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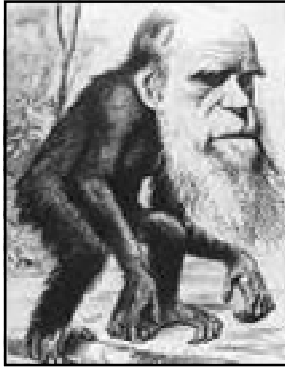
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Darwin, Monkeys And All That

R. Srinivasan



(1809-2009)

“Man still bears in his bodily form the indelible origin of his lowly origin”

- Darwin

Darwin, Marx and Freud totally transformed our world outlook and the planet has not been the same that it was earlier. In a sense, they are

our masters and we are deeply beholden to them and, as in individual lives, the intellectual heirs have protested against their sires and have sought to go their own way. Surprisingly, Darwin’s epigone have least quarreled with him except in some pockets in the US.

In commemorating the bicentenary of Darwin and the sesquicentennial of the *Origin of the Species*, it is good to remember that evolution as a concept was old hat and from the time of the Greeks, thinkers have always been haunted by it. In modern times, people as different as Hegel and Spencer have seen evolution to be a key concept and the intellectual climate was moving towards natural selection – both Wallace in Malaya and Darwin independently arrived at this and both were to be influenced by Thomas Malthus’s essay on population. Darwin’s grandfather Erasmus was an evolutionist of some note. There were varieties of the theory as those of Lamarck and many others were suffused by this. Tennyson, much before Darwin’s book, was to be struck by the the struggle of survival and made popular to his readers of the phrase “nature red in tooth and claw”.

Malthus had emphasised fecundity to be widely witnessed in nature. Darwin was led by this insight and was to write: “In the struggle for survival the fittest wins out at the expense of their rivals because they succeed in adopting themselves best to their environment”. Variations or differences among members of the same species prove helpful for a plant or animal in its struggle and helps it survive and reproduce itself. These favourable variations are passed on to the offspring and its survivors are perpetuated over succeeding generations. This principle of natural selection is to be seen throughout nature and species. This theory of evolution by natural selection has been regarded as the most important scientific innovation in the nineteenth century. Later, in his *Descent of Man*,

1871, he applied the evolutionary theory to humans and argued that man and apes have descended from a common ancestor. “Man still bears in his bodily form the indelible origin of his lowly origin”.

Both Marx and Freud could not ignore Darwin’s contribution and Marxism is suffused with the approach of evolution and Freud too thought that in the very process of social evolution, religion too will give way to more realistic attitudes and his book on religion, *The Future of an Illusion* is well known. Social Darwinism inspired by Herbert Spencer became the stock in trade of unbridled capitalism in the U.S. and was a convenient apologia for a full-fledged predatory capitalist order and the phrase survival of the fittest became a useful slogan. Tens of thousands of copies of Spencer’s books were sold and circulated.

The greatest challenge to orthodox Christianity came from Darwin’s theory of natural selection and the vulgarised notion of man descended from monkeys dealt a blow to traditional notions of creation, of the Garden of Eden, Adam and Eve and original sin. The rather spirited debate between T. H. Huxley and Bishop Wilberforce was to excite the Victorian intellectuals. Not many today are familiar with the exchange.

T. H. Huxley and Wilberforce

Within six months of the publication of the *Origin of the Species*, the British Association met at Oxford (June 1860). Pro-Darwinists and anti-Darwinists had ranged against each other. Bishop Samuel Wilberforce (not to be confused with William Wilberforce who took a lead in the Abolition of Slavery), led the battle on behalf of the Creationists and took on Darwin’s views. “With such resources of obvious wit and sarcasm, saying nothing with much gusto and ingenuity that he was clearly taking even sober scientists with him. Finally overcome by success he turned with mock politeness to Huxley and ‘begged

(Cont’d. on p.20)

End of Economic Ideologies? What Next?

