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Another Chance for Mrs. Gandhi

M. R. MASANI

I have always thought that Indira Gandhi was a lucky woman. Her luck has certainly been holding out in recent months. If she had been invited in April 1977 to nominate three suicidal maniacs to succeed her in power she could not have done better than she actually has as a result of the activities during the past two and a half years of the three gentlemen at the top of the Janata administration who have been described by Mr. James Cameron, a good friend of India, in the *Guardian* recently as "elderly frauds and personal time servers." I notice that one of these three guilty men has described Mrs. Gandhi's victory as "magic or a miracle." Nothing of the sort. Anyone could have foreseen what was coming, though not the exaggerated swing of the pendulum caused by our crude electoral system. I spoke to your Club in this very room on 16th August 1977. The title of my talk was "Isn't it time for J.P. to speak up?" I warned then about what has happened now. When someone from the audience asked me whether I was not being somewhat hasty in writing off the Janata Government within four months and whether they could not be expected to improve, my answer was that there was not a hope in hell of any such improvement but that on the contrary they would get "worsen and worsen," as the Cockney would put it.

The fact is that since 1935, when I have been watching and fighting Parliamentary elections, it has been my experience that people don't vote for, they vote against. In 1971 they voted against the S.V.D. politicians and therefore for Mrs.

Gandhi. In 1977, they voted against Mrs. Gandhi and Sanjay, and therefore for Janata. Now they voted against the misbehaviour of the Janata leadership and therefore for Mrs. Gandhi. The result therefore is what could and should have been expected.

Yet, in one respect the composition of the new Lok Sabha is different from what it could and should have been. With 42.58% of the votes cast, the Congress (I) has bagged 66.85% of the seats. The electorate certainly wanted Mrs. Gandhi back as Prime Minister, but they are not responsible for the size of her bogus majority in Parliament. That phenomenon we owe to the archaic British electoral system which we have adopted. This system, which is more appropriate for the race course, is described as "first past the post." The result, even in Britain, is that one gets a somewhat exaggerated majority in Parliament which does not reflect the real mind of the people. In India this caricaturing of the minds of the electorate has been even more crude than in Britain. Never since Independence has any party in office ever secured a majority votes of that polled and yet we have had parties in office with a two-thirds majority, as in this case. This is very unscientific and very undemocratic. Let me illustrate this.

To quote an example from Tamil Nad. Congress (I) with 31.3% of the vote got 20 seats; DMK polled 22.2% of the vote and got 16 seats; AAI-IMK polled 24.8% of the seats, i.e., more than DMK, and got only two seats.

Let us take our own city of Bombay. Janata got 5 seats and Congress (I) 1. From this you would think that five times the number of citizens voted for Janata as for Congress (I). Nothing of the sort. Both polled practically the same number of votes. Janata 9,86,840; Congress (I) 9,61,440. Neck to neck. A fairer decision would have been 3 and 3 seats for each.

Finally take Maharashtra. Congress (I) polled 53.30% of the votes cast and won 39 seats in the State out of 48.

If the present Lok Sabha had been elected by some system of Proportional Representation, Mrs. Gandhi would have been faced with a strong opposition to keep her on her toes and to keep her under control. The sooner we change our 18th century electoral system and replace it with a 20th century electoral system of Proportional Representation, the better for Indian democracy.

Based on an Address to the Rotary Club, Bombay, 15 Jan. 1980.

This exaggerated swing of the pendulum which has now been going on for the last three elections has a warning for Mrs. Gandhi. She must realise that she has the support of only less than half the electorate and that the majority of the electorate, who are cruelly under-represented in the Lok Sabha, will be watching her performance somewhat critically.

THE ISSUES.

If I were to be asked what were the issues on which the elections turned, I would quote from an article that I wrote in the **Daily Telegraph** of London on September 4 last year, in which I had said: "The issue in the coming election will not be democracy versus autocracy; it will be the record of the Janata Government and, above all, the level of prices."

Those who tried throughout the campaign to suggest that a vote for the Janata or Lok Dal would be a vote for democracy and that a vote for Congress (I) was a vote for autocracy obviously did not have a clue to the mind of the electorate. Indeed, if their proposition were accepted, it would mean that the people of India have actually voted for autocracy. We all know that this is nonsense. The people of India have voted for a strong and purposive government in place of an inept and useless government. They have voted for the restoration of law and order and of some discipline in our national life, but they certainly expect that this should be done within the boundaries of the Constitution and of democratic processes.

One of the points that Mrs. Gandhi's opponents have consistently failed to understand is that you cannot fight something with nothing. When these same elements, who were later to make up the Janata Party, joined forces against her in January 1971 under the slogan "Indira Hatao", they made this mistake. Once again they have repeated the error this time by their appeals to "Stop Indira." Both these slogans were unwise and self-defeating. They stem from a basic misunderstanding of the nature of the threat that undoubtedly faces our young democracy.

That threat does not come from a **rakshashi** (monster) named Indira Gandhi who has appeared from nowhere and for no good reason. Dictatorships are generally not the result of the wickedness or lust for power of any one particular individual. Strong men and strong women are thrown up as a result of years and years of misgovernment by inept and selfish politicians in a democracy. Hitler emerged as a result of the ineptitude of the Weimer Republic. De Gaulle became President as a result of the failure of the politicians of the Fourth Republic in France. Indira Gandhi is a result of twenty-five years of Indian politicians playing the fool, neglecting the problems of the country and enlarging their egos and their bank balances. The danger to Indian democracy does not come from Indira Gandhi but from the failure of the democratic system and those who have worked it.

This situation is not unique. Walter Lipmann, in his beautiful little book "**The Public Philosophy**," described such a situation many years ago as follows:—

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"If the people find that they must choose whether they will be represented in an assembly which is incompetent to govern or whether they will be governed without being represented there is no doubt at all as to how the issue will be decided. They will choose authority which promises to be paternal (in this case, maternal) in preference to freedom which threatens to be fratricidal. For large communities cannot do without being governed. No ideal of freedom or democracy will long be allowed to stand in the way of their being governed...."

"A SECOND FLING"

The period of competitive lying which has gone on for the past three or four months has now happily ended. The battle in which the main ammunition of all the protagonists was mud has come to an end. So enough about the distasteful past. Let us now turn to the future.

In the *Indian Express* of January 8, 1980, a correspondent quotes a *paanwalla* whom he interviewed in Bombay on the result of the elections. He says that a *paanwalla* gave him a free *paan* in celebration of the event and said: "She deserves another fling." He was right. Mrs. Gandhi is having a second innings at the wicket. Will she play the political game according to the rules of the Constitution or will she again try to cheat as she did in 1975? Will she now turn out to be a patriot and a statesman of the stature of Charles De Gaulle who served France so well or will she listen to bad advice and let the country down once again?

