

Founder : M. R. MASANI

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Alignments of the non-aligned

NISSIM EZEKIEL

The crucial questions about non-alignment tend to be overlooked in comments on topical policy statements and events. The viewpoint of analysis is necessarily partisan; when wholly objective, it is innocuous.

If you side with the Soviet Union, you resist open or implied criticism of it. Leaning towards the West, and in favour of opposing communist expansionism, you wish all Western political and military moves to be condoned or ignored. The ideal judgement weighs both forces of the main conflict in some mythical balance, and demands equal praise or blame for them in the alleged interests of peace.

In my view, all these are exercises in futility. To condemn the recent Conference and the Delhi Declaration, on the ground that several of the participants and signatories are not non-aligned at all, is not very useful. To celebrate gleefully that part of the declaration which is described as "a forceful blow to Soviet and Vietnamese aggressive acts" (China's Xinhua News Agency) is merely to perform a ritual in big-power rivalry. China, after all, is a dubious champion of non-alignment.

The Opposition in India did not cover itself with glory when it had the opportunities to increase India's moral stature in the eyes of the world. Even when it is clearly right on specific issues, such as Kampuchea and Afghanistan, its general stand is not clear and positive enough to suggest an alternative.

Western comment, similarly, has an overwhelming case when it points a finger at the contradiction, double-talk and selective moralism at the Conference. It is divided when it comes to reassurance as regards its own will in facing the present crisis.

The compromises embodied in the Delhi Declaration, to accommodate the differing views of ninety-six nations, are forgivable in the circumstances. Less so are the confusions of value, principle, self-interest and long-term perspective. Very little was said about freedom, for example, as if a peaceful world without it is as acceptable to the non-aligned nations as one with it.

This is, in fact, true about many of these nations. They talk almost exclusively in terms of power and power-relationships. Whether pro-Western or pro-Communist, they are not interested in the protection and advancement of human rights. Pakistan is an example of the former, Cuba of the latter. Not only is their non-alignment suspect, their relationship to their own citizens is highly unsatisfactory.

Hence the collapse of any moral significance that non-alignment is supposed to generate. Its representatives are such poor exemplars of democratic theory and practice. No wonder they argue whether or not to characterise Afghanistan under Soviet rule as a democratic republic!

India struggled hard to prevent, or at least to reduce to the minimum, criticism of the Soviet Union in its relationship with the rest of the world. Whether you call it alignment or non-alignment, it is hardly moral principle at work. The price of securing a final accord at the Conference was paid only in words and phrases, to give the appearance of harmony.

Non-alignment as an international movement can still be valuable and indispensable if it asserts and reasserts the values of democracy and freedom. It should not confine itself to discussions in periodical conferences on the line to take about the course of events over which it has no influence whatsoever. In that role it can, at best, provide comfort, or, alternatively, make a minor nuisance of itself in the eyes of this or that power.

At present, ASEAN has greater credibility in the political forums of the world than the non-aligned nations. ASEAN had the good sense to withhold recognition of the Heng Samrin regime because it is so notably a puppet of Vietnam. How could India, one of the leaders of the non-aligned movement, accept the Vietnamese invasion of Kampuchea in December '78 and continue to this day supporting the presence of Vietnamese troops in that country? Is India unaware of the fact that over a million citizens of Kampuchea are now refugees in Thailand?

As for Afghanistan, India's attempts to make the Conference share its myopic attitudes to the Soviet occupation were pathetic and undignified. It should have taken a simple, straightforward line, which would have won it the respect of the whole international democratic community.

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL ANNUAL REPORT

K. S. VENKATESWARAN

IT is a measure of the ever-increasing scale of brutality and repression practised by governments all over the world that the annual reports of Amnesty International continue to grow more voluminous each year. The latest, covering the 12 months between May 1979 and April 1980, is a 408-page assessment of the human rights situation in over a hundred countries. It is based on extensive research by the network's London-based International Secretariat.

In this period, "almost half the countries of the world were believed to be holding people in prison because of their political or religious beliefs... Many of these prisoners were detained without charge or trial, and tortured. Others were executed after unfair trial or assassinated by 'death squads'." The country-by-country survey cataloguing the more pernicious practices, makes sad reading.

Although Amnesty International continues to stick steadfastly to its refusal to rank governments or countries or to single out any regime or group of regimes as the worst human rights offenders, it is clear that the most flagrant violations occur in the totalitarian states, vigorous semantic propaganda notwithstanding. It is hardly a coincidence that many, if not most, of these regimes are more or less leftist.

As in the previous years, the Soviet Union continued to feature prominently in the list of Amnesty's prime concerns, and not without reason. "The year was characterised by a marked increase in the number of dissenters arrested, put on trial and sentenced to imprisonment." Although many of those arrested were explicitly charged with political offences such as 'anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda', a large number of others faced criminal charges, such as 'resisting the police', 'hooliganism' and even 'attempted rape', which AI believes to have been without foundation. Moreover, trials of dissenters continued to be marked by frequent violations of internationally accepted standards for fair trial.

That the systematic persecution of "Helsinki monitors" in the USSR continues unabated, is a telling commentary on the scant respect shown by the Soviet authorities for the Final Act of the Helsinki Conference to which the country is a signatory. Apart from the harassment, exile and persistent humiliation of Andrei Sakharov, which, predictably, received wide publicity in the world media, the incarceration of a 51-year-old economist, Edward Arutunyan, along with three other monitors belonging to the Ukrainian group and their being charged with "anti-Soviet slander", is sufficiently illustrative of Soviet attitudes towards the discharge of obligations under international law.

Three countries which have virtually monopolised recent debates on international affairs—Iran, Afghanis-

tan and Poland—have not escaped the scrutiny of Amnesty International. In Iran, "the main concerns of Amnesty International during the year were the holding of the prisoners of conscience, lack of fair trials and executions." Besides decrying the spate of summary death sentences passed on members of the previous regime, Amnesty reiterated the conclusion in its earlier Report on Iran (submitted to Ayatollah Khomeini on 9 January 1980) that "the guarantees necessary for a fair trial are effectively lacking in cases heard by the Islamic Revolutionary Tribunals." What is worse, "sentences of death and flogging had been imposed even when they were not required by Islamic law..."

Much the same criticism applied to Poland, where the period under review saw an intensification of repressive measures against human rights activists. "Instances of police brutality have been reported and conditions of detention... give cause for serious concern," notes the Report. Citing the case of a retired metal worker, Edmund Zdrozinski, who was arrested and later convicted on a number of minor charges, Amnesty International avers that certain aspects of the Polish judicial system are open to abuse.