A. D. Moddie

**This really looks like the end of all economic ideologies of the last century.
A curtain has come down on the world's stage and nobody knows what next.**

For just two decades, 1989 to 2008, red Commissar Communism (Stalin, Mao) and its pink shades of Socialism (Nehru, Nasser, Nyrere) came to crashing ends with the fall of the Berlin Wall and the bankruptcy of the three N states by 1994. Now in 2008, all economic ideologies are at sea in a global recession not seen since 1929-30. The cocky KGB one-sector oil/gas Russian economy (Putin) is floundering with the crash of oil prices and its industry, employment, and currency have been hit by the Western capitalist fever, as Deng's China too has been hit. All economists are out of their depth in the surging waters set in motion by US capitalism since the 1990s especially since 2003. The emerging BRIC economies have suddenly gone in reverse gear after years of high growth. The poorest developing people of Asia and Africa may revert to colonial poverty and misery. This really looks like the end of all economic ideologies of the last century. A curtain has come down on the world's stage and nobody knows what next.

A Nobel prize awaits a solid work to show what caused this massacre of the 20th century economic ideologies of the Left and Right. And a more deserving Nobel to show the way to new paths to stable growth, good employment and low inflation in a new liberal globalizing economy.

The failures of red totalitarian and pink authoritarian (both 'sarkari') systems may basically be due to the iron straight jackets of ideology and inflexible, corrupt, inefficient governments, deluded by Marxian Moons; unable to adapt fast enough to the compulsions of change in a complex globalizing world of capital, technology and markets. Stalin's rigid state economy only saw a very partial modification of the KGB-managed restricted capitalism after 1989, drawing its strength temporarily from a single sector, oil and gas. It also produced mafia enterprises in conflict with state power. It has not had time to develop a sizable middle-class broad-based flexible economy, with appropriate financial institutions.

The equally disastrous and rigid Maoist economy destroyed itself, a case of economic suicide with a Red

Book and the mindless destruction of both intelligentsia and peasants. It was reformed and redeemed amazingly in the largest society in the world - torn by a century of war, insurrection, turbulence, by a pragmatic genius of leadership under Deng and his successors. Now that amazing Dengian China is also hit by the American economic tornado of the Bush regime after Iraq, Afghanistan, the sub-prime mortgage scandal and the Berlin Wall-like collapse of at least ten of America's biggest financial institutions, banks and businesses; including the 20th century jewel in the crown, the automobile industry. There has been an avalanche of \$62 trillion credit defaults, a householder's debt of nearly \$14 billion since 2005, big bank debt ratios jumping from 12.1 to 30.1 and the collapse of American capitalist pillars every month and week. Paulson, from one of those capitalist pillars, Goldman Sachs, and Bush's secretary for the Treasury, has himself pronounced in bewilderment; "raw capitalism is dead". When and how did the world's greatest economic machine become "raw" bad meat after the highest rise in prosperity since 1950?

The best and the most honest answers lie with the Nobel Laureate, Joseph Stiglitz's "The Roaring Nineties" (2003). He had seen the insides of US economy and government at the highest levels. Even before the recent US sub prime mortgage catastrophe, what he found in American capitalism should have shaken US citizens, apart from the world. Even earlier, Ralph Nadar, had warned of the dangerous cowboy panache of American Capitalism. There was the precedent of the Nasdaq technology gamble of 2000, which also crashed.

The rot began with the repeal in 1999 of the 1933 Glass-Steagall Act, which ensured the separation of the work of commercial and investment banks. The pillars of regulation came down. Subsequently, Robert Rubin and Henry Paulson of Goldman Sachs were on both sides of the revolving doors of finance and government.

Chairman Cox of the US SEC failed to act against allegations of devious deals since 1999. Hence the failures of Bears Stearns, Lehman Brothers and now Madoff.

Alan Greenspan said “the productive capital investment system was severely weakened by August 2007”. Yet investment banks in the world and in India did not awake to the bear market till April 2008. Why?