It is right that we should frankly pose those questions. I have known Indira Gandhi from her childhood. I am aware of her good qualities and her weaknesses. I have fought Mrs. Gandhi as an Opposition leader from 1966 to 1970. During the Emergency, I rebelled against her censorship and as Editor of my little journal *Freedom First* I got a judgment of the Bombay High Court striking down the censor's orders. All the same, I would not like to join anyone in the old game. "Give a dog a bad name and hang him." The Indian people have given their verdict and it would be undemocratic and unsporting to claim superior wisdom and think they are wrong.

Mrs. Gandhi takes over at a very difficult time, particularly on the economic front. Hers will not be a bed of roses. If she were to ask me for advice — which she won't — I would list the tasks facing her as follows:—

First and foremost, to restore order and discipline and let there be security for life, person and property. The restoration of order and discipline can be brought about without dictatorship. The law of the land is adequate, provided it is enforced strictly and firmly. Let me give one or two examples.

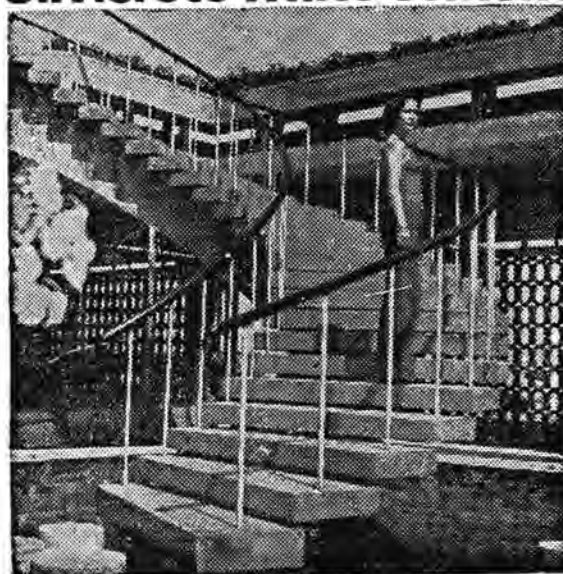
Is it suggested that students who *gherao* and assault Vice-chancellors of Universities cannot be arrested on the spot and sent to jail for criminal assault and grievous hurt? Yet this has not been done.

Is it not true that the law of the land bans illegal strikes and 'go slow,' that leaders of illegal strike can be sent to prison and heavy fines can

be imposed on the Trade Union? Has this been done? Is it not true that all political parties in office have in turn connived at illegal strikes, go slow and assaults on Managers and failed to enforce the law? In other words, Indira Gandhi's first task is to restore discipline but without dictatorship. Secondly, as Mrs. Gandhi herself said a few days ago, the restoration of law and order is linked with the problems of economic policy. Her second task will be to adopt pragmatic policies to deal with our economic problems. She possesses courage which is lacking in other politicians. In fact, when I was in Parliament I used to describe her as "the only man in her party." Will she have the courage to tell the people the harsh truths and facts of life, as that other iron lady, Margaret Thatcher, has been doing in Britain? These basic truths which need to be put to the people are that you cannot consume what you do not produce, i.e., there can be no wage increase or bonus except through harder work and increased productivity.

The basic truth she should put to the people is that you cannot distribute what you have not produced and that there is only one path to social justice and that is the path of increased production. This calls for reduction in taxation which she had brought about during the Emergency in her Budget in 1976 and the dismantling of the apparatus of excessive controls by which the economy is hamstrung and which creates so much corruption, by raising the stakes of office. Will she free the people from the strait-jacket and allow the people to save and to produce by giving them the necessary incentives? All this has been done in Sri Lanka by President J. R. Jayawardene. Why can't it be done in India? President Jayawardene has already given us a slogan by saying: "Yesterday, Sri Lanka, Today India."

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Thirdly, will Mrs. Gandhi avoid the temptation to be vindictive and be magnanimous in victory? In Bernard Shaw's play "Caesar and Cleopatra" there is an interesting incident from which she can learn. After Julius Caesar had won his naval battle against Mark Antony, one of his courtiers came up to him on deck and said: "Caesar, this is a list of your enemies. You can now do with them what you will." Caesar said: "A list of my enemies, did you say?" The courtier repeated his earlier remark. Caesar said: "Throw that list into the sea. From now on I have no enemies. I have only friends."

Can she or will she do these things? I do not know.

I see that my good friend Mr. Bernard Levin has written in the London Times of January 8 in a somewhat pessimistic vein:

"I have no doubt that Mrs. Gandhi will abuse the power she has now been given and that she has never had the slightest intention of refraining from such abuse of it, though I certainly expect her to do it in a manner less gross than she employed last time."

In my view the decent and Gandhian thing to do is to respond to the appeal made by her for popular co-operation and to give her the advice and help that each of us can. If after that she still fails, the responsibility will be hers and not ours.

J. P's Question.

Jayprakash Narayan's name and photograph were shamefully misused by the Janata Party in their election campaign. I am sure that if he had been alive, he would have abstained from these elections. I say this on the basis of several intimate conversations I had with him. I will reveal one of them because it guides us as to the path we should follow. I had visited JP in Patna on his birthday on October 11, 1978. Already I could see clearly that Mrs. Gandhi was going to be India's next Prime Minister. So I tried JP to prepare for what I thought might be a blow. I said: "JP, if you live long enough, I am afraid you will see Mrs. Gandhi as Prime Minister freely elected by the vote of the people. I hope you will not take this personally. It will not be your defeat, but that of the stupid and petty men you have put in office in Delhi."

JP's answer was worthy of the man. He said: "Why should I, Minoo, feel upset if that happens? I have nothing personal against Indira. If the people of India elect her I shall cheerfully accept the verdict. Then he added, "But will she obey the Constitution?". That sixty-four thousand dollar question posed by JP will be answered in the next few months and years. Let us all keep our fingers crossed. ★

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The Experience of Absolutism in Ceylon

A. E. GUNAWARDENA

President : Ceylonese Liberal Party

The 1977 general election in Sri Lanka is an example of the sort of election that arises when the norms of democracy are not adhered to. The election came two years late and strictly was due in 1975 when Parliament was due to wind up, but since the government had a 2/3 majority in parliament and was able to change the constitution it extended parliament, conflicting with the sovereignty of the people.

The question of the validity of extension of parliament was however broached by Mr. J. R. Jayawardena, the leader of the Opposition at the time, by resigning his seat and recontesting it to prove the protest of the people in this respect. But even in that he was obstructed and dissuaded with threat of a ban on recontest of a seat by M.Ps. Though J. R. Jayawardena won his seat it made little impression on Sirima Bandaranayake, the Prime Minister, who did not take it as an expression of lack of confidence in her government.