As for Afghanistan, much of the comments and criticism in the Report relate to gross violation of human rights by the previous regimes of Presidents Taraki and Hafizullah Amin, which the Soviet-installed government of Babrak Karmal promised (sic) to reverse. It is a pity, of course, that the Report contains no comments on the more outrageous practices followed by the Karmal regime, including the alleged resort to chemical warfare for combating nationalist opposition to the Soviet invasion. A passing reference explains that "...human rights concerns of a more general nature, such as those relating to armed conflict,... fall within the mandate of other international organisations such as the International Committee of the Red Cross and bodies of the United Nations."

The Indian Scene

Civil libertarians and critics of the National Security Act in India can take heart from Amnesty International's unequivocal support to their cause. An *aide memoire* sent to Mrs. Gandhi in April 1980 underscored the fact that "in the experience of Amnesty International, preventive detention legislation introduced in India in the past for limited offences only, had in due course been used to detain peaceful opponents of the government."

The other concerns of Amnesty in India included the persistence of serious police brutality and the incarceration of several political prisoners without trial for long periods. The *aide memoire* also recalled the Supreme Court's ruling in *Sunil Batra's Case* urging the effective implementation of The Code of Conduct for Law Enforcement Officers and the U.N. Declaration on the Protection of All Persons from Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, following reports of torture being practised in New Delhi's notorious Tihar Jail.

Understandably enough, the outrages perpetrated in Bhagalpur and elsewhere do not find a place in the

Report under review (these being events of too recent occurrence), as also the Supreme Court's momentous judgment upholding capital punishment (which, incidentally, was delivered just over a week later than the cut-off date for the present Report). To be sure, the next AI Annual Report can be expected to contain a caustic commentary on these issues of seminal importance, falling as they do directly within the mandate of the Nobel Prize-winning organisation.

Soviet Designs On Pak, Iran And The Islamic World

J. G. TIWARI

The official Soviet version of *The Truth About Afghanistan*, a Novosti publication, sheds light on Soviet designs in relation to Pakistan and Iran.

Soviet animosity toward Pakistan stems from their belief that "Pakistan has been turned into a stronghold against liberation struggle of the people of the area (middle east), their allies and socialist states". The General Staff of the Pakistan armed forces is accused of setting up a single military organisation of Afghan reaction in order to topple the Soviet puppet government at Kabul. The document continues in this vein and states that Americans are turning Pakistan into a hotbed of tension, and a bridgehead for further escalation of aggression against Afghanistan.

Then follows a warning that Pakistan's independence would be in danger if it continues opposing Soviet aggression in Afghanistan. The document says: "If Pakistan continues to follow the same route, it will gain nothing but will undermine its position as an independent state. It is in its interest to consolidate its independence and maintain good and friendly relations with all neighbourly states."

The obvious implication is that if Pakistan continues objecting to Soviet military presence in Afghanistan, Soviet armies would march into its territory.

The document contains a number of statements underlining Soviet eagerness to alter the Pak-Afghan border to the advantage of Afghanistan. The concern for such an alteration dates from the early fifties when the dispute between Afghanistan and Pakistan began over the Pushtun issue. It reminds readers that the Soviet Union was the first to endorse the Afghan demand for solving the Pushtun issue. It further declares that Moscow continues to endorse the just demands of the Afghan people.

The document publishes, obviously with official approval, the statement of the Pushtun leader Ajmal Khatak, on August 31, 1980, the Pushtun day, in which he calls upon "the Pushtuns and Baluchis to direct your path toward struggle for republic". In the statement Khatak assures the Baluchis and the Pushtuns that the Soviets are their "brothers and comrades" who have declared their "full solidarity with the demand of Baluchis and Pushtuns".

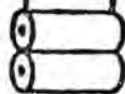
Soviet support to Baluchi and Pushtun irredentism is indicated unequivocally in the following lines:

"Moreover the Soviet Union always looks with sympathy on the national aspiration of minorities, such as for example Baluchis who are oppressed and denied the right to preserve their identities by imperialist and reactionary elements."

The reason given for this support is justified on the ground that the Indo-Afghan border, since it divides prominent ethnic groups, is a cause of instability in the region. Its redemarcation would enhance the stability and integrity of Afghanistan. In other words, the annexation to Afghanistan of the Pushtun area of Pakistan is necessary for enhancing the former's stability. This implies that acting as a Soviet surrogate, Afghanistan would be justified in attacking Pakistan at any time.

The document repeatedly indicates that Pakistan is an eye-sore for the Soviets. Zia-ul-Haq and his supporters are called thugs, and his government is accused of causing internal instability and profound discontent by its repression of political opponents. This is a clear incitement of Bhutto's supporters to work against their government.

The ruling circles of Iran are condemned by the Soviets for their assistance to Afghan rebels. They are charged with establishing training centres for Afghan insurgents and conspiracy to topple the Kabul government. The Iran Government is warned that "the culmination of Iran's hostile attitude toward the democratic republic of Afghanistan and the Soviet Union serves only the interests of imperialists and reactionary forces backed by U.S. and Pakistan. Those



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who support such policies must bear the full responsibility for the serious consequences of their action."

The Soviet Union threatens to punish Iran not only for supporting Afghan rebels but also for other anti-Soviet acts. One of these is criticism of the Soviet Union, alleged to be a progressive country, a friend of Islam and of the enslaved nations. Another instance of such anti-Soviet acts is the repression of Iranian communists by religious "fanatics". Iranian leaders, Khomeini and his followers, must correct their perception of the Soviet Union and consider it a progressive country, or dangerous consequences would follow. Khomeini and other leaders of the Islamic Revolution are labelled fanatics, reactionaries and obscurantists.

To topple the present Government of Iran, the Soviets not only support the Tudeh but carry on vehement propaganda against Iran's Islamic revolution and their leaders, from a radio station based in their own territory, called the National Voice of Iran. This radio station accuses the present government of Iran of exporting the revolution to Soviet territories, of ruining the economy of the country, and calls upon it to act according to the advice of Iranian Communists. Otherwise the people of Iran would not stop short of punishing even the tallest of Iran's leaders. For instance, examine the following broadcast:

"Our Islamic republic is bankrupt. Agriculture has been ruined and chaos rules in all national affairs. Those who call for exporting revolution would do better to turn attention to serious problems confronting our nation before it is too late. Specific steps to improve our domestic situation have been outlined by progressive elements. Instead of following their advice, pseudo-revolutionary forces are attacking progressive forces in Iran and abroad. They will be called upon to answer to the people, regardless of their position"

Obviously, Khomeini is told to follow the leadership of Iranian communists, and cultivate friendly relations with them as well as with the Soviet Union. A communist coup would otherwise punish him, regardless of his status.

