

Non-Interference and Bangla Desh

V. B. Karnik

NON-INTERFERENCE in the internal affairs of a country is a recognised rule of international conduct. It is the basis of the activities of the United Nations. Nehru raised it to a high pedestal by including it in the five principles of relations between nations, the Panchasheel, that he negotiated with the Chinese Prime Minister, Chou En-lai. The rule has proved useful. It has prevented many big nations from interfering in the affairs of smaller nations. It has helped the growth of nation states and enabled many communities to build up stable political societies, unhampered by the machinations of unfriendly neighbours. It has many achievements to its credit; it has also many crimes to its discredit.

The worst crime to its discredit is the rise of Nazism in Germany. It was clear for all those with eyes to see that Hitler had let loose a reign of terror, that he was destroying democratic institutions and movements and that he had embarked upon a policy of genocide. He was not checked because it was considered improper to interfere in the internal affairs of the nation. The end result of that policy of non-interference was the second world war which killed millions of men, women and children and destroyed hundreds of millions worth of property. Stalin's and many other dictators' atrocities were ignored on the same ground.

The latest crime to the discredit of the rule is the Pakistani military junta's war against the people of Bangla Desh. It was a war against the majority of the people of the country for suppressing their legitimate desire to implement the clear verdict of the election. Thousands of unarmed men, women and children were killed in the war and millions were uprooted from their homes and hearths and forced to find refuge in the neighbouring areas of India. All these crimes against humanity took place before the open eyes of the nations of the world and yet nobody, not even the mighty nations, were prepared to intervene, the excuse being the rule of non-interference in the internal

affairs of a state. But what after all is the internal affair of a state? If a dictator ruling over a country decides to kill off a large number of his subjects or to deny them ordinary human rights can it be regarded as the country's internal affair and the world community asked to shut its eyes to the atrocities that may be perpetrated? Whatever the condition in the nineteenth century and the first half of this century, civilized humanity will not tolerate in this latter half such grave misdeeds. The rule which compels nations to hold off their hands when such crimes are being committed will have to be modified. The modification can be easily effected and necessary action taken now not by one or another nation but by the comity of nations through the United Nations. If the United Nations can stop wars between nations as it did in the case of the Anglo-French war against Egypt, the Indo-Pakistan war and the war between the Arab States and Israel, why can it not intervene to stop a nation's war against its own people?

Intervention can take many forms other than military action. Far more effective can be economic sanctions. Why cannot the Big powers and all international monetary organisations immediately declare secession of all aid to Pakistan until it stops its terroristic activities in Bangla Desh and negotiates a political settlement with the representatives of the people, the Awami League and its leader, Shaikh Mujibur Rahman? A firm declaration to that effect will have instantaneous effect and compel Pakistan to seek ways of peaceful settlement.

There is no dispute now about the facts of the situation in Bangla Desh. It is admitted by all, including the Pakistanis themselves, that a massive violation of human rights has taken place and that millions of people are suffering and starving. The presence in India of millions of refugees is also a fact which cannot be denied. It is these incontrovertible facts which persuaded U. Thant, the Secretary General of the United Nations, to issue his appeal for a large scale international effort for the relief of the refugees. Red Cross Societies have swung into action. Intellectuals all over the world and many international organisations have also rallied to the help of the people of Bangla Desh.

But all these expressions of support and sympathy and all this assistance to the refugees will not solve the political problem. Without a political solution the

(Continued on page 4)

The Quest For Peace In Mid-east

R. Muthuswamy

RECENT captions of commentaries on the mid-east situation such as 'the Israeli Dilemma', 'the Mid-east Riddle' aptly describe the difficulties commentators face while dealing with the Israeli-Arab situation. Unfortunately apart from the inherent paradoxes in the situation itself, big power politics also got involved in it with the result that in spite of best efforts from all sides, so far the problem has eluded solution and peace in Mid-east is still hanging on a hair's breadth. It was in such a background that the latest mission of American Secretary of State, Rogers, in quest of peace in this troubled region is to be viewed.

Since February 1969 the four big powers have been searching for a solution of the Israeli-Arab problem. In 1969 the first peace plan of America was drafted. This plan called for unqualified withdrawal of Israeli forces from occupied territories during the six-day war in 1967 in return for an Arab pledge for a binding and permanent peace with the Jewish State. Other conditions were freedom of passage for Israel through international waterways and Palestine refugees were to be given a choice between repatriation and compensation and Jordan and Israel should seek an agreement on control of Jerusalem and its holy places. This proposal was rejected by the Soviets as 'pro-Israeli' and the Israelis themselves objected to joint control of Jerusalem. Meanwhile the Soviet military assistance to Egypt increased and American Secretary of State came forward with a cease-fire proposal during which the U.N. representative Gunnar V. Jarring would seek implementation of the Security Council resolution of 1967, which called for the withdrawal of Israeli armed forces from territories occupied by them in the six-day war and respect for territorial integrity and political independence of every state in the area and their right to live in peace within secure and recognised boundaries free from threats or acts of force.