Those who wished for elections were silent because the new constitution allowed the same parliament to go on till 1977. But in 1975 the United Front government broke up when Dr. N. M. Perera and his Samasamaja party left it, causing reason for resignation and dissolution of parliament.

There were two matters that were enjoying Sirima Bandaranayake's attention as of importance viz., the Non-Aligned summit to be held in Colombo in 1976, and the Trial of the Insurgents. It was about this time that Indira Gandhi also assumed her authoritarian rule in India and almost gave sanctions for similar action in Sri Lanka. The high-handed actions of Sirima Bandaranayake could not be checked or brought into focus without a democratic set-up under the new constitution. The Senate was abolished, the judiciary lost its independence, and no system of free provincial administration prevailed. Whatever local government there was in towns and villages was halted with abolition of local elections and substituted with administration from the Centre.

The two large newspaper groups, the *Lake House* and the *Times* were nationalised or threatened with it, and the *Sun* publications were stopped. Only the party journals kept up any criticism. Democratic freedom was reduced to zero point, and for a country that was developing its democratic institutions since 1931 it was a setback.

The firm manner in which Sirima Bandaranayake put down the insurrection was thus viewed as a brave defence of democracy. But when she failed to maintain democratic norms thereafter by becoming an absolute ruler the sharp swing that took place in 1977 was not surprising. Sirima Bandaranayake was acting constitutionally in her view and had precedent for it in Dudley Senanayak's own action of going through the

full term of office 1965—1970. Though constitutionally correct in both instances, the two leaders were oblivious to people's sovereignty and their right to enjoy good government. Towards 1968, Dudley's government was in a crisis. The Federal Party resigned from the coalition, the rupee was devalued, the District Councils Bill failed, and prices rose and the drastic defeat Dudley suffered in 1970, was therefore not surprising.

The crushing defeats of 1970 and 1977 indicate the strong reliance and confidence people now have in the power of the vote to effect changes of government without *coup d'états*, revolution or insurrection. For a people still living below the poverty line and without proper education, to be broadminded is commendable. The only instance of a real insurrection was in 1971, but it was something abnormal in that it was largely caused by the enfranchisement of the raw teenage youth without mature understanding. The crushing defeat were largely due to the faulty political framework in the country where two parties or two personalities dominated the country since 1960. Many parties existed at the time of Independence, like the Labour Party, Sama Samaja Party, etc., but only the Sinhala Sabha was able to develop into an independent national party to contend with the United National Party that began to function only with Independence.

The Sinhala Sabha which became the Freedom Party with national ideals and aims developed largely because of the personality of S.W.R.D. Bandaranayake and the U.N.P. to a very great extent because of D.S. Senanayake's personality and that of his son who followed him. The two party idea with personalities emphasised made the people loose track of democratic norms that permit opposition criticism, dissent and self-determination without absolute power vested in a single person or political caucus.

A government without a strong opposition or a free press that is critical of it or intelligent opinion expressed about, it could be well-nigh stranded or isolated by losing its moorings. It cannot help but be dictatorial and totalitarian. That makes it difficult for the next government to take over with calm and sobriety. That was the unfortunate experience of J.R.'s government in 1977 and shouldn't be made recurrent.

The absolute power enjoyed by Sirima's government only deluded it into thinking that it should stay on to preside over the Trial of the Insurgents and could give priority to the Non-Aligned Summit over other matters, for prestige and show. Absolute power is inconsistent with democracy and only makes it difficult for democracy to work, and for a new government to be in preparedness for the tasks facing them. Absolutism only leads to further absolutism, and the vicious circle can be broken by not touching it even with a barge pole. ★

NON-ALIGNMENT and COMMUNIST ECONOMY

Rama Swarup

The non-aligned nations of the world would do well to take a long hard look at the mounting failures of Communist China and the Soviet Union. The East-Bloc woes were spelled out in a recent report to the **Wall Street Journal** from Prague, Czechoslovakia. The report warns that the prospect for the future is grim, not only in the satellite states in Eastern Europe, but also in Russia. Inflation, which has been hidden by government subsidies, now is forcing drastic price increases. Industrial production is down because of widespread absenteeism. Energy costs are on the rise as Moscow increases its oil prices to match the prices of the OPEC states. The quality of East European goods deteriorates as the result of outdated industrial plants and production methods. Finally, Communist exporters are finding it more difficult to compete in foreign markets for urgently needed currency.

A prime example of what is happening is the fact that Taiwan and Hongkong have replaced Switzerland as the leading supplier of fine watches to the European Economic Community countries. In 1977, their share of the market rose from 45 percent to 55 percent. All East European

states are feeling the pinch of Moscow's attempts to tie its oil prices to the OPEC level. In 1979, gasoline prices have gone up 37 percent in Poland; 63 percent in Hungary; 84 percent in Romania; and 94 percent in Bulgaria. In the last country listed the price now is equivalent to Rs. 32 per gallon. This gloomy picture is reflected in the 1980 budget just revealed in Moscow. The budget calls for a reduction in Military spending to make possible an 8.8 percent increase in agricultural production and a rise in petroleum production. This year's grain harvest fell to one of the lowest in recent years, requiring a big increase in grain imports, largely from the United States. Oil production for the year is well below the anticipated target of 11.9 million barrels.

Comparable figures from Communist China are not available, but it is established that agricultural production will be lower in 1979, and industrial production will fall far short of the target set last January. All of these grim figures emphasise that Communism cannot compete with the free enterprise system anywhere in the Free World. ★



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Should Political Parties Have Intelligence Units

Attar Chand

The title of this piece may come as a surprise to many, but it stands to reason that the political parties in this country are in need of maintaining their own intelligence units, more so at the present time when party workers tend to cross the floor on considerations of money, power and favours. Former Prime Minister Morarji Desai was a victim of implicit faith in the loyalty of his Party members, several of whom deserted his company on so-called ideological grounds. In reality, they did so for reasons primarily relating to money, power and other interests. Mr. Desai's exit gave rise to destabilisation in the political situation of the country. Defection from one Party to the other under the pretext of new alignments became a fashion.

It would be helpful for our political parties to evolve an internal system whereby they can keep an eye on the activities of their members. Intelligence units could watch the activities of party members, so that moves aimed at sabotage or defection are forestalled and prevented. Lack of Party intelligence resulted in the overthrow of the Janata Government led by Mr. Morarji Desai, who described his downfall as a "stab in the back" by his former colleagues.

It will be advisable if the Party intelligence units maintain comprehensive dossiers on their Party members, so that the room for manoeuvrability and manipulation can be minimised. These dossiers could keep records of the assets of political workers and Party members, both immovable and movable, such as bank balances, sources of income and expenditure by members in relation to their incomes. Regular checks in regard to the financial position of the members would have a desirable impact on corruption, as any inexplicable or sudden increase in the wealth of members could be traced to its sources and proper inferences drawn from such investigation.

