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Rajiv in Politics

What it means

NISSIM EZEKIEL

The scenario till the final plunge was as carefully planned as a Hollywood suspense thriller mystery. Although she denies it, the manipulator behind the scenes is Mrs. Gandhi. If she did not want it, Rajiv would not want it either. He has a mind of his own and used it precisely as he was bid.

Now he intends only to help his mother, now he makes a modest public appearance with a 90-second speech, now he resigns his job and fights an election. His mother says repeatedly she has nothing to do with these decisions and moves. She will presumably not be responsible for the projects he launches and the methods he employs, while he is aware, and so is everyone else, that her approval has already been obtained.

As a connoisseur of political styles, Mrs. Gandhi shrewdly distinguishes between Rajiv's anticipated mode of functioning and Sanjay's well-known dictatorial devices. What is common in her sons, she tells the world, is their integrity, commitment to the country and intelligence. All three qualities should be studied in a single case history: Maruti. And Rajiv is an admirer of his brother, even if he cannot be tarred with the same brush.

Rajiv has announced that he wishes to complete the work started by Sanjay. Of course, he doesn't mean Maruti. Mrs. Gandhi has already said that nobody can take Sanjay's place, though she describes Rajiv as "a serious, sincere and deeply dedicated young person."

In this relationship with Mrs. Gandhi and in his attitude to his dead brother, I see nothing but a sinister and wasteful prospect for the country. In addition to the failure symbolised by Maruti, there is the noise and upheaval created by Sanjay's activities which added up to zero as a contribution to the nation's progress. Millions of words were spent on praising him, rarely clarifying the main issues. Millions more will be spent now on Rajiv, to the same effect. Only the equation of power may change, never the dimension of ideas and values.

What was Sanjay in that dimension? What is Rajiv? As for seriousness, sincerity, dedication and commitment, do Hitler and Stalin fall short of Mrs. Gandhi's ideals? It would have been better for the world if they had shown signs of frivolity and incompetence. A few million victims of their ways may have been saved.

Let Mrs. Gandhi and Rajiv spell out their plans more comprehensively and with greater democratic participation, let them define the stages of the work and the results expected in concrete terms. What Mrs. Gandhi offers at present is only a series of gestures in lieu of action, behind a verbal smokescreen of slogans.

Rajiv is learning to practice the same art. What else is the significance of "to complete the unfinished task"? It is pure rhetoric. Every statement by Rajiv, every move he makes will strengthen his role as Mrs. Gandhi's successor, while no dent is made on poverty, no single institution improves in the actual working (only its image is refurbished), no solution ever appears on the horizon to the multiple ills from which the country suffers today.

It can hardly be said that Rajiv's career, experience and record of achievements in the cause of the nation's advancement make him our ideal future leader. Mrs. Gandhi and she alone has given him that honour. All the others who clamoured for his entry into politics and are now preparing to follow his commands will withdraw their support in the event of Mrs. Gandhi falling out with Rajiv. In other words, they do not back him on principle but only out of expediency.

That is why I see his entry into politics as a poor reflection on our character and on the nature of our public life. Only slaves follow the movements of their Master's eyes and interpret the expression on his face, moving in the required direction. Free men want argument and evidence for trusting a man to tackle their problems, not the kind of testimonials Mrs. Gandhi has given Rajiv. Even if he is not the disaster for the country that Sanjay proved to be, he is the artificial creation of his mother's devious politicking.

On that politicking he is totally dependent. To imagine that the nation's major problems can be solved by such a clone is folly. Rajiv may be a spectacular success or a spectacular failure. (It has to be spectacular in such cases). I do not believe the difference will make much difference to the social, economic, educational and cultural condition of India.

The Chinese Conundrum

B. P. ADARKAR

For several years now, the Indian Government has not been able to take a definite stand on the Chinese question. Both the Government and the people are still nursing their grievances over the 1962 war, and cannot see their way through the constantly changing international scenario — although during the last half century, many nations which were sworn enemies have become friends and *vice versa*.

What our policy-makers do not understand is that in politics, and particularly in international politics, neither friendships nor enmities are permanent. Both Mahatma Gandhi and, at the other and more pragmatic end, Chanakya-Kautilya have said the same thing and advised flexibility in foreign affairs. And yet we go on blindly pursuing a no-change policy on the Chinese question.

What is worse, there does not appear to be any effort to do some re-thinking in Delhi; nor are there any China experts available at headquarters. In the circumstances, it now becomes very necessary to do some retrospective as well as prospective thinking.

So far as recent history goes, I do not think that there has been any fair assessment of Chinese motives and actions during the 1962 war. After Indian independence, right since 1947, China was our Friend No. 1 and, in fact, Premier Chou En-Lai was one of Pandit Nehru's ideological confreres in their early experiments in Non-alignment. But when bosom friends fall out, they always become the most bitter enemies. So, the main question, to my mind, is: Why did they fall out?

Non-Alignment Schizophrenia

Now, it was Non-alignment that brought China and India together; and Pandit Nehru was undoubtedly its high-priest. In his younger days, Nehru — and friend, Krishna Menon — were fascinated by the Russian communist revolution, which was also blessed by political sages like Laski, Sydney and Beatrice Webb, Bernard Shaw *et al.* But by the time Nehru started his political career in India, he was already disillusioned by the Russian excesses of persecution and murder of millions of Russians and others in concentration camps and by the substitution of dictatorship of the proletariat by dictatorship of cliques and coteries. Nevertheless, although Nehru lost some of his zest for communism, his antagonism against capitalism still remained. Thus was born the schizophrenic doctrine of Non-alignment, i.e., neither here nor there but somewhere in between — comprising the doctrine of Mixed Economy and that of aloofness from the capitalist and communist blocks, led respectively by the USA and the Soviet Union.

In practice, Non-alignment has never been non-aligned and has never been really "genuine" either! It has never been clearly defined by anyone and its only advantage is that every country can put its own

interpretation on it and behave as it thinks fit. Nehru always supported the East against the West and was particularly anti-American and initially pro-China, although somewhat aloof from the Soviet Union.

