shourie's book lists several titles he has authored. But his most successful best-sellers are those where he seems to be lashing out at a vulnerable class: Dalits, Muslims (The World of *Fatwahs*), and Christians - twice! His earlier book was written when the Catholic Bishops of India, (with extraordinary bad judgement in my opinion), invited him to one of their meetings - doubtless, in the hope, that he would appreciate the gesture! He used this vantage position to crucify the whole Christian community, in general, and "the missionaries" in particular.

It would not be an exaggeration to say that Mr. Shourie's scholarship, and his knowledge of the Bible, would shame many a diocesan priest. In general, Protestants (now the Churches of the South and North India) are well

versed in the Bible, and the average protestant lay-person probably knows the Scriptures better than the Catholics do. Intelligent Catholics should make up for this lacuna. How sad, that this exceptional scholarship, should be done - with questionable motivation!

Surprisingly, only the opening and closing chapters deal with the rash of anti-Christian happenings, that have occurred, since the NDA Government assumed office. He dismisses these as *never having happened - at all!* According to Mr. Shourie, there were "incidents" in the Dangs; there were local Christians among the nuns raped in Jhabua; Rev. Graham Staines, was rightly cut down; or rather, burned, as his proselytizing struck at the roots of tribal family structure. But the main thrust of the book, is less, to whitewash the NDA government in the State, and in the Centre (than

to strike at Judaeo-Christian-Scripture itself! This is done, by clubbing to death, the proposition that there are chronological errors, in the Synoptic Gospels, and that the Gospel of St. John, is some sort of aberration!

Mr. Shourie is particularly hard on Mary, stating that an error in translation/deliberate accretion of Church-teaching, with no foundation in the Scriptures, have changed the words "a young woman shall conceive ..." into "a virgin shall conceive ...". He is factually right, that the dogmas of the Immaculate Conception, (not the conception of Jesus, but of Mary herself !); her "Assumption into heaven" are fairly contemporary dogmas. He also points out, that if Jesus is a conception of Mary, by the Holy Spirit, then the lengthy genealogy of Jesus, tracing him back to Abraham, and even Adam, is irrelevant, since Joseph was not his

natural father. Perhaps the intention of the Evangelists, was to prove the historicity of Jesus, since in his mortal life, he was known as the son of Joseph, the carpenter. It was only to those who recognized Him, for who He was, during His lifetime; and those who came to believe, after the Resurrection, that His human ancestry would be irrelevant. To the Gentiles, it would, first of all, be necessary to prove, the historicity of Jesus; hence, perhaps, the lengthy tracing of His ancestors.

As for his comments on Mary, it is true that the references to Mary, in the Gospels, are maddeningly sparse. However, "The Hidden Years", offer more than a possibility, that Jesus learned a great deal from His mother; and, that after the Resurrection, she played an active role, in the spread of the early Church. Here too, the believer, makes a leap of faith. But even the few references to Mary, show her as a humble servant of God, an eloquent person; a stoic and courageous soul, who is at the foot of the Cross, whence all the Apostles, except John, have fled. Jesus, first demurring, works His first miracle for her. He is conscious of her presence, near the Cross, when He commends her and John, to each other's mutual care. The portrait, that emerges, from the sparse scriptural references, is that of an inspiring role-model for women of all times; is relevant, even, for women of today. Mary, the servant of God; the mother of Jesus; the resourceful wife who could flee with Joseph by night, leaving Israel to sojourn in a foreign land. These are telling images, that take shape and form, from reading the Scriptures, between the lines.

The changes from the Old Testament, to the comparatively merciful criteria of the "New" are doubly welcome, when one reads

Mr. Shourie's unlimited list of "quotes" which, strung together, make of Yahweh, a blood-thirsty ogre, mercilessly cutting down those who deviate from *total belief of him*. Mr. Shourie of course, tears out of context, passages which show Jesus manifesting the same intolerance based on exclusivity! These instances are rare. The Sermon on the Mount; The Lord's Prayer; the Parable of the Good Samaritan, constitute the kernel of a much gentler teaching, which, if practiced faithfully, by Christians, could have changed the world. However, men are fallible. Their human failure, to observe the demanding teaching of universal love, does not discredit what Jesus taught: the Sonship of Man, coming from the paternity of a Universal Father, substance of the Lord's prayer. This wonderful prayer, theoretically wipes out, *all* class distinctions.

He has lumped all Christian Missionaries together. This is not correct. I am speaking, specifically, for Catholics: not Jehovah's Witnesses; Baptists; Seventh Day Adventists, and the like. I believe, I largely reflect the thinking of the Catholic hierarchy, and priesthood. They do serve the poorest of the poor with the ominous consequences, we have seen lately – all whitewashed by the BJP establishment, as false, following minimal enquiry, by the Justice Wadhwa Commission.

Accepting Mr. Shourie's quotations from some source (perhaps not Catholics, but some Christian "fringe-sect"), if it is wrong for a Christian hospice, to baptize a dying man or woman – how is it, that thanks to a Christian organization, they are dying with dignity, under a roof, and not on the streets?

If dying adults are conscious, as death approaches, I personally

would ask if they wish to have ministrations of a Pandit, or a Mullah. If they are already in coma, and no organization of their Faith could minister to them, a little water, and the words of Baptism, may not do harm, and may do some good – if only in the Christian belief! Hindus and Muslims should try, starting or running, one-hundredth as many, institutions, of social welfare, such as Christians have! Even if their motive is conversion – those who object to conversion should render equal service, and very definitely, draw those classes, into mainstream Hinduism.

Two Lessons for Christians:

1. Their faith should not be the ritual, of Sunday Catholicism. "Protestants tend to know the Bible, much better. If a Hindu can, in the time it took Mr. Shourie to write this book – develop such mastery of the subject, Christians could give God – a bit more, than a mere Sunday Mass! If an era of persecution, should be about to dawn, and Christians have to suffer, perhaps die; then they should know more fully, what it is, that they must suffer, or die for.
2. In "The Tribal World of Verrier Elwin", we can see that the "mores" of tribals, compatible with their environment, are different, not only from Christian but perhaps Hindu "mores" – particularly in respect of the tribal "Gotul". Here, young men and women, cohabit, by custom and convention, before marriage. The "mores" of marriage, also have their own singularities. It is almost impossible, for a tribal to become a catholic, without ditching his distinctive tribal background. The Church in Africa, faces a similar problem in respect of

polygamous marriages. Insisting on Christian monogamy there, would make prostitutes, of women who are wives.

To the extent possible, conversions of tribals should leave tribal family structures intact. My, "to the extent possible" Is in fact, almost impossible, as cardinal precepts of Christianity, that a tribal must accept, require that he should align himself with his new brethren in the faith, distancing himself from his blood family. I agree with Mr. Shourie, that asking government for extension to Scheduled Tribe Christians, of facilities enjoyed by other S.Ts is a copout for our own failure. However, unlike caste, in Hinduism, there is no 'Manuvad' style metaphysical rationale for this. The only argument in favour of political concessions for S.C./S.T. Christians (the very description is a mockery of "The Lord's Prayer"), is,

that Sikhs and Buddhists, do enjoy, this form of positive discrimination, or affirmative action. For the hierarchy of the Catholic Church, and missionaries – it is important that they integrate these "new converts" into the Christian polity. As these people have made the sacrifice, of leaving their old familiar structures behind, the Church owes them no less!