An important part of the functioning of such units would obviously be related to the widespread practice of sabotage rampant in the Indian political system. Surveillance by intelligence units would obviate underground activities and attempts at spreading discontent or causing defections among Party members. These units could help in the investigation of the family background of Party members their antecedents and their relatives. Some individuals may have political links with foreign powers. In such cases it is all the more important to carry out full in-

vestigations into the background of the members, as foreign powers could use such links for furthering their own interests in disregard of the interests of the country concerned.

Intelligence on political workers is particularly important when the Party is in power, as members of the ruling Party have several avenues of acquiring undue monetary gains and in some cases extra-constitutional powers. Intelligence could curb the lure of ill-gotten wealth and unhealthy practices, which are at variance with the democratic functioning of the political system. The role of intelligence units in checking the dual membership of the Party members cannot be minimised. Recently, the country was thrown into political turmoil on the question of the dual membership of certain Janata Party members, whose loyalties were divided. Many Janata Party members belonging to the former Jan Sangh, had not broken their ties with the R.S.S., even though they claimed to have severed all links with the parent organisation. That is why they could not work whole-heartedly for the welfare of their Party.

While, on the one hand, it would be useful to maintain vigilance against the undesirable activities of political workers, it is equally important to see that intelligence units do not transgress their jurisdiction and prove a hurdle in the legitimate activities of political workers. ★

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THE BULLDOZER VICTORY

N. C. Zamindar

The 1977 victory has been repeated in reverse gear. The bulldozer seems to be the appropriate symbol for the victorious party. Why did our best analysts and political correspondents fail in coming to a near-correct prediction? It seems to me that false models of analyses are responsible for it. What was the value of the Marxist analysis and of the intermediary caste analysis? All have been blown away by the great Indira wave.

Why is it not seen that the non-Congress parliamentarians failed the electors? It is not that Indira's success is a miracle. It is the consequence of the extremely bad record of our non-Congress parliamentarians. They did not care for the difficulties of the citizens but indulged in mud-slinging. Till the last days before the Elections, negotiations were going on with the Indira Congress. The collapse of all values among the non-Congress leaders presented a disgusting picture before the citizens. I had warned my friends about this ugly situation long before the Elections but they cynically laughed at my warnings.

What, then, are the reasons for Indira's bulldozer victory? The first and foremost reason is her personal charisma. She fully projected her image in the country. She worked like a female Hercules. She toured the country with incredible stamina. The non-Congress circus moved around lethargically. In Indore, the enthusiastic non-Congress workers overplayed their hand. The ugly cartoons, the abuse, the cheap slogan-mongering and the low level of the speeches damaged the non-Congress cause. There was also a false complacency among the workers of this so-called Janata bastion.

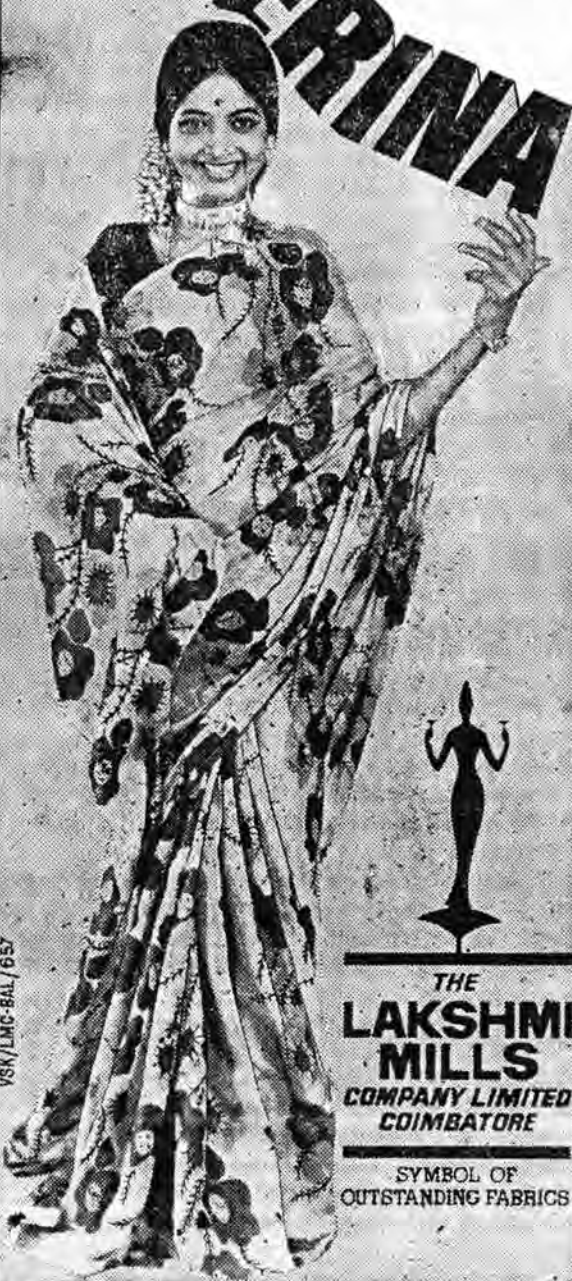
The second reason was widespread discontent in the official administrative machine. The police force added its own dissatisfaction with those in power. I think that this vital factor is responsible for affecting the minds of the mass of illiterate voters. The rural areas had been adversely affected by the overworked land-reform slogans. The lowering of land ceilings in Tamil Nadu created uncertainty in rural Madhya Pradesh.

The third reason is that the non-Congress Ministries created an atmosphere of instability. Daily living conditions approached anarchy. There was not even routine administrative control. There was no realization of the mess created by misguided policies. The fourth reason was the budget of Charan Singh. It sky-rocketed prices and created artificial scarcity. The newspapers cited certain figures but the markets belied them. The fifth reason was the absence of a dialogue between intellectuals and the common people. Ivory tower thinking based on worn-out cliches caused widespread bewilderment. Not a single paper or journal cared to report the facts realistically. What amounted to mere coffee-house reporting misled the majority of its readers. Many reporters tried to gloss over the unpleasant reality. ★

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C. L. Proudfoot

All things change with time, including our value systems. And whilst an older generation's views about many things to-day are critical, criticism is no longer a force for change. It is, therefore, less ulcerating to merely compare and comment than to criticise. To establish my sporting credentials without wishing to appear boastful, I can claim happily to have indulged in a wide range of activities starting with gilli-danda, marbles and tops to handball, kabadi, wrestling, hockey, football, cricket, rugger, boxing, athletics, badminton, tennis, table-tennis, squash, polo on both horses and cycles, shooting, fishing, swimming, sailing and golf. Of all these, hockey was dearest and I twice represented the Indian Army in international matches abroad; and of all these, golf is the only one still actively pursued. I have written about sports, done hockey and soccer commentaries from AIR, Delhi, and once shared the mike with Dicky Rutnagar at Indore when the Pakistan cricketers played Central Zone some time in 1959 or 1960.