While Nasser accepted the American proposal, Israel was reluctant to accept the proposal on the plea that the three-month cease fire would be utilised by the Soviets and the Egyptians to strengthen their joint missile defences on the western banks of Suez Canal. However under diplomatic pressure from U.S. ultimately Israel agreed to negotiate under the aegis of Gunnar Jarring. Then came the hijacking of commercial airplanes by the Palestinian commandos. Thus whatever little progress was possible under the Roger plan was thwarted.

Then came the death of Nasser and succession of Sadat. It was the diplomatic initiative taken by Sadat

by announcing Egypt's willingness to recognize Israel's right to exist in return for the return of captured territory by Israel and the offer by him to reopen Suez Canal as an international waterway, which enabled Rogers to pursue his mission to the mid-east. It is significant here to note that after the visit of Dulles in 1953, no American Secretary of State visited the Mid-east so far and there was the additional complication of U.S. having no diplomatic relations with Egypt. Egypt had cut off the relations in 1967 in the wake of the six-day war. It was the first time in American history that a Secretary of State visited a country with which America did not have diplomatic relations. All this Rogers was willing to do because as he put it "there has never been, and may not again be for a long time to come a better opportunity than exists today to move toward a just and lasting peace".

Sadat laid a condition that Israeli troops must withdraw from the Bar-Lev Line to new positions farther behind allowing Egyptians to occupy that area and attend to clearing the waterway. While Israel was willing, according to reports to withdraw its troops, it had strong objection to the Egyptian troops occupying the vacated area.

Since then there has been dramatic developments in Egypt itself. Al Sabri, Vice-President, who is pro-Moscow resigned his post and along with him went many important ministers. There has been a complete reorganisation of the set up. From all reports it appears that for the time being Sadat has the situation well under control and will be able to carry his nation with him in his efforts to secure a just peace in mid-east.

While talking to the delegation of Ulemas, Sadat placed three goals of his government viz., military reinforcement, diplomatic struggle to make Egypt's stand clear to both friends and enemies including Egypt's desire for a just peace and thirdly, construction of a modern nation founded on science and faith. The last mentioned goal is of high priority in Egypt. Sadat has already taken measures of liberation of the various measures introduced to curb liberty in the name of security. Opening of Suez Canal is a vital need for improving the country's economy and Russia is much more interested in its opening in finding a direct link between its Mediterranean and Indian Ocean Fleet. Israel's objection is not to opening of the canal *per se* but the use of the East Bank of the Canal for purposes of a further organized invasion on Israel. Thus opening of Suez affords the best opportunity for paving peace in the Mid-east and how far international diplomacy will succeed in this effort one does not know.

Planning Plans

M. R. Pai

IN a land of contradictions, wherein the Jumbo jet and the bullock cart, the atomic power station and the cow-dung cake co-exist, one more glaring contradiction is not surprising. President V. V. Giri signs an ordinance transferring functions of the Planning Commission to the Planning Ministry. Prime Minister Indira Gandhi denies next day that the Planning Commission is dead. It very much exists, she asserts. To add to the confusion, the new Planning Minister, Mr. C. Subramaniam, says that the Presidential order was defective and the Planning Commission has, in fact, been upgraded, not downgraded!

Thus, even our Planning Commission affairs run on an unplanned, chaotic basis. It is, therefore, no wonder that this once-prestigious body has fallen to a very low estate. It is a sad commentary on its functioning that in a planned economy there has been so much "non-plan expenditure" (officially so described), that cynics have demanded a Non-Planning Commission to look after such expenditure!

The story of Indian planning is one of good intentions, confused thinking, political greed, bureaucratic urge for empire building and ultimately wastage of scarce resources due to managerial incompetence of politicians and bureaucrats, and loot of the ordinary Indian citizen.

There are people who say that Indian planning is good but its implementation is bad. This is a nonsensical statement which betrays a lack of understanding of the process of planning. Planning means assessment of not only financial resources but also of *administrative capacity* to implement the plan projects. To ignore the limitations of administration is to plan badly.

Planning had been elevated to a new mystical religion in India. But there is nothing novel about planning. Even individuals plan their lives, some efficiently, some sloppily. But planning, they certainly do.

The governments have to plan. But that planning should be of its basic functions like defence of the country's territorial integrity and freedom, maintenance of law and order, provision of social overheads such as roads, posts and telegraphs, agricultural extension services, education, public sanitation, laws for regulation of private enterprise, legal framework for conduct of day-to-day lives of citizens etc.

When governments go beyond this, and resort to centralised and comprehensive planning of all or bulk of economic activities, and also their detailed administration, governments and people are in trouble and freedom is in jeopardy. That is known as the communist model of planning. It was introduced in our

country in 1956 (Second Plan onwards) and has led us to the present sorry pass.

Obviously it has failed for two reasons. First, centralised comprehensive planning has failed to deliver the goods even in Communist countries (though it has helped to build up a war machine). It cannot succeed in India either because it is a system which violates the laws of the market which are based on human nature. So it fails. Although the Soviets boast of their space achievements, which was possible because of concentration of resources in that sector, only a few weeks ago Mr. Leonid Brezhnev, Secretary of the Communist Party of Soviet Union, referred to 34 million "underprovisioned" in the country. This is an euphemism for poverty which after 50 years of communist type of planning touches the lives of one out of six Soviet citizens.