Of course, politically such a concession would change electoral arithmetic! It, therefore, will not be done. Hence the all-embracing need for absorbing S.C. and S.T.s into the whole fabric of Christian society.

In conclusion, Mr. Shourie has received many gifts from God: an analytical mind; a "nose" for a "hot" subject; a tremendous capacity for painstaking research. Generally speaking, he does not follow the Sherlock Holmes dictum, that one can start, with a working hypothesis:

But reach no conclusion, till all the evidence is in.

Mr. Shourie starts with more than a working hypothesis: The conclusion is already in his mind, as he shapes the evidence. Since he is a Minister of the NDA (not BJP) government and a Minister has been defined as a "public servant", one wonders, how, in terms of his job-category, and the provisions of Article 19, he can spout his beans of violent hatred – against the Minorities! This kind of book, could have been written by him, as a journalist and an author. Not as a public-servant, who has sworn, in his Oath of Office, to uphold, preserve and protect India's secular Constitution.

DR. LOUELLA LOBO PRABHU is Member – Media, Mangalore Bishop's Steering Committee for Protection of Minorities' Fundamental Rights; Senior Member, Chair in Christianity (1986-2001); a Spokesperson for the All India Christian Council.

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Ramashray Prasad Choudhary

A Grandson's Tribute



My grandfather, Ramashray Prasad Choudhary lived to be 103. He used to cycle to town and back (Dalsingsarai in North Bihar) till he was 85 and looked after the cinema and family businesses till he was 101. When he cycled to town, you could spot him from a distance as we whizzed past him in our car. He was steady, slow and rode in a straight line so much so that the people in the area said that Babu Saheb, as he was popularly called, could cycle on a railway track! I inherited the 1934 BSA cycle from my grandfather.

My grandfather had a number of opportunities to go to England, but he did not do so because it was considered against the Hindu religion to travel abroad. No, while he was deeply religious he was not orthodox. Rather he was a great liberal. He studied Arabic in a *madrassa* till class 5 and when English became an absolute necessity in the courts, he taught himself how to read and write English through self-taught postal courses from London.

He was a pure vegetarian.

Manuwant Kumar Choudhary

When it came to fighting corrupt bureaucrats and politicians. The family spared no one, and was always prepared to go even to the Supreme Court. It is such families that governments fear.

Once when he had to go to Bombay since he was one of the members of an Advisory Board, he was put up at the Taj Mahal Hotel. The manager of the hotel was informed that everyone was eating except one person. The manager approached him and Baba explained that he did not eat in hotels. To which the manager replied that he could surely eat fruits. He appreciated the service of the Taj.

He lived in a large British-built bungalow, aptly called Burra Bangla (Big Bungalow). He had his office alongside the bungalow. It had a large wooden office table with racks alongside where files would be kept. There were also large Victorian cupboards all around, all polished and shiny. But these did not excite me, a child, as much as an iron door at one end of the office. I always considered my grandfather to be the richest man in the world. This locked iron door was one reason for me thinking so. I thought it was some kind of a safe, with money stacked away.

One day, I asked him whether I could see what was behind that door. Surprisingly, my Baba in his usual style called for Balgovind, a servant we inherited from the British along with the bungalow. Baba never shouted at servants. Soon a chocolate brown, old man, stooping from the hips appeared. He carried with him a bunch of keys. He opened the iron

door with some difficulty. It hadn't been opened for quite sometime. I was in for another surprise. My grandfather was not the richest man I had thought him to be.

The iron door led to an empty room, with a few old cupboards. There were cobwebs all over and the room hadn't been dusted. There was no money to be seen, only worn-out moth-eaten files. Disappointed, I returned home and told my mother that my grandfather was not the richest man in the world. My mother told me that the money actually came from those files. They were the hundreds of cases my grandfather had fought against the government to get compensation for some property that had been acquired. It was not a pleasant revelation.

In 1928, he built the Chhatradhari Uchch Vidyalaya, a co-educational High School. It has a beautiful building with a large football ground in front. All his sons studied in the school. And, he did not build the school to evade land ceiling laws as many of the politicians have done. There was no land-ceiling act in 1928. He built it because of his social concern. And what did the government of free India do? It nationalized it. The government has not built a single high school in Dalsingsarai since 1947. So it was with the Ramashray-Balashwar College. The government nationalized it. Instead of

nationalization and promises of compensation, why can't the government build desperately needed new institutions with the money? The government will not, because politicians are interested in power, not people.

It explains the backwardness of Bihar and India.

Yet, there have been moments in the country's history when Bihar has shown the way. Even if it has not succeeded in going all the way it has definitely rekindled some hope in this hopeless society. One such hope was the formation of the Swatantra Party. Founded by India's first governor-general, C. Rajagopalachari, it gave the slogan, 'Farm, Family and Freedom', something much needed even today.

It promised a free market economy for India. Ramashray Babu wholeheartedly supported it. He even contested an election against Satyanarayan Sinha, then India's railway minister. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru campaigned against Ramashray Babu. The railway minister won through corrupt electoral practices. A case was filed with the Election Commission but the case continued so long that Satyanarayan Sinha died and the case was dismissed.

Ramashray Babu was the host to the first state convention of the Swatantra Party held at Dalsingsarai in 1962. Leaders like Rajagopalachari, M. R. Masani, N. G. Ranga, K. M. Munshi and others attended. Rajaji arrived at the Dalsingsarai railway station at 1 a.m. He was driven in a Packard car to the bungalow with police escort. Rajaji had been a Governor-General. On his arrival at the bungalow, he asked whether he could meet Ramashray Babu - his host. He was promptly told that he

could meet Babasaheb only at 4 a.m. since he had gone to bed as it was past his bed-time. Though surprised, Rajaji did not mind this. Instead, when Babasaheb opened his door at 4 a.m., Rajaji emerged from his room as well.

Baba once told me that the only leader he went to meet at a railway station was Mahatma Gandhi. Gandhiji was passing through Dalsingsarai and he would make a brief appearance at the Dalsingsarai railway station. A lawyer friend accompanied Baba to the railway station. It was packed to capacity with Congressmen - in their white caps, somehow called Gandhi *topi*, though Gandhiji never wore it. As the train came to a halt, Gandhiji emerged, waved to the crowd. Baba was introduced to Gandhiji. Gandhiji smilingly pointed towards Baba's head, indirectly asking why he was not wearing the white cap. Even before Baba could reply, Gandhiji picked a cap from a man's head, smelt it and placed it back on his head. The cap was new and everyone wearing the cap had bought one only to impress Gandhiji. In other words, they were hypocrites. The admiration was mutual. Baba admired Gandhiji, though he despised Congressmen.

Ramashray Prasad Choudhary was elected a member of the Legislative Council in 1922 and later again in 1932. It was during one of his terms that he got an unusual request from a lower caste student that he wanted to see the proceedings of the House and wanted permission. The student, Babu Jagjivan Ram, who later became India's defence minister. Jagjivan Ram always held Ramashray Babu in the high esteem and called him 'the light of Bihar'.

His description of Baba was right, especially when it came to

fighting corrupt bureaucrats and politicians. The family spared no one, and was always prepared to go even to the Supreme Court. It is such families that governments fear. During British rule, when India did not have a Supreme Court, Ramashray Babu took a case right upto the Privy Council in London.