The most apt descriptives for our attitude towards sport, I think, were Skill and Joy. From earliest boyhood we consistently strove to improve our skills in whatever sport we took part, and in that skill and in the fierce thrill of competition was a supreme joy. Whilst winning a match was always the primary aim, how the game was played was equally important — the Spirit of Sport truly had meaning for us. Things like arguing with referees and walking off the field were unheard of. What a contrast to the BSF team which recently won a tournament in Delhi after an utterly disgusting display of bad behaviour, bad sportsmanship and arguments with the referee, and was then congratulated at a reception hosted by their Director General, given special awards and promotions and told (*en passant*) that players should obey the referee!

The strangest phenomenon in Indian sport since Independence is the manner in which King Cricket has become a national religion that knows no narrow barriers of caste or creed, age or sex. More Indians read about, listen to and look at cricket than any other single subject; it has become The Great Indian Tamasha, the opiate of the masses. So much so, that now there are two classes of Indians — those who are cricket fans and those who are not. The latter are viewed with pity because of their lack of interest (What, you don't watch the cricket?) whilst they themselves consider cricket maniacs with condescension as morons having nothing better to do.

The impact of television on cricket has brought about a transmutation of both spectators and players into self-conscious actors — at the slightest provocation they leap wildly into air with upraised arms or rush to embrace each other lovingly; simple catches are dramatised with acrobatic rolls, and spectators always have a self-conscious grin or a grimace for the roving eye of the

TV camera. Even Prime Ministers, who never progressed further than the village gilli-danda B Team, suddenly appear in the VIP stands and try to look knowledgeable.

Hockey, that greatest of our national games at one time, is fading away. Press photos of hockey matches unavoidably disclose the desolate emptiness of the stands, which only fill up for semi-finals and finals of big tournaments. This fast-moving game of skill and team-work is dying a slow death. Nurtured from its earliest days in the Anglo-Indian boarding schools, each housing as many as six hundred boarders at a time, hockey was the prime favourite, and provided a steady stream of good players for the Army, Railways, Telegraphs and Customs. Some of the greatest Anglo-Indian hockey wizards of all time put India on top of the world for many years. When these boarding schools were forced to close for economic reasons, the most prolific breeding grounds of natural hockey players became barren; and despite the efforts of enthusiasts in many parts of the country, Indian hockey will never be the same again. Yet, the fact that boarding institutions, which can impose strict training disciplines, are still able to produce good players was proved by a young team from Lucknow which visited Bombay last season and became favourites of this city's discerning hockey fans. Maybe there is still hope.

The lesson is that sportsmen must be caught and trained young; but we are so concerned about scintillating performances of current heroes that we forget the nurseries. One fact that has always intrigued me through the years is the consistent performance of the Anjuman-I-Islam High School in Bombay. From way back in my own schooldays we remember them winning the Inter-School cricket tournaments with unflinching consistency, their nearest rival being Bharda High School. Anjuman is still the leading cricketing school in the country. But what happens to all those gifted young bowlers and batsmen after they leave school? How come they never get to be employed by the great cricketing Banks and Private Companies or find places in the Ranji Trophy and Test teams? Is it because there are too many Cricket Godfathers who put community before skill? An interesting social problem!

So, with these thoughts let me leave you, as I sit alone on a bench in an empty stadium recalling the great days of sport that our generation has been privileged to see; days of Skill and Joy, when we played for the love of the game, played hard and fast and sportingly; winning quietly and losing without bitterness or anger. And as I sit here amongst the flitting shadows of the great sportsmen of the past, I mourn for the Spirit of Sport which is being slowly strangled by professionalism, the ugly politics of personal ambition; by ignorance and tamasha. ★

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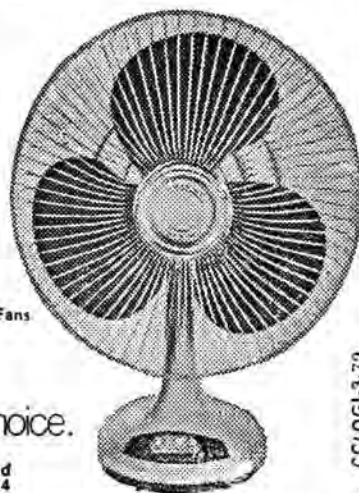
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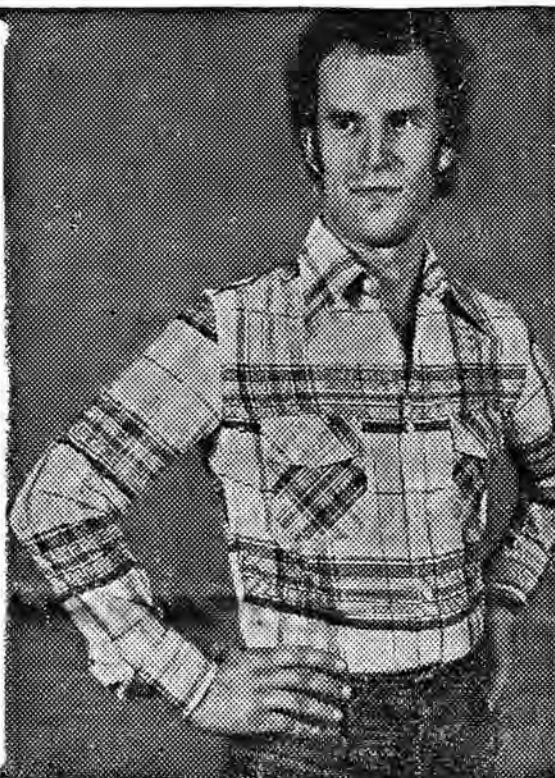
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THE WORLD OF BOOKS

A Political Dissenter's Diary (Volume II); by Dr. (Mrs.) Krishnabai Nimbkar; International Book Service, Poona; pp. 371; Rs. 26.

In his insightful essay, "Isaiah's Job," Albert Nock makes the trenchant observation that "until society seems to be disintegrating around one's ears, not many people are going to listen to a critic who comes in the name of principled action." That this has been true of our society as of any other, is borne out by the painful experience of many thinkers whose incessant efforts have been expended on preaching an unpleasant message to a sceptical and often hostile readership. Dr. Krishnabai Nimbkar, who belongs to this increasingly rare breed of public-spirited individuals, has recently come out with the second volume of her *Diary* which while it carries some disturbing commentary about the erosion of values that has been robbing us of our vitality and purpose, offers a message that should give heart to the weary and frustrated who may be on the verge of relinquishing all hope for freedom.

