

Founder : M. R. MASANI
Editor : NISSIM EZEKIEL

30th Year of Publication

freedom first

MARCH 1983 Price Rs. 2

361

A JOURNAL OF LIBERAL IDEAS

DEAD-END POLITICS

Nissim Ezekiel

In Assam today and in the Punjab tomorrow, there is no substitute for dead-end politics. This means that any solution is no solution. It is too late. Disruption of normal life, violence, economic regression and social disharmony may as well be taken for granted in thinking about long-term answers. None of the forces concerned are going to wait for them. The only consolation lies in the prospect of a fresh start when the current upheavals exhaust themselves.

The damage done in Assam can only be undone by a whole series of positive gestures. One such would be President's rule, so that a non-representative government, elected while the greater part of the Assamese population boycotted the elections, would not be in power. Another would be a renewed attempt to discuss the "foreigners" issue on the basis of the highest principles—national unity and integration without loss of regional identity.

Mrs. Gandhi has frequently described her dilemma in Assam, but she has not offered a comprehensive formula for reconciliation of the alienated Assamese people. This is partly because her party is in disarray but also because she thinks so exclusively in terms of power and personalities. One has not heard from her for a long time the voice of a national leader concerned wholly with the spirit of national renewal and above the present chaos of narrow partisan loyalties.

When things are out of control, as they are in Assam it is no use complaining about how people behave, and in recommending to them the norms of democratic decency. What matters is whether some policy is enunciated which goes to the heart of the problem. This is whether Assamese identity exists, whether it is threatened, and how it is to survive. Fortunately, there is no separatist movement in Assam.

The same cannot be said about the Punjab. The talk may be about autonomy but the aim is a state as close to the idea of a Nation as possible in the present circumstances. Eventually, Khalistan will be demanded,

with membership of the United Nations. Other states are likely to move in the same direction. Whatever the justice of particular regional and communal demands, they fade into insignificance when seen in the context of a larger, completely unwarranted ambition.

Once India is divided into a number of nation-states, border and other problems between them are bound to arise, leading even to full-scale wars. I have written about the nightmare before in these pages and so shall not repeat the argument. The Akali leaders may speak in slightly different terms when it comes to moderation and extremism, but what makes them allies is their common feeling that, in India, Sikhs are second-class citizens or slaves.

There is, in truth, not the slightest evidence of this, so one can only conclude that ethnic, communal and religious identity is the main issue. It includes the dread element of fundamentalism among the Sikhs, as it does among other minorities in India. Bhindranwale makes no secret of it, and those who keep it a secret are reported to be doing so for strategic purposes only. Once in power, they have assured their followers, they will practice what they do not preach in public at present. By differentiating between the Assamese and the Sikh demands, one is implying that identity is important if it draws the line at separatism. The Assamese does, the Sikh does not.

Cultural development of regional life in India requires maximum encouragement of the relevant regional language. Here, too, one should differentiate legitimate emphasis from the fanaticism which excludes English and the national language. Experiments in such fanaticism have been disastrous failures, of which Gujarat at one time was a notable example. If Telugu signboards replace all other signboards **overnight** when the Telugu Desam party comes to power, it is an ominous sign of language fanaticism.

It would be tragic for India if the renaissance of regional cultures and languages leads to national disintegration or at any rate to a weak Centre and a decline in the influence of historical Indian traditions. These are invaluable in dealing with the problems of the twentieth century and ought not to be abandoned for short-term regional gains.

A VARIETY OF COMMENT

K. S. VENKATESWARAN

1. INTERNATIONAL REDISTRIBUTIONISM

THE publication of yet another report by Willy Brandt and his colleagues on the Independent Commission on International Development Issues has, predictably enough, injected a new dose of vigour into the largely vacuous, long-drawn-out debate on the global economic situation. Since the present report merely advances the thesis outlined in the earlier one and renews the oft-repeated call for a radical restructuring of the international economic order, apologists of distributionism have seized the opportunity to further their cause by quoting chapter and verse from the document.

Whatever the merits of the rival contentions, one aspect of the debate which is fraught with great interest for liberals in particular is the ease with which the highly questionable hypothesis contained in dissertations of the Brandt variety has come to be accepted on such a wide scale all over the world. What are the underlying causes that have made respectable the notion, for example, that societies cannot escape from poverty without external assistance or prohibitive sacrifices? Or that the blame for economic stagnation in most of the so-called Third World is to be laid squarely at the doorstep of the affluent West?

Peter Bauer, the distinguished Director of the London School of Economics, who has reflected on this important question for many years, offers some plausible explanations in his classic *Dissent on Development* which merit serious consideration by economists and policy-makers alike, if the current drift in the international economic debate is to be checked before it becomes too late.

It is Bauer's considered view that the thesis of "the vicious circle of poverty" (best explained by the late Professor Nurske's aphorism that "a country is poor because it is poor") holds a populist appeal because of its congruity with "certain intellectual fashions and methods of approach, and also its effectiveness in forwarding certain political aims, especially the promotion of intergovernmental foreign aid and the establishment in under-developed countries of economies closely controlled by the State."

The invocation of the thesis (which is manifestly invalid and unsupported by any empirical evidence, as Bauer convincingly establishes in his book) also serves to build up a picture of the under-developed world as a substantially homogeneous and stagnant mass, sharply distinct from the developed world. In doing

so, it succeeds remarkably well in deliberately concealing the wide diversity of peoples, faculties, attitudes, levels of income, population growth rates and conditions of living in the various countries that constitute the abstraction called the Third World.

No less important, says Bauer, is the usefulness of the thesis as a weapon for "those numerically small but effective groups and persons who are opposed to major institutions of western society and who envisage the underdeveloped countries as instruments in the promotion of their beliefs and policies." Should we be surprised, therefore, if some of our own arm-chair radicals who masquerade as developmental economists launch a renewed tirade against the "conspiracy of the imperialist West" to keep India poor?

2. THE PAVEMENT-DWELLERS' RIGHTS

AS the final hearing of the writ petitions filed by Bombay's pavement-dwellers in the Supreme Court is about to commence, four months behind schedule, there has been a spate of articles in the popular press, seeking to explain, to a largely naive public, the so-called rights of slum and pavement-dwellers under the law.

However commendable such efforts may be as an exercise in mass education, the current crop of write-ups unfortunately raises disturbing questions of a far-reaching character. Most of them attempt to argue the legal case for the pavement-dwellers on premises that are demonstrably far from tenable, except perhaps on the emotive plane. A few of them actually betray a confusion of thought that is as plain as it is pathetic.