The second reason is that in a democratic set-up it is impossible to operate a centralised economy. Rationing, compulsory savings, labour movement restrictions, suppression of citizens' right to criticise authorities are inevitable concomitants of centralised planning. Our democratic constitution does not permit these things. Hence the present attack on the Press, the fundamental right to property, on the Supreme Court, on private enterprise and other "impediments" to socialism.

Confused thinking on economics and democracy is thus the primary reason for the mess in Indian planning.

The communist planning system, however, has opened up new economic opportunities to what Milovan Djilas has described as the New Class — to professional politicians, power-mad bureaucrats and corrupt business men in our country. The rigid licensing procedures, permits and controls created a "closed market". It substituted administrative judgement (amenable to corruption and political pressures) for the impersonal forces of the market. The power and patronage in the hands of professional politicians and bureaucrats benefited them, and also the corrupt business men who lost all fear of consumer discipline.

The lust for power has soaked so much into the bones of the politicians and bureaucrats that recently the Industries Ministry refused to dismantle even those licensing procedures which have been found to be superfluous. The so-called simplification we hear of now and then is always hedged in by clauses.

Now the lust for power derived from economic controls has gripped the politicians at provincial level. The provincial satraps want licensing power for state governments!

The Public Sector set up under the communist plan-

ning philosophy has been another means for evolving a more meaningful life for professional politicians and bureaucrats. The record of these enterprises is one of tragic wastage of resources. Yet the administrators, without managerial competence or business expertise, refuse to move away from "deputation posts" in Public Sector units. Hindustan Steel has accumulated losses which will be sufficient to finance half the cost of another steel plant. Machinery and Allied Mining Corporation has wiped out its capital of about Rs. 20 crores with its losses! Bhopal Heavy Electricals has already accumulated losses of Rs. 57 crores.

The wastage is not confined to central undertakings. State government units run in a similar manner.

The Government of Gujarat took six years to prepare one text-book. The expenditure came to Rs. 65,500 of which staff expenses amounted to Rs. 47,800! The nationalised road transport in Madhya Pradesh has an investment of about Rs. 11 crores, choicest routes, and yet lost Rs. 42 lakhs in 1969-70. The poultry dressing plant of Maharashtra Government at Poona has lost Rs. 11 lakhs since its inception in 1968.

Politicians interfere to such an extent with Public Sector units that even the names of new Jumbos acquired by Air-India and announced in advance were changed by the Civil Aviation Minister! When the economy was held to ransom by communist-led bank employees in July 1970, the nationalised banks' managements were "innocent bystanders" waiting for the Union Finance Minister to return from abroad.

(Continued from page 1)

Refugees will not return to their homes and will remain a permanent burden on the resources of world organisations and more particularly on those of India which can hardly afford to shoulder it. In the case of India, the mere presence of refugees on its soil may give rise to many difficult problems.

As days go by, a peaceful political settlement will become more and more difficult. Success of military operations will not ensure peace nor will it secure the permanent adherence of Bangla Desh to Pakistan. The Pakistani army may succeed for the time being in suppressing the people's revolt. The revolt is, however, securing a firm base in the villages and may from that base wage a war of attrition against the army. If that war continues for a fairly long time, Pakistan will not only lose Bangla Desh but make a present of that largely populated and fertile area to the forces of disruption and anarchy. The comity of nations should not ignore that grave danger to peace and freedom all over the world.

Without even consulting the managements, this personage took a snap decision which has created a new crisis of cost and indiscipline in the banking industry!

The present planning system has led to enormous wastage of scarce resources because of which prices have been continuously rising (Rupee was worth 56 paise in 1969 as against 100 in 1959), a huge foreign debt has been accumulated, unemployment has grown, educated unemployed like engineers have become frustrated, the lot of the urban poor has deteriorated while the rural poor have virtually remained where they are, and now the entire process of planning has broken down.

We see patches of prosperity and confuse it with benefits of planning for the nation. The new rich who live a life of ostentation comprise of the corrupt industrialist, black marketing business man, the smuggler, the cooperative boss, the parasitical trade union leader, the professional politician and the corrupt bureaucrat.

The working classes and agriculturists who wear miracle fabrics apparel and carry transistors are a small fragment of a huge population. Their prosperity is not national prosperity.

Economic development which has brought prosperity to a few has been at the cost of millions of landless labour and fixed income groups like the middle classes. They are being looted of the fruits of their endeavours through inflation and other ways, as also of economic opportunities.

The entire system is heading towards a crisis which will not be confined to the economic sphere. Unless the rulers recognise their managerial incompetence in running the national economy and citizens become active in forcing the public authorities to behave with decency, the epitaph for Indian planning will be written with the tears of politicians whom no one will be able to save from the fury of the masses.

BOOKS RECEIVED

1. *The Politics of the Developing Areas*, Edited by Gabriel A. Almond & James S. Coleman, Oxford University Press, Bombay 1. Rs. 22.
2. *Enchanted Frontiers*, Nari Rustomji, Oxford University Press, Bombay 1. Rs. 45.
3. *India in Transition*, M. N. Roy, Nachiketa Publications Limited, 22 Naushir Bharucha Road, Bombay 7.

The Sudan In Soviet Strategy

Ian Tickle

THERE are signs that the Sudan is on the way to becoming a centre of Soviet influence in Africa.