Sino-Indian Conflict

It must be noted that although in the beginning Russia and China were allies, they parted company towards the end of the 50/s and became adversaries, mainly because of border issues (e.g., Sinkiang). Naturally, the Russians were not happy about the Sino-Indian alliance and had been looking for an opportunity to throw a monkey-wrench into the works. They got the opportunity when the Chinese army advanced into the Aksai Chin area on its way to Sinkiang to protect China's interests there.

It was President Khrushchev who soon descended upon Delhi and bamboozled and persuaded Nehru to intervene on the still unproved ground that Aksai Chin was Indian territory. Not even the British in their days were so sure that Aksai Chin belonged to British India; their maps and reports were ambiguous on the point.

Aksai Chin, far beyond the Himalayas and beyond even the Pamirs, was almost unknown and untrodden so far as India was concerned, and its political, strategic or economic worth to India was nil. On the other hand, to the Russians Aksai Chin was indeed like a thorn in their ribs, as that was the only route for the Chinese to attack them through Sinkiang, which was a Chinese province.

It was indeed a tragedy that Nehru fell into the Russian trap and agreed to challenge China on a worthless issue. Khrushchev not only egged him on to attack the Chinese but promised help if the latter became difficult. The Big Brother would take care of the Little Brother, he said; but when it came to brass tacks, when the Indian army was nearly defeated, he advised Nehru to sit at the table and negotiate for peace.

This was indeed a shock to Nehru, but he sought help from elsewhere, and it was the Americans and the British who stood by us; and Mao's armies quietly withdrew across the Himalayan border. Unfortunately Nehru did not live long enough to realise or rectify his error; and his successors, including Mrs. Gandhi, have not yet seen through the Russian chicanery.

After the war, naturally, China became more friendly with Pakistan on the principle that "the enemy's enemy is a friend." Also, the Chinese were completely disillusioned that Nehru should have helped their enemy, the Soviet Union, as against a trusted friend. From 1962 right upto this date, China has been aiding and abetting Pakistan in the latter's machina-

tions against India — all of which shows what a costly error the Aksai Chin adventure was.

Moreover, the Indo-Russian treaty of 1971 was the direct outcome of all this, because meanwhile the Chinese had joined hands with Pakistan and the Americans to harass India, and President Nixon went too far in the joint affray, thus virtually throwing India into Russian arms.

The Present Position

Thus a correct and dispassionate reading of history shows that it was our own mistakes which cost us our friendship with China for the mere bagatelle of Aksai Chin, which created a new and needless enemy right on our borders. Of course, during the Maoist regime the Chinese reaction was not only bitter but positively hostile. The question arises whether there is any way out of this tangle, and whether it would be possible to settle outstanding issues with China. In any case, it would be dangerous to leave things as they are.

With Kashmir on one side and Assam and the North-eastern States on the other, fermenting with disorder and intransigence, this is just the time for a complete concord with China.

Things are changing on the Chinese side under the leadership of Deng Xiaoping, and, as pointed out to Mr. Subramaniam Swamy recently by Ji Pengfi, the Deputy Prime Minister, "The previous government (the Gang of Four) was indulging in anti-Indian policies, but that is now stopped." The new men forming the anti-Maoist group, headed by Deng Xiaoping, are far more practical and flexible in their attitude towards international affairs. Their main concern and pre-occupation today are *vis-a-vis* the Soviet Union, which is at loggerheads with them on several border and other issues. That is why they are co-operating vigorously with the USA and even with Pakistan to organise a common front.

The Chinese do not approve of our friendship with the Russians for obvious reasons. Also, for the same reasons, the Russians have been strenuously lobbying in Delhi to prevent any normalisation of our relations with China.

Thus, with a new government in China with a new orientation towards international issues and a less poisonous attitude towards India, the chances of a settlement seem somewhat brighter and we should avail ourselves of them. At the same time, we should stop playing second fiddle to Moscow in its foreign policies and see to it that the Russian lobby does not baulk our negotiations with China.

Just as Khrushchev came to Delhi personally to persuade Nehru to checkmate China in Aksai Chin, Brezhnev also made a special visit in June 1980 to get Mrs. Gandhi to recognise Heng Samrin's government in Vietnam. This was not only a hasty decision, completely out-of-step with all the ASEAN states, but has further added to our misunderstandings with China.

Steps Necessary

So far there have been no regular government-to-government negotiations with the Chinese. Only Mr. Swamy was permitted to visit China by the Janata Government on a sort of fact-finding mission, but

his recommendations were ignored by the Government. Then, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee visited Beijing in his official capacity as Foreign Minister in 1979 but came back empty-handed.

What was surprising, however, was that Mr. Vajpayee and the Delhi Government made a grievance that China attacked Vietnam even while Vajpayee was still in Beijing! This was indeed an irrelevant and meaningless complaint. International law does not prohibit a government from declaring war against a third country while the foreign minister of another state happens to be in the capital. Apart from this, admittedly Vajpayee had overstayed his scheduled programme, and probably the Chinese had already fixed a date for the attack!

There is no doubt that it is worthwhile to take up the negotiations without further delay. The negotiations must be fullfledged on a government-to-government basis.

The main bilateral issue will be the border question — which must be tackled first. The British never settled this, and in their days it was not such a live issue either. Their MacMahon Line was never drawn properly on any map, but was mainly a conceptual line. It was mentioned in a treaty, which the Chinese said they never signed. Therefore, it is still an open issue.

Other issues include Sikkim, Kampuchea, Aksai Chin and China's support to Pakistan on the Kashmir issue. All these must be settled on a give-and-take basis, patiently, and the sooner the better.

If we can clear up misunderstandings and wean China away from Pakistan, our defence burden will be considerably lightened. Otherwise, it will be back to square one again.

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A STATEMENT TO REMEMBER

The Indian Liberal Group On The Emergency

1. Indian Liberalism has, since the nineteenth century, played a notable part in the constitutional and political development of India and left its mark on the Constitution. It was an important strand in the history of the freedom movement and a factor in the modernisation of the country.