Take, for instance, the arguments on constitutional grounds. It has been contended that the mandate of Article 14—which enjoins that no person shall be denied equality before the law or the equal protection of the laws—goes far enough to fully and effectively protect the "right" of pavement-dwellers to continue occupying public lands in the absence of alternative accommodation. To hold otherwise, runs the argument, would amount to condoning arbitrariness on the part of the State which, while creating employment for these homeless immigrants, denies them a shelter near their work-places.

The absurdity of this argument is all too apparent. For one thing, the doctrine of "arbitrariness" under Article 14 as laid down by the Supreme Court in a number of recent decisions, was meant to apply only to cases of allocation of benefits (e.g. award of contracts or other forms of largesse) by the State. For

another, it is plainly erroneous to suggest that the provisions of Article 14 could bring to naught the mandatory obligations cast on public authorities (e.g. the municipal corporation) to maintain at all times such reasonable amenities and facilities as would be necessary for orderly life in the city.

No less absurd is the argument under Article 21. By pleading that in the absence of a shelter near a person's work-place he is exposed to the perils of unemployment (including, in an extreme case, death from starvation), it has been sought to be contended that removal of unauthorised structures from pavements and public lands violates the citizen's right to life and personal liberty under Article 21 and is hence unconstitutional.

Doubtless there is some validity in the argument that only the extreme compulsions of poverty would drive any person to adopt the depraving conditions of life on a pavement. But, surely, the remedy does not lie in institutionalising the conversion of public streets and lands into mass refugee camps, by an illogical extension of a well-accepted constitutional concept? And what of the future? Even if it is accepted, for the sake of argument, that the present squatters are capable of being accommodated in the existing vacant lands in Bombay, how long can this process of accommodation go on, especially in the face of mounting immigration figures?

3. HUMAN RIGHTS IN PAKISTAN

IF it were not so tragic in its implications, the recent

announcement by General Zia-ul-Haq that henceforth the evidence of two women would be equal to that of one man in the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, would have been amusing indeed. This novel change in the procedural law, which evoked an unprecedented spate of protests from several women's organisations and human rights activists in that country, is but one of a long series of repressive measures initiated by the fundamentalist Martial Law Regime (MLR) ever since it captured power six years ago.

In its latest annual report released earlier this year, Amnesty International (AI) throws considerable light on these repressive practices and passes a searing indictment on the MLR. According to AI, the Provisional Constitutional Order of 24 March 1981, which effectively annulled the 1973 Constitution, "marked the end of the independence of the judiciary" in Pakistan, just as the large-scale detention of civilians from 1981 onwards spelt the end of democratic government in that country.

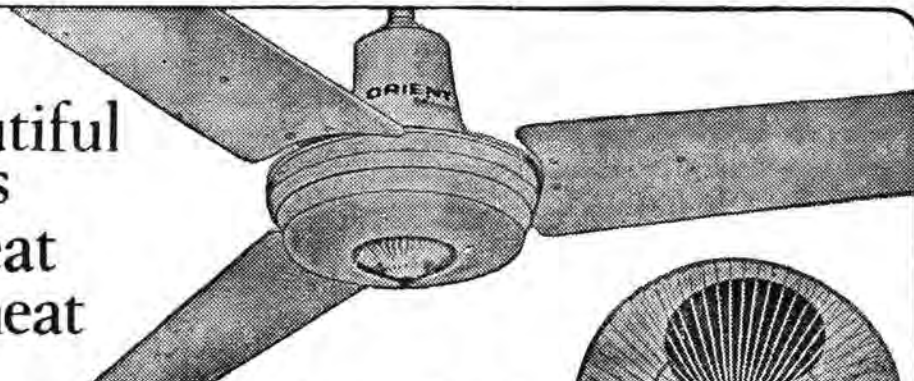
Throughout the period under review, AI received "a growing number of reports that political prisoners, especially those held incommunicado, had been tortured... It was alleged that people had been suspended upside-down, beaten on the soles of the feet and on the head, given electric shocks, burned with cigarettes and deprived of sleep and food for several days." At least ten prisoners, including three political prisoners, were reported to have died in custody, allegedly as a result of torture.

**Beautiful
ways
to beat
the heat**

Whatever your need, whatever your taste or your budget, Orient can offer more of what you want. More of quality, more of beauty, more of value, and more of choice—the widest selection ever!

Why sweat this summer? Beat the heat, with Orient breeze at your fingertips!

Guaranteed for two years



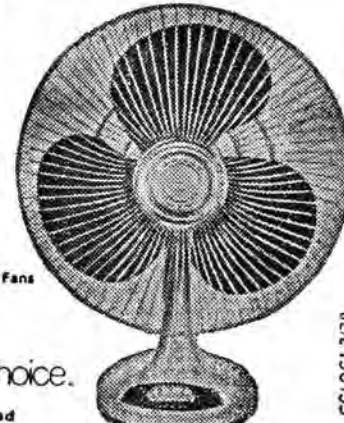
**ORIENT
FANS**

4 Ceiling Fans • 6 Table Fans • 2 Pedestal Fans



More of beauty. More of choice.

Orient General Industries Limited
6, Ghore Bidi Lane, Calcutta 700 054



CC/OC1-3/79

Three Years of Soviet Intervention in Afghanistan

RAMA SWARUP

THE Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan three years ago in search of a quick-fix for its troubled policy of advancing socialism in that country. The original "limited" Soviet presence turned into a full-scale military occupation, and Soviet advisers are trying to restructure the country in order to make it a dependency of the Soviet Union.

Moscow has paid a stiff military, economic and political price for this policy. It has been stalemated by a growing insurgency and a weakening of its Afghan Communist allies. The Soviets appear to be looking for a way out of the Afghan trap, but do not seem willing to make any concessions.

1. The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, according to Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko, was supposed to have been a "limited" incursion to "safeguard the (Communist) revolution (of April 1978)". The Afghan Communist leader, Hafizollah Amin, had deposed his Communist predecessor in September 1979, and had bungled the attempt to impose socialism on Afghanistan's traditional Islamic society. The Russians believed that by replacing Amin with the supposedly more moderate Babrak Karmal they could strengthen the Communist Party and weaken the resistance. The reverse has occurred.

2. Claiming that they were "invited" by Karmal, the Soviets and thirty thousand Red Army troops invaded Afghanistan on December 27, 1979. As of November 1982, this force has grown to over 130,000 combat soldiers, plus support troops, and the 12 divisions stationed in the country have been combined into the 40th Army under General Akhromeyev. Akhromeyev has his headquarters at Termez, on the Soviet border, and takes his orders from Marshal Sergei Leonidovitch Sokolov, Commander of the Central Asian Military district.

3. The Soviet Union also has 3,500 military advisers with the Afghan army. Many of these officers serve at the Battalion level and command Afghan troops in the field. Gen. M. I. Sorokin directs their activities from his headquarters in the Darulaman Palace in Kabul. He is the *de facto* chief of staff of the Afghan Army.