The lawyer representing him was no other than Mohammed Ali Jinnah, a brilliant lawyer and later founder of Pakistan. Whether it was Karpoori Thakur or other socialist leaders, Ramashray Babu encouraged a healthy opposition. Though he was critical of the depths to which the political system had descended, he always cast his vote. He did it first thing in the morning on the day of voting. The booth-grabbings took place after he had cast his vote.

His interest in democracy was not so much to do with acquiring power or money but because it was a system meant to benefit the people. But while he built a school, college, a cinema hall, beautiful houses, a well-planned town, the last fifteen years were not his best. Family feuds bogged him.

I recall my father giving me a Rs.1 lakh cheque to give to my Baba. It was from his unclaimed pensions for his years in the Bihar Assembly. Baba took the cheque and for the first time gave it to his manager saying, "Don't give this money to anyone. It should be spent on my funeral". An individualist, he lived a simple life in the village, enjoyed eminent friendships and achieved beyond the expected. Yet he never traveled in an aeroplane. He never had such a desire nor the need. As for money, my Baba was surely rich. His wealth was in the giving.

MR. MANUWANT KUMAR CHOUDHARY, a journalist, is currently a reporter with NDTV in its Patna Bureau.

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India-U.S. Relations

A Dialogue of the Deaf

B. Ramesh Babu

India's Nuclear Programme is as old as the Indian Republic

The 1960's and 1970's were decades of much intellectual ferment and a lot of new beginnings in several walks of life. The fervent plea for a New International Economic Order (NIEO) in tune with what was believed to be an emerging new global political order was one such hopeful and positive pointer to a better World. There was also talk of a new World Information Order. These impassioned pleas made waves for a while. But, the so-called North-South dialogue degenerated into the proverbial "dialogue of the deaf" rather quickly. Both sides knew fully well what the other side was driving at. Yet each side sang its own song, while the other side did not bother to even to hear, let alone listen! Neither side wanted to understand the concerns and the tribulations of the other.

The contours of the conceptual clash and the fundamental fissure between the US (the nuclear haves) and India (the nuclear have-nots) are clear, real and seemingly reconcilable. India insisted then and insists today that nuclear proliferation involved in the endless search for "bigger bombs for the buck" by the nuclear haves and the development and deployment of "new" and "improved" bombs by those who are already armed to the teeth (especially the US) is equally, if not more, dangerous to the world as a whole than the spread of nuclear weapons to new nations. The Big Five, especially the US, had no right to play havoc with the destinies of

mankind in the name of ensuring their own national security.

Dubious Distinction

Even as the nuclear haves (especially the US) armed themselves, as far as the other nations were concerned, they had a very clear policy and doctrine, "disarm the unarmed"! The justification offered for such a "holier than thou" posture is indeed untenable and preposterous. If the nuclear weapons fall into the hands of "irresponsible" leaders of the so-called rogue states, US leaders argue, the world will become a very dangerous place to live in. Extraordinary indeed! But one thing is clearly rooted in fact and witnessed by history. The United States is the only country that actually dropped atom bombs on the enemy's defenceless millions. No other nation can claim this dubious distinction!

At this stage, one more fundamental quarrel between India and the USA needs to be brought in. Not only did NPT impose unequal obligations on the nuclear haves and have-nots, but the weapon states did not comply with its key stipulations on technology transfer and know-how in harnessing the atom to meet the energy needs of poor countries. The massive fact is that the US and other nuclear weapon states never even intended to comply with the stipulations. This is certainly an integral part of the American (and Western) policy of technology denial

in general and nuclear and missile technology denial in particular to the less advanced countries. In India, this is seen as a continuation of the old colonial mind-set seeking to perpetuate domination through other means.

One final key constituent element of India-US discord on proliferation is the adamant refusal of the Big Five, especially the US, to link the NPT, CTBT etc. to nuclear disarmament in any form or manner whatsoever. SALT and START were not disarmament measures. They either limited or sought to limit weapons of mass destruction or dismantling of bombs or missiles did not occur or it so miniscule as not to merit even passing mention. The awesome arsenal of the US is capable of destroying the planet earth several thousand times.

Pokhran II and Clinton

The series of underground nuclear tests conducted by India on 11 and 13 May 1998 at Pokhran certainly represent a landmark in India's nuclear history. The whole world was shocked beyond belief. It seemed out of character for India, a country that preached disarmament day in and day out for so long. Pakistan followed suit immediately with a series of underground tests and conveniently blamed India for escalating the arms race in the sub-continent. Reaction to the Indian tests around the world was swift and mostly ranged from negative to very hostile.

Hostile responses from the US were naturally expected by the Indian Government. The U.S. administration was so completely taken aback that it felt cheated and outsmarted. It was sullen, resentful and felt deeply frustrated. A high level inquiry was ordered into how the CIA and the wide array of spy satellites hovering around the earth round the clock failed to detect the enormous activity that must have preceded the series of five explosions spread over two days at the old test site in the Rajasthan desert.

Russia was also critical of India, but did not condemn the tests. It declared that the long-standing and extensive military co-operation with India will continue uninterrupted. Russia was critical of Pakistan and China and held them responsible for the deteriorating security environment in South Asia. Many countries in Europe and a large number of the non-aligned nations of Asia and Africa were critical of Indian tests and regretted them. But they also appreciated India's security concerns and other compulsions that led to the nuclear tests.

A National Policy

India's nuclear programme is as old as the Indian republic. Dr. Homi J. Bhabha, the founding father of the country's nuclear programme, convinced Prime Minister Nehru of the crucial importance of developing nuclear energy to keep India abreast of the world in this vital field. He laid out a three-stage long term plan to lead India from the U-235 reactors to plutonium based fast breeder (fission-fusion-fission chain) reactors, an unending and self-sustaining cycle of energy generation that does not need additional supplies of fuel!

India did not choose to exercise its nuclear option lightly. It continued to inch towards the

threshold steadily under successive governments. Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee was the one who gave the final order to take the plunge.

In 1974, Indira Gandhi did not seek national consensus on the first test, nor did she take other parties into confidence. She took the plunge and the nation was solidly behind her. Pokhran II received even more overwhelming and enthusiastic support from the people.

Bad Diplomacy

However, the BJP-led government was vulnerable on the democratic front and in the culmination of India's foreign policy in the immediate aftermath of the tests. Home Minister L. K. Advani's sabre rattling was misplaced and ill-conceived. Defence Minister George Fernandes deserves kudos for bringing into the open the facts of life regarding the security threat posed by China. The cat was out of the bag, so to say. For a long time, the reality of a hostile China armed with nuclear weapons and long range missiles, colluding with Pakistan and clandestinely transferring nuclear weapons and missile technologies to our historical adversary, and ganging up with other nations to keep India out of the Security Council was dealt with kid gloves. After all, China is a big power and is in effective occupation of thousands of square miles of Indian territory along the Himalayan borders since 1962. It is meaningless and unrealistic to underplay this massive fact of life and its implications for India's security environment.

Pre-requisites for a Real Dialogue

In retrospect, it seems that the earliest signs of the toughening of India's position on CTBT were to be found in the negotiations at Geneva

in 1996. Arundhati Ghose refused to be cowed down and brow beaten by the Big Five and a battery of other nations championing non-proliferation. She declared unequivocally that the CTBT in its "present" form was simply unacceptable to the country.