Although it derived its inspiration from the Western constitutional tradition, it showed a remarkable capacity for independent thought and freedom from doctrinaire thinking.

Liberals like Gopal Krishna Gokhale and Srinivasa Sastri, the late P. Kodanda Rao and Mr. D. V. Gundappa have represented this fine political tradition which has stressed freedom and responsibility.

2. Heir to this fine tradition, the Indian Liberal Group has sought to educate people in the tasks of citizenship in a free society. It stands for the spirit of moderation and compromise in politics, for justice and fair play, for economic growth with stability and the rule of Law.

It has consistently condemned violence in politics and regarded it as detrimental to ordered existence in a free society. Members of the Indian Liberal Group have therefore viewed with concern the growth of populism and the arbitrament of the streets.

Equally, it has denounced the unprincipled expediency which has been the bane of Indian politics in the two decades and a half which have elapsed since the inauguration of the Constitution.

3. At the same time, the Indian Liberal Group has been apprehensive of the growing power of the State. Liberals in India view with deep apprehension the developments which have taken place since June 26 this year. The steps taken by the Government lead logically to authoritarianism rather than the preservation of democracy.

The Indian Liberal Group fails to see the rationale for the declaration of Emergency and the steps taken by the Executive. Specially odious is the application of MISA to politicians and public figures and the imposition of a censorship on the press.

To the same category belong the suspension of civil liberties of the citizen and his right to move the courts of Law in self-defence and the efforts made to remove the highest political offices of the land from the purview of judicial inquiry.

Frequent amendments of an illiberal nature to the Constitution have had the effect of distorting the intentions of the framers who conceived of it as a great and noble instrument of freedom, a fitting finale to the struggle for independence and

an abiding framework for a just and free society.

4. It is sad to reflect on the fact that draconian measures like those now in existence were not resorted to even during the most repressive days of the British Raj. The Indian Liberal Group is convinced that this policy of seeking to rule the country with an iron hand is bound to leave permanent scars on the face of Indian democracy and do irreparable damage to the future of constitutional government.
5. The authoritarian regime established in India for the past few weeks is neither total nor irreversible. The Indian Liberal Group hopes it is not yet too late to stop this unfortunate trend from proceeding further down the slippery slope to total dictatorship. It is to be hoped that there is enough wisdom and resourcefulness in India among all concerned to save the country from such a catastrophe and to get back to more normal conditions in which it would become possible for the people of India to choose freely their own Government and decide their own destiny.
6. Happily, everyone in India, whether in the Government or Opposition, is agreed that such a choice can be made freely by the people of India through a General Election to Parliament. It is obvious that, under present conditions, with the kind of precensorship of the press that exists, the detention in prison of a large number of men and women of influence in the country, and the threat of detention without cause and without trial under the Maintenance of Internal Security Act, no election that would enjoy any credibility could take place.

In order that an election campaign can be conducted freely and fairly, there will have to be freedom of discussion and expression on the platform and in the press without fear of consequences. At the same time, in order that elections can take place in an orderly fashion there will have to be general agreement that extra-constitutional weapons should be placed aside.

The Indian Liberal Group is confident that an arrangement on some such basis as this can be worked out and calls upon its members, its friends abroad and all concerned to do whatever they can to help in facilitating such a development.

The Group is glad to note that some of its active members are engaged in efforts to bring about an understanding of this nature and it hopes these efforts will succeed.

Indian Liberal Group
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The Soviet Union And Islam

SOUTH YEMEN

Having learned the lessons of Somalia, the Soviets have decided that come what may in Ethiopia — where the success of rebel movements and the Soviet and Cuban inability to crush them has lessened their hold — they will never leave South Yemen.

For the first time in a Muslim state, the Soviets are trying to root out Islam from South Yemen. Although they do not want the rest of the Muslim world to know and are prepared to go to some considerable lengths to preserve secrecy, atheistic propaganda is being introduced into South Yemen with rare passion.

It is reported that daily prayers have actually been declared illegal, and almost all the mosques of the country have been turned into military buildings — which are controlled either by Soviets or Cubans. Lenin's birthday has become the principal holiday of the year and has been given equality with all religious feast-days. Refugees say it is only a matter of time before it is given precedence.

Experience in Afghanistan has shown the Soviets that they cannot hold a Muslim country — even when it has the Red Army on the frontier. So if they want to dominate the Arab world they will have to stamp out Islam — or else reduce it to satellite status, as has been done with so many (though not all) Christian organisations inside the Soviet Union itself.

South Yemen is a test-case for the abolition of Islam. And, in order to confuse the Arab world, a delegation of Soviet Muslims actually visited Aden at a time when the Muslim religion was being described in South Yemeni schools as "a flaw in the human spirit".

Moscow And The Muslims

Moscow is becoming more and more interested in developing relations with leaders of the Muslim faith throughout the world. In October 1980, the leader of the Muslims in the Soviet Union, the Grand Mufti, visited Syria. In January 1981, a delegation of Soviet Muslims toured South Yemen. And last December, a Muslim leader from Afghanistan made an extended visit to the Soviet Central Asian republics.

The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in December 1979 understandably caused uproar in the Muslim world. Protests by Muslim countries led to two serious defeats of the Soviet Union in the United Nations General Assembly. On January 15th 1980, the assembly passed a resolution by 104 votes to 18 requiring the Soviet Union to withdraw its troops from Afghanistan immediately and without conditions. On November 21st, a similar resolution was passed with an even heavier majority: 111 against 22.

The Conference of Islamic States has also repeatedly required the Soviet Union to withdraw its

troops from Afghanistan, most recently at Taif in Saudi Arabia in January of this year.

To prevent a further deterioration of its reputation in the Muslim world, particularly in the Middle East, the Soviet Union has started to take important counter-measures. A vast propaganda campaign at the international level has been started up to portray the Muslims in the Soviet Union as a flourishing religious community, with full freedom to hold religious services and to propagate Muslim culture.