4. The Afghan Army has fewer than 40,000 men under arms, less than one-third its complement before the invasion. A series of mutinies, riots and mass desertions (27,000 in 1981 alone) have reduced the army to a relative handful of forcibly recruited soldiers. Afghan officers often lock the men inside the barracks at night and only distribute weapons to

trusted men except when the units are ordered into combat.

5. The Afghan security forces are also under strength. All males between 18 and 40 are required to serve either with combat or support units of the army. Even veterans are required to re-enlist. Boys as young as 10 receive military training, and 16-year-olds are required to join the militia, as are men between the ages of 40 and 55. The quality of security units is even worse than that of the army. President Babrak Karmal told party officials on October 17, 1982 that the "level of discipline, order and unity in the units and companies must be improved."

6. Afghan resistance forces have quintupled since the Soviets marched in three years ago. More than 100,000 freedom fighters harry the Communists to such a degree that the government "is unable to maintain even a police force that could keep a local official present" in more than 200 of the country's 300 *woleswalis* (administrative districts) according to diplomatic sources quoted by the Associated Press last October. One Afghan resistance leader, Sayyed Gailiani, told the *New York Times* in September that he could arm 150,000 men if the weapons and ammunition were made available.

7. The heavy fighting has, according to an Afghan official quoted by the Red Army newspaper *Red Star* on November 8, 1982, exacted a "big price". More than 25,000 Soviet troops have become casualties in Afghanistan, close to 10,000 of them killed in action.

8. The Communist Party that the Soviets sought to shore up has declined from 60,000 members to fewer than 10,000 in three years. The two warring factions, Babrak Karmal's Parcham Wing and the Khalq group to which his predecessors, Nur Mohammed Taraki and Hafizollah Amin, belonged, carry out a blood feud that claim at least a dozen party members a week.

9. At a party conference in August 1982, Karmal admonished his followers to put aside factional differences and "stop your lies, allegations and slander". Karmal, however, is the principal catalyst in the feud. The Khalqis blame him for the death of their leader Amin and for bringing the Soviet Army into the country.

Karmal has also systematically kicked all the Khalqi leaders out of his cabinet. Their leader, Assadollah Sarwari, was exiled to Mongolia in 1981 and the last two Khalqis to hold high government posts in it, Gen. Gul Aqa and Mohammad Gulabzoi, were

dismissed on August 4, 1982, two weeks before Karmal made his plea to end factional differences. On August 19, two days after Karmal's speech, a party gun battle in the Presidential place killed eight high officials and wounded two dozen others.

10. The weak government is not able to manage the economy effectively. More than 6,000 Soviet economic advisers, representing 400 Soviet commercial firms and banks, as well as the Soviet Government, effectively run the bureaucracy. Their boss, Vasily Savronchuk, is often referred to as the "Soviet Proconsul" in Kabul, because he wields so much power.

11. The Russian advisers decide what shows the television station will broadcast and who sits on the court benches. According to one former Ministry of Foreign Affairs officer, the government's foreign policy statements are written by Soviet officials in the Ministry. Afghan professors who are not sympathetic to the Communist ideology are sacked and replaced with party members trained in the USSR.

12. The Soviet economic advisers manage the economy, but for the good of the USSR, not Afghanistan. Despite the need for food, which now has to be imported from the USSR (330,000 tons of wheat last winter alone, plus large quantities of sugar and edible oil), these advisers are forcing the Afghan economy into an industrial programme that will supply Moscow with the natural gas, coal, bauxite and other raw materials it needs. Afghan textile and cement plants receive second priority, and agriculture is almost ignored. As a result, the Afghans are being made dependent upon the USSR. More than 90 per cent of all imports and exports are destined for or come from the Soviet bloc.

13. This integration of the two economies is part of a Soviet plan to subjugate Afghanistan slowly and to make it into a *de facto* Soviet Socialist Republic. The insurgents, however, are trying to make this integration as unprofitable as possible. According to **Red Star**, they have inflicted "immense damage" on the Afghan economy.

14. The Soviets themselves have inflicted "immense damage" on the Afghan economy. The agricultural sector, which before the war employed 82 per cent of the work-force, has been ruined. Soviet strategy demands that crops be mazed, villages levelled and farmers herded away from their fields into cities. This deprives the guerrillas of food and support and makes the Afghans dependent on the largesse of the government, which in turn needs Soviet aid to survive.

15. The fighting, the scorched earth policy of the Soviets, and the oppression by the authorities in areas where the regime has managed to keep a presence has forced more than a fifth of the population to flee the country. Pakistani refugee camps are home to 2.8 mil-

lion Afghans, and another 1 million have found refuge in Iran. Resistance sources estimated that at least 500,000 people, most of them innocent civilians, have been killed or seriously wounded in the three-year-old war: many have been killed by bombs, napalm and other conventional weapons, but thousands have succumbed to gas and chemical weapons used by Soviet forces in Afghanistan.

16. The Russians have also had to pay a diplomatic price for the rape of Afghanistan. The United Nations, the Islamic conference, the Non-aligned Movement and almost every nation and organization in the non-communist world have condemned the invasion and occupation of Afghanistan. Even Soviet supporters like Libyan leader Mu'Ammar Al-Qaddafi and India's Prime Minister Indira Gandhi have asked the Soviets to withdraw. Indira had resisted condemning Moscow in the hope of convincing the Kremlin to pull out. She finally lost patience with the Russians during her September 1982 visit to the USSR. At a Moscow news conference, Indira told reporters that the Afghan war should be resolved by the Afghans alone, and that "foreign involvement only complicates the crisis."

17. Negotiations between the Afghan regime and the Pakistani Government to seek an end to the fighting began last June in Geneva under United Nations auspices. The Soviet Union, through the Afghans, is demanding that the Karmal regime receive diplomatic recognition from Pakistan and other countries and that the Communist regime be "guaranteed" against foreign interference, such as allowing guerrillas to receive supplies from their supporters in Pakistan.

raymond's suitings

A GUIDE TO THE WELL-DRESSED MALE



The Raymond Woollen Mills Limited

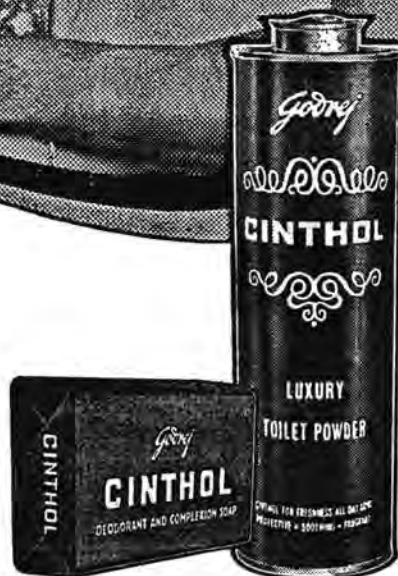
J. K. Building, N. Morarjee Marg,
Ballard Estate, Bombay-400 038

TERRIFIC
TOGETHER

CINTHOL SOAP AND TALC

The perfect partners for deodorant
protection—a bath with Cinthol Soap
and a sprinkling of Cinthol Talc—
to take you to great heights of freshness.