The present volume, like the earlier one, is a collage of personal writings by the author covering the tempestuous period between 1970 and 1978, which witnessed the most cataclysmic events in our recent history. The objective behind its publication, as the author herself puts it, is to "provide a peep into the course of events as they built up towards the Emergency imposed by Mrs. Gandhi, culminating in what JP called a mini-revolution, which ranged India alongside the democracies with free and open societies, permanently." Although the scenario of things that followed may make it difficult for one to agree with the strong optimistic undertone permeating the author's efforts, the essays are eminently readable for their unmistakable rejection of those insidious proclivities which demand ever-vigilant attempts to conquer.

It is painful to reflect that even before the horrible scars of the Emergency have been erased, an increasing tendency is gaining ground of deliberately ignoring those barbarities whose number is so great and details so fulsome that the sensitivities are soon dulled and the mind numbed by accounts of them. Such an ominous trend may be of little concern to a society that has lost its genuine love of individual freedom, but it represents the meat and marrow of the considerations underlying the very survival of our nascent democracy.

Dr. Nimbkar recognises this only too well when she observes that "under no circumstances can justice be deferred too long, whatever be the status of the wrongdoer." All the same, her subsequent assertion that "Indian polity... has deve-

loped sufficient survival power to decide never again to barter away its freedoms to any dictatorial power" seems overly optimistic, especially in the context of recent events. So, too, her observation that "the temporary aberrations which gripped the nation of six hundred millions have almost been lifted. The big hurdles in the way to the entry of this country into a new era of introspection, reasoning, sanity, non-violence and constructive activity, have been removed." It is little consolation to reassure ourselves that "the thirst for individual freedom is an ingrained force in human nature which cannot be permanently destroyed."

The author is on firm ground when she categorically denounces the mischief perpetrated by the unconscionable amendments to the Constitution, culminating in the near-total eclipse of all those cherished values which our Founding Fathers so painstakingly sought to preserve for generations unborn. Referring to the ominous 24th Amendment Bill, Dr. Nimbkar passionately pleads for concerted action against its monstrous onslaught. "Are we so blind that we cannot see that the safety of all of us lies in our fundamental rights and are we so apathetic that we are not willing to fight in order to defend them?" she asks in a particularly forceful appeal addressed to fellow-citizens. Perhaps the "failure" of our Constitution, to which our wily politicians so frequently allude, has a fitting reply from John Adams whose observation about the American Constitution has an imperative relevance in the Indian context. "Our Constitution was made only for a moral and religious people. It is wholly inadequate to the government of any other."

Dr. Nimbkar has rendered a signal service to the cause of freedom in this country by her unequivocal condemnation of the creeping menace of communism which, woefully enough, continues to constitute one of the greatest threats to the very survival of our open society. Unfortunately, a body of misconceptions and myths has been assiduously put into circulation by interested parties to diminish the potential fruitfulness of efforts at exposing the dangers inherent in the subtle indoctrination of the masses by socialist propaganda. Dr. Nimbkar's insight is remarkable and her views deserve to be quoted:

"Often, we hear some intellectuals voicing a smug belief that as far as India is concerned, communism can never take deep root and to fear it is to raise a non-existent bogey. Repeated expressions of such belief make it sound almost a platitude. But such blind spots will surely disappear when one is witness to the persistency

The World of Books

with which the communist parties are assiduously applying themselves to the task of a nationwide build up of a network of organised proletarian power. One cannot shut one's eyes to the objectives before this power, which in the ultimate analysis, is to rule this country under the dictatorship of the proletariat."

Even in the present Indian context, it is not unthinkingly alarmist to examine the hazards that the advent of our peculiar brand of socialism entails. In a country where a vast majority of the people are victims of an unbalanced exposure to radical propaganda, the threat to basic human freedoms can never be overestimated. As one committed liberterian, Dr. Clarence B. Carsen, explains: "There is no place in socialist ideology for liberties to be natural rights; their only theoretical justification is utilitarian. Utility is a slippery concept at best, and where the common good is arbiter of utility, utility is whatever those who have the power to determine it say it is." History has demonstrated, time and again, that man's freedom is in inverse proportion to government rule, for man is only free when government is controlled.

A substantial portion of the volume under review is devoted to an unpleasant controversy that arose between the author and the "Citizens for Democracy" of which she was an active worker. The correspondence on the subject covers more than two-score pages which, one might be inclined to feel, could have been put to better purpose. All said and done, the book is readable, notwithstanding an apparent shoddiness in print and production. ★

K. S. VENKATESWARAN

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DYNAMIC PERSONNEL ADMINISTRATION: MANAGEMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES by Prof. M. N. Rudrabasavaraj, Himalaya Publishing House, Second Edition — September 1979. Rs. 70. The administration of human resources in industry is not restricted to the attaining of efficiency but also to providing a correct image of corporate bodies in society. The task acquires special significance in a country like ours with its wide range of religious, social, linguistic and geographical influence, a large population but scarce "Quality Human Resources." The author has appreciated such factors while describing various personnel techniques. This volume will be a ready reference for students desirous of specialising in this area of management; practitioners (whether Corporate Managers or Consultants), government administrators dealing with labour problems, and faculty members or researchers in the field of Human Resources Management (HRM).

The book has been divided into four parts. The first deals with the concept; the second covers such areas as man-power planning, objective selection, development of human resources, employee morale, employee benefits and wage — salary administration. Part three is concerned with what is commonly known as the industrial relations of Personnel Management. Here employee discipline, grievance redressal systems, labour legislation and Union-Management relations are discussed.

Before we refer to part four of the book, some reference to the first three parts may be necessary to do justice to the studious analysis in them. The central thesis is the emphasis on the dynamic nature of personnel administration by highlighting its scope, range, nature, principles, functions and philosophy. It helps the readers in appreciating the various concepts of personnel administration from savagery followed by slavery, servitude, welfare and paternalism to modern ideas of participation, trusteeship and statesmanship.

Thus the reader is prepared by the author to read the fourth part of the book, viz. — "Management of Human Resources — Recent Trends." In this the author deals with areas which he terms "futuristic." In the sixth chapter of this part not only does he analyse the new trends viz. HRM education and Computer application in HRM, but also the role of management generally and of personnel administration in particular in promoting the human health of organisations and the economic growth of the nation. Professionalism in the field personnel administration has been given its due importance by the author.

The message that the author seeks to convey is that in the administration of human resources, one cannot follow the "Beaten-Track Policy" but that there is need for creativity.