Stiglitz summed up the American (and Western) malaise in one sentence: “Asset prices were unrelated to asset values”. Why? His significant answers briefly were

- bad accounting with “financial innovations with new ways to cheat shareholders”, grossly enrich corporate directors on short-term financial growth and long-term disaster; dubious auditing by boards paying them; ‘analysts’ scandals that brought investment banks into the worst disrepute;
- all leading to the grossly exaggerated enrichment by short-term bonuses of billions to bank and finance company directors, with the added incentive of tax-free offshore banks leading to Stiglitz’s “corporate malfeasance”. Which came to its peak with the massive irresponsible scandal of sub-prime mortgages in America’s hemorrhage of politics, economics and its American dream.
- Misguided deregulation and bad tax reduction policies for the rich, leading to the erosion of corrective regulation.
- Wall Streets thrust for dubious derivatives and speculative cash flows not related to true asset values, printing money for debt relief for more inflation.
- All this revealing to the world the myth of American capitalism and the myth of Adam Smith’s “invisible hand”, which corrects and balances markets. In “The Madoff Economy”, Paul Krugman figured “about \$400 billion a year in waste, fraud and abuse”. Where were the Fed, the SEC and the President and his men?

And behind these American internals, there were the major blinded faults of American foreign policy behind the swing doors of what I call the Goldman Sachs-Halliburtonisation of American geo-politics and foreign policy. Those swing doors facilitated the movement of leading American private bankers and company directors to high offices of state and vice versa with both political parties. This also led to the major American disaster in Iraq in quest of oil, under the pretence of undiscovered weapons of mass destruction and with presumptuous ideals of spreading Jeffersonian democracy among tribal war-lords and the “bad guys” of fanatic terrorism. Forgetting the British empires failed experience in the same region in the previous two centuries! Stiglitz says “We draw our economic lessons from our politicians only at our peril”; especially when those politicians can go both ways

through those swing doors to power and to pots of gold. No nation’s interests can be entrusted to such with untamed appetites for private wealth at the enormous public cost, now on unprecedented global cost. The American dream has become a global nightmare.

When the corporate financial delinquents spread their net of sub-prime mortgages to millions of greedy house-owners, at greatly reduced interest charges from 7% in 2003 to under 3% even to speculative, greedy house aspirations without job, incomes and risk-backed assets; they were giving away the precious savings of the public and the pensioners for their short-term golden bonuses of billions, with no conscience or responsibility for future consequences. The American state, this super-power is now in multiple dilemmas. Should it makes its financial barons accountable? Or will that bring them and the industries they finance to their knees with mass unemployment? Or should they print a trillion dollars to bail out those bonus-hungry barons and the economy as a whole? And even if they do, who can tell the consequences in this devil’s cauldron?

And this is not just America’s cauldron. With globalization it is also the world’s; especially over 3 billion of poor with high priced food, energy and commodities, and life-destroying inflation and disease.

What are the answers and remedies? For what they are worth, they seem to be beyond national political leaders without statesmanlike global leadership.

First, as it is the worst politico-economic, geo-strategic globalization problem ever, the greatest single challenge with globalised climate change for this new century, let us at least list those formidable responses.

1. First, in rational economics, there has to be a balance - not easy to define between laissez fare capitalism of the American kind, with a medium of effective state intelligence of the markets and the necessary regulation against fraud and delinquency in financial institutions, banks and companies. There are no hidden hands to balance between boom and bust. How to avoid the politico-bureaucratic-commissar strangling of the enterprise and economic security of millions? There is a wide range of such experience. That future Nobel Laureate is awaited who can give us the best distilled past experience in all kinds of states. And there will, of course, be different answers for states in different stages of development from Sweden to Sudan. And the politics of each is fundamental reality. Politicians

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Point Counter Point

Ashok Karnik

Every issue has at least two sides. A wise man examines all sides before coming to a conclusion. This is an attempt to present various sides of an issue so that a considered opinion can be formed.

Police Image

1) The image of the police in India is not bright, to say the least. The police have the stigma of being corrupt, rude, bereft of concern for human rights, etc. Besides, it is accused of being ill trained, ill equipped and ill prepared to face an emergency. In spite of all this calumny, it is the police who stood up to the terrorists on 26/11 in Mumbai. Many of them died but no one ran away with the excuse that they could not match the AK 47s wielded by the terrorists. We might not love our police but when our lives are in danger, we need our policemen. Rapid Action Force, NSG commandos etc. will come later but the policeman comes first and bears the brunt of enemy fire as well as public criticism.

The city (of Mumbai) survived January 1993. It will survive November 2008. Whatever survival means. A functional stock market? Another exuberant Ganeshotsav? Another star-studded page 3 soiree? ..We will probably seek more desperate refuge in the world of trivia than ever before.