Thus, the head of the Soviet Muslim delegation to South Yemen, Mufti Mahmud Gekkiyev, Chairman of the Religious Committee of the Muslims in North Caucasus, told his hosts that full religious freedom was guaranteed to all Soviet citizens, that Muslim believers could visit all mosques at all times without hindrance, and that a new generation of religious leaders was being trained in seminaries in the Soviet Union.

The prayer leader of the most important mosque of Kabul in Afghanistan, Mohammed Amin Sadr, claimed after his visit to the Soviet Union that all Muslims in Soviet Central Asia observe religious feasts. The mosques were full of believers, both young and old.

This is of course not the full picture, and indeed the partial picture is itself full of inaccuracies. Although it is true that freedom of religion is guaranteed by the constitution of the Soviet Union, only atheists are allowed to try to increase their number.

Whatever the propaganda may say, it is a fact that Muslims are not allowed to show their beliefs openly in public or to proselytise. Whatever parents believe, all children are indoctrinated with atheism at school.

The Sufi community, to which the fact that Islam has survived at all in the Soviet Union is largely due, is not recognised in any way by the State, and its members are persecuted.

The determination of the Soviet authorities to fight against all forms of religious belief as effectively as possible was recently emphasised at the 22nd Congress of the Communist Party of Turkmenistan. In his keynote speech, the First Secretary of the Communist Party, Muhammednazar Gafurov, condemned the ineffectiveness of atheistic teaching in the schools.

Because of this ineffectiveness, Gafurov said, charlatans clothed themselves as religious leaders and declared certain places to be holy. They deceived people by receiving pilgrims and looking after the sick. He described religious feeling in Turkmenistan as the expression of a narrow kind of nationalism which was incompatible with Soviet patriotism.

Gafurov also stated that ideological education against such "superstition" was one of the most important tasks of the Communist Party. The Party must improve its work in favour of atheism, he concluded, by taking up arms against customs which were alien to the Soviet Union.

Gafurov's words have had their effect. Increasingly, new obstacles are going up against the practice of the Muslim religion in the Soviet Union. Although one or two new mosques have been opened in recent years, their number is totally insufficient. There are altogether about 200 mosques for a Muslim community of over 40 million, while before the revolution there were over a thousand for a much smaller population of Muslims.

The number of Muslim clergy has also been reduced to only a fraction of the number practicing in the mosques before the revolution. There are now only two Muslim seminaries — known as madrasas — in Bokhara and Tashkent. These together contain only about 100 seminarists; 20 of these qualify as clergy each year. After they have completed their seven years of religious training, these seminarists must serve two years in the army before they are allowed to take up their religious tasks.

The seminaries could easily take more theological students if they were allowed to do so. Each place at the Bukhara seminary has five or six candidates.

The Koran and other Muslim religious works are printed in the Soviet Central Asian republics. The Soviets make great play of this in their propaganda in the Muslim world outside. They do not talk statistics, however, and in fact these works are published in ridiculously small editions for the number of the Muslim religious community.

It is forbidden for Soviet radio and television to broadcast religious programmes of any kind.

In order to maintain their community in the hard conditions of the Soviet Union and keep a limited freedom of religion, Soviet Muslims are obliged to accept compromises and make serious concessions to the authorities.

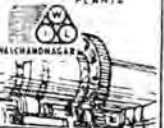
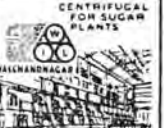
The four religious communities into which the Islamic hierarchy is subdivided are forced to allow themselves to be misused by the state for propaganda purposes. They are made to play along with the false picture of Soviet tolerance which is being projected by the authorities to the rest of Islam.

For example, Radio Moscow has made great play of forced declarations of support by members of the Muslim clergy to justify the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.

But in spite of such important attempts to suborn Soviet Muslims, it is simply not true that they enjoy the status and the rights that Soviet state propaganda claims for them. Even in the five Islamic republics of the Asian Soviet Union, it is difficult if not impossible for a practising Muslim to reach a place of any importance in political or economic life.

Both the state administrations and the respective Communist Parties are reserved for unbelievers; and since most of the indigenous people of these republics are in fact practicing Muslims, this means that they are ruled by immigrants from the European part of the Soviet Union.

From *Swiss Press Review and News Report*,
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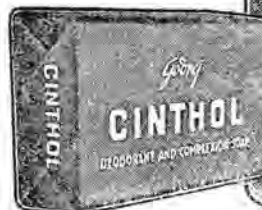
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Trusteeship And Common Ownership

ARVIND A. DESHPANDE

In our April issue we published an article on **Gandhian Socialism** by Smita Bankeshwar. In the present piece a different point of view is expressed which we are sure will interest our readers.—Ed.

All life is a trust and all power carries with it obligations. The Gandhian principle of trusteeship expresses the inherent responsibility of the privileged, the educated and those with money, talent, knowledge and skill, to the community and in particular to the poorest and the disadvantaged.

In so far as business enterprise is concerned, trusteeship means responsibility to not only workers and shareholders but to consumers and the community. What Gandhiji was concerned with was the **legitimate position** of those who have **wealth and power** in a society where there are the poor, the underprivileged and the vulnerable and the exploited. It was his conviction that either we submit to self-rule (Swaraj), self-discipline, or we shall be overpowered by brute forces, unleashed by those who may get corrupted and dehumanised by absolute helplessness, poverty and powerlessness.

The late Jayaprakash Narayan, who strove to bring civilised norms to business and industry as to politics, warned again and again that the alternative to capitalism need not be chaos and cruelty just as the alternative to a dictator in politics need not be a breakdown of authority. Communism is a reaction to capitalism and not an alternative. Trusteeship which aims at taking responsibility, and democracy to the economic field, flows from a more basic understanding of human nature and it holds the freedom of the individual no more or less important than the "responsibility" of the individual and the society to one another.

Freud believed that it was the nature of human beings to be greedy and we are naturally oriented towards being **bad** and must, therefore, impose **good** upon ourselves. The behavioural scientists don't agree with this but believe that the human being is naturally "neutral" and, therefore, free to be conditioned towards good or evil.