Khomeini is considered to be a counter-revolutionary element who is complicating the Iranian situation by repressing left and communist forces.

Izvestia perceives the Government of Iran as follows:

"The hegemonic aspirations of certain circles in Iran, their chauvanistic policy with respect of numerous national minorities within Iran, the lapses towards a position of shameless anti-Sovietism are direct threats to proletarian solidarity. They encourage national hostility and alienation between the people of different nationalities."

Amusingly enough, the document implicitly makes mention of the person who would lead a Soviet-backed coup in Teheran. He is Zafar Peshavari who led in 1921 the Soviet-backed Gilan Soviet Republic in Northern Iran. Zafar was a communist hero in those days who fell into infamy because of his wrong policies which led to the collapse of the Gilan republic. Obviously the document attempts to rehabilitate a communist hero to provide leadership for a planned Soviet-backed Communist coup in Teheran.

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DILEMMAS OF LIBERTY

By C. RAJU

It is possible for liberty and good Government to go together. Liberty is often in a dilemma between the strong man's craving for power and the poor man's craving for the basic necessities of life. It implies careful thought and discriminating choice. Liberty always carries with it, responsibility and restraint, either self-imposed or imposed by a benevolent State.

The fundamental threat to liberty is the power to coerce. This power may lie in the hands of a dictator or in the representatives of our electorate, who often merely fawn before a dictator for offices of eminence. Such a dictator often moves in the garb of a Socialist, distributing platitudes to the hungry and needy. The preservation of liberty requires the elimination of concentration of power, be it in the hands of one individual or a group of individuals, who in the name of Democracy are concerned with amassing fortunes for themselves and their progeny.

One of the great bulwarks of liberty is the competitive private enterprise system. When this system gets eroded or is gradually replaced by public enterprises, the power of the State increases. When it controls directly or indirectly the greater part of the available resources, there is danger of dictatorship in one form or other. It is a popular belief among some socialists that in a democracy, the state is controlled by the electorate and that a free press ensures the liberty of the people. This is a dangerous half-truth.

The control exercised by the electorate over the activities of the State is limited in many ways. Its control of details is non-existent and often ineffectual. The political parties base their election slogans on bread and butter issues or "*Garibi Hatao*". Once they are in power, these issues are forgotten, and there is usually a wrangle for personal power or dominance of one group over another. Thus during the brief tenure of a political party, the common man's needs are forgotten, corruption grows within corruption, sub-committees flourish under committees, and commissions are formed only to gain time or to throw dust in the eyes of a patient electorate.

One of the economists who through his writings has made a fervent plea for the arrest of the growing encroachment of the power of the State is Milton Friedman. In his *Capitalism and Freedom*, he says: "The kind of economic organisation that provides economic freedom directly, namely, competitive capitalism, also promotes political freedom because it separates economic power from political power and in this way enables the one to offset the other."

The need of the hour seems to be decentralised private enterprise and competitive markets. These are

more congenial for the exercise of effective economic and political freedom than concentration of economic power in public enterprises or in the State. The size of public sector under-takings has been growing enormously. Also, thanks to our income-tax system the Government is able to go on increasing its expenditure with impunity.

We as a nation do not seem to have a passion for equality. We are docile and rarely impatient with privilege or authority. One reason for this is possibly our attachment and devotion to the theory of Karma, or the fact that we have a high percentage of illiteracy. There can be and there has been curtailment of individual liberty due to repressive legislation. It can become benevolent when it prevents or controls air, water, and soil pollution arising from industrial processes, (in particular, pollution of the air in metropolitan regions), with the dumping of sewage in estuaries and oil on the high seas, and with the use of pesticides and chemical fertilisers.

The growth of national monopolies has enabled both capital and labour to conspire against the public by raising production costs. Corporations whether national or multinational are growing bigger every day. They are much larger than those a decade ago. They have the power to influence voters and the Government to support policies favourable to them. They know how to buy up advertising space. They have highly organised lobbies and openly bribe journalists, labour leaders and public servants to gain their ends.

Workers in all occupations have become hypersensitive to their pay structure and clamour for increased D.A., even if there is a fall in real earnings, even when for economic reasons, a slight decline is unavoidable. "More pay, more D.A., and little or no work in a day" has become their motto. This is a phenomenon without parallel. Labour is becoming increasingly aware of its collective power to inflict injury on its industry, which in turn has no option but to concede the demands of labour, and this in turn gives rise to increasing costs. Ultimately, it is the consumer who bears the burden and is quite helpless in the face of inflationary tendencies.

A democratic government with its eyes fixed on the next elections is always for industrial peace. By this is meant concessions and more concessions to labour. Ultimately what this will lead to, nobody knows. When inflation becomes self-generating, the moral duty of the Government to act as broker or mediator becomes increasingly important. The balance between liberty and State power may then be endangered.

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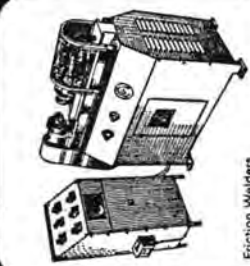
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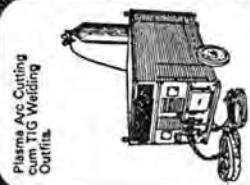
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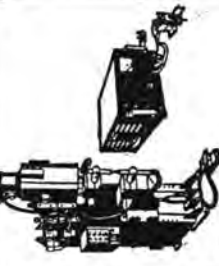
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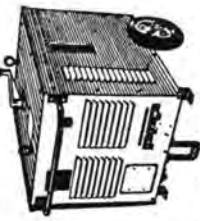
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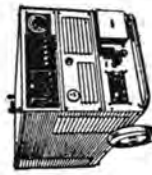
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Child-To-Child Programme

By HOMAI MOOS

Member, International Committee
"Child-to-Child Programme"

The Child-to-Child Programme, originally drawn up at the Institute of Education and Child Health, University of London, is an international plan designed to teach and assist children to concern themselves with the health, welfare and development of other children in the community.

Improvements in the standard of living in our country can be achieved only when we promote productivity in all sectors of our economy. This problem at macro and micro levels is related to several social issues. Both children under the ages of 18 years and others are stimulated to understand the implications of health, education, problems of handicapped children, recreation, creativity, a scientific temper and so on. It is hoped to create a multiplier effect through their efforts in influencing their own lives and those of other young future citizens. It calls for not only a clear understanding of their respective roles but also a determination to create a congenial climate. We are looking ahead to the 80's with greater action and with the will to improve the quality of life of our children.