India could not have accomplished the Herculean task at Geneva unless Arundhati Ghose's brief was clear and categorical. Once the US realized that India meant business and will insist on linkage with a disarmament time table of some sort, the hard ball negotiations between the two countries began in earnest. It was tough, has been tough and will continue to be tough. If the U.S. persists in its blind refusal to respond to the genuine security concerns of India, the dialogue of the deaf will become even less of a dialogue and compel India to become even more deaf.

The USA, now the lone super power, must acknowledge "certain facts of life" and address the following issues honestly and fairly: (a) India is a declared nuclear power and the genie can't be put back in the bottle. Whether the US and others in her camp or outside recognize or not, India is a nuclear weapon state. (b) India will decide what its security requirements are and will not give up its sovereign right to define them the way it sees fit. (c) India's nuclear and missile programmes are indigenous, self-reliant and will continue as per its judgement to meet its national security needs and priorities. If the US and others don't like it, that is too bad. (d) As Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee reiterated several times, India regards nuclear bombs as weapons of deterrence. It will never be the first to use them against nuclear weapon states. India will not use them at all against non-nuclear states. (e) China is an inescapable and integral part

of any meaningful security dispensation in South Asia. (f) China and Pakistan have developed their nuclear capacities clandestinely. (g) China is and has been clandestinely transferring nuclear and missile technologies to Pakistan. (h) The US is fully aware of these facts, but refuses to officially acknowledge them as such because it never wanted to take the logical next steps required to be taken against them

according to its own laws. (i) The sanctions failed miserably. They have adversely affected India in some sectors. But, India has overcome the difficulties and will not be swayed away from its chosen policies in this vital area of the nation's security. (j) Progress on CTBT and non-proliferation is vitally linked to progress on disarmament on the part of the Big Five.

Unless the US is willing, ready and able to accept these fundamental realities on the ground, I believe, there can be no progress in the India-US dialogue on non-proliferation, CTBT, NPT, etc.

MR. B. RAMESH BABU is former Head of the Department of Civics and Politics, University of Bombay, and Senior Academic Fellow in International Relations, American Research Studies Centre, Osmania University, Hyderabad.

* This article was written in the second week of May 2000.

The Impact of Clinton's Visit

Nitin G. Raut

The U.S. has tacitly accepted India as a power to be reckoned with in South Asia

U.S. President Bill Clinton's visit to India in March, 2000, the first by a U.S. President in twenty two years, was billed by political pundits as the visit of a lameduck President, considering that his second term ends this year. The reality is that for the U.S. India did not figure at all in his first term. Coincidentally or incidentally, the contours of India's emergence as a potential market and a credible regional power also began to take shape in the mid-1990s as also the realisation of India as a prospective future ally.

The Clinton visit to India did not take place under the shadow of the Pokhran II blast, which had soured Indo-U.S. relations. On the contrary, even the vexed issue of signing the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) was almost a 'non-issue' in the emerging Indo-U.S. relations driven more by market forces and infotech economies. Also the refusal of the U.S. Congress to ratify the CTBT adversely affected the Clinton Administration's moral authority to sermonize on nuclear proliferation.

Expectations

Prime Minister A. B. Vajpayee's expectation that the U.S. would endorse India's strategic and political pre-eminence in the context of the United States' global perception did not obviously make open headway. Doing so would tantamount to ditching Pakistan – a step the U.S. is not in a hurry to take.

It is however evident that the U.S. has tacitly accepted India as a power to be reckoned with in South Asia. It was with U.S. approval that India dispatched its naval armada to pre-empt a coup bid in the Maldives a few years ago as also the Indian Peace Keeping Force in Sri Lanka. Even India's present diplomatic initiative in Sri Lanka is a continuation of this tacit endorsement.

Clinton undertook the March 2000 visit to India, not merely because of a belated U.S. realization of India's strategic importance. India, with around a six per cent growth rate – the highest in South Asia – its

rapidly burgeoning infotech industry and with about 1.5 million jobs in the U.S. dependent on U.S. products and service investments in India, the visit was as crucial to the U.S. as to India.

Improving Relations

In the new improved Indo-U.S. relations, Indian Americans have played an important role. The 1.2 million strong Indian Americans, the third largest ethnic Asian group after the Chinese and the Phillipinos. The average annual earnings of Indian Americans in the U.S. is \$50,000 as against the U.S. average income of U.S.\$33,000. In the States of California, New York, Illinois and New Jersey, Indian Americans have built a strong political constituency and have aggressively lobbied for India. In fact, there are half a dozen Indians occupying electoral offices in the State Houses of Representatives. The Indian Caucus in the U.S. Congress is 115 strong and includes such leaders as Senator Sam Brownback, Chairman of the powerful Senate Foreign Relations

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Sub-Committee on South Asia and Congressman Gary Ackerman, a bitter critic of Communist China and supporter of Tibetan freedom. The Indian lobby is also making efforts to have the sanctions lifted before Prime Minister Vajpayee's September 2000 visit.

U.S. Priorities

The U.S. administration of course has its own priorities. And in this unipolar world, diplomatic tact demands that India reconcile its national self-interest with U.S. policy. For this India should cultivate both the Republicans and the Democrats as unlike domestic policy, there is convergence of views on U.S. foreign policy between the Republicans and the Democrats. In dealing with Indo-U.S. relations, it must be noted that on issues like Kashmir, the U.S. is not necessarily going to consider the rights and the wrongs of the problem. What India needs to do is to adopt an appropriate policy to align with the U.S. to combat terrorism and deepen Indo-U.S. economic ties. Economic diplomacy will play a crucial role in thwarting Pakistan's plans in Jammu & Kashmir. The recent visit of Home Minister, L. K. Advani, to Israel, France and Portugal is an extension of Clinton's visit and is an effort to achieve worldwide coordination to combat terrorism.

Tactless Remarks

In the art of diplomatic finesse, India is yet to learn some elementary lessons. The recent visit of President K. R. Narayanan to China in June 2000 may have had the legitimate objective of improving ties with China. While stressing the five principles of peaceful co-existence in Beijing, the call for rejection of "overlordship by any one nation or group of nations" – a clear reference to the U.S. – was an act of diplomatic imbecility. It will make

China no more friendly or unfriendly than what it is today. On the contrary, it will rile the U.S. at this crucial juncture of a breakthrough in Indo-U.S. relations. Rather than the futility of bending backwards to appease China, India should closely watch the patterns of U.S.-China relationships. Will the U.S. accept China as a strategic partner or perceive it as a future threat to its global leadership? It is here that Indian diplomacy's mettle will be tested. In the current context, India will have to aim at strategic cooperation if not a strategic partnership. It is long term diplomacy which will have to be executed with élan and sagacity.

Common Agenda

The issue of nuclear proliferation is no doubt a thorny one although the present focus is more on cooperation than on differences. The U.S. Assistant Secretary of State, Karl Fredrick Inderfurth has described the present upbeat in Indo-U.S. relations as a transition from "estranged democracies" to "engaged democracies". It is a pivotal change in U.S. policy perception. Clinton's visit has resulted in India and the U.S. agreeing to work together on combating terrorism, nuclear export regulation and economic issues. The visit led to the establishment of a Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) office in New Delhi. This is important, because though the U.S. may not have changed its stand on nuclear proliferation there is a perceptible change in the U.S. attitude. There is a growing understanding of India's security needs and justification for minimum credible nuclear deterrence.