Abraham Maslow contends that both the above theories are incorrect and the human being is part of an evolutionary process and oriented towards good i.e., towards an increasingly harmonious, co-operative and loving social order. Maslow rightly points out that the first concern of the human being is his/her physical need for food, clothing and shelter. His second concern is the "security" need, i.e., protection of life from harm and continuous satisfaction of his physical needs. His third concern is his "affective" need, i.e.,

his need for love and affection. Then comes his "ego" need, i.e., how he is being viewed by others. Last comes (and something he never ceases to want) the need for self-actualisation, i.e., personal fulfilment through his contribution to an ultimate intangible value such as beauty, charity, justice, wisdom or love.

That is what Dr. Schumacher had been stressing all his life. A job in which one finds no personal satisfaction destroys the soul; a job in which one sees no sense of tangible productivity and progress destroys initiative. Safety regulations, provident fund, etc., take account of workers' bodies but no such checks exist for workers' minds, their urge to serve and collaborate with other people to liberate themselves from inborn egocentricity, in short, to give more than to take.

Gandhi wanted the self-actualisation need of the worker as well as the employer to contribute to the practice of "Trusteeship" for the community. Perhaps Bharatha who looked after the kingdom of Ayodhya in Rama's absence was an ideal example of a Trustee. He strove hard to return the kingdom to his brother much more prosperous than he had found it; enjoy all the fruits of your labour, talent, skill, knowledge but remember all this is a "trust".

Every sane person, in any case, gives more to family and also to society. Sooner than later one must prepare to phase out and distribute returns on one's capital, skill, talent, in favour of the community or else face "expropriation" as is done in a communist society.

We have the rather "realistic" view of industry's obligations to society which Prime Minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi described as, "The enforcement of proper standards of quality, avoidance of tax evasion and conspicuous consumption as a **minimum feasible programme**", and then we have the other view represented by J.P. and other believers in Trusteeship who contend that acceptance of social obligations involves commitment to national goals which in turn calls for participation of the consumers and community's representatives in industrial decision-making at appropriate levels, and industry's active involvement in the wider fields of rural development, creation of entrepreneurship, self employment and submission to periodic social audit and, in the ultimate analysis, phasing out and redistributing both **ownership** and **power/authority** of capital in favour of workers, consumers and the community.

This may be considered a tall order or a harsh demand on those who help produce wealth but is, in actual fact, not so. **It is essentially bringing the democratic attitude into the economic field.**

As a first effective step in our march towards it our friends in England and Spain have evolved a concept of common ownership. The basic principles are:

(a) That people hire capital; capital like other inputs, labour, management, has the same price and value. Today we tend to believe that capital has "value" and the rest, labour, management etc., only a "price".

(b) There are **no** individual shareholders as in a co-operative unit, which gives them a feeling of "power" but all capital input is either a loan or owned by the Trust.

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(d) The net profit, after deduction of taxes etc., are distributed as follows: 1/3rd to build reserves, 1/3rd to be shared **equally** by all those working in the unit, and 1/3rd to be given back to the community for projects of development, or to the disadvantaged, etc., on the recommendation of Trustees who comprise representatives of consumers and the community. So, what you take for yourself is also given back in **equal** measure to the community.

In such units, there will be no conflict, no seeking after **power/money** for its own sake, and each will feel, "it all depends upon me".

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The Ugly South African Reality

South Africa evokes different feelings in different people. The European thinks of it as a land of milk and honey. The Afrikaaner (the original Dutch Settler) thinks of it as his own property by virtue of his having tamed and nurtured a hostile land with his own blood and sweat. The African tribes, specially the native Bantu, Hottentot, and Zulu, think of it as their original Eden, corrupted and snatched from them by the serpent in the shape of the white man. The Asian thinks of it as a land of some of his forefathers, but also as a land of golden opportunities, provided he can stomach inimical laws of apartheid sanctioned by law, and brazenly practised in favour of the white man.

The four communities live together in utmost disharmony. Tensions are never dormant. The situation is never far from being explosive. There is mutual suspicion between the British, the Afrikaaner, the Asian and the African.

The problem in all its plurality was simply, sensitively and objectively put across in a slim book of 183 pages entitled *A Patch of White* (Thackers, Bombay 1969). The author is Arun Gandhi, son of Manilal Gandhi, and grandson of the great Mahatma whose subsequent crusades for human liberty were cradled in South Africa.

A journalist by profession, the author has not allowed personal bitterness or prejudice to cloud the issue. He has patterned his book on factual plinths. He starts it by making the reader experience the cultural shock as he enters the Union from free and comparatively liberal Britain. The ugly manifestations of apartheid reveal themselves from the airport corridors through restaurants, buses, housing, hospitals and even mortuaries.

There is no retreat from apartheid, rather a firmer stranglehold, and the bitter truth is that despite vociferous denunciation from world bodies, it continues unabated. Its wealth in gold and diamonds makes the Union all-powerful in global corporations and defies a solution to the vexed problem.

"At all levels of life colour bar is designed to hit you. You go to a post office and you have to stand at separate counters, and if the clerk is shared by the two sections, it goes without saying that the white man gets first preference even if he comes there after you... At the railway stations a non-white cannot enter through the front entrance. He has to use the separate side entrances and exits, and separate counters for tickets. The benches on the platform are all marked for Europeans only, and in a nine-car train, the first six would be reserved for the whites, and all the non-whites would have to crowd into the last three bogies, despite the fact that the non-whites use the trains in larger numbers than the whites...."

The author then explores the hundred-odd-years history of the Union of South Africa, and in the process, sheds light on the origins of apartheid. The trade route before Suez took the British and Dutch colonialists round the Cape of Good Hope, and in due course, it started to become a settlement. The Dutch far outnumbered other Europeans and made inroads into surrounding areas.

The British went east and discovered the potential of sugar-cane farms in Natal. The Dutch became agriculturists and the British monopolised the lucrative sugar-cane trade. The Dutch drove the native Bantu and Zulu tribes away into the wilderness, sincerely believing from the Book of Genesis that these tribes had sprung from Ham, son of Noah, and that they, the Dutch, were the chosen people. The British, on the other hand, were busier with practical considerations. They needed cheap labour for their extensive sugar-cane farms and found it convenient to import indented labour from India. This was the entry of the Asian on the South African scene.