Largely because of concern for the people of the southern Sudan, the global ramifications of this new role have been overlooked; and yet it should not be supposed that the large-scale Soviet aid provided to help the Sudan crush the southern rebellion has been given out of feelings of pure friendship for the military ruler in Khartoum, General Numeiry.

For more than five years, the Russians have seen their influence grow steadily in Egypt. As in the Sudan more recently, this influence has been fed by the general instability of a country at war. Since the 1967 war with Israel, Egypt's economic and military recovery has been exclusively due to gifts from the Soviet Union; and with these gifts have come technicians and soldiers. There have been indications that Egyptian politicians could not always act in important matters without asking their Soviet counterparts first.

But for the Russians the new regime of President Sadat has been a disappointment. In his quiet way the new president has moved in two directions; and it seems that in doing this he has had one aim—to free his country from the Soviet grip. In the first place, he has been making apparently sincere attempts to come to a peace with Israel; the process has not got very far yet, and there is no question in Sadat's mind of a surrender to Israel's terms. But the indications are that he is more genuine in his attempts to reach peace than President Nasser ever was. As the Soviet presence in Egypt is fed by the instability of the war situation, this is also a significant move away from Soviet domination. A peaceful Egypt devoted only to economic progress would have little need of Soviet aid. Secondly, President Sadat has set about eliminating important members of his predecessor's regime who have allowed themselves to become compromised by their support of Soviet influence.

If this process has only very recently come to the light of day with the dismissal of Ali Sabri from his post of Vice-President, it has nevertheless been going on for a considerable number of months. The Soviet Union has therefore been looking around for another ally which will serve the same interests in the same area, and if possible increase them. It has hit upon the Sudan, and the first fruits of this policy have taught the Russians that if their influence can be well established in Khartoum they will have a base which in the long run will be of more use to them than Egypt.

The Egyptian base was established at a time when the main object of Soviet policy was establishing a

naval presence in the Mediterranean. This has been done, and today this presence is widely accepted. Soviet strategy now is devoted to establishing a similar presence in the more distant Indian Ocean and using this for bringing influence to bear in African countries. Soviet interests have thus quite naturally moved from the area of the Suez Canal farther south.

This has coincided with another change in Soviet policy—which has not been enunciated in any declaration, but which is becoming clearer with every successive piece of evidence. The Russians have increasingly found themselves outflanked in Africa by the Chinese—because the latter have been lending their support to guerrilla movements, while the Soviet Union has concentrated on diplomatic relations with existing governments. This policy has had meagre results, however, because existing governments do not need to rely on Soviet aid; and they are beginning to learn by experience that this aid usually leads to a degree of loss of independence over any lengthy period of time.

So the Russians have again taken to examining their attitudes to guerrilla movements; and those which appear safe from Chinese influence are once more beginning to receive their aid. An important piece of evidence for this is the already notorious book recently published in Russian in Moscow entitled "Political Parties of Africa"—which implies future Soviet support for the 'revolutionary-democratic' parties of Africa.

If there is to be peace between Israel and Egypt, the Suez Canal will be open, and the Soviet Union does not need to bother much more about its communications with the Indian Ocean through Suez. The Sudan, on the other hand, can provide it with valuable bases on the Red Sea—which strategically is part of the Indian Ocean—and can act as a valuable supplement to the facilities already established at Aden and Socotra further south. In the sphere of oceanic strategy, the Sudan is therefore not less important than Egypt.

Where the Sudan has a great advantage over Egypt, however, is in its relation to the rest of Africa. Much play has been made of Soviet aid to the regime to suppress the black Africans in the south. This aid is naturally calculated to offend many African regimes which have hitherto had sympathy with the Soviet Union. But these cannot afford to make too much of this because of the risk of secessionist movements in their own countries—and the danger that they may eventually need Soviet aid for the same purposes as the Sudan. On the other hand, this is an element which is not likely to prevent the 'revolutionary-democratic'

parties from accepting Soviet support—for the latter is likely to be much more effective in material terms than support from the Chinese Communists, even though their ideological sympathies may be more with the latter.

As well as suppressing its own black Africans, the Sudan is now a base for subversion in other black African countries. FROLINA, the Arab liberation organisation fighting the French in Chad, is able to subsist because of the support which it has claimed in the Sudan and the use of Sudanese territory for regrouping its forces. In addition to this, the Eritrean liberation movement, which is trying to carve out an independent Eritrea from Ethiopia, has also successfully claimed support from the Sudan.

In supporting these two movements, the Sudanese regime shows that its concern is more with the exten-

sion of Arabism than in a general disapproval of secession. It is fighting against its own secessionists in the south, and supporting secessionist movements in both Chad and Ethiopia. This is in stark contrast to the position of the Nigerian Government, which has opposed secession everywhere regardless of the merits or beliefs of the secessionist movements—on the ground that only such an attitude can justify what it demanded of all other countries on the Biafran issue.

The Numeiry regime in the Sudan has withstood ten attempts to bring it down. It would not now exist if it were not for Soviet aid; and such has been the efficiency of Soviet infiltration that at the moment every change of regime which is conceivable in the confused constellation of Sudanese politics would also owe its existence to the Soviet Union.