CINTHOL by *Godrej*



Interpub/CTS/1/80/5

A VISIT TO FREE CHINA

MINOO MASANI

On 23rd January, the Republic of China in Taiwan, celebrated World Freedom Day and I was invited to participate, along with distinguished parliamentarians and intellectuals from all continents and no less than thirty countries, by the World Anti-Communist League.

That particular day commemorates the freedom of choice given by the United Nations to the Chinese and North Korean prisoners of war in its hands at the end of the Korean war. In the result, more than 22,000 prisoners of war refused to return to communist territory and opted to stay on in the R.O.C. and South Korea. I mentioned a fact, which is not widely known, that it was an Indian general, General Thimayya, whom I had the privilege of knowing, who carried out the mandate of the U.N. and gave the POWs the right to choose, despite great pressure being brought to bear on him to repatriate forcibly these unfortunate men.

I also stayed on in Taipei, in response to an invitation to participate in the Indian Republic Day celebrations on 26th January, organised by the China-India-Burma-Sri Lanka Association. It was good to see the flags of the Indian and Chinese Republics fluttering side by side.

I had last visited the R.O.C. in 1963 and on my return to India reported on my impressions to Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru. The highlight of this visit was a long interview with President Chang Kai-Shek, whom I have always regarded as a great man.

Even in 1963, I had a success story to report. This time I was able to see the tremendous progress made by the R.O.C. during the last twenty years. The annual per capita income in Taiwan is U.S. \$2265, while that on the mainland is a miserable \$238. The basic monthly wage in Taiwan is \$91.7 as against \$12.4 in Communist China. Electricity consumption per capita in Taiwan is 2193.8 kw, but only 293.8 kw on the Mainland. The daily per capita intake of food is 2845 calories in Taiwan as against 1800 calories in Communist China.

These wonderful results have been achieved by reliance on a free competitive economy, encouragement to agriculture, a welcome to foreign capital, and relative political and individual freedom.

I was glad to see that the leaders of the R.O.C. are not being taken in by the love-making to which Peking is exposing them these days. They know the worth of communist promises and assurances.

In stressing that there is nothing to choose between

Moscow and Peking, that both systems are evil and should be rejected, I took the opportunity to mention that Mahatma Gandhi had always rejected the choice of "the lesser evil."

I also stressed that the focus on communist aggression has now shifted from West to East as exemplified by the invasion of Afghanistan. It should be appreciated that peace, like freedom, is indivisible. There can be no detente in Europe whilst there is communist aggression in Asia.

Having been opposed to the Government of India's recognition of Peking and failure to accept the fact of the existence of the Republic of China, I must confess to a similar lack of sympathy with the "China Card" to which President Nixon has committed the U.S.A. Turning its back on its friends and allies in Taiwan has not so far yielded any perceptible gains for the U.S.A. On the contrary it may well be argued that the U.S. courting of Communist China has helped to make the Soviets more willing to come to terms with Peking, which is not a consummation the U.S.A. favours. *From "As I See It".*

Courtesy, The Statesman, Calcutta.

**MUKAND
IS
STEEL**



**MUKAND IRON & STEEL
WORKS LTD.**

**Registered Office :
Lal Bahadur Shastri Marg
Kurla, Bombay 400 070.**

SCIENCE AND MORAL VALUES

Statement by Mr. A. Solomon, President of the Maharashtra Rationalist Association, Bombay, and of the Indian Secular Society, Pune, at the Seminar on "Scientific Temper and Spiritual Values" organised by the Nehru Centre and the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan in Bombay on 22 and 23 January 1983.

In any intellectual discussion, particularly like the present one, if it is to be fruitful, it is necessary to make a special effort towards clarity of thought and expression. In this regard, I think the discussion would have been more to the point if the subject had been described as "Scientific Temper and Moral or Ethical Values" rather than "Scientific Temper and Spiritual Values".

The word "spiritual" could mean all things to all people; during the discussion it was being used interchangeably for "moral" values, often implying that "Spiritual" values whatever they may be are somehow intrinsically superior to all other values. I submit that the phrase "Science of Spirituality" is a contradiction in terms. Spirituality cannot be scientific. It rejects the methods of science and the validity of sense experience.

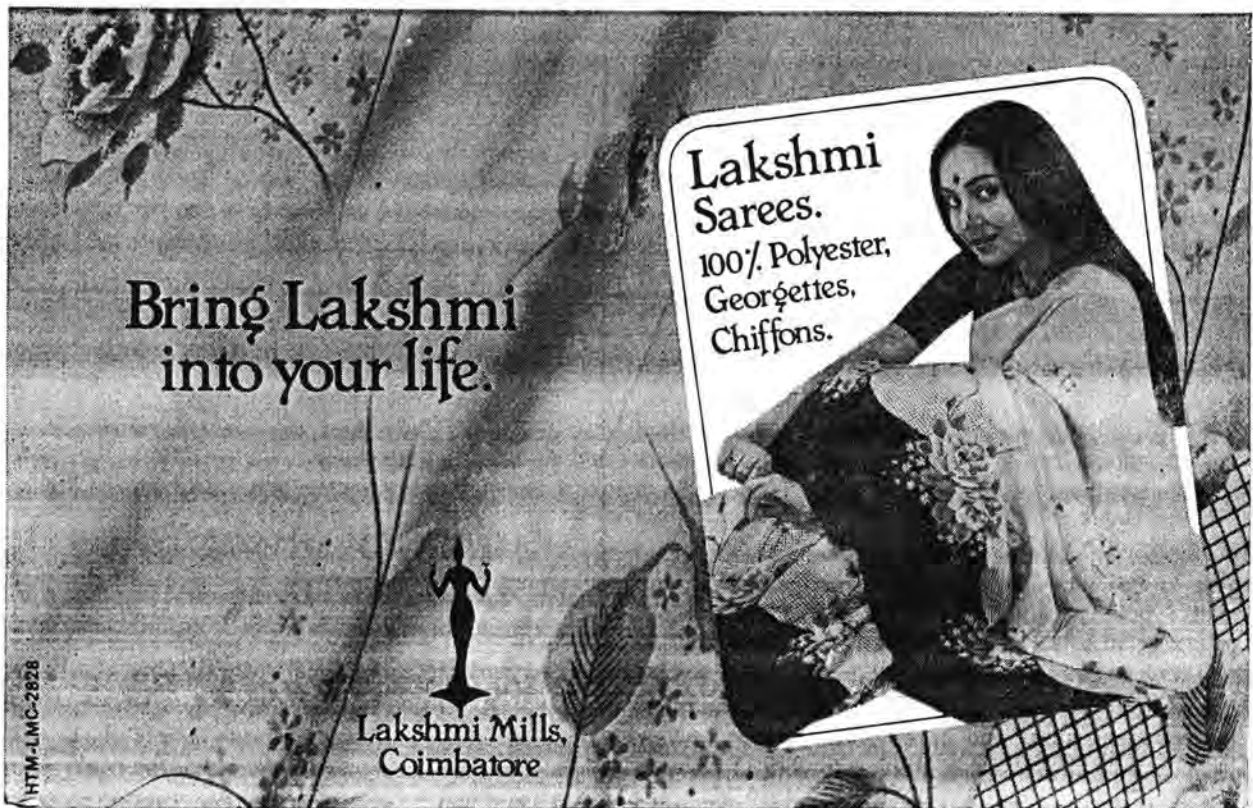
The question really is whether or not Science and the scientific attitude or temper could be a source of moral or ethical values.