Problems soon arose, however, when the Indian labourers found it difficult to adapt to African tribal ways, so the British were obliged to bring over Indian traders and merchants to cater to the labourers' animal needs. With the merchant class came an element of unscrupulousness and profiteering which was to ultimately boomerang on the Asian community. But alongside this embryonic community, there grew a steady population of accountants, officials, and a professional cadre of doctors, lawyers, nurses and so on—educated, enlightened people, with a will to develop and integrate with the polyglot growth.

When these cadres found their voices ignored and their professional careers blocked, purely from racial considerations, resentment flared up and built to bursting point. The downtrodden Asians and Africans made common cause and, under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi, mounted the Satyagraha movement. It gathered momentum and forced the usually fair-minded British to intercede on their behalf and soften the segregationist laws to a certain extent.

While the chapter in this book on the Asian factor of the South African problem does not entirely exonerate the Asian, but rather, raps him for his baser commercial instincts, the chapter on the African situation is one of unrelieved oppression.

The infamous Pass Laws which require every African to carry a wad of identification papers round the clock and throughout his lifetime in the Union;

the total veto of African entry into Orange Free State;

the hovels given to African peasants, euphemistically called Settlers' colonies;

the pittance they get for their labour; the numerous prison camps into which guilty and innocent, adults and children, men and women alike are herded indiscriminately and forced to labour on farms and roads;

the frequent, unprovoked attacks on African families by the legally empowered, pitiless police;

the indefinite imprisonment of African nationalists like Luthuli and Mandela on Elba-type Robbin Islands —

in fact, the virtual disenfranchisement of the African, remains a blot on human civilisation.

INDU SARAIYA

VOICES 2

Recent Resolutions of Citizens for Democracy

This meeting of the Citizens for Democracy, Bombay, views with grave concern the alarming growth of political corruption and use of black money in public life, including the electoral process. This results in the eclipse of moral values and a phenomenal rise in prices of essential commodities, like sugar and edible oil, and unabated inflation entailing untold hardship to people living below the poverty line or having fixed incomes.

The CFD believes that one method of breaking this vicious circle is to bring about radical reforms in the electoral system on the lines suggested in the report of the Committee on electoral reforms appointed by Jayaprakash Narayan. This includes the bearing of a substantial part of the electoral expenses by the State, so as to eliminate the abuse of money power in elections, and free the electoral representatives of the people from resorting to corrupt means.

The CFD reaffirms that the problems of poverty, corruption and law and order cannot be solved by concentration of power in the Centre or in one leader or by resort to barbaric laws like those of preventive detention or censorship. These methods invariably lead to greater inefficiency in Government, break down of law and order, frustration of the people and then further use of force to curb them.

The CFD reiterates that the acute problems facing our people can be solved only by decentralisation of power and responsibility, by increasing the will and initiative of people at grass roots level, and by their greater involvement in public life and development activities, such as the Adult Education Scheme.

The CFD appeals to the people to strive for electoral reforms, elimination of corruption in public life, decentralisation of power and responsibility, and formation of Peoples' Committees for developing local initiative for repeal of inhuman laws like those of Preventive Detention.

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THE WORLD OF BOOKS

FREEDOM OF THE PRESS. Published by the Institute of Social Studies. Pg. 43.

The expression "freedom of the press" has a wide range of interpretations. The Institute of Social Studies, which held a seminar on the subject, has brought out a useful little booklet of the proceedings, including excerpts from C. R. Irani's "Press Freedom"—the A. D. Shroff Memorial Lecture of 1977—from Professor Sanghavi's "Afghanistan and Indian Foreign Policy", and from P. M. Kamath's "Afghanistan and the Indian Response".

"Press freedoms are an integral part of human values and human rights", states Mr. Irani. It comprises Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The right to press freedom is "a right to hold opinions without interference, and a right to voice dissent without fear of the consequences. It is also a right to free and truthful information for the citizens of a democratic society, as it is vital for the formation of correct opinions by those who lead, govern and administer.

Press freedom, moreover, according to Mr. Irani, does not require the Press to pay any heed to the sensitivities of governments. "Our duty is to our own high code of ethics with an ear to the voice of dissent, which is the one unfailing test of respect for Human Rights." Later in the discussion, the participants point out that while Government is free to indulge in propaganda, it is improper to dish it out in the form of news.

No government likes criticism, they agree, but assert that while the masses are made aware of the constant striving for the satisfaction of their economic rights, personal, civil and political rights which deserve equal importance, are neglected. An unbalanced reporting on economic rights should be replaced by a balance in coverage of all rights, whether they are fulfilled or not.

How far the press is free depends on how far it is fair and accurate in its reporting. Mr. M. V. Kamath pertinently points out that all reporters had a four-fold responsibility to their country, to the government, to his editor and finally to himself. He adds that "by and large" the press in India is more free and fair than in some advanced countries. The bastion of press freedom is undoubtedly fundamental to the successful working of a democracy.

Accountability of a reporter according to Mr. Kamath, to the editor and the public, make for accurate presentation of facts and in case of his bias ("who does not have a bias?") the reporter generally attempts to make efforts at being impartial in his reporting of events.

However, Yeshwant Doshi's statement that freedom of the press in India was coloured by an urban

bias lent a new dimension to the discussion. The press in India is indeed urban biased, and adequate coverage of rural happenings is missing. This does indicate the alarming one-sided quality of press freedom that makes the reader wonder about its extent and whether the vernacular press can help tilt the balance.

"An underdeveloped society is also an unjust and exploitative one", and so it is more convenient (for the press) "to cater to the needs of the elite rather than struggle on behalf of the dumb and crushed millions". So, although press freedoms are limited by the Official Secrets Act, Parliamentary privileges, contempt of court and defamation laws, etc., the "legal and quasi-legal restrictions are mere peanuts," says Prof. Sanghavi, "compared to intangible pressures which make a mockery of press freedom."