Arundhati Subramaniam, *The Hindu*, December 7, 2008

National Investigation Agency

2) In the wake of 26/11, the Parliament, showing rare unity, passed a bill to form a National Investigation Agency (NIA) to improve the country's anti-terror mechanism. Various States still have misgivings that the NIA would become an instrument for the Centre to interfere in state matters, impinging on the federal structure of the country. These doubts have been kept on the back burner for the time being, underlining the desire to meet the terrorist threat with greater determination than shown hitherto. The Prevention of Unlawful Activities Act has been strengthened. For better coordination of intelligence, the Multi-Agency Centre (MAC) has been restructured to work on a 24x7 basis. This is a welcome development but do all these measures meet our crucial needs?

If terrorism, is the result of following political correctness, we are caught in a trap. Can we get out of this correctness trap?

Mr. N. Vittal, *Mumbai Mirror*, September 8, 2008

1) The criticism that our policemen are ill equipped is correct but our expectation that all of them should be provided with AK 47s and bulletproof vests is unrealistic. The street policeman has to deal with the daily routine of crowd management, traffic control, thefts and routine complaints of assault and petty quarrels. He cannot move about with his AK 47 and wear bulletproof jacket even if he is provided with one. It is the riot police or Special Task Force men who need to be better equipped not the man in the police station. The thing to remember is that even with bare lathis and occasional revolver, the police at Mumbai Chowpatty remained undeterred, killed one terrorist and captured another. There is also a misconception about the efficacy of bulletproof jackets; the jacket has layers of Kevlar fabric to obstruct a bullet. The greater the number of layers, the grater is its ability to stop a bullet. The problem is that a multi-layered jacket hinders one's mobility. You don't want your policemen rendered motionless!

2) Now the test lies in how well the NIA and the MAC are put to use. The NIA has countrywide jurisdiction, unlike the CBI, which requires State's permission to investigate offences in the State's jurisdiction. Is it one more organisation that would enter the turf battles already ruining the country's administrative efficacy? An instrument to investigate terror attacks, narcotics networks, counterfeit currency apparatus, etc was badly needed. However, terrorist attacks can be prevented only through better intelligence. Counting the body bags and prosecuting the guilty is the second step, not the first. The first step is yet to be taken. Does the MAC have the teeth to whip the various intelligence agencies into giving up their domains and work together for the national cause? The bane so far has been that each agency wants to protect its little fiefdom. Will accountability be a by-word in our administration from now?

Home grown terrorism is just the most glaring consequence of past lapses by both government and businesses. The rampaging mob that killed the CEO in Noida, the Bajrang cadres who are terrorising Christians in Orissa and Karnataka, as well as violence against non-Maharashtrians in Mumbai are all a consequence of selective and sporadic application of the rule of law.

Excerpted from the article "Mass Violence and Business", Rajni Bakshi, *Mint*, October 23, 2009.

People's Representatives

3) The brouhaha over Sanjay Dutt's getting the Socialist Party ticket for the next Lok Sabha election is a true reflection of our political immaturity. The reaction suggests as if we have been gifted a saviour, a knight in shining armour. The media is agog with the reception he got in Lucknow. No lament over a convict trying to get elected to Parliament. A jailbird contesting elections to prove that he has been exonerated by the people's court is becoming a norm rather than an exception. Since we did not stop the first convict from getting elected, we are paying the price for our lethargy and are having more and more criminals as our representatives. What right do we have to complain that our democracy is dysfunctional?

3) We hope that the courts will come to our aid by stopping convicts from contesting elections. Appeals against conviction are the instrument for defying all norms of decency. The appeals are not decided for eons and convictions are held in abeyance, allowing the convicts to contest elections. In Sanjay Dutt's case, his conviction has not been stayed – as yet. No doubt, courts should be more aware that judicial processes are being misused. This avenue of escape should be denied to convicts. Beyond the courts, is it not the responsibility of the society to remedy matters by defeating all such candidates? Why do we shift our burden to the courts and the law? All those convicted of offences of moral turpitude need to be defeated at the hustings so that they dare not contest elections again.