On the CTBT issue, India while stressing its discriminatory nature, has to highlight the China-Pakistan axis and their nuclear

collaboration. The signing of the CTBT has to be linked to the normalization of relations with China and Pakistan, as also India's legitimate claim to a seat in the U.N. Security Council. The U.S. must also realize that though communism has collapsed in Europe, Asia is yet to rid itself of that scourge. India, as Asia's leading democracy, cannot abdicate its responsibility as a bulwark against communism and totalitarianism by compromising its security requirements.

Speaking about the prospect of a permanent seat for India in the U.N. Security Council, the U.S. Assistant Secretary of State, Inderfurth, said: "We recognize the case that India is making for a permanent membership based on its size, democracy, contribution to the U.N. including peacekeeping. We have said that for these reasons, we will give serious consideration. We believe that India can further enhance its case for membership by moving towards the international community on an issue like non-proliferation."

A Genuine Effort

The Clinton-Vajpayee meet can be best summarized as a genuine effort to understand each other's compulsions and predicaments which hitherto had never been addressed. The transition from estranged democracies to engaged democracies singularly belongs to Prime Minister Vajpayee and President Clinton. Both India and the U.S. have become business-like and are showing a willingness to make pragmatic compromises.

NITIN G. RAUT is a lawyer, practising in the Mumbai High Court and a member of the Advisory Board of *Freedom First*.

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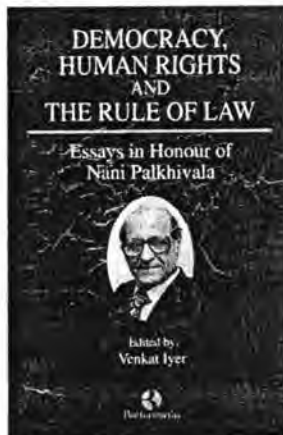
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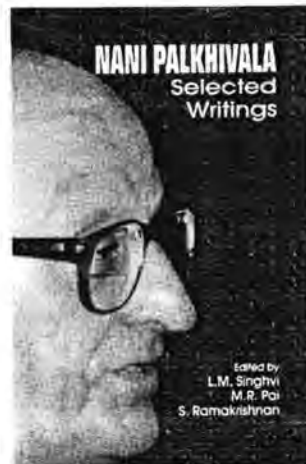
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BOOK REVIEWS

DEMOCRACY, HUMAN RIGHTS AND THE RULE OF LAW, ESSAYS IN HONOUR OF NANI PALKHIVALA edited by Venkat Iyer, Butterworths India, C-71A, Malaviya Nagar, New Delhi 110017; 2000; pp.276; Rs.425.



NANI PALKHIVALA, SELECTED WRITINGS edited by L. M. Singhvi, M. R. Pai, S. Ramakrishnan; Viking/Bhavan's Book University; 1999; pp.330; Rs.395.



**Reviewed by
Dr. R. Srinivasan**

Shri Venkat Iyer has done a valuable service to the cause of Liberalism in India, by editing a festschrift for Nani Palkhivala on his attaining his eightieth year. It celebrates his invaluable contribution to the fostering and guarding of liberal values and for elucidating the inner strengths and democratic vivaciousness in the Indian Constitution.

The contribution of the judiciary to the furtherance of democratic institutions is narrated by Fali Nariman. He reminds us that the tendency to keep the judiciary under leash was as much a part of the executive during the days of the East India Company as of contemporary times. Only, the guardians of the law were found to be restive of any attempts at muzzling them and fought tenaciously for their independence.

Apart from Chagla in the Bombay High Court who maintained the highest standards, Nariman reminds us of the high standards set by J. J. Mukherjee, Khanna, Krishna Iyer, D. P. Madon, each one of whom boldly stood for principles, ruffling the feathers of the Executive. Subba Rao's far-sightedness on many a public question has been attended in almost every article.

Preventive Detention has remained one of the darker aspects of democratic politics in India; Atul Setalvad argues that the courts have not been able to effectively "lessen the harshness" of detentions. The executive has resorted to preventive detention on flimsy grounds and the need is for the courts to review such detentions. And these are not beyond the purview of the courts. Apart from preventive detention, the emergency powers too have remained a grey

area in the Constitution. The Fathers of the Constitution inveighed against this but in vain. Their apprehensions were fully borne out by the infamous emergency of 1975. The attack on the opposition and the press, the assault on the judiciary and on the Constitution are dwelt upon in detail. It was the most glorious period of the State Courts and an inglorious one for the Supreme Court. In this comprehensive study, Anil Diwan reminds us that the Indian public has forgotten the evil days of 1975-77 and they cannot be sufficiently reminded of this dark period to prevent its recrudescence.

Justice Sujata Manohar has drawn attention to various decisions of Courts which elucidated the nature of the rights implicit in the clauses of the Constitution and drew on the implications for the enlargement of the connotations of the clauses. She also sounds a note of caution that trying to cover too much (under Article 21) which are not "readily justiciable or enforceable" may lead "to trivialization of the courts' pronouncements. It may even promote the habit of ignoring judicial orders" (p.148).

One of the areas where the judiciary has acted most creatively in meeting the challenges of contemporary social problems is in the development of Public Interest Litigation. This has remained one of the most creative of the activities of the Courts and unforeseen potentialities of redress as well as correcting wrongs have been explored by retired Chief Justice R. S. Pathak. The judiciary has been gradually changing its stand on issues and what was permissible in an era becomes unacceptable at another and in this process, the role



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of dissenting opinions (here, as in U.S. judicial history) has remained significant. Professor Sathe covers this, and the sea-change in decisions compared to the Gopalan case (1950) and the Maneka Gandhi Case (1978) has been entirely due to the role of dissenting judgements. A minority opinion gradually becomes the orthodoxy. Hidayatullah, H. R. Khanna, have remained great dissenters as have been Fazal Ali and Subba Rao.

Soli Sorabjee with great lucidity and lightness of touch examines one area of which not much by way of commentary is available to the average Indian. This is the imperative to give reasons by administrators for decisions taken by them. He covers a wide ground of comparative law and educates us in this new aspect of legal and constitutional development.

Of the many legal battles that Palkhivala undertook, his contribution to the doctrine of the Basic Structure of the Constitution has been regarded as enduring. It is likely that in the legal and constitutional annals of independent India, his name will be imperishably associated with this doctrine. Ashok Desai examines the complexities involved in the context of the famous Kesavananda case which had political reverberations. "On 10 Nov 1975, at the height of the Emergency, Ray C. J. constituted a bench of 13 judges to reconsider the decision in *Kesavananda*. Nani Palkhivala's submissions, opposing such reconsideration, marked his finest hour in forensic eloquence. He alluded to the intervening events and the court's salutary application of the basic structure in *Indira Gandhi*. He justified his arguments by reference to the particular excesses of the Emergency, including the abrogation of fundamental rights and

the absence of any effective opposition in Parliament. The Court accepted his plea and declined to review the decision". (p.87).

The doctrine is definitely anti-populist and there is a grey area of ambiguity where a judge can "mould the Constitution in his own image" (p.90). The need for the majority to be curbed to "protect the civilized existence of the minorities ... (remains) .. one of the permanent dilemmas of any democracy which permits freedoms that are capable of destroying other freedoms. The majority can always seek to legislate to deprive the minority of its civil rights. A Constitution can be a barrier and a powerful barrier against such moves because, without it, the ruling establishment is deprived of its legitimacy. The search for those depriving elements of the Indian Constitution will doubtless pre-occupy us for some years to come, and as long as it does so, we will be constantly reminded of Nani Palkhivala's immensely rich contribution to Indian Constitutional Law". (p.91).