Prof. M. P. Rege has raised this important point and also suggested that perhaps it is the moral and ethical sensibility of man, his urge for freedom and the search for truth, which have led to the development of science and the scientific temper or attitude.

We all agree about the need for the promotion of moral and ethical values in society. In fact, most people whether they are spiritualists or materialists (I mean in the philosophical sense), whether they are believers or non-believers in religion, express their anxiety and concern about the absence or decline of moral values in society today. What they differ about is the source and basis of such values, and the causes for their absence or decline.

The protagonists of a religious or spiritualist view of life maintain that religion is the source of moral values. That these are transcendental. That they cannot be derived from scientific knowledge or the scientific attitude. They blame science for the ills of mankind and the decline of belief in religion as a result of scientific progress. In support of their claim they point out that all religions preach the same moral values although they may differ in their beliefs, dogmas and rituals. This is indeed a strange argument.

I would like to submit that it is entirely incorrect. From the point of view of modern scientific knowledge,



Bring Lakshmi
into your life.

Lakshmi
Sarees.
100% Polyester,
Georgettes,
Chiffons.

Lakshmi Mills,
Coimbatore

HTM-LMC-2828

man is the product of nature and history. He is at the same time physical, social and cultural. All his attributes are part of and within nature and subject to its laws. Man's capacity to reason applied to human experience is the source of all knowledge and moral values. Moral principles and ethical values are the product of social living and inter-personal relations.

Society expects all members to observe the laws; to value and tell the truth; to subordinate narrow self-interest to higher impersonal interests; to respect other people's right to pursue happiness so long as they do not infringe the similar right of their fellow-men and women. Society expects all this of its members irrespective of whether they are Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Jews, Zoroastrians or professing any other beliefs or none.

Religion is irrelevant to moral principles or ethical values. In fact it is the development of moral and ethical values which has civilised and refined religious beliefs and practices. It is the moral revulsion against the burning of widows which led to the abolition of the religious practice of "suttee" based on the belief that a wife must die with her husband in order to serve him in the next world.

I would like to ask: What was the state of moral values during the ages of faith, when science and the scientific attitude of observation, experiment, questioning and criticism were suppressed? I am referring to the historical ages of faith and not to an imaginary golden age in the past.

Bertrand Russell has been quoted as saying "Unless men increase in wisdom as much as in knowledge, increase in knowledge will be increase in sorrow." But nowhere has he said that wisdom can be had without knowledge, specially scientific knowledge, as those who denigrate science wish to imply. Indeed, the way to wisdom advocated by religious and mystical thinkers is the rejection of worldly knowledge and social responsibility, a retreat to the Himalayas or to the wilderness and communion with the supernatural, a situation in which there is the complete absence of all human moral values.

The various religions offer a view of life and a set of beliefs which arose from, and were determined by the specific historical and social situation existing at the time they were propounded or took shape. Religion arose as a response to man's intellectual and emotional need for understanding the world, in order to survive, and his search for significance in life. But as soon as the faculty of reasoning, applied to experience as an instrument in the search for truth and in understanding the problems of existence, was discarded, the various religions which were in fact philosophies of existence, became dogmatic creeds based on blind

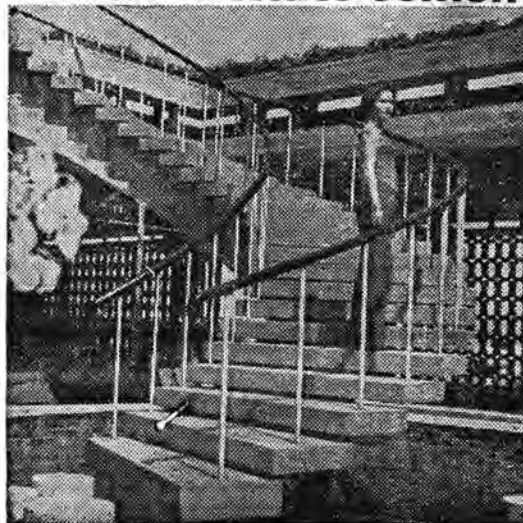
faith and authority which could not be questioned. Religion today has become an obstacle to social and cultural progress.

Science is organised knowledge, subjected to the test of reason, observation, and experiment. Science gives us knowledge and philosophy, meaning thereby a comprehensive world-view, based on scientific knowledge, gives us wisdom. Such a philosophy of living is necessary for survival and to meet the challenges of existence in the modern world.

Most protagonists of transcendental wisdom claim to know exactly what the Lord meant by the words used in the scriptures, the Vedas, the Bible, the Koran etc.; perhaps they have a direct line of communication with the Almighty. Those who are committed to science and the scientific temper make no such claim to infallibility. They are content to be seekers of truth, knowledge, and understanding, through science and philosophy, for the promotion of moral values and the welfare of mankind.

Some people liken philosophy to a blind man, in a dark room, searching for a black cat which is not there. But the trouble is that our spiritualist friends claim to have found it.

Silvicrete white cement



not just exclusive...marvel-lous!

a product of The Associated Cement Companies Ltd

ACC

Walchand Hirachand. The man who dared to transcend the impossible.



Walchand Hirachand was a man of rare talent. A visionary, with the power to lift the veil of the future. Who believed, with total conviction that his life's mission was to free India from her economic bondage. He knew India's needs. More, he knew India's capability.

While others held back, hesitating, Walchand fearlessly set up enterprise after enterprise. Proving to the world that, given but the opportunity, Indian technology need never lag behind.