One area that has not been dealt with relates to Union-Management Relations. It would have been interesting to read the author's analysis of the reasons for labour unrest taking an ugly turn in our recent past. Or is it that the author has not ventured to touch this sensitive theme in view of his belief that this trend would vanish if the measures discussed in his book are effectively implemented? ★

B. H. PATANKAR

THE WORLD OF BOOKS

REPORTERS' ETHICS

By Bruce M. Swain, Hindustan Publishing Corporation, 1978 (Iowa State University Press), 153 pp., Rs. 25)

Over the years, a cult has been built up around the press — its powers and functions, as well as around the individuals carrying out these duties. This is especially apparent in America, where the journalist has emerged as something of a popular hero. Established professionals such as Walter Cronkite, the anchorman for the CBS network, not only "reads" the news (as we think of it with our AIR background), but infuses a special Cronkite flavour to the entire proceedings. When he concludes his broadcast with his usual line, "That's the way it was on January 16, 1980," one can bet that for the majority of viewers, that's the way they are going to think it was.

Even award winning entertainment programmes on television, such as "Lou Grant," the tough non-compromising pro who cares nevertheless perpetuate the growing cult of the super-journalist who not only "reports objectively" what he has seen or heard, but who is expected to do something about his subject matter — whether it is solving a crime story that has baffled the police, or paving the way for Sadat's visit to Jerusalem.

The American Society of Newspaper Editors outlines in a slightly unnerving "Statement of Principles" a code of ethics for reporters. "The American press was made free not just to inform or just to serve as a forum for debate but also to bring an independent scrutiny to bear on the forces of power in the society, including the conduct of official power at all levels of government."

Under this heavy burden, a few journalist backs are bound to break, or at least twist into some distortions of abstract axioms.

Bruce Swain's **Reporters' Ethics** is a useful introduction to various aspects of the reporter's bind, and explores the concept of objectivity versus conflict of interests, personal philosophy and beliefs, political bias, bribes, glamour, libel suits, irate power figures, and interfering editors. The best down-to-earth comments on some of these mind-boggling problems come from reporters themselves. On the basic question of the journalist's duty "to serve the truth," Edward J. Epstein says that we might all be better served if reporters admitted that because of inescapable limitations, "they are merely circulators of partial information and not establishers of truth." Among the limitations he points to are the dependence of reporters on self-interested and often unidentified news sources, inability to compel testimony, deadlines, and limited budgets.

Walter Lippmann, another eminent journalist, says that since reporters must deal with an "incredible medley of fact, propaganda, rumour, suspicion, clues, hopes, and fears," one has to be grateful that a reporter's story contains as much of the truth as it does.

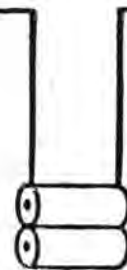
When studying a complex question on different levels, it is easy to get lost in the finer points

of some issue or the other. **Reporters' Ethics** deals with a wide spectrum of problems, opinions, and specific cases. The communications student or the general reader will certainly get a good idea of the various problems confronting a reporter in the course of his work. What could be made a little clearer, perhaps, is what the very basic questions are: is there really such a thing as objectivity in reporting, or is ideal objectivity merely well-presented subjectivity which gives the opposite viewpoint some equal time?

It has often been argued that the very selection of facts and details, the choice of stories to be covered, and the emphasis on certain aspects of an issue reflects the world-view of the reporter or sometimes the paper he works for. A clear understanding of this inevitability, and its implications on a major source of day-to-day information — the newspaper — may take some of the pressure off the average reporter to be a super-human channel of truth for the public. It may be easier for him to reconcile himself to his not being a Woodward or Bernstein of Watergate fame, if his readers' expectations of and dependence on him, are a little more realistic.

Reading Swain's work, one realises the need to draw a clearer line between the myth and the reality of the powers and duties of journalism. The American comic strip "Superman" makes a neat comment on the link between myth and reality in the form of its hero — part-time journalist and part-time superman. Unfortunately, real life reporters do not have Clark Kent's good fortune — a Superman lurking within him, who emerges at the right time, and who works out (roughly, if there is a need for violence) the reconciliation of contradictions in the practice of day-to-day journalism. ★

GITHA HARIHARAN



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AFGHANISTAN

Nissim Ezekiel

All arguments justifying the Soviet Union's invasion of Afghanistan are merely sophistry. They demonstrate once again the capacity of human beings to support evil when it does not directly affect the supporters themselves. None except traitors to their own country will accept the presence of foreign troops in full control of their own Government, whatever its character. There is never any doubt about the role of foreign troops, when needed, in an independent nation. It is to support the national defence forces and to be subordinate to them. They are not expected to be instruments of another government for replacing the local authority, even should its legitimacy be in question.

If these premises are granted, it is obvious that the Soviet action in Afghanistan is and cannot be called anything other than aggression. The only valid questions to raise are about how to liberate the country that has lost the freedom to make its own destiny. To say this is not to express any approval of the Government that has been overthrown. It is not to defend the kind of society that prevailed in the old order. It is not to offer any apologia for activities of other foreign powers or of any particular dissident group. The methods used by such groups or by the other foreign powers are not necessarily beyond criticism. What is important is to insist clearly and loudly that influence is not conquest, that conquest is what it is, even if by "invitation" or because of some real or alleged "provocation."

The response by super-powers and their allies may be debated, and negotiations help to bring out all the implications, risks and dangers of any proposed course of action. For example, India may have doubts about the consequences of arming Pakistan or of any association between the U.S.A. and China to prevent further Soviet expansion in the Middle East. There is no reason for taking the line that any action against a blatantly clear-cut violation of one country's national sovereignty by another should be discouraged on any ground. It is suggested by some that reaction to the Soviet aggression, will only provoke them further, that it will "escalate" the conflict, that it will increase "tension," that it will reopen or intensify the "cold war." All these arguments are based on false assumption.

It is the aggressor who thrives on these assumptions, and they demoralise its opponents. The aggressor exercises the right to engage in hot war and describes even a mere resolution against it as a "cold war," to be highly deplored! It creates the conditions for international tension and then characterises criticism of those conditions as increasing tension. It carries out its own nefarious purposes by force and warns opponents of it that to resist is to make matters worse. The Soviet Union enjoys the dubious privilege of not only enforcing its will wherever it can by its might, but counts upon innumerable voices to

back it up, with logical and illogical subtleties. An apparently logical line is that counter-attack on the scale that matters may indeed get out of control, and those who plan it have the responsibility to prevent such a result. Similarly, some governments with little or no moral authority, and others which are ideologically closer to the aggressor, even if they have quarrelled and therefore in a state of confrontation, may have to be used as allies. But what if there is no single effective mode of defeating the aggressor which can be regarded as free from self contradiction and impure motives? Is there, then, nothing to do but pass resolutions or to abstain even from voting in their favour, as India abstained in the United Nations?