In Prof. Sanghavi's words, "Profits rather than values become the touchstone of efficiency",—"because those in the political saddle could touch the press barons at many tender points,—freedom was readily sacrificed at the altar of expediency, of kow-towing to the power gods."

While it is laudable to state that the press is comparatively free in India, it is not consoling to discover the unseen but all-pervasive pressures that prevent the realisation of true press freedom. In the final analysis these are **economic** pressures.

Though Dr. Gilmore states that what he means by press freedom is the freedom for any one group to start a newspaper, to air its views, or a "socialisation of the press", where journalists work, reporting for their special causes, electing editors from their midst, the reader knows this is unworkable. As M. V. Kamath points out, divergent views are already expressed in a large "capitalist era" press. Besides, the economics of running a small publication that caters only to one section of the community is precarious.

Financial pressures always weigh on newspapers and, to the extent that they suffer these pressures, they are not fully free. In India the nationalisation of newsprint, and the control of large government advertising through the DAVP, can make or break a paper. As Dr. Aloo Dastur, who chaired the seminar, poignantly states, small publications could protest in the Emergency precisely because they were small (and their courage was not lacking). Big newspapers like **The Times of India** which employs 3,500 people could not afford to protest effectively because of their huge investments.

Yeshwant Doshi and M. V. Kamath categorically answer the question, "Press freedom for What?"—with the statement "We need press freedom not for anything else, but because freedom is an essential quality without which man cannot live." The right to know, inherent in press freedom, is part of the vital right to live without fear of injustice. However, in a situation where the right to know intrudes on the right to work, or the right to bread without questions means bowing to the official propaganda handout, which right prevails?

Mr. Irani declares that in his concept, bread and freedom go together. The reader would ardently wish to agree with him. In the Emergency, however, only a few papers like **The Statesman** and **Freedom First** had the courage of their convictions to fight for press freedom. Most papers followed the blitz of this freedom, obviously mindful of the fact that press freedom and bread do not go together.

PREETH I. BIDDAPA

WINTER POEMS by Keki Daruwalla. Allied Publishers. Pg. 73. Rs. 25/-.

Keki Daruwalla's new book is a mere addition to an already impressive body of verse. There can be no doubt of the excellence of individual poems. The disappointment is in the total impact.

There are eleven sections, each a sequence, except for the section "Graffiti" which contains individual poems. Daruwalla begins with a quotation from Wallace Stevens — "It is equal to living in a tragic land/ to live in a tragic time". The position of the quotation suggests that it applies to the whole book. But he repeats it in the second section "Hunger 74". Undoubtedly it is appropriate, but why should any sophisticated writer disregard discretion and overstate his case? In this collection the poet does so repeatedly in different ways.

Reading *Winter Poems* is an exhausting experience. Images of rottenness convey that aspect of the human condition. Daruwalla's nightmare vision is imaged in terms of "skeletal children", "radioactive spikes", "meadows of bitumen". The harvest moon is a "bloated well-fed musk-melon". The sky is an "intense blue, the stars lighted ulcers on the sky's belly". There are no fields or gardens in his landscapes; only "forests fazzled with the cry of jackals",

"the inner desert shuffling across with skeleton arms to meet the outer desert".

The desert motif is overplayed: "deserts of despair", "deserts of reason" "deserts of the imagination", "deserts of hunger". Even the last sequence of the book, "Bombay Prayers", is not a traditional supplication but a gesture of despair.

"From the lepers, the acid-scarred, the amputees I turn my face".

The poems have the desired effect. The anguish of living in a city with no corresponding compassion to alleviate suffering is effectively brought out. Virtually every poem is a variation on this theme, and the same mood is sought to be evoked through similar imagery. This is precisely Daruwalla's weakness. His technique is not of persuasion, but of bludgeoning the reader into submission. If he continues to limit his vision in this manner he will lose his credibility as a writer.

However, there are compensations for this defect. The poetry is free from vague academic philosophy and facile intellectualism. Unusual imagery and foreign turns of phrase startle and delight the reader. "For my daughter (Anaheita)" begins with a statement.

"Only a week earlier
you were faceless, formless
a pressure and a bulge against the womb walls,
an unknown wistful promise".

Later when the child is untangled from the placenta she is "raw and shrivelled as a giant prawn". The image is a combination of the acutely grotesque and the romantic, and the poem has a tenderness missing in much of the other writing.

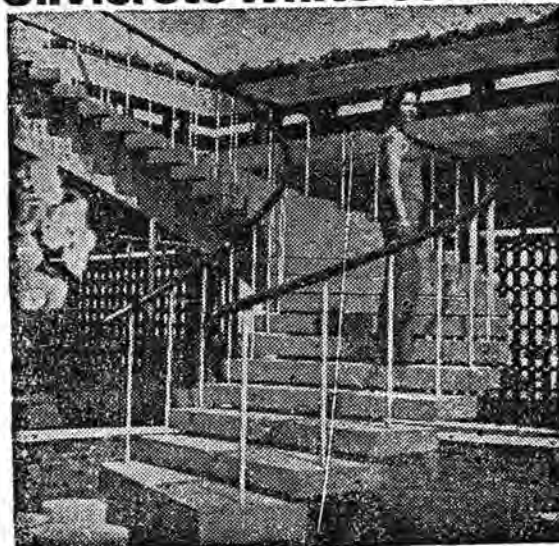
The monologues work wonderfully. They are grim, but the poet's personae do not rage. The language is close to the spoken word, each statement adding to a fuller impression of the personality or the situation. "Einstein explains to god the end of the world" in the following words:

"Three letters and a number
were enough to turn the world
into a stewed cucumber".

Keki Daruwalla can do remarkable things with his language. He can be witty when he is not dramatising a human weakness. Though the writing is bitter the experiences are not bizarre. The real and the concrete are constantly kept in the foreground. The poems convey the substance of a unique but limited experience.

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Population Control for Economic Growth

ATTAR CHAND

The need for an effective check on the unrestricted growth of population for economic development is now widely recognized. Between now and the end of the century the actual number of people in the world will increase from just over 4 billion to over 6 billion. 90 per cent of the extra 2 billion people will be born in the economically poor countries of the world.