Walchand gave India an indigenous automobile industry. He freed the seas for Indian shipping. He set up the country's first aircraft manufacturing unit. Modernised engineering. Undertook monumental construction work. Built dams, bridges, barrages. Introduced mechanisation and scientific method into agriculture. Revived many a flagging industry. And more, revived every Indian's faith in his own abilities.

This then, is the rich inheritance he left behind. Today, the vast industrial empire that Walchand founded has proved more than worthy of his faith. Taking Indian technology further than ever before. Striving for a streamlined efficiency of operation in every area—from consultancy to construction to transport to heavy engineering to agriculture. Earning national and international renown in all activities and spheres he entered—whether in mammoth construction works, or water management, or machinery, or precision hardware for nuclear projects and space research.

Today, these industries remain his greatest memorial. Bringing home to every Indian, a justifiable pride in India's capabilities.

In celebration of his centenary year, we, the Companies in the Walchand Group pay homage to the indomitable spirit of a pioneering genius

Premier Construction Co. Ltd. • Hindustan Construction Co. Ltd. • Indian Home Pipe Co. Ltd. • Premier Automobiles Ltd. • Walchandnagar Industries Ltd. • Ravalgaon Sugar Farm Ltd. • Vikhroli Metal Fabricators Ltd. • Acrow India Ltd. • Bombay Cycle & Motor Agency Ltd. • Ganga Bridge Construction Co. Ltd. • Walchand Tander Cement Co. Ltd. • Walchand & Co. Pvt. Ltd. • Share Investment Trust Pvt. Ltd. • National Rifles Ltd.

WST'S VOL. 100/81

Yes, In the Name of Secularism !

AZIZ MADNI

"On 9th December 1982, forty-five Muslim MPs belonging to different political parties issued a statement demanding a ban on all para-military organisations 'preaching communal hatred, such as Vishva Hindu Parishad and Rashtriya Swayam Sevak Sangh'. The statement, which is ostensibly issued in the name of secularism, is itself reeking with rabid communalism".

Thus begins an article by Mr. Nitin C. Raut in February 1983 issue of **Freedom First** sarcastically entitled "In the Name of Secularism". The subject-matter of the article is a Memorandum submitted to the Prime Minister by some 45 Muslim members of Parliament, including some Congress (I) MPs, to focus New Delhi's attention on the grievances of Muslim minority in our country. The initiative for it was taken by the Janata MP, Syed Shahabuddin, a young ex-foreign service officer, whom no one in fairness can accuse of being a communalist, unless he himself is one.

To revert to the article in question, what does the author object to in so many words right at the outset? That the signatories to the Memorandum should have demanded a ban on "all para-military organisations" (emphasis added). What is wrong with that? That these happen to be militant Hindu is a fact of our political life. No such Muslim or Christian organisations are known to exist. Were there any, the demand would have most certainly applied to them just as well.

This demonstrably tendentious and wholly one-sided paragraph sets the tone of the rest of the article. Let us look at some of the points made in similar vein.

"The communal bias of the Memorandum is inherent and manifest", writes Mr. Raut, and goes on to add: "Muslim communalism... is sought to be promoted with impunity under the garb of secularism". I can do no better than quote from Mr. A. G. Noorani's article in **OPINION** (Dec. 28, 1982). Commenting sarcastically on such mentality, he writes: "A gathering of Muslims which voices these grievances is called communal. But a gathering of Muslims, sponsored by the establishment to voice support to its foreign policy, for instance, is highly publicised at home and abroad and lauded as nationalistic. What rank hypocrisy is this?"

Nor does Mr. Raut's pose of righteous indignation prevent him from standing the fact of the matter on the head by asserting on the contrary, for instance, that "In Moradabad it was not the communal bias of the police force but the indiscriminate and thoughtless

attack on the Police by a Muslim mob after discovery of a piece of pork in a mosque, that caused the trouble".

The most glaring instance of this is his reference to Syed Shahabuddin's interview with the **Sunday Observer** (January 2, 1983). Without the slightest twinge of conscience, Mr. Raut quotes him out of context thus: "It is the Hindu Wave which is chauvinistic, extremist, Militant. It shakes me because it will destroy the country".

Let us hear what Mr. M. V. Kamath, former editor of **The Illustrated Weekly**, has to say about the interview. In January 28, 1983 issue of **MID-DAY**, he quotes Syed Shahabuddin as saying: "Today, the Muslim grievance is not against the Hindu community. This has to be clearly understood. It is no longer Hindu mobs attacking Muslim mohallas. It is the police attacking Muslim mohallas. It is the police providing cover to anti-social elements. It is police itself participating in the act of plunder. It is the police which breaks bones, and loots, burns and kills".

At one point, Mr. Raut goes so far as to fly off the tangent by switching over to Minakshipuram conversions. These, according to him, "had distinct political overtones, as was evident from the presence of Muslim League MPs". Mr. M. V. Kamath speak again. Writing in **MID-DAY** (Feb. 8, 1983) in another context, Mr. Kamath has this startling but truthful comment to make: "Hinduism does not deserve to be a religion if it cannot provide a sense of belonging to those who profess it, from whatever caste they hail. No religion can make inroads into Hinduism if it is true to itself." That is a resounding slap in the face of the critic who belittles his own religion by charging that it is Arab money, and not the beastly treatment meted out to the Harijans by their high-caste co-religionists, that is the real cause of such conversions.

To sum up, the gravamen of the critics' charge against the 45 Muslim MPs is that, in spite of being elected on the support of largely non-Muslim voters, they should have had the audacity to become spokesmen of aggrieved Muslims. Writing on the subject in **The Indian Express** (Feb. 8, 1983) the well-known educationist, Mr. V. V. John comments perceptively: "Not a word on the truth or otherwise of such a grave charge as that 'communal violence is turning more and more into police action against the Muslim minority'... Instead the MPs are being warned that they are playing with fire".

Know your Road Signs-2



**Be level-headed:
don't go without
BI-Girling brakes**



**Brakes India:
Making your safety
a certainty**

The rate of accidents at unmanned level crossings is incredibly high... don't take chances. Make sure that the coast is clear before you proceed. And make sure that your vehicle is armed with BI-Girling brakes. Because they're rigorously tested—for 100% safety, 100% efficiency, 100% reliability. And they're backed up by the expertise of the famous international brake specialists: Girling Limited of U.K.

For maximum safety on the road, trust Brakes India: manufacturers of BI-Girling brakes and braking equipment, hydraulic brakes and clutch actuation systems.

Brakes India Limited
Padi, Madras 600 050

Issued in the interest of Road Safety

SAA/BI/227

THE HAPPY CYCLE OF TRUST

YOUR TRUST HELPS US GROW, OUR GROWTH
INCREASES YOUR TRUST

Yes, Sundaram Finance is surging ahead with your support—with its own funds (Capital and Reserves) increasing from Rs. 146 lakhs in 1971 to Rs. 503 lakhs in 1982. What's more, the assets of the company as at 31st December 1981 exceeded Rs. 74 crores.