WHERE CONTINUOUS GROWTH IS THE PRIMARY ENDEAVOUR

Amar Dye-Chem have never been satisfied merely with the progress that comes with the passage of time. From the beginning they have been primarily concerned with growth, expansion and pioneering. Bringing new products and knowledge to the field of dyes and chemicals, thus minimising dependence on imports for India's textile, paper, plastics, coir and many other industries.

AMAR DYE-CHEM LIMITED
 'Rang Udyan', Mahim, Bombay 16

 **TO ENRICH INDIA'S LIFE WITH COLOUR**

MIRATIADC/70 A

Freedom Of The Press

Arvind A. Deshpande

I WOULD rather have a completely free Press, with all the dangers involved in the wrong use of that freedom than a suppressed or regulated Press," the late Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru once said. Recent statements and speeches by the Prime Minister and the Union Minister of State for Information show that we are drifting away from this ideal. Instead of insisting on the only worthwhile and unqualified commitment namely a commitment to a completely Free Press, we now seem to be talking about a "committed" Press, which is, obviously, an altogether different thing. In fact, recent trends should be a cause for deep anxiety. Some of the remarks made recently by the Prime Minister and others are indicative of an attitude which seems to have some reservations on the subject of Press freedom. In an open and liberal society, the very talk of a "committed" Press would be considered dangerous and this becomes all the more sinister when the word "commitment" cannot be defined. It should be noted here that Press is the only medium of information which is not yet controlled by Government. We have one definition of commitment "as an enlargement of our mental horizons, a clear appreciation of our role in society, a re-dedication of our goal, a single-minded determination to work for their fulfilment and a corresponding refinement of our methods". Another definition says that "commitment" is "a commitment to the decisions of Parliament." It has also been pointed out that the idea of commitment was summed up by the word "Dharma", which is supposed to be an expanding and not a static concept. All this talk is too vague and will create more confusion.

It is by now clear that the Prime Minister is not very happy with the Press. Addressing leading journalists and publicists on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the UNI, she complained that the Press in India was out of touch with people and events; that it gave only 5% of the news space to development news; that it was urban oriented; that it gave prominence to non-Asians

news and that it did not measure upto standards in factual raportage. It has also been pointed out that the Press was by and large, proved completely wrong in its predictions on the outcome of the Parliamentary snap poll.

Some of this criticism, it would appear, is valid and justified, specially with regard to undue importance given to politics and politicians in news coverage. It is also true that most of the leading papers became victims of their own views and thinking and could not gauge the mood of the electorate. But this can happen to any Press in any free society. This has happened again and again in Britain, in France and in the United States. So far as the predictions in regard to Parliamentary poll are concerned, it might be said that even politicians who are supposed to be closer to the people have been proved wrong in their assessment.

It must be conceded that ever since the Congress split most of our papers have adopted a rather puzzling and ambivalent attitude. In fact, in many cases, our papers have supported the ruling party in the name of stability and democracy and have often ridiculed attempts of the opposition parties to come together. Now there is almost a keen competition in running down the poor Old Congress. In a country, where there is no strong and credible opposition, the role of the Press would naturally be to provide opposition. It is, therefore, strange that we should resent the very little genuine opposition that is now being provided by our Press.

As for the Press being out of touch with the rural areas, this is a reflection on our literacy standards and reading habits. The Press Registrar in his latest report says that all the newspapers in India in all the languages put together have a circulation of nearly 7.8 million which means only 15 copies per 1000 of population. There are on a conservative estimate 158 million literates in our country and one should expect that the circulation of newspapers would be 70 million and not 7 or 8 million. The corresponding figures in other countries per thousand of population are 469 in Japan, 39 in Ceylon, 64 Taiwan, 479 in the UK, 310 in the USA, 264 in the USSR and 505 in Sweden. Instead of frightening a few critics and editors and talking about the multiple diseases of our not very effective Press, a progressive administration should turn its attentions to the problems of poor circulation. As much as 52% of the total sale of Indian dailies is in the four cities of Calcutta, Bombay, Madras and Delhi. There are many other major cities where the total circulation is very small, and only 2% go to the villages. In fact, something

Trade Unions & Politics

BY V. B. KARNIK

Price: Rs 3.50

Published by
UNIVERSITY OF BOMBAY

LABOUR EDUCATION SERVICE

127, Mahatma Gandhi Road,
Bombay 1.

needs to be done to encourage more people to start newspapers and encourage people in the village to read them. It has been suggested that a school teacher in a village should be given a newspaper of his choice along with a black-board, chalk and books. It is a pity that we never bother about these problems and keep on harping on the themes of monopoly, commitment and so on. We are aware that ultimately, all power systems are systems of communication. As democrats, our aim is to arrive at a national consensus by discussion and not by direction which is what "commitment" would lead to.

Let us now briefly turn to the views expressed by the Indian Federation of Working Journalists' Conference recently, held in Gandhinagar. This conference urged Government to take immediate steps to transfer management of "The Press Trust of India", "The United News of India" and the major newspaper groups under the control of dominant industrial undertakings, to statutory corporations. At the same time, the conference says, that the corporation should be free from Government control. This is rather paradoxical. During the days of the British Raj, many nationalists started newspapers and fought for freedom of the press, but they never asked for financial aid to Government.