Readers are invited to send in their points of view on serious issues of the day to avkay@mtnl.net.in

The Guilty Men of 2008 – Bureaucracy's Accountability

Sadanand B. Kumte

The day of 26th November when the terrorists attacked Mumbai is not merely its darkest hour but its defining moment that has permanently changed India's psyche but its destiny also.

Who are the guilty men of 2008? The first to come are the politicians and the ruling class. Three heads of politicians have rolled so far – the Home Minister of the Government of India, the Chief Minister and the Home Minister of Maharashtra. All Indians are seething with anger over their utter incompetence and what was worse, their trivialisation of the tragedy and palpable insensitivity to the heart rending agony of the survivors and the relatives of the dead. Overnight, politicians have become the most hated class.

This article is not about politicians whose credibility is at an all time low, but about our bureaucrats smugly sitting in their air-conditioned chambers. And as usual in any crisis they suddenly become invisible and deafeningly silent! What were they doing? We saw firemen in action, innocent men dying and being held hostage and mercilessly being shot, others suffering the trauma of 60 hours of siege with death staring in their faces. Then there were the brave NSG men, Naval Commandos, Policemen and officers facing the terrorists – against a mere ten, armed to the teeth with hatred in their hearts.

In sharp contrast stand out our top bureaucrats who preside over the destinies of the service class, starting with the Chief Secretary down to the lowly section officer. This hierarchy normally manages the silted channels of the government carrying doddering files tumbling forward

ending up in the 'holy' hands of the honourable minister! The pity is that this milieu of politicians and bureaucrats is entrusted with the task of law and order, protecting the lives of ordinary citizens. The bureaucrats are adept in the art of quoting rules of business to be able to stall progress, action or innovation. But when it comes to sharing responsibilities, they conveniently hide behind the ministers! They are the masters of the *status quo*. This class needs to introspect and ensure that their foot soldiers are well equipped and well looked after, instead of working for their own privileges and comforts. Not one bureaucrat has paid any price so far for the Mumbai tragedy. Not even the National Security Adviser. If he was so helpless, he should be renamed Notional Security Adviser!

We have a rotten state because corruption runs through the entire system. Bureaucrats and policemen curry favour and do politician's bidding. Public weal takes a back seat. Merit is the first casualty in this web of political patronage. If the Mumbai tragedy does not shake up this huge monolith of entrenched *babudom* with all its security, it must be made accountable by the government.

There is talk of Administrative Reforms. We have been hearing about them since the Appleby Report after Independence. We do not know how effective will be the Moily Report. It is high time the guilty men of 2008 are identified and held accountable and not allowed to escape the consequences of their lapses.

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Obama's Presidency and Indian Foreign Policy

P. R. Dubhashi

It would be a great mistake for India to view Obama's Presidency in the narrow South Asian perspective.

Obama's arrival on January 20 as the new US President in succession to George Bush has been looked upon in some Indian quarters with some amount of reservation and even misgivings. According to them, Republicans and not Democrats have been generally friendly to India. Bush was India's best friend. Prime Minister Manmohan Singh went to the extent of telling him that "Indians loved him!"

He sent his Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice with the message that the US wants to help India to become a super power! With this end in view, he took initiatives leading to the Indo-US Nuclear Agreement and "strategic" alliance articulated through several agreements including that on military cooperation. He point blank refused Pakistan President Gen. Musharraf's request for a similar nuclear agreement making it clear to him that Pakistan cannot be equated with India, ending once and for all the hyphenated treatment of India and Pakistan. US Ambassador to India, David Mulford also underlined this in a TV interview. Bush refused to interfere with the Kashmir issue expecting the two countries to settle it themselves. In his farewell address, Bush specially mentioned strategic alliance with India as an achievement of his Presidency. This showed the extent of importance he attached to US-India relationship.

Despite all this "goodwill" for India, it should not be forgotten that at no time did Bush support India's longstanding case for membership of the UN Security Council. His "tilt" towards India could well have been a part of America's worldwide strategy aimed at maintaining America's un-questioned supremacy in the world. America (and Bush) looks upon China with her rapidly growing economic and military power, as a threat to its supremacy. It, therefore, needs India to counter balance China. Hence the pursuit of strategic and military alliance with India. America's support to democracy in India is a matter of convenience. When needed, America has never hesitated to support military dictatorship whether in Pakistan or Indonesia.