The International Headquarters of the Programme is located in the Institute of Child Health, 30, Guildford Street, London WC1N 1EH England.

The National Headquarters in India is located in Niloufer Hospital — Hyderabad — A.P. and the Western Region Headquarters is located at Bombay in the Bombay Productivity Council, Rohit Chambers, Ghoga Street, Bombay-400 001. The Chapter Members in Delhi, Chandigarh, Madras, Calcutta, Tirupati, Hubli, Jamkhed, Tilonia (Rajasthan) Pune, etc. are active in carrying out special projects for the Programme.

Mrs. Roda Mistry, Member Rajya Sabha, is the Patron of the Programme in India. The programme was first developed in 1977. After world-wide canvassing a workshop and conference were held in London and in Littleworth (U.K.) the following year. At this conference small mixed groups of experienced educationists and health workers developed the Child-to-Child concept, and the "activity sheets" were evolved. The discussion led to the production of the book *Child-to-Child*, (Macmillan — London) and is now available in India. This book with attractive illustrations by Carol Baker, is published at the remarkably low price of 95p. It contains a number of "activity sheets" each dealing with a single suggested area of child-to-child work.

In 1981 the Programme clearly tends towards the problems of the handicapped child.

The international group meetings in London and West Sussex examined the problems of reaching the child who has never attended school — up to 80 per cent of girls in some parts of the world do not go to school — as well as the drop-out. The family of the "non-school child" is where children will benefit most from the Programme.

In dealing with the many aspects of the child, there is one major resource that has so far been almost

completely ignored, and that is— other children! Findings from several workshops conducted in more than 50 countries show that the resources to materially improve children's lives are not at first sight available. Toward the end of 1980 there

were 1.4 billion children in developing countries. Of these, 350 million will be beyond the reach of the most basic services of nutrition, health and education. Materials and manpower are unavailable to reach the slum areas of the Indian cities and still less the rural areas. Energy and money have been exhausted training specialists. There has been little emphasis on preventive health. The affluent Society's model of health services has been adopted, to the detriment of children in developing countries.

Six broad ways have been outlined by The Programme, through which older children can help the younger: 1) Eating well; 2) Improving health; (The shakir cartoon strip); 3) Providing a safe environment by simple research; 4) Helping children grow up; 5) Stimulating younger children; 6) Helping handicapped children.

In Chile the government has appointed a national Director of the Programme. Guatemala has a scheme, Nino al Nino (NAN), in the remote mountain district of Jacaltenango. In India a project has been set up for children to identify leprosy, and most importantly for the eradication of the stigma on those contracting this disease. Kuwait has completed a preliminary study of the help older children give their siblings. In Papua Guinea the Ministry of Education is supplying a copy of the *Child-to-Child* book to every Primary School. Similar support to the Programme in a variety of ways is being given in many other countries.

In the International Year of the Child, 1979, it became clear that the new Programme is here to stay and that every effort should be made not only to ensure its continuation but also to help it to develop appropriately in different parts of the world. A study of methods of reaching the non-school child is already in hand and will soon be completed. 1981 is the International Year of Disabled Persons, and emphasis is being placed on the handicapped Child integrating with the normal Child. There is also a case for looking at the possibilities of developing a distance-teaching Programme related to the Child-to-Child idea.

Most important, is the co-operation between health and education personnel. So far, the Programme has developed a valuable collaboration between health and education. There is also a need for it to involve agriculture and simple animal husbandry. Child-to-Child may be a useful way through which simple but vital lessons in agriculture and fishery can be passed on from one generation to another with new developments from appropriate technology.



THE WORLD OF BOOKS

H. M. Patel 75th Birthday Commemoration Volume
Charutar Vidya Mandal. Rs. 50.00. 151 pages.

Most commemoration volumes are boring, and this one is no exception. Barring a few contributions, all are dull and repetitive—extolling H.M.'s "qualities of head and heart." And yet Mr. H. M. Patel's life has covered many interesting events—the most dramatic being the transfer of power and the partition of India in which he played a leading role.

Mr. Patel was one of a band of outstanding administrators among the ICS officers who joined the service in the late twenties and early thirties. They were versatile, well-read and well-informed with many initiatives to their credit. As a distinguished member of this band, Mr. Patel had an understanding for the many facets of government in a period of ever-growing state intervention in economic, cultural and social life. It was to be expected that he would have a successful career in the Ministries of Commerce, Industry and Civil Supplies, Defence, Food and Agriculture, and as Cabinet Secretary.

In 1947 he was appointed Partition Secretary and his work was acclaimed by all concerned. Rajaji, Mountbatten and Nehru among others. L. K. Jha describes with what imagination and resourcefulness, Mr. Patel tackled the enormous problem involved in the transfer of power, including the solution of deadlocks on account of differing views of the Indian and Pakistani members of the Partition Secretariats. Patient negotiations were necessary, and the credit for smooth transition and division of assets goes to Mr. Patel.

It is unfortunate that after this brilliant success, followed by admirable work as secretary in the Ministries of Defence, and Finance, Mr. Patel was compelled to retire prematurely from the services because of the Mundhra affair and the failure of T. T. Krishnamachary, the Minister, to accept responsibility for the investment of LIC funds in certain shares. One or two contributors mention this incident in passing but none of them has examined the Mundhra scandal in detail as it should have been. It raised several questions about the relationship between politicians, civil servants and the business community.

Firstly, there is the question of corruption. The electoral system makes the struggle for political power so expensive that politicians must extort money from business and industry in return for favours. Both they and the officials are tempted to expect a return for the grant of licenses and permits without which the economy cannot move.

Secondly, the Mundhra affair showed up the inability of autonomous bodies to function without the interference in their detailed work by Ministers. In the Mundhra case, the LIC was an autonomous body and

there was no occasion for the Minister or the Ministry of Finance to interfere in the investment of its funds.

Thirdly, the affair raised the question of Ministerial responsibility. If there was interference regarding the investment of LIC funds the responsibility for the decision was the Minister's but, as has happened frequently before and after the Mundhra affair, Ministers fail to accept responsibility for their acts and make civil servants the scapegoats. As a result of TTK's passing the blame, Mr. H. M. Patel had to retire prematurely from the ICS.