At a seminar held in Srinagar in May 1970, in which many leading journalists, editors and the then Union

Minister of State for Information participated, the question of ownership was discussed in detail. Even those who pleaded for independence of the news agencies and for change in the patterns of ownership did not seem to have clear ideas. Divergent views were expressed. Some maintained that in order to guarantee the free and independent functioning of the press, newspapers must be economically viable. As long as freedom of choice was available, the readers' preference was the most appropriate sanction against the misuse of the press to serve any interest. Since our ideas about patterns of ownership are not yet clear, the best thing would be to give serious thought to this and suggest appropriate procedures and safeguards to prevent owners from interfering with editorial freedom and also to prevent Government from trying to unduly interfere with freedom of the press. We should allow some experimentation so that some new patterns of ownership may evolve through genuine voluntary efforts. There is a wide scope in our country to try out new experiments. We should do nothing which will affect the freedom of the press, without which there could be no true democracy. Or else, like the two socialist parties who lost everything in the recent election when the whole country was talking about socialism, our working journalists might lose their own freedom when there is too much talk of freedom of the Press.

MERCURY PAINTS AND VARNISHES LIMITED

Foremost Manufacturers of
READYMIXED AND VARNISH PAINTS,
PLASTIC EMULSIONS ETC.

WELL-KNOWN FOR THEIR 'GIRAFFE' SYNTHETIC
ENAMELS

Address:

Agar Bazaar, Veer Savarkar Marg,
Dadar, Bombay-25.

Phone : 452307, 452098

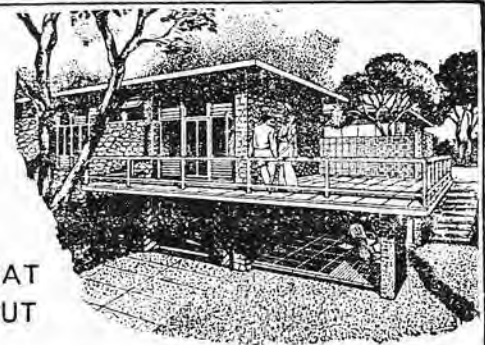
Seven Months That Shook India

M. D. Kini

INDIA has faced many crises since Independence, but the one that she faced in 1969 was the most severe and trying. The crisis in 1969 was primarily that of the Congress. Since Congress was India, and is India, it was equally a crisis of India. It is doubtful whether India has emerged from it with flying colours while Indira has. Two recent books* recount the events that led to the split in the Congress. Mr. Kuldip Nayar deals mainly with the crisis but covers a whole decade of the sixties. It is based on the diary the author has been maintaining during his years with the Government and as a journalist, as well as his interviews with all the leading Indian political personalities. Mr. Rajinder Puri's book is a personal account and assessment of the crisis and the major personalities involved in it. His judgement of *dramatic personae* is uncanny — Mr. Nijalingappa "is the closest thing to Mr. Pickwick in Indian politics and was quite unsuited to meet the pace and temper of that crisis when it came"; Mr. Morarji Desai "did try to come up with the right response to the crisis . . . the harsh truth is that history judges leadership by results"; Mr. Kamaraj "is the big fixer, he does not have to understand the issues. He understands men especially men who seek power"; Mr. Chavan "remains a puzzle. More than any man in this crisis he talked of peace and brought about discord, raised hopes and created despair, now here, now there, exasperating friend and foe alike"; Mrs. Indira Gandhi — "Mrs. Gandhi's source of power is a state of mind, her lack of inhibition in doing affront to procedure, in misuse of the machinery and patronage of office in order to coerce and to induce, and if necessary, to upset democracy itself in the obdurate pursuit of her will—the courage of the child who has a finger on the trigger." Puri's book contains his excellent cartoons on the events before and after the crisis.

It all started boiling in May 1969, though it was simmering for quite some time. Mrs. Gandhi having climbed the ladder was trying to throw it off. The so-called Syndicate which installed her was trying to control or remove her from the *sanctum sanctorum*. The death of President Zakir Husein was used for the trial of strength. Mrs. Gandhi wanted to have her nominee as President while the other leaders of the Congress wanted that the candidate for the Presidentship should be chosen by the Congress Parliamentary Board. Mrs. Indira Gandhi thinking that she would not have an

easy time at the Congress Parliamentary Board meeting started trying to divert the attention at the Bangalore session of the Congress by her "stray thoughts rather hurriedly dictated". The "stray thoughts" contained some of the points mentioned in the ten-points programme adopted on 12th May, 1967, which included nationalisation of banks and of import trade, etc. The Congress Working Committee moved a resolution welcoming the Prime Minister's note. A couple of days later at the Congress Parliamentary Board meeting it was decided to nominate Mr. Reddy by four votes to two. Morarji, Kamaraj, Patil and Chavan voted for Reddy while Mrs. Gandhi and Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed voted for Jagjivan Ram. Nijalingappa and Jagjivan Ram did not vote. It was reported that Mrs. Gandhi hurled a threat that "if the majority of members insisted on forcing a candidate on her they would face the consequences". However, on the following day she declared the acceptance of the majority decision, announcing at the same time her intentions to "fight those in the organisation who attacked her because of her policies and beliefs." Within three days of this announcement she relieved Mr. Morarji Desai of the Finance Ministership. In



IF YOU
BELIEVE THAT
NOTHING BUT
THE BEST
IS GOOD ENOUGH

for YOUR HOME...