The corporate policy of the company has always been service-oriented, which means, when the customer comes to Sundaram Finance, he gets not just hire-purchase-finance or leasing facilities but service throughout the period of contract.

With the kind of Service we offer, it's not surprising that the number of customers has grown. Today, Sundaram Finance has on its rolls 8,000 customers and over 46,000 depositors.

**THE PEOPLE TO TRUST IN
HIRE PURCHASE AND EQUIPMENT LEASING**

SUNDARAM FINANCE LIMITED
180, Mount Road, Madras-600 006.

BRUTALISING THE POLITY

MANMOHAN CHOUDHURI

AN ordinance has been promulgated in Madhya Pradesh providing for condign punishment for offences like bribery, violation of terms of contract, illicit felling of trees in forests, laxity in supervision of works by officers, collusive bidding at public auctions, supplying and accepting manipulated tenders, awarding excessive or disproportionate compensations and a host of other offences. It also includes the death penalty for adulterated liquor that causes deaths.

There are proposals for enacting an anti-hijacking law by the centre that would provide the death penalty for hijackers, special courts are proposed to be set to try communal offences. Earlier there had been talk of special courts for economic offenders and of course the ESMA provides for summary trial of striking industrial workers.

Quite a lot of people, fed up with the deteriorating law and order situation, are likely to welcome these measures as indicative of the Government's determination to get down to work. Many are attracted by harsh measures taken to enforce discipline by dictatorial regimes. But one thing that they forget is that the level of anti-social activities in any society is in inverse ratio to the moral tone achieved by it.

There is an age-old belief in brutality as a deterrent to crime. Hindu scriptures abound in descriptions of brutal punishments. Other traditions have also sanctioned such brutalities. The spread of the humanist outlook and the enlightenment brought about by scientific knowledge helped to change the old belief so that criminals came to be treated with a measure of compassion. There has been a worldwide movement against the death penalty and about two dozen countries in the West have abolished it.

But there has been a revival by totalitarian and autocratic regimes of brutality. Offenders are stoned to death in Saudi Arabia, and in Pakistan the law sanctions the cutting off of hands of thieves. The death penalty is imposed in the USSR and many other countries under the dictatorship for offences that would draw much lighter punishments in democratic regimes. Here in India the accustoming of the people to harsh measures will pave the way for the destruction of democracy, because democracy cannot survive without an underpinning of a humanistic outlook.

The raising of the level of moral behaviour in a society also involves the level of morality of the administration. An administration functioning without fear or favour and free from corruption greatly influences the moral tone of the society. Of course the ideal is difficult if not impossible of achievement,

but where aberrations are kept within limits by vigilant public opinion they do not have any serious distorting effect on society. But when those in charge of the Government purposely flout all norms of decent moral behaviour, disregard laws and engage in corrupting and demoralising the bureaucracy the whole society begins to sink into a morass of immorality. This is precisely what is happening in India. All the offences listed in the M.P. Ordinance are being committed daily by hundreds or may be thousands of members of the ruling party, by Ministers and legislators. The whole weight of high offices is utilised to protect such offenders. The voice of the people, the press, is sought to be silenced to facilitate these goings-on. How can one expect such a Government to be serious about enforcing moral discipline?

Hence a similar motive behind all this talk of harsh laws cannot be ruled out. The M.P. Ordinance in particular may have innocuous looking provisions that can be used to harass the Opposition and intimidate critics. The act amending the I.P.C. and Cr. P.C. that preceded the Bihar Press Bill was let pass without notice and only later did it dawn upon everybody that it was designed to add to the deadliness of the Bill that was to follow. The enemies of democracy have now adopted the tactics of having their way stealthily, destroying freedom and democratic norms by little moves that may not attract attention. The civil liberties movement needs to get the M.P. Ordinance examined thoroughly. (SPS FEATURE).

For The Most Professional Service in Air
Cargo Bookings—Domestic and International



Regd. Office: Neville House, Nicol Road,
Ballard Estate, Bombay 400038.

Branches: Bangalore, Bhadohi, Calcutta,
Hyderabad, Madras, New Delhi,
Kanpur, Pune, Srinagar, Tri-
vandrum and Varanasi.

(Approved by I A T A)

BOOK REVIEW

MARXISM AND THE MUSLIM WORLD by Maxime Rodinson. Translated by Michael Pallis. Orient Longman Limited. Pp. 229, Rs. 80.

The author was born and brought up with a Communist background and joined the French Communist party in 1937. He became an ardent Communist on account of what he describes as the "courageous and deep commitment of the Soviet Union and the Communist International to fighting the evils of Nazism and Fascism." His convictions underwent a drastic change when he began to question the dogmas of communism and its working in the Soviet Union after the second world war. He was expelled from the party in 1958.

A convinced hard-core anti-colonialist and a firm believer in the tenets of Marxism, he lived in the Middle East for many years before becoming Director of Studies at the Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes. His first-hand experience of leftist groups and his knowledge accruing from his investigations of contemporary events in the Middle East are reflected in this collection of his writings.

According to the author, revolution is an ongoing process and no revolution can put an end to struggles between classes, categories, sections of society, ethnic groups and nations. However, the Marxist ideology

considered the Bolshevik revolution as the final one, a definite one which saw the end of all such struggles. Marxist sociology, though, indicated the opposite to be true.

A completely balanced human society free from conflicts and convulsions is only a dream. This has been confirmed by the turn of events during the post-war era. As a self-styled independent Marxist, the author believes that dialectical materialism as envisaged by some Marxists cannot provide the answer to all social problems. In his view, Marxist thought does not exclude gradual reform as providing the most acceptable solution to problems.

The appeal of Marxism lies in its challenge to everyone to go to the roots of each problem, re-examine and rededicate himself to ideals, in other words, to be a rebel. The author finds common cause with Alexander Solzhenitsyn and others who have challenged the working of communism in the Soviet Union and its satellite countries.

Has the practice of Marxism been free from the spirit of colonialism? Hardly so, claims the author. He presents the case of Sarjit Sultan Galiev, a prominent Tartar intellectual who joined the Bolshevik party in November 1917 and became President of the Central Muslim Commissariat, a body affiliated to the People's Commissariat for Nationalities. He developed a series of ideas which envisaged a historical role for



Polyester Blended
Suitings Shirtings
Navsari Cotton and Silk Mills Limited

the Tartars within the framework of the Central Marxist organisation.