His life after retirement has, however, been full of purposeful activity. Unlike many of his ICS colleagues Mr. Patel did not join a business house—he decided to work for rural reconstruction from a base in Vallabh Vidyanagar which was founded as a memorial to Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. He set out to redress the imbalance between rural and urban India and to integrate the interests of the two. He took charge of the Charutar Vidya Mandal which was started as far back as 1946, when Sardar Patel was still alive, to persuade farmers to give land for development. From this beginning the Mandal has been responsible for diverse activities which have brought prosperity to the whole region.

Whether as honorary Chairman of the Gujarat State Electricity Board or as the Sarpanch of the Gram Panchayat of V. Vidyanagar, Mr. Patel has devoted his time, energy, experience and ability to the task of creating an educational, political, economic and social ferment in a rural community. He was the driving force behind the Sardar Patel University, the Agro-economic Research Centre, the Jyoti Solar Energy Institute, to mention only a few of the institutes which have been created to bring about a regeneration in the countryside.

The brief interlude in politics was not as successful as H.M.'s other activities. As a Swatantra MP and later as Finance and Home Minister in the Janata Government he could not compete with the demagogues in his own and other parties.

The book has a Gujarati section containing tributes of more or less the same kind as the English. The tributes which gladdened this reviewer's heart are those of his daughters. H.M.'s achievement in allowing and encouraging these five attractive young women to develop their individual personalities in freedom, liberated from the inhibiting conventions of their social environment, is as pleasing as his efforts, through the Indian Wild Life Board, to allow wild animals to live free from the fear of the hunter. Both are a reflection of a humane and liberal approach to life in all its manifestations.

MEHRA MASANI

FREEDOM FIRST

This is the promised sequel to **Daddyji**, published in 1972. The evaluation of Hindu society is exemplified in a single family. It is city-bred and already several steps closer than **Daddyji's** to a somewhat hazy concept of the "modern world". That world has very little effect on the women.

Ved's mother has hardly any education and is confined to the kitchen. She is simple-minded and superstitious, has no clearly defined personality. She comes into her own after marriage in a more liberal environment, but continues to accept the inevitable, doing little to influence situations or events.

Limited as she is, the book is not her story but that of her family—their lives, hopes and aspirations. Her father is the symbol of progress, and its resultant contradictions. His diary originally inspired the narrative. The first half of the book is his story. He has risen above his feudal origins, through education to wealth and a 20th century life-style: "Babuji smoked a cigar and carried a stick." The rest of the family (11 children) are satellites: they appear and disappear in the narrative in so far as they affect him.

Basically, the diary is a catalogue of births, deaths and rituals. It also tabulates important events such as his failing in exams, and his election as a "Fellow of the Punjab University." The Diary provides a skeletal framework for an otherwise diffuse narrative.

A variety of names flits in and out of the book. The innumerable births, and deaths, the swift passage of the years give the impression of the irrevocable movement of time, the insignificance of the individual, and the inevitability of death. Much of the writing is based not on direct experience but on stories taken from the mouths of mothers and fathers, aunts and uncles. An emphatic or rhetorical style is unjustified if one has not lived the life described.

"To see through the glass somewhat clearly," Ved affects a tone that is neutral, balanced and impassive. He is no moralist, and there is no attempt to condemn a situation, to alienate the reader. The marriage of his aunt Malan at the age of 8 is described as follows: "She was unaware that she was betrothed to anyone until she was finally put in a palanquin and told to 'be good wife to your lord and master Baggu Ram.'" Malan then started wailing. "The family covered the palanquin with a woollen shawl to muffle her screams, and she was taken away."

There are no outraged exclamations after this passage. Ved moves immediately to a happier moment. This is as it should be, but sometimes the author seems to have reservations.

The author knows much more of agony, suffering and cruelty than he is willing to portray. The language is smooth but flat. There is little that is forceful or compelling in the writing. The book is pleasing but lacks significance. The characters are mere cameos; narrative interest predominates. Events and upheavals project individuals.

The Arya Samaj affects Babuji. He rejects all superstition and idol worship, feels the oppression of living

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in a dated style in the ancient city of Lahore. There is a longish passage reflecting his despair. I mention it because it is the only image in the book and the only passage to describe a condition of the mind. I take it as a reflection of the "Old India", physically and symbolically. It is not unlike the lives our people still lead, untouched by the modern world.

"As Babuji lay on the roof he could not ignore the stench of raw sewage from the open drain below, and he imagined the sewage sluggishly moving through the network of gullies—to the river in which the ashes of his ancestors had been committed. He felt trapped in the gullies. He felt trapped on his ancestral plot of land where generations of Mehtas had died, leaving scarcely a hand mirror to mark their passage through its various houses."

This image captures the essence of a philosophy and life-style that is debilitating and static. It was a conjunction of two opposing cultures that stimulated the first Mehta to assert himself. His rebellion is symbolised in the fact that as soon as he can afford it, he moves to the new city that the British had built.

HAVOVI ANKLESARIA

CONTEMPORARY INDIAN ENGLISH VERSE:
AN EVALUATION edited by Chirantan Kulshrestha
(Arnold-Heinemann. 1980. Rs. 65/-).

A BOOK which consists of twenty essays all devoted to modern Indian poetry in English is something to welcome; however, it must be said that this one does not always make easy reading—you need to be strongly motivated to persist with essays that begin (and continue) like this!

"The unquestionable giftedness of quite a few of the at times alarmingly increasing tribe of Indian poets writing in English gives us pause to wonder about the name and nature of their quite genuine poetic potential and about what the poets would seem to make of it, let alone what we as readers could make of it."

All too often ponderous paragraphs lead up to little or nothing by way of conclusion, like: "Indo-Anglian poetry... has voiced the aspirations, the joys and sorrows of the Indian people." And in the first part especially the occasional concrete examples are like water in the desert. Yet, once one is prepared to endure desert conditions, the book can make rewarding reading.

It begins with Meena Alexander's impassioned expression of the plight of the poet writing in an alien tongue, and goes on to two sober discussions (M. K. Naik and V. K. Gokak) of what constitutes the distinctive Indian contribution at the earlier stages, suggesting, among other things, mystical poetry. The next piece is P. Lal's emphatic rejection of the mystical style, followed by S. Mokashi-Punekar's rejoinder.

Then comes a group of essays discussing broadly the work of later poets and whether they have finally achieved something that counts. One of these is K. Ayyappa Paniker's "Peacocks among Patriarchs", commenting on the Oxford University Press and Clarendon House books of poetry in 1977, which is a particularly brilliant and succinct piece of writing. Apart from this, the arrangement justifies itself, the anthologist's hand

creating a meaningful structure in which one may perceive both a slow growth and branching out into distinctive voices at last, and the ever-present danger of imitativeness.