Palkhivala's emphasizing the basic structure recalls the famous position of John Locke in the Second Treatise on Government (1689) which contains a succinct presentation of Western liberalism. Though there have been difficulties in zeroing in on the exact constituents of the Basic Structure (for there are differences among the proponents) yet the generally accepted consensus goes back to the famous Natural Law doctrine of Western philosophy.

Palkhivala's advocacy of a Presidential system has not had similar acceptance. Rajan Ramachandran has devoted an entire essay, 'The Perils of Presidentialism' which is convincing.

The dazzling personality of Palkhivala and his many sided achievements have been admirably covered by Tehmtan Andhyarujina. Palkhivala's strength has been that of persuasive advocacy, presented with great clarity. His remarkable and quick grasp of the intricacies of a problem was put to service in fighting many cases of public interest. His apparent setback in the Bank Nationalisation Case by parliamentary amendment yet was to have a lasting import in the development of the philosophy of the process of law, "Although the aftermath of the Bank Nationalisation Case was a setback for Palkhivala, the law laid down by the Supreme Court in that case proved to be the foundation of the most fruitful development in Indian Constitutional Law, namely, the introduction of "due process" in the area of personal liberty guaranteed by Article 21 of the Constitution."

One cannot do better in summing up the character of Nani Palkhivala than what was said of Beethoven. "He traversed all, he comprehended everything. He who follows him cannot continue; he must begin anew, for his predecessor ended only where art ends". (p.11).

Selected Writings

It is appropriate that a collection of the writings of Palkhivala should have been brought out now to remind a younger generation of his abiding writings relating to life, education, religion, public policy and the Constitution. Several things that he penned in his books have a timelessness for Indian conditions and these need to be reiterated now more than at any time earlier. For the lights of liberalism are being put out with gusto and the new citizens have to be educated on basic principles; one cannot have a better person to take the younger

generation by hand and guide them on a conducted tour of values.

Even more than his writings, and words, his life itself is an example of high ideals realised and noble purposes pursued relentlessly and the biographical sketch is an admirable exercise; the many-sided splendour of Palkhivala comes through this memorably.

The popular perception of Palkhivala is that of a champion of the values of Constitutional liberalism; of his battling against the shibboleths of socialism, his championing of a robust monetary policy that would accelerate economic development. There are sections of the book concentrating on these and one cannot but read them again and again. But the catholic sympathies and vision of Palkhivala too are evident. His empathy with Hindu seers and religious philosophers, of his commemorating memories of people not well-known, as his old school teacher who taught him many things invaluable and that publisher without peer, G. R. Bhatkal. Deeply immersed and nurtured in his natal faith, religious beliefs and the ambience of his community, he has written with great feelings on these. His human dimensions come out unforgettably in his narration of his experiences as an Ambassador. He sees education as central to the building of a healthy social system and has written on this with a deep felt passion.

This book is addressed to the citizens of the coming century and it will form an ideal gift to the young, to be treasured for long, to be dipped into and pondered over.

DR. R. SRINIVASAN, is retired Professor of Political Science, and associate editor, *Freedom First*

God is subtle but he is not malicious.

Albert Einstein

GODREJ : A HUNDRED YEARS (1897-1997) VOL. II by B. K. Karanjia, Viking Penguin Books India (P) Ltd., Panch Sheel Park, 11, Community Centre, New Delhi 110017; 1997; pp.374; Rs.395.



Reviewed by Professor R. V. Chari

The second volume, dedicated to the memory of Pirjosh B. Godrej, deals with the builders and developers of the Godrej Empire. With the passing away of Burjorji P. Godrej, in 1994, his eldest son, Ardeshir Godrej – shortened to Adi Godrej, a graduate of MIT, took complete charge of Godrej Soaps Ltd. in 1963-64. When Adi was inducted into the Board, he was hardly 21.

At one time, Adi was toying with the idea of going into the manufacture of cigarettes as well as beer, but was prevailed upon by his father to drop the proposal, as he was a thorough moralist and was opposed to enter areas of production injurious to the customer.

Commenting on the change in the style of operating and also dealing with employees, Adi says: "I saw that the style of operating in the world is changing. I have tried, both consciously and unconsciously, to change whenever I felt the need to. Earlier there was a boss-subordinate relationship between me and my people. Now there is more of a team

relationship."

Nadir Godrej, the younger brother of Adi, also a Managing Director of Godrej Soaps after graduating in Science from MIT, completed his MBA from Harvard Business School. He was also a poet. About his approach to poetry, Nadir says: "I grew up hearing poetry and I picked up metre instinctively, long before I learnt it as a well-defined system." A part of the poem about Ardeshir Godrej, is reproduced below:

When Ardheshir Godrej joined the bar

He was soon sent to Zanzibar
Where he soon found that to win
He was obliged to commit a sin.

Today it may not seem uncouth
To legally distort the truth
But Ardeshir was of sterner stuff
He told himself enough's enough
He quit the law and looked for work.

For any manufacturing company, it is a must to have an up-to-date tool room, equipped with the latest machines and instruments, to cater to the varying needs and requirements of its multifarious operations. All the more so, for Godrej, which had taken up the manufacture of typewriters, with component parts running into hundreds. This need was very clearly anticipated by Naoroji Godrej, who had to persuade and cajol his father, Pirojsha Godrej, to set up a tool room section. The permission was granted with great reluctance. Today the tooling requirements of the entire gamut of products manufactured by Godrej, from refrigerators to electronic typewriters, to safes and locks is taken care of by the section. According to the General Manager (Operations), of Voltas Ltd., Shri S. N. Tripathi, "Godrej has the best machine tool room in the country. It is not only the latest but the most capable and flexible tool room." During the last

55 years, 4,000 machines have been marketed in India and abroad, which is attribute to the memory of Naval Godrej, the pioneer in the machine tools industry.

Godrej started manufacturing fork-lifts in 1961. Fork-lifts were ready to be marketed in 1963. Associated with Clark Equipment for more than two decades, Godrej has successfully weathered the competition. With the growth and development of the plastics industry, the manufacture of injection moulding machines received a big boost. Consequently, Godrej seized this opportunity and started manufacturing as well as marketing them.

The passing away of Naoroji Godrej in 1990, has hastened the assumption of full responsibility by his son, Jamshyd Godrej. Jamshyd used to trudge along with his father to the shop floor to acquaint himself with the details of manufacturing operations. He is, therefore, well-groomed to shoulder the heavy burden of managing Godrej & Boyce Mfg. Co. An introvert by nature, he is a person of few words, he could be very curt, at times. At other times, he is capable of the grand as could be seen in his paying out Rs.1,30,000/- for a bottle of Scotch during the celebration of the Spirit of Scotland in Mumbai! However, this was for a noble cause – the Bharatiya Yuva Shakti Trust.

Volume II of the Godrej Volume brings out the business policies, procedures, and practices of the House of Godrej along with biographical sketches of important management personnel. Both the volumes could be profitably used as case studies of how Indian companies can succeed even in a difficult environment.

MR. R. V. CHARI, a freelance writer, is a Professor of Management and Commerce.