Specify **ACC Cement**

ACC your guarantee
of top quality cement

THE ASSOCIATED CEMENT COMPANIES LTD.
The Cement Marketing Co. of India Limited

HTA-CMI. B148

* India: *The Critical Years* by Kuldip Nayar, Published by Vikas Publications, 5, Daryaganj, Ansari Road, Delhi 6. Rs. 20.
A *Crisis of Conscience* by Rajinder Puri, Published by the author A-422 Defence Colony, New Delhi. Rs. 20.

another three days she nationalised the fourteen large banks through an ordinance signed by the Acting President Giri, minutes after he resigned from office. Mrs. Gandhi proposed the name of Mr. Reddy for the Presidentship but she refused to issue any whip lest it may be considered to be misuse of her office. It was Mr. Arjun Arora who started a revolt against the party on August 10 declaring that he would support Mr. Giri for Presidentship. The following day Jagjivan Ram and Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed alleged that Nijalingappa was trying to oust Mrs. Gandhi with the help of the Jana Sangh and Swatantra Party. A signature campaign was launched for voting according to conscience led by some junior ministers. On August 14 Nijalingappa suspended Arjun Arora from the party membership. On August 20 Mr. Giri won the election on second preference votes by a narrow margin of 14,650 electoral votes. "Never before in India or elsewhere a Prime Minister worked so zealously against a candidate of the party which chose the Prime Minister", says Kuldip Nayar.

At a meeting of the Congress Working Committee on 25th August Mr. Chavan put forward a unity resolution which was supported by Patil and Atulya Ghosh but opposed by Morarji Desai, Kamaraj remaining silent. This resolution was passed in a spirit of forgive and forget after Nijalingappa's feelings were assuaged by Mrs. Gandhi's statement that the allegations against him were based on wrong assumptions. This is how Mr. Nayar puts the situation at the Congress Working Committee's meeting: "Nijalingappa's main anxiety was to convince everyone that he had not 'conspired' with the Jana Sangh and Swatantra. At the very beginning of the meeting he demanded the withdrawal of the charges against him. As the charges had served their purpose, Mrs. Gandhi's supporters saw no harm in dropping them, and a resolution was passed that the allegations made were 'on wrong assumptions based on information available at that time and therefore they are untenable'."

After this first round Mrs. Gandhi wanted to strengthen her position by capturing the organisation. Mr. S. D. Sharma, who was the General Secretary of the Congress at that time suggested to Mr. Nijalingappa that Mr. C. Subramaniam can be removed from the Congress Working Committee since he had resigned from the presidentship of the Tamilnadu P.C.C. and quietly informed Mrs. Gandhi of the move. Immediately, Mrs. Gandhi, Chavan and four other members of the Congress Working Committee condemned "the move" to remove Mr. Subramaniam though Mr. Nijalingappa had not written to Subramaniam about this at all. Simultaneously the Prime Minister asked four junior ministers to resign from the

cabinet to make it more purposive, apparently in retaliation to the alleged attempt to remove Mr. Subramaniam. Mrs. Gandhi's supporters also started a move for requisitioning a Congress session. It was signed by 407 members, but 11 of the 21 Congress Working Committee members who attended the meeting, rejected the demand for requisitioning a Congress session. In the meanwhile Nijalingappa removed Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed and C. Subramaniam from the Congress Working Committee. Mrs. Indira Gandhi decided to hold the requisitioned meeting and set up a separate office. She was suspended from the primary membership of the Congress soon. On November 13 the Congress Parliamentary Party met and passed a resolution of confidence in Mrs. Indira Gandhi. "At a meeting of the Congress Parliamentary Party, which Mrs. Gandhi convened, the presence of 330 members (260 of them from Lok Sabha out of the party's total strength of 429) was claimed. Foreign journalists counted only 240 at the meeting (it was for the first time that newspapermen were allowed to sit with party members.) One Watch and Ward official shouted 210 as the number present but he was quietened by his superiors," writes Kuldip Nayar.

Thus ended the drama of the Congress split. Split in any organisation in a normal way on differences of opinion, even if regrettable, is not a thing to be deplored. But in this case the way it was organised and the way our Prime Minister and her supporters behaved leaves a bad taste in the mouth. She has no objection to refer the selection of the party candidate for presidentship to the Congress Parliamentary Board, but thinks it proper to hurl a threat when her candidate was not chosen. She files the nomination of the party candidate but supports her colleagues in the Cabinet who defy party discipline. Her colleagues allege collusion between Nijalingappa and the Jana Sangh and Swatantra Party at the *critical juncture* but later withdraw it claiming it to be based on insufficient information. All this and many other things in this battle for the supremacy in the party leave many things to be desired. These were done because Mrs. Gandhi was afraid that the other leaders of the Congress were trying to remove her from office. Even supposing they were trying to replace her, it is the legitimate right of the party members to change their leader. Of course it is also the legitimate right of the leader to retain the leadership. But both have to work without injuring the conventions and the rules of democratic functioning. Here Mrs. Gandhi and her supporters have many things to answer for. They have not enhanced the prestige of democracy or upheld any moral principles. They have not even cared to speak the truth and nothing but the truth. Less than seven months were enough to put asunder what was put together more than seven decades ago and strengthened by Indian leaders like Tilak, Gandhi, Nehru and Patel.