Most of the population growth is taking place among about three-quarters of the world's population living in the less developed regions—Latin America, Africa and Asia (minus Japan). There, previously high death rates fell rapidly after World War II and by about 1977 were at the comparatively low level of 12 deaths per 1,000 population annually. As a result, the developing regions are growing at a rapid 2.1 per cent every year.

By contrast, among the other quarter of the globe's population in the more developed regions (the United States and Canada, Europe, the Soviet Union, Japan, Australia and New Zealand), the annual rate of growth now stands at a much lower 0.7 per cent reflecting an average birthrate of 16 per 1,000 and a deathrate of nine.

The current 1.7 per cent world growth rate is adding some 74 million people a year to today's global total of about 4,300 million. By 2000, the United Nations projects a total world population of 6,200 million, with a lowered growth rate of 1.5 percent resulting in an annual net increase of about 93 million people. Some 90 per cent of the 2,000 million increase in the next two decades will take place in the developing world.

Apart from the low GNP, highly populous areas have to contend with several other problems. The International Labour Organisation (ILO) estimates that in 1975 there were around 283 million people unemployed or underemployed in the non-communist developing world—40 per cent of the work force of some 700 million outside the People's Republic of China and other communist countries.

High levels of population growth negative economic gains, can limit prospects for a better life for generations to come. Because of rampant population growth, and the poverty due in part to that growth, the hungry two-thirds of mankind is no better off today than it was in 1974.

In spite of the progress, population growth for the developing world as a whole literally eats up almost all of the painfully achieved growth in food production of 2.9 per cent a year. In fact, in 23 countries, per capita daily calorie intake has actually gone down. And the per capita figure fails to reflect the full depth of the problem.

In recent decades the earth's vegetation cover

(croplands, forests and grasslands), fisheries, water sources and atmosphere have undergone a sharply increased rate of depletion and pollution. A large part of this is due to high production and consumption lifestyles. Environmental degradation has also resulted from the desperate efforts of rapidly growing impoverished populations in developing nations to survive.

Vast areas of Africa, South and Southeast Asia, the Middle East and Latin America have been crippled by slash-and-burn agriculture, overcropping, overgrazing and consequent wind and water erosion. Such despoilation has an adverse impact on the ecological balance.

Even as the population of a country grows, the size of its young relative to the total population generally goes up. The implications of this trend on fertility, employment, industrialization, education and housing touch all regions of the world, but the developing world bears the heaviest impact, because the problem is greatest there in relation to the resources required.

The portion of the population under 15 years, who now constitute over 40 percent of some populations, are prone to create social disorder and widespread unrest, unless they are properly absorbed in constructive and gainful pursuits.

Fortunately, most governments have now introduced programmes for fertility reductions. Though realistic broad economic development, leading to a preference for small families cannot be anticipated for ever. Particularly, elements of development are effective in bringing about fertility decline. One is to reduce infant mortality. When parents expect more of their children to survive, they will go in for fewer "insurance births". Another is to distribute economic growth more equitably. Growth alleviates poverty only if the masses participate through increased consumption. But, typically, in developing countries the upper 20 per cent of the population receives about 55 per cent of the national income. The lowest 20 per cent receives only five per cent of the income.

The primary challenge, therefore, is to raise the productivity and thus the income, of the poor. The fertility of subsistence farmers is high. Land reform, water and credit enable such farmers to increase their incomes and thus improve their living standards. This should normally lead to a decline in birth rates. Better education, especially for girls, is another way to attack the problem economically. Studies in Latin America reveal that women who have finished primary school will have about two children less than those who have not. Schooling broadens a woman's opportunities to find a job that may compete with raising a family. High literacy rates in Kerala in India have also contributed to a decline in the rate of population growth.

Schooling also tends to raise the age of marriage, which in turn is one of the best ways to reduce birth rates. Sri Lanka's low rates are related to the fact that the average age for marriage for both men and women is among the highest in the developing world—28 for men and 24 for women. Delayed marriage is also a major aspect of China's birth control policy. In fact, raising the status of women in general contributes a lot to reduce fertility.

The other major approach in addition to economic policies, is an effective family planning programme. A 1976 survey indicates that of approximately 400 million women around the world (excluding the USSR and China) "at risk" of an unwanted pregnancy, two-thirds were not practising contraception.

In countries, where birth rates have gone down, the major cause has been reduction in marital fertility, particularly among women over 30. This is related to a steady growth in the proportion of women who use contraception.

One of the most effective measures to encourage family planning is community incentives, that is, rewarding villages that achieve greatest success. This has proved most effective in Indonesia.

The opposite approach is to penalise parents with large families. Another useful measure in countries where economic growth is limited is the use of paramedics. With most of the people beyond the reach of doctors and formal medical services, large number of paramedics are needed to provide simple health services, including family planning services.

The approaches currently being pursued or proposed to improve family planning services and "beyond family planning" can be summed up as follows:

More and Improved Services: Surveys and experience in Asia and Latin America show that readily available, well-advertised services can, in many cases, boost contraceptive practice rates.

Information and Education: In the long run, population education can change family-size attitudes and help spur contraceptive acceptance.

Restructural Development: The message of the Bucharest World Population Conference is to push those elements of development that appear to be most directly related to lowered fertility: reductions in infant mortality, improvements in women's status, better education and nutrition, and generally more equitable distribution of the benefits of development.

Incentives/Disincentives: Singapore, a pioneer in this approach, has now reduced its fertility to replacement level.

Pressures and Sanctions: Some observers feel that voluntary family planning, even coupled with measurable gains in levels of living, cannot be expected to reduce LDC birth-rates rapidly enough; this may take organized pressure.

Although the emphasis may vary with individual country situations, all of these approaches are and will doubtless be necessary if fertility is to decline to replacement level in the coming two or three decades. Migration to industrial countries has eased population pressure for some small and medium-size developing countries. But international migration on the scale that would be required to make a significant difference for countries the size of India and Pakistan is not possible.

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