A number of suggestions have been made to create a climate of opinion against the Soviet move in Afghanistan. Most of them at least have the merit of making some moral gesture, the meaning of which is not ambiguous. It has been widely pointed out, to take one possible case, that boycott of the "Moscow Olympics" is a weighty proposition. If at least half of the nation were absent at the Olympics, this fact could not be hidden from the Russian people. All the indoctrination in the world and all the most vigorous control of mass media that can be imagined would not prevent millions of Russians from suspecting that their government's presence in Afghanistan's seats of power was responsible for the boycott.

It is true that when issues concerning politics and sports impinge on one another it becomes difficult to take up a consistent position. Those who have opposed the boycott point to the skeletons in the cupboards of the nation that champion boycott of the Moscow Olympics. The African nations have their own special feelings in this context. Well informed students of politics will, no doubt, cite many instances where sports events would have been ruined by political differences. All the same, relying only on the facts of the present situation created by the Soviet Union, I am inclined to be on the side of those who would like to see the Moscow Olympics reduced to a farce.

It cannot make the Russians withdraw from Afghanistan. It cannot reduce the rigours of communist tyranny. It cannot change life for the people of Eastern Europe. But it is a thousand times better than accepting the Russian presence in Afghanistan as a *fait accompli* about which nothing need be done, or the political stances that find fault equally with all the forces involved therefore preferring apparent neutrality. It is of course not neutrality at all. It is acquiescence in aggression.

Another proposal is that all countries which have treaties of friendship with the Soviet Union, should seek to revise them, to the extent they are in a position to do so. India has such a treaty and it can be changed so that the Russians will never be able to invoke any of its terms for the

purpose of supporting an Indian government with its armed forces. We Indians will feel very different about the Russian troops in Afghanistan or in the countries of Eastern Europe if we envisage the possibility, which we should, of their patrolling the streets of New Delhi. It is unlikely that we will then be impressed by stories about how the Russians came to our rescue, or how reassuring that they will depart when no longer "needed". Only those who have totally swallowed communist theory and practice will remain true believers in that situation. The rest will know that they have lost the independence which they gained in 1947.

A third proposal is that India and Pakistan should come together for the purpose of discouraging further moves by the Soviet Union towards the Indian borders. The problems involved in such a reapproachment need not be described here, as they are well known. It is still possible for a change of approach on both sides, and in relation to the U.S.A., which could at least open the possibility for co-operation in defence. It is unthinkable that the two countries should remain in opposition to each other even when the independence of both is threatened. American

military Aid to Pakistan could be balanced by similar aid to India, as many commentators have suggested. As a deterrent, it may not be decisive, but as one of a series of strategic steps it obviously has its value.

If direct intervention in Afghanistan is ruled out, and if even gestures expressing disapproval against the Soviet action are not seriously considered, then it follows that all the advantages are to be left in the hands of the aggressor. Surely international public opinion is not so impotent as that would imply. Total Indian passivity in relation to the violation of Afghanistan's sovereignty would encourage supporters of communism as a system. It would encourage all those individuals, groups and institutions that do not take democracy very seriously, except in its external forms. It will encourage the party in power to seek all kinds of authoritarian instruments for maintaining its rule. It will demoralize real and potential resistance to anti-democratic tendencies in governmental and non-governmental bureaucracies. Afghanistan is not merely a country that has been invaded. It is a symbol of political and human depravity. ★

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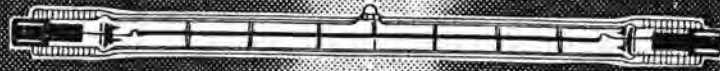
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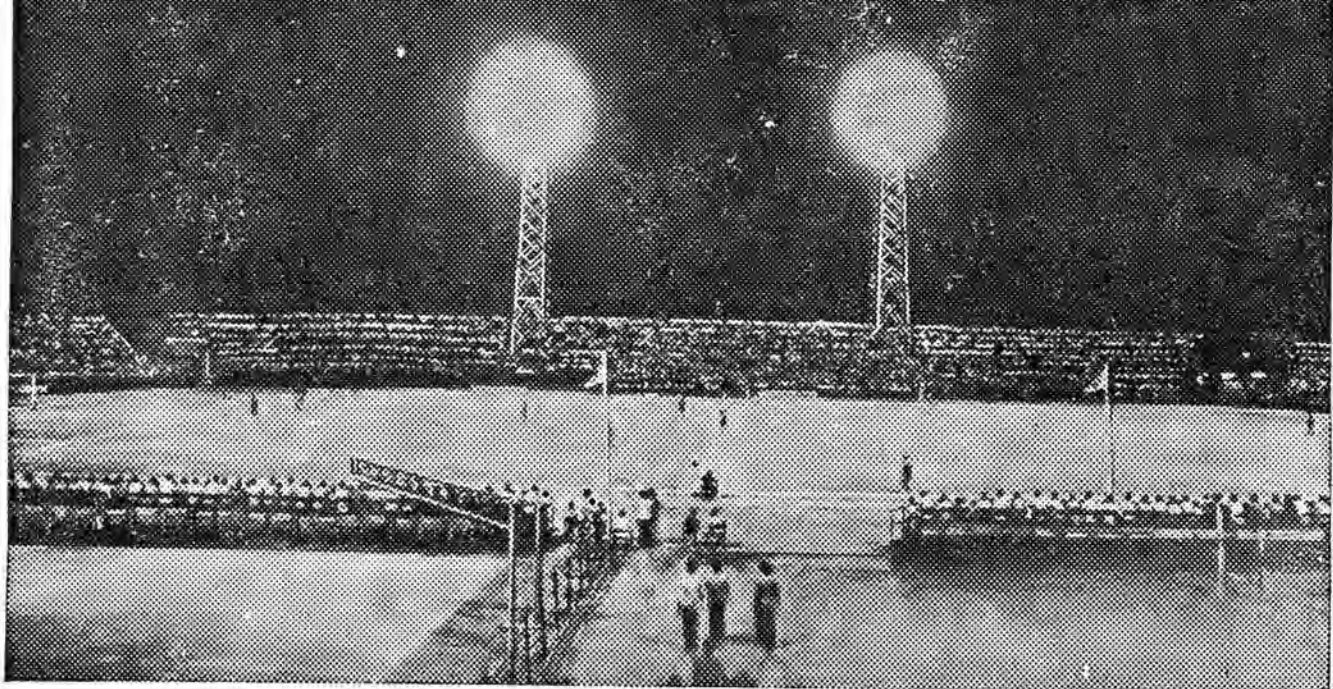
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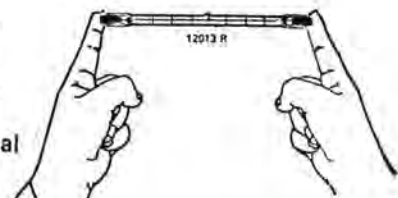
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