It is a pity that the effect of form has been destroyed to some extent by omitting all indication of the sources and dates of the essays. And that ridiculous misprints should have been allowed to make poets sigh for such things as "a jumped style of life" and critics write of "Michael Madhusudhan Dutt who were **The Captive Ladie**" and how "what the poets did was a explore Oriental themes."

The second part of the book deals more closely with the work of individual poets; it includes, for instance, Christopher Wiseman's invaluable essay on "The Development of Technique in the Poetry of Nissim Ezekiel." Surprisingly, this section of the book is less successful in some ways than the first, though it is thoughtful and full of stimulating juxtapositions.

What goes wrong is that the evaluation promised in the title and introduction, the business of deciding how the poems work and why they matter, is taken for granted and the critics tend to drift into exposition of meaning:

"The person in the poem... is always at a great distance from the hills which symbolize the loftiness of spirit. His river of life is dry, and the winds lie dead in his path, meaning that he is devoid of the creative breath which has the power of regeneration."

How much this is the rule becomes particularly apparent when we reach the last essay, Vrinda Nabar's on Keki Daruwalla, in which, at last, discrimination between the effective and not-so-effective within the work of the poet is prominent. Elsewhere this is absent, and we may at worst find ourselves asked to admire the way in which "the last word 'storm' creates the prevailing atmosphere which is violent," the "satiric thrust" and "profound sense of life" of such lines as:

Come, darling, let us set up home
And ride by regal rickshaw-walla
To caverns with an icy dome
And milk by the gola.

(Lal)

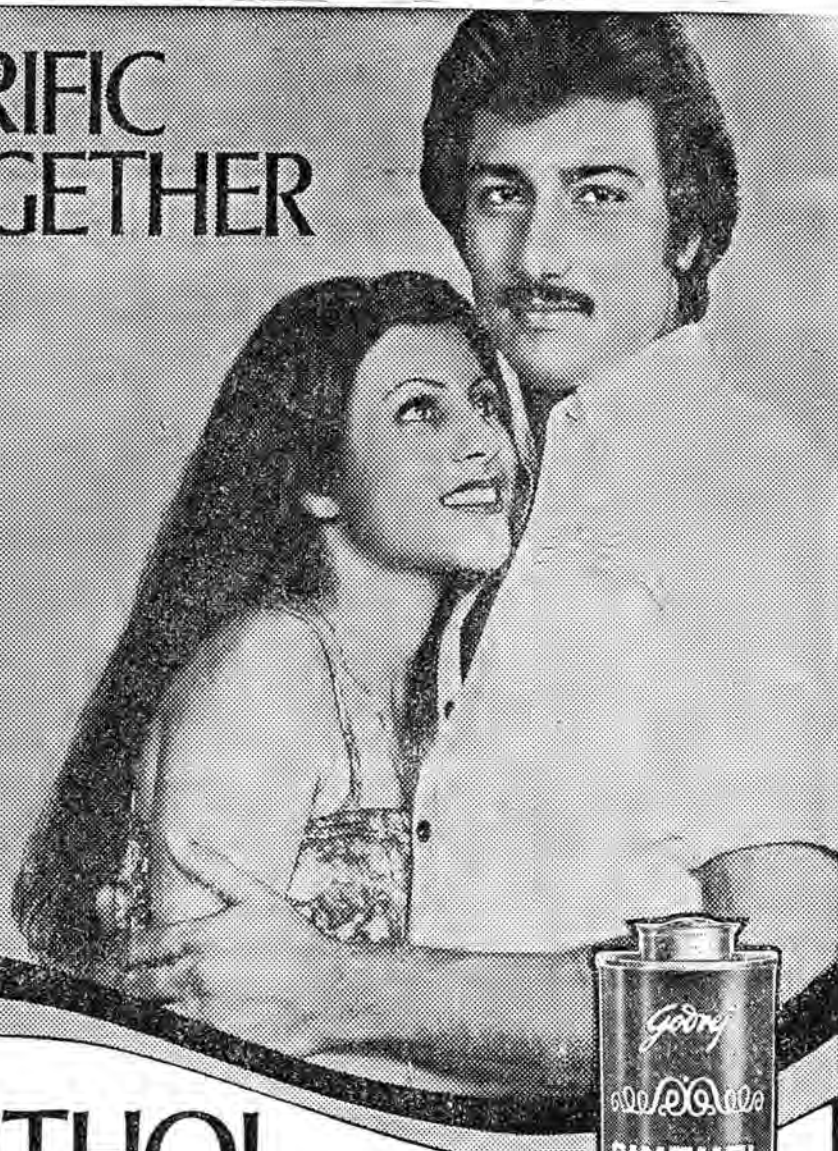
Even where things are not on this level, a certain sameness and lack of light and shade prevails; most important, this often indicates a deficient vitality, a bookishness of response:

"Thus is built up (in Ramanujan's Small-scale Reflections on a Great House) a strange and bizarre catalogue of things that come into the house from outside to stay for ever and the things that go out but inevitably return: stray cows, library books, neighbours' dishes... sons-in-law, daughters-in-law", etc.

"Strange and bizarre"!—in which country does this critic live? Responses like this are certainly not the kind that help to create a favourable environment for poetry. Yet there is much here to interest and fruitfully occupy the teachers and students for whom the book is chiefly meant. Let us hope that from them the nourishing element will some day come.

ELIZABETH REUBEN

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Tribute to M. C. Chagla

(Speech at the Condolence Meeting in Bombay)

—M. A. RANE

Since Jayaprakash Narayan founded Citizens For Democracy in 1974, there was hardly any public meeting held in Bombay under the auspices of the C.F.D. or any other sister organisation without Mr. Chagla presiding. Today we are meeting for the first time without Mr. Chagla. In this very hall he addressed several public meetings, inspiring and stimulating the audience. Those who had the good fortune to listen to him may still remember his voice reverberating.

The last meeting Mr. Chagla addressed in this hall was on 20th November 1980 in support of the Independence of the Judiciary. His presence at that meeting within ten days of his operation in a Hospital was ascribed by Mr. Seervai to his indomitable spirit. The entire audience stood up and gave him a thunderous ovation in token of its gratitude for his public spirit. Today, we will all have to stand up in silence in memory of the Grand Old Man of India.

This meeting is convened not only by the Citizens For Democracy but also by several Citizens' organisations committed to the values of human freedom, civil liberties and democracy. The sponsors include People's Union For Civil Liberties, Indian Radical Humanist Association, Chhatra Yuva Sangharsh Vahini, Bombay Sarvodaya Mandal, Committee for Protection of Democratic Rights, Citizens Coordination Committee for Strengthening Democracy, Lawyers Committee for Judicial Independence and Indian Rationalist Association.