Without Comment

American View

MR. JOSEPH J. SISCO, US Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs, referred in a statement before the Foreign Affairs Committee of the US House of Representatives to the situation in India, Pakistan and Ceylon.

He noted that in the recent elections India had again demonstrated that democracy was a vital part of its political process. "Despite the complexities of a multi-racial and multi-lingual society, in the midst of a massive development effort, and faced with serious law and order problems in at least one State, India has successfully and impressively carried out its fifth national elections. This is an achievement which over the longer terms augurs well for the peace, stability and development of the region," he said.

He added that India had recently undertaken a more active role in regional affairs commensurate with its power and resources. In this context, he referred to the help India had given to Ceylon to deal with the insurgents there. "It is also undertaking a massive

relief effort for the refugees from East Pakistan," he added.

In Pakistan, Mr. Sisco said, the internal conflict had impaired the building of the institutional framework within which the country could successfully come to grips with its pressing political, social and economic problems. The severity of those problems had been intensified.

He pointed out that as a result of what had happened in East Bengal, there had been a marked deterioration in relations between Pakistan and India. "This is something we can only look upon with profound regret", he said, "for our hopes for the sub-continent rest upon better relations between these two countries so that each will be free to pursue the imposing challenge of development."

He said the US had watched the developments in Pakistan with a sense of sorrow and humanitarian concern for the people of that country.

Listing the steps taken thus far "to manifest the seriousness of our concern" he mentioned the discussions on humanitarian relief efforts with the Governments of Pakistan and India, and said, "We have taken the lead in supporting the international relief effort being organised by the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees for the benefit of the large number of refugees from East Pakistan who have fled to India. —U.N.I.

CANCER IS CURABLE IF DETECTED IMMEDIATELY

These are the 7 Danger Signals

1. Any sore that does not heal.
2. A lump or thickening in the breast or elsewhere
3. Unusual bleeding or discharge
4. Any change in a wart or mole
5. Persistent indigestion or difficulty in swallowing
6. Persistent hoarseness or cough
7. Any change in normal bowel habits.

If you notice any of these 7 Danger Signals--consult a doctor AT ONCE.

YOUR MONEY CAN SAVE A LIFE!

The Indian Cancer Society is in urgent need of funds with which to fight cancer. However small your donation, it can help to save a life. Post your contribution to THE INDIAN CANCER SOCIETY, Hospital Avenue, Parel, Bombay 12.

GIVE TO CONQUER CANCER

With Many Voices

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

Small powers can often begin a world crisis. Great powers always end them.

—Hugh Thomas quoted in *Time*, May 24.

The right to demonstrate for peace abroad does not carry with it the right to break the peace at home.

—Nixon, quoted in *Time*, May 10.

"Does one ping-pong tournament make a detente"? And the answer is definitely "no" as far as European opinion is concerned.

—V. R. Bhatt, *Hindustan Times*, April 28.

While Marx had a wordy upper-second-class mind, of a type that is often attractive to lower-second-class minds, Keynes had a terse first-class mind, of a type that must have been infuriating to other first-class minds in his generation.

—*The Economist*, April 24.

The Press — a truly Free Press — is the one sure means to prevent democracy being snuffed out.

—*March of the Nation*, May 8.

Absolute security for one power means absolute insecurity for its neighbours.

—Henry Kissinger, quoted in *Time*, May 17.

Space stations may become dangerous military bases. Who knows?

—*Free Press Journal*, May 12.

One thing will lead to another, in Egypt as in Czechoslovakia.

—*Swiss Press Review and News Report*, May 24.

Come then, oh ye retired Generals, Air Marshals and Admirals who spend your time disconsolately playing golf and writing occasionally about past wars, here (in Bangla Desh) is your opportunity to serve the right and win new glory.

—*Opinion*, May 11.

National power does not flow from the barrel of a gun, it flows from the will of a people to use their strength.

—Rajinder Puri, *Illustrated Weekly of India*, May 30.

The question uppermost in my mind is whether the Great Powers have finally left South Asia to the tender mercies of Mao Tse-tung.

—C. Rajagopalachari, *Swarajya*, May 15.

The issue is mankind versus Islamabad.

—*Thought*, May 22.

She (Mrs. Gandhi) has given the people the feeling that she will succeed where her father failed.

—Durga Das, *Navhind Times*, May 26.

Concentration of economic power is an evil whether it is in a State organization or in private agencies.

—K. Santhanam, *Swarajya*, May 22.

To the Editor,
FREEDOM FIRST,
C/o Democratic Research Service,
127, Mahatma Gandhi Road,
Bombay 1.

Please enrol me as a subscriber to FREEDOM FIRST.
I remit the annual subscription of Rs. 5.00

"The Secretary knows our position well," said an Israeli official last week. "It has been explained to him in Cambridge English, broken English and just plain English."

—*Time*, May 10.

Name:

Address:

If Bangla Desh is alive at all, it is living in West Bengal.

—*The Economist*, April 24.

Signature