PERCEPTIONS ON KAUTILIYA ARTHASHASTRA edited by K. P. Jog; Popular Prakashan Pvt. Ltd., 35C, Pandit MMM Marg, Tardeo, Mumbai 400034; 1999; pp.220; Rs.250.



Reviewed by Dr. Ashok Chausalkar

This year, we are celebrating the birth centenary of Prof. R. P. Kangle, an outstanding scholar on the Arthashastra of Kautilya. He has edited the Kautiliya Arthashastra, translated it in both in English and Marathi and made a critical study of the Shastra. The present volume, *Perceptions on Kautiliya Arthashastra* is presented to readers to commemorate Prof. R. P. Kangle's birth centenary because the Arthashastra was a subject dear to his heart.

Prof. M. V. Rajadhyaksha has written a moving account of Prof. Kangle who lived an active intellectual life. He extended whatever support he could to Dr. Ambedkar providing him with Sanskrit references, but never exploited this relationship. He was a Pandit without being a pedant and a nationalist without being rigid. He was a modified version of the renaissance gentleman with an open mind and versatile interests.

'Kautiliya Arthashastra' is a

collection of essays written on different aspects of Kautiliya's Arthashastra by scholars who are specialized in Kautiliya studies. It is interesting to note that women scholars form the majority of contributors.

Usha Thakkar deals elaborately with morality in the light of Kautiliya's theory of diplomacy. She opines that Kautiliya in his quest for public welfare did not sacrifice religion, moral principles and public welfare. Paineeta Deshpande's article "Kautiliya's Arthashastra and Kanik Niti" is interesting. Kanik Niti in the Mahabharata was preached by a teacher called Bharadvaja. She points out that Bharadvaja in the Arthashastra and Kanika Bharadvaja in the Mahabharata shared many ideas and perhaps the Arthashastra is indebted to Kanik Niti which existed prior to it.

The socio-political philosophy of Kautiliya is ably studied by Sharad Kulkarni. He holds that Kautiliya was a fiercely independent person who had no use for the metaphysics of the Vedas. He was a sage who not only highlighted the philosophy of Ramrajya but also groomed a King to practice it.

Shubhada Joshi's article on the areas of relationship between 'Dandaniti' and 'Dharma' is an important contribution. She holds that 'Dandaniti' is about the maintenance of law and order as well as the welfare of society. The attitude of Arthashastra was more liberal than that of the Dharmashastras regarding such issues as 'Svadharm' and 'Varnadharm'. The problem in the Arthashastra is: Is private morality different from public morality? She holds that while performing one's duty, a public servant has to protect the interests of the state and society, even if at times unethical means need

to be adopted. In a conflict between 'Samanya dharma' and 'Vishesha dharma', she points out, what is important is the purpose of your action. If action is performed in a spirit of selflessness and in the secure belief that though unethical, it was performed in the interest of the society, it cannot be faulted.

Another noteworthy article is by Jaya Chemburkar on the relationship between the early Dharma Sutras and Kautiliya's Arthashastra on the problem of 'Rajadharma'. She points out that Arthashastra and Dharmasutras have emerged independently of each other. Their perspectives were different. Dharmasutras laid down duties of dharma with reference to the administration of small states.

The concept of 'Lokasamagraha' is discussed by Hemangini Jain. The relevance of Kautiliya's concept of sovereignty is dealt with by Chandrakant Raje in the light of the concept of 'Apurva Sandhi' – a treaty not yet made. He discusses the issue of sovereignty in the light of the Portuguese-Maratha treaty of 1777 and the NPT and CTBT which India is asked to ratify. Kautiliya says that before ratifying any new treaty, its consequences must be thoroughly studied.

Lalita Deodhar discusses the status of women in Chanakya's literature. She contends that Chanakya was a wise and practical person who took note of the social trends of his times. He adopts a comparatively liberal attitude as he allows women to claim maintenance from their husbands at times of divorce and permits widow remarriages.

Vasant Bhadare critically studies the influence of Kautiliya on Kalidasa's presentation of King Raghu. He concludes that Kalidasa

had a deep knowledge of Kautiliya's Arthashastra and the latter greatly influenced the political ideas of the poet.

Dr. Ramesh Dhongde discusses the stylistics of scientific texts with reference to the Arthashastra. The articles by H. C. Patyal, Vinaya Kshirsagar, Manjusha Gokhle, Maria Schetelich and Keshav Jog are noteworthy. Manjusha Gokhle discusses the decorative style in the Arthashastra and argues that he has not taken the decorative style for the sake of achieving literary excellence but to effectively clarify his thoughts. Maria Schetelich is of the view that the Patan fragments of the Arthashastra should be more thoroughly studied because they supply extremely valuable information. She points out that the Patan manuscript establishes a relationship between 'anvikshiki' and 'Nyaya vidya'. Keshav Jog, editor of the volume throws light on some readings of Kautiliya's text ignored by Kangle and points out that it will be rewarding to have a fresh look at them.

On the whole, the essays in the book are interesting as they show the contemporary understanding of the Arthashastra of Kautiliya. Except Dr. Thakkar and Dhongde, it seems that most of the contributors are Sanskrit scholars and it is satisfying to note that the Kangle tradition is alive in Bombay.

DR. ASHOK CHAUSALKAR, Reader, Faculty of Political Science, Shivaji University, Kolhapur.

The release of atom power has changed everything except our way of thinking. The real danger lies in the heart of mankind. If only I had known, I would have become a watchmaker.

Albert Einstein

COLONIALISM, TRADITION AND REFORM by Bhiku Parekh, (revised edition); 1999; Sage Publications, pp.359; paperback edition Rs.295



**Reviewed by
Professor G. N. Sarma**

Prof. Parekh's study of Gandhi's political discourse under the title "Colonialism, Tradition and Reform" has already been acclaimed as an outstanding contribution towards the understanding of Gandhi's thought. First published in 1989, it has been republished in a second revised edition with a new chapter entitled "Gandhi and the Bourgeoisie" which considers the leftist criticism of Gandhian philosophy and programme of action.

What was distinctive about Gandhi's personality was that his thinking and living went hand in hand. He was ceaselessly experimenting with Truth and preached only what he practiced. Parekh does not regard Gandhi's experiments as scientific, as concerned with truth in the abstract or with new truths..." he was only concerned to live by one set of values, and his experiments were designed to ascertain if he could do so. What difficulties he encountered, and how to overcome them". These values were received ones, already

part of tradition and most of them confined to the middle class. The realm of morals however, may be approached with a scientific spirit though it may not be subjected to scientific experiment. It was in this spirit but with the scrupulosity of a scientist that Gandhi's experiments were carried out ... especially his experiments in the field of sex which were 'remarkable and almost dare-devilish'.

Gandhi was a rigid moralist with a puritanical zeal and severity. Political life was to be moralized and the dichotomy of means and ends to be annulled. Life was to be simple and wants were to be reduced to the minimum. Property was to be held by the owners as a trust and not as private possession *sans* obligation and responsibility. *Ahimsa* or non-injury was to be the principle of conduct and resistance in any form was to be non-violent and guided by faith in the power of Truth to win in the end by converting the mind and the heart of the opponent. The resister against injustice and iniquity was to be a *Satyagrahi*, an unswerving adherent of truth and to keep himself pure, energetic and radiant by strict observance of *Brahamacharya* or celibacy. Gandhi was a firm believer in God and in the "inner voice" which guided him in moments of crisis. It is the interplay, the shift and alternation of reason and mysticism which makes Gandhi a riddle for commentators and an embarrassment for his followers. Gandhi was destined to turn his weapon of *Satyagraha* on several fronts. First of all, the burden of colonialism and exploitation was to be overthrown. His attitude in the matter was complex. It was not the foreigner alone who was to be blamed entirely for the ills of the country must share the blame. In fact, we brought it upon ourselves by our supineness and lack of character predating the

white trader's landing on our shores. We must know ourselves and be ourselves and the burden will drop off on its own. We have to thank the epoch of colonialism for having enabled us to know ourselves and to become aware of our right to freedom.