Galiev soon realised that the decisions of the Sept. 1920 Congress in Moscow on the revolution being led by the proletariat **excluded the non-western proletariat**. He moved into opposition, to fight what he called "Great Russian Chauvinism". For taking part in nationalist deviations, Galiev was arrested and subjected to imprisonment and hard labour.

Galiev's ideas were echoed in those of the Indian Communist M. N. Roy and others. Indeed, the Communist leaders are as intolerant and obstinate as their capitalist counterparts in the matter of the colonial people's desire for freedom. Galiev can be seen as the first prophet of the colonial struggle against white hegemony within socialism itself. His ideas could have influenced Maoist Communism, and heralded the new line adopted by the Soviet Union since 1954 backing the Afro-Asian bourgeoisie.

The author examines in depth the question of the relevance of Marxist Sociology in the context of the Islamic countries of the Middle East—whether there can be a reconciliation between the atheistic materialism of Marxism and Islam. The latter is a theologico-political religion which enjoins on man not only to seek his own salvation but to create a society in keeping with divine law, the Sharia.

The author argues that there is inherently nothing in the practice of Islam which is at odds with adopting a socialist ideology and a strategy for delivering the goods to the people. The Egyptian regime under Nasser proclaimed that it stood for scientific socialism to thwart the influence of the various sects such as the Muslim Brotherhood, whose attempts to reinstate the **sharia** would have inevitably led to a reactionary orientation in Egyptian Society.

The author is convinced that the threat of capitalist economic imperialism continues to exist today, although capitalist nations may have temporarily rejected political imperialism. He concedes that "socialist imperialisms" can also exist. A case in point was the imposition by Stalin of a treaty concerning oil concessions in Iran in 1945. The nationalist hostility it generated in Iran contributed to American aid and investment in Iran. The Soviet Union and China seek to exert their influence in third-world countries by using their economic, demographic and military processes which are subject to political control.

When he wrote the preface to the book in 1978 the author was pessimistic about progress in the Muslim world. He feels that oil-money has resulted in the entrenchment of reactionary systems in many countries of the Muslim world.

MARY THOMAS and THOMAS GEORGE

Nachiketa Publications Limited

5 Kasturi Buildings, J. Tata Road,
Bombay 400 020.

A STATESMAN ENTERPRISE

Books for all bookshelves and budgets:

	Rs.
Aesthetics and Literary Criticism	by R. B. Patankar 10/-
Bihar Shows The Way	by S. K. Datta-Ray 75/-
D. M. K. In Power	by P. Spratt 10/-
Education In The Fourth Plan	by J. P. Naik 6/-
Freedom Of The Press In India	by A. G. Noorani 6/-
From the Jhelum To The Volga	by S. Nihal Singh 15/-
Gandhi And The American Scene	by C. Seshachari 8/-
Glimpses of Old Calcutta	by R. R. Chowdhury 55/-
German Scholars On India —Vol. II	75/-
Hindu Muslim Relations in Bengal 1905-1947	by H. Rahman 15/-
Indira's India: A Political Notebook	by S. Nihal Singh 35/-
Indian Polity: A Plea For Reform	by R. A. Gopalswami 10/-
India In Transition	by M. N. Roy 12/-
India's Caribbean Adventure	by K. Bhimani 8/-
Kerala: Yenan of India	by Victor M. Fic 25/-
The Career Of The Secondary School Teacher in Poona	by P. Kale 9/-
The Phases Of Indian Nationalism, and Other Essays	by Dietmar Rothermund 12/-
Traditional Recipes Of India	by Mrs. B. J. Maneckshaw 22/-
Under The Indian Sky	by A. Chanda 10/-
Writings And Speeches Of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan	by S. Mohammad 16/-
What Price A Free Press? Edited	by V. V. John & A. B. Shah 9/-

Also Available From:

THE STATESMAN LIMITED

Statesman House
Connaught Circus,
New Delhi 110 001

Statesman House,
Chowringhee Square
Calcutta 700 001.

Fagun Mansion
26 Commander-In-Chief Rd.
Madras 600 105

Statement about ownership and other particulars
about Freedom First

Place of Publication: Bombay
Periodicity of its Publication: Monthly
Printer's & Publisher's
Name: J. R. Patel
Whether citizen of India: Indian
Address: 285 Javji Dadaji Marg
Adenwalla Baug,
Bombay-400 007.
Editor's Name: Nissim Ezekiel
Whether citizen of India: Indian
Address: The Retreat
Bellasis Road,
Bombay-400 008
Name and address of individuals who own the newspaper and partners or shareholders holding more than one per cent of the capital: Democratic Research Service
127, Mahatma Gandhi Road,
Bombay-400 023.

I, J. R. Patel, hereby declare that the particulars given above are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

J. R. Patel
Publisher

Dated 1st March 1983.

Freedom First

Subscription Order Form

127, Mahatma Gandhi Road,
Bombay-400 023.

Please send *Freedom First* to me for one year (twelve issues) at the following address:

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

This is a New/Renewal* subscription.
I enclose payment of Rs. 20 in favour of *Freedom First* by

*Cheque *Bank Draft *Postal Order

I have remitted by money order, receipt enclosed. For outstation cheques kindly add Rs. 2 for bank charges. Renewal intimation cards are posted to subscribers separately.
(Overseas subscription rate £3 or \$5.50.)

Signature: _____

WITH MANY VOICES

Let no one expect unilateral disarmament from us.

—Yuri Andropov quoted in the *Observer* (London), January 2.

How on earth can one govern a country that produces over five hundred varieties of cheese?

—General Charles de Gaulle quoted about France in the *Sunday Observer*, January 9.

Just as people in Britain like to read about the Royal Family, so people in India enjoy these episodes of Safdarjang Road, a saga of India's ruling family.

—Trevor Fishlock in the *Times*, December 17.

At the rate we are going it will soon be Red-baiting to say that Stalin was a Stalinist.

—William Buckley Jr. in the *Herald Tribune*, January 4.

Keynes is dead. And Hayek, at 83, is more alive than ever.

—*International Herald Tribune*, December 18-19.

A great deal of inter-governmental aid is hijacked in one way or another by governments and their servants.

—Conor Cruise O'Brien in the *Observer*, January 2.

Since the principal secular call of the century is to oppose the people who gave us Gulag, then Red-baiting is a civilised and honourable activity.

—William Buckley Jr. in the *Herald Tribune*, January 4.

Mrs. Thatcher's morning generally begins the previous night.

—Simon Hoggart in the *Observer*, January 2.

Mrs. Gandhi is now a tiger cornered.

—Trevor Fishlock in the *Times*, January 8.

Mrs. Thatcher is the best man in England.

—President Reagan quoted in the *Times of India*, January 12.

I know many huntsmen, and none of them are ferocious. I know many humanitarians, and they are all ferocious.

—Bernard Shaw quoted in *The Times* (London), January 4.