On the passing away of J. P. we had unanimously elected Mr. Chagla as the All India President of the Citizens for Democracy. All the Human Rights Organisations had decided to felicitate Mr. Chagla in this Hall on 3rd March 1981 on his completing 80 years and to inaugurate the Bombay Branch of the People's Union for Civil Liberties. We had also decided to observe 22nd March as the J.P. Memorial Day, it being the day when the Emergency was lifted.

Mr. Chagla had agreed to deliver the J.P. Memorial Talk on that occasion. All of us are the poorer by his death. But we are rich by our association with him and richer by memories of him which will be recounted by the President Mr. Justice J. C. Shah and the eminent speakers to follow.

I belong to the generation of lawyers who were fortunate in commencing their practice in the Court of Chief Justice Chagla at a time when the Constitution had been promulgated. Largely, we owe our present position in the profession to Chief Justice Chagla, to his courtesy, his kindness, his warmth and his willingness to appreciate talent. It was a great pleasure to argue in his Court. I have several pleasant memories about him as a Judge.

Tributes have been paid to Mr. Chagla by the Chief Justice of our High Court at a full Court Reference. He has been truly described as one of the pillars of the Bombay High Court and even of the Indian Judiciary. In an interview with the Editor of *The Illustrated Weekly*, Mr. Chagla described the period when he was the Chief Justice as the finest years of his life. I think in public life his finest years were the last six years, when the Emergency was declared and when he did not hold any position of office or power.

I was in close personal contact with Mr. Chagla during this period. When attendance at public meetings was banned on pain of being detained under the hated MISA without assigning any grounds, Mr. Chagla never hesitated to address a meeting which we convened under one pretext or other. He attended the Freedom-Loving Lawyers Meeting banned by the Commissioner but upheld by the High Court, the Gandhi Jayanti Meeting in 1975, the Annual Meeting of the Citizens for Democracy convened to condemn the 42nd Amendment. He delivered the inspiring speech at the Civil Liberties Conference organised by the late Mr. C. T. Daru and his friends at Ahmedabad in October 1975. Mr. Seervai has described that speech as a classic which should be included in any anthology of inspiring speeches.

Mr. Chagla was one of the Chief Architects of the destruction of the Emergency Rule. Whether during the Emergency or under Janata Rule, or after the return of Mrs. Gandhi, Mr. Chagla's was a fearless voice, in a climate polluted by sycophancy and convenient defections. Betrayal of the people by the leaders of the Janata did not shake his confidence in the values of democracy and human rights.

Mr. Chagla was one of the most outspoken Rationalists that modern India has produced. He was one of the founders of the Rationalist Association of India in the early thirties along with contemporaries. Rationalists like Sir Raghunath Paranjpe, Dr. G. V. Deshmukh, Dr. D'Avoine, Dr. Erulkar, B. G. Horniman, S. A. Brelvi and R. D. Karve. At one of the early meetings of the Rationalist Association he delivered a talk on Rationalism and Civil Liberties when he pointed out the close connection between the two.

That was a time when the Civil Liberties of our people were suppressed by the British and there was the ominous rise of Fascism in Europe. As a Rationalist he believed in the supremacy of reason in explaining the universe and man, and in guiding human conduct. He did not require the crutches of gods, godmen or holy scriptures for behaving civilly and morally with his fellow human beings. He did not believe in any religion or supernatural powers. He held many high and exalted offices but before taking the oath he did not consult any astrologer. He did not be-

lieve in sin or cloistered virtue, in heaven or hell, in the soul, in an after-life or in the theory of Karma.

It is not an accident that Mr. Chagla's mortal remains were consigned to the flames at the electric crematorium without a single religious rite. This was according to his wishes, expressed to his near and dear ones. His enlightened sons, daughter, son-in-law and daughter-in-law deserve congratulations for displaying courage in carrying out his wishes.

As he was a Rationalist, Mr. Chagla was also a Humanist with unshakable convictions in and commitment to human values, civil liberties, freedom and democracy. Mr. Chagla's can be described as secular Humanism, which is growing as a powerful movement all over the world in the west as well as the east. Four hundred years before Christ the Greek Philosopher Protagoras had said, "Man is the measure of everything". His object was to wean away people from other worldliness. Five hundred years before Christ, Gautam Buddha, for whom Mr. Chagla had high regard, made the same attempt.

Mr. Chagla belonged to the age of enlightenment. In all probability the close of this century will see the rise of secular humanism as conceived and practised by Mr. Chagla. In that movement, Mr. Chagla will have an abiding place.

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From the frying pan into the fire

By VASANTHA SURYA

One by one, third world societies are opening up their dearly paid-for packages of industrial development to find that the much-advertised item called "social progress" is missing. Women in particular discover that ancient modes of discrimination have been given a new look, and that they have doffed their traditional garment of self-effacement only to be neatly fitted into a new psychological strait-jacket.

Schooling, when it is made available to women, does not stimulate their intelligence, or coax into growth their stunted personalities; it trims and prunes their already warped attitudes and enfeebled skills to suit a limited range of low-paid jobs. Worst of all, the longed-for chance to enter the money market as earners in their own right usually turns out to be a one-way trip into a maze of exploitation.

This collection of reports from Asian countries in various stages of industrialisation shows that despite the passage of scores of laws purporting to protect the rights of women, these economies are beginning to rely heavily on cheap, docile female labour to keep the prices of their products competitive in the world market.

Aiko Carter's "On Being a Woman in Japan" reveals how Japan has used its women to leapfrog into the industrial age. In the words of a Japanese woman textile worker in the early years of this century, the factory owners "scolded us like cows and horses, they

beat our heads if we broke the threads on the looms". After the second world war, Japanese industrialists virtually purchased peasant girls from their indigent families for their 24-hour-a-day industrial recovery operations.

Today's more sophisticated managements in Japan divide female workers into competing groups, encouraging coercion within the group to bring laggards into line, so that production quotas may be filled. Although the Japanese Constitution contains an equal rights clause, Mr. Carter claims that except in the civil service, women work for longer hours and receive less pay than men for the same jobs. They are also liable to lose their jobs early.

Many companies retire full-time women workers at 30 to 35 years of age—only to re-employ them on a low-wage, temporary, part-time basis. Says Ms. Carter: "The ability of Japan to dump electronic products on the world market is based on cheap female part-time work taken from the over-40 age bracket." Women so employed do not aspire to career advancement; they merely want to keep their jobs and earn enough money to reach out for the goodies of the consumer culture.