The weapon of *Satyagraha* had also to be turned against our age-old tradition. Much of it had become outdated and totally unacceptable in present day conditions. Was it to be discarded root and branch as impatient enthusiasts might demand or creatively adapted, retaining the permanently valid part of it and shedding its accidental accretions? The blot of untouchability called for instant and total elimination, but the basic principle of caste was sound! Gandhi fought against tradition but also defended it. He took upon himself to offer a fresh gospel for the age, a *yugadharma* relevant to the times but also true to the eternal values of our tradition. He was thus a creative traditionalist who sought to reform so as to preserve. As the author puts it "though Gandhi valued tradition, he was not a traditionalist". He reduced tradition to a resource, located its essence in its general moral values which commanded respect but left room for critical evaluation, and gave every individual the freedom to draw upon the insights of other traditions".

But, observes the author, Gandhi's *yugadharma*, with all its merits was inadequate because it was insufficiently connected with the character of the modern age and its basic tenets.

Gandhi's attitude towards life and towards various problems of the day was ambivalent, confusing and posed a lack of moral consistency as well as modernity. The moralist could question his political programme, the traditionalist his understanding of basic Hindu

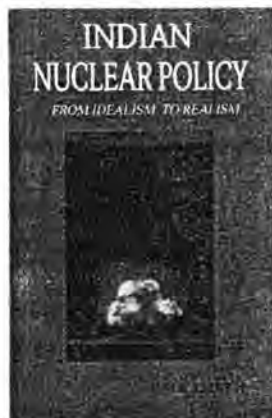
religious texts as well as his eclecticism, the political extremist his insistence on the primacy of ethical values and the intrusion of the "inner voice" into the area of political action. Contradictions could easily be seen in Gandhi's political attitudes – Gandhi of *Hind Swaraj*, a near anarchist, sanctioned state action in 'exceptional cases' which were not a few. The rigid moralist softened enough to overlook cases of smoking, gambling and prostitution whereas he categorically disallowed drinking.

Though Parekh's study is particularly devoted to Gandhi, its scope is vast. It is to be valued as a thorough and critical survey of modern Indian thought in its historical setting and its philosophical implications. It is frank in its criticism of the Mahatma and well balanced in its appreciation of Gandhi's philosophy of life and action. It can disturb Gandhians as well as Gandhi's critics and compel them to introspect over their respective positions "whatever the full explanation might turn out to be, the fact remains that there is far more to Gandhi than what his followers have done with him". Paradoxical as it might seem, by using his still considerable moral authority to legitimize and propagate their project of a long overdue radical transformation of India, Marxists might do more justice to his legacy than his self proclaimed followers.

The great merit of the book is that it stimulates thinking and disturbs settled ideas. It avoids hero worship as well as irreverence and is original, bold, rational and well argued. It has few equals in thoroughness and elegance of style.

PROFESSOR G. N. SARMA, retired as Head of the Department of Political Science, Marathwada University, Aurangabad.

**INDIAN NUCLEAR POLICY:
FROM IDEALISM TO REALISM**
by P. M. Kamath, Printwell,
Publishing Distributors, C26-D,
Malaviya Industrial Area, Jaipur
302017; 1999; pp.131; Rs.275.



**Reviewed by
Dr. Jayanta Kumar Ray**

Dr. P. M. Kamath is a wellknown writer in the field of world politics in general and India's foreign policy, in particular. This book, a collection of 18 articles, will certainly add to his reputation as a scholar.

Kamath has neatly presented the journey of India's nuclear policy from idealism to realism. Prime Minister Nehru was indeed lucky; he died about six months before the first Chinese nuclear explosion in the atmosphere. He, therefore, could stick idealistically to an unconditional advocacy of abstention from the manufacture of nuclear weapons. Prime Minister Shastri introduced realism in India's nuclear policy by retaining the nuclear option only after his government tried and failed to secure from Nuclear Weapon States any guarantee of protection against a nuclear attack or blackmail by China. Prime Minister Indira Gandhi availed of the nuclear option by an underground explosion in 1974.

Nowadays, when one goes through writings by Indians on India's nuclear policy, one is amazed to come across some writers – especially in Calcutta and Delhi – whose obsession with a peculiar brand of internationalism is so strong that they do not bother much about safeguarding India's national interests. Therefore, they condemned India's nuclear tests in 1998 without ever denouncing China's nuclear tests. They can even go so far as to claim that India is responsible for promoting an India-Pakistan nuclear arms race, without caring to remember that, long before India's nuclear tests in 1998, Pakistan acquired nuclear weapons with direct assistance from China and indirect support from the United States and other Western Powers. Fortunately, Kamath does not belong to this hypocritical tribe.

Kamath has brought into focus some essential points which do not always receive attention from writers on India's nuclear policy. First, although India has not adhered to the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT) and the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), it has not lost its goal of a time-bound scheme for universal nuclear disarmament. Secondly, a Nuclear Weapon State like the United States has promoted the NPT or CTBT as instruments for non-proliferation but not for disarmament. Thirdly, the United States has declared openly that it reserves the right to use nuclear weapons against an opponent threatening the use of biological and chemical weapons. Fourthly, India has not received any appreciation from the United States for abstinence from nuclear tests during 1974-98. In contrast, the United States bought the adherence of China and France to the CTBT by promising help in the acquisition of computer simulation tests technology. Fifthly, the CTBT

tries to impose upon India an obligation to sign this Treaty without India's approval, which is patently contrary to international law, because India is not, after all, a country defeated in a war.

Kamath does not fail to discuss many other points about India's nuclear policy to which I need not refer, because they are fairly familiar. I should end this review by mentioning Kamath's concluding remark that in a situation where both India and Pakistan have nuclear weapons, one can rule out a military solution to the Kashmir problem.

Kamath's lucid analysis, backed by a painstaking collection of data, will certainly appeal to teachers, students and decision-makers.

DR. JAYANTA KUMAR RAY is Centenary Professor of International Relations, Calcutta University.

"Notopfer Berlin"

Will the Union Government consider a permanent special tax levy, towards setting up a permanent common relief fund on an All-India basis? That is to fix an additional special stamp of 5 paise or 10 paise to each and every postal charge or money order, telegram or telephone. I am certain, every citizen will welcome such a move. Such a levy will avoid overlapping of relief funds, if and when called for, enable better accountability and prevent misuse and misappropriation of such funds.

This suggestion of mine is not a new one. The Federal Republic of Germany introduced such a special levy to support the economy of West Berlin at the time of the Soviet blockade of Berlin in 1948/49. It was generally known as "Notopfer Berlin" (Sacrifice for Poverty in Berlin). Part of the tax was to affix an additional special stamp of 2 Pf. to each and every postal charge until 1956.

C. A. Reddy, Chennai.

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