Malaysia appears to be intent on emulating Japan's methods, judging from Jamilah Ariffin's account of women workers in multinational electronics firms in that country. Regulations regarding night-shift work for female workers have been relaxed to attract foreign investment, and the government studiously refrains from opposing the investors' concerted action to block the formation of workers' trade unions.

In addition, recruiting agents are allowed to scour the Malaysia country-side to induce rural girls to migrate to the urban-based factories. Village girls are easily lured out of their traditionally restrictive milieu by the prospect of working in airconditioned workplaces at wages which appear at first sight to be attractive. The jobs don't last, however. Compulsory night-

Women in the Third World: Edited by Laeeq Futehally with an introduction by Suma Chitnis. Jaico Publishing House. Leslie Sawhny Programme. 1980. Price Rs. 30/-.

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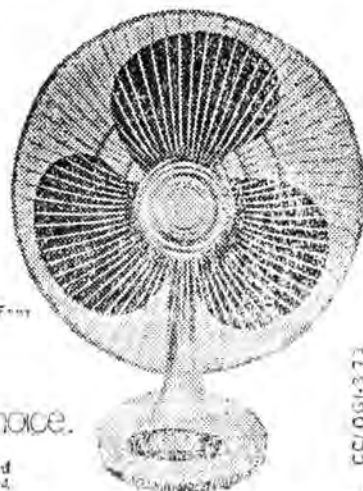
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shifts and overtime soon result in fatigue, failing eyesight, and boredom.

Electronic workers are sometimes bored literally to tears by their demanding, utterly monotonous toil, and mass hysteria on the shop-floor is a frequent event, apart from individual break-downs. Before a girl's productivity begins to decline, and often just before she is due to be paid her first annual bonus, she is dismissed. With girls so plentiful and so compliant, the electronic firms find frequent retrenchments more profitable than reliance on experienced workers.

Rami Chhabra and Alka Basu report that India's entrance into the industrial age has actually made life more precarious than ever before for her women. They base their analysis on the Official Life Tables of the Registrar-General from 1951 to 1971, three decades of phenomenal industrial growth. Female mortality rates have of course always been higher than that of males in this country, reflecting not only their vulnerability during the reproductive period, but also the widespread practice of feeding girls and women less than boys and men.

Until 1951, however, the curve swooped briefly upwards at puberty, and stayed there till age 15, the onset of the reproductive period. In pre-industrial Indian society, a pubescent girl was encouraged to grow so that she might bear sons in a few years' time, and till recently females were perhaps genuinely cherished at least for their child-bearing ability. Now that modernisation (so-called) has arrived, even these few years of relative good health are denied them. The curve of female mortality today hovers between 10 to 20 per cent above that for males, right from age one to age 50, when those few women who have survived

chronic malnutrition and a multitude of diseases ultimately prove harder than men of the same age.

Among traditional Asian value-systems, perhaps Sri Lanka has been kindest to women. Buddhism, which coloured every social activity, discouraged the emergence of customs like female infanticide, purdah, and the oppression of widows. Despite the imitation of a European-Victorian ethic during colonial times, and the disruption caused by the advent of a plantation, cash-crop economy, Sri Lanka women have retained some of their original status. Like the women in Kerala, they have traditionally exercised a good part of the decision-making authority in family and community affairs. Whether their basic cultural conditioning towards equality will help to emancipate them from the restraints imposed by an industrialising economy remains to be seen.

Javanese and Sudanese possess a similar cultural advantage: their social system allows both men and women to continue to belong to their natal kinship groups after marriage.

Perhaps societies which strengthen such egalitarian traditions can better withstand the brutalising influence of industrialisation, and give both men and women the chance to live more human lives. The trouble is that women's issues cannot be cut loose from the tangled knot of social relationships, although they are agonisingly visible in almost every turn and twist. As they rush headlong into the future, the developing societies seem to be oblivious of fundamental human perspectives, blind not only to the worsening relationship between the sexes, but also to the dangerous tensions between groups and classes of every kind.

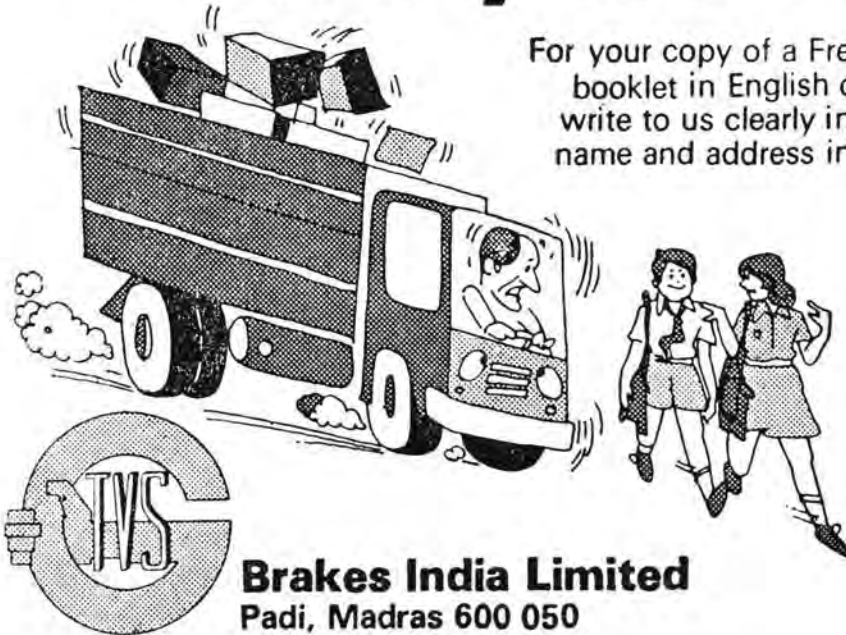
British versus Soviet aid

The combined net official aid of the Soviet Union and its six East European satellite States to the Third World is "markedly less" than that of Britain alone, the British Minister for Overseas Development, Mr. Neil Marten, said in Cambridge recently.

"If one excluded their aid to Cuba, Vietnam and the People's Democratic Republic of Korea, their official net aid effort to the rest of the developing world is only just over a quarter," Mr. Marten added.

A similar picture can be seen by looking just at the net aid figures for India. In the two financial years 1978-79 and 1979-80, Britain gave an estimated equivalent of Rs. 298 crores in net bilateral aid to India, compared with the figure of *minus* Rs. 121.5 crores from the Soviet Union and other East European countries together.

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