Will Obama maintain and develop this "cordial relationship" between the two democracies – one described

as the oldest and the other largest? The reservations and misgivings about Obama stem from the interpretation of some of his utterances. As a Senator he moved amendments which might have stymied the nuclear agreement. Consistent with the stand of the Democratic Party, he is likely to press for India signing the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and NPT which India has steadfastly refused to do so far. He has linked the Kashmir issue with the war against the Taliban fighters on the Pak-Afghan border. It has been hinted that Obama may appoint a special envoy on Kashmir and on Indo-Pak relationship.

It would be a great mistake for India to view Obama's Presidency in the narrow South Asian perspective, more specifically in the context of Indo-Pak relationship. A country like India should view it in a broader perspective or world view as it did in early years of Jawaharlal Nehru's leadership of foreign policy.

Obama's arrival as the 44th President of USA marks verily a revolution, a culmination of a long fight of the black (Afro-American) population for equality and human rights. This also has a message to all the oppressed people of the world. Obama has expressed his determination to bring about a qualitative change in internal and external policy which has created an atmosphere of hope and optimism all over the world. That explains the euphonic response in US and elsewhere to Obama's assumption of the American Presidency.

The one major departure which Obama is likely to effect from his predecessor's foreign policy is in respect of the overwhelming use of military power and war. This was exhibited in full measure in the "shock and awe" attacks on Afghanistan and Iraq. Perhaps Bush and his close allies in policy-making Vice President Cheney and his ex-Defence Secretary Rumsfeld intended to do the same in case of Iran and Syria. But the US was so embroiled in Iraq that perhaps they had no opportunity to actually implement the threats extended to both these countries. Nor is Obama likely to uphold Bush's doctrine of "unilateralism" supported by military might. Obama will rather approach world problems through diplomacy and multilateralism. He

has already expressed his intention to engage in negotiations with Iran. He is likely to use the medium of the UN to deal with problems arising in different parts of the world. World peace rather than war is likely to be the goal of his foreign policy.

In his inaugural speech he has eloquently spoken of his ardent desire to unite the US bridging different segments of the US population and unite humanity transcending national barriers. The US, he said, will be a friend of every country in the world. These were also the goals of Nehru's foreign policy as a result of which India took a lead in peace missions in different parts of the world.

Obama's support for CTBT and NPT need not cause misgivings to India. India opposed signing these treaties because it felt that they are discriminatory. If the discriminatory approach is given up and abolition of nuclear weapons becomes the goal to be pursued by all nations, big and small, then India should have no hesitation in supporting such an approach. After all this was the keynote of Rajiv Gandhi's proposals made on the forum of the UN which were largely ignored by the nuclear powers.

Recession is the biggest economic challenge which Obama will have to face. Even Bush, sworn to capitalist market economy and minimalist state, had to introduce \$

700 billion bail out plan. Obama is likely to follow Keynes rather than Friedman in dealing with recession. In his inaugural address he has talked of a big infrastructure development plan and welfare plan with emphasis on high quality health services which should encourage similar programme in different countries including the developing ones which under the influence of "Washington Consensus" formed by the Republicans over two decades were perforce required to undertake structural adjustment programmes and so called fiscal discipline with reduced public expenditure with disastrous consequences on the living condition of the poor and the have-nots. This might well pave the way for the re-emergence of the concept of New International Economic Order (NIEO) which was rejected under the American influence during the Republican regime. All in all India should welcome the "regime change" in US.

In this new context India should think of giving up its pusillanimous policy of being a junior partner of the USA and go back to its initial years after independence when India stood for ideals of world peace, equality, freedom and fair play and followed an independent foreign policy based on those ideals.

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A Demand for Indian 'Hyenas'

Recently there was a headline in a newspaper almost screaming, "Indian Hyenas in Demand Abroad". The headline was spread over four columns. It grabbed attention and made interesting reading. For, there was demand from abroad for something Indian!

But it was, nevertheless, baffling. I for one was not aware that there were hyenas in such abundance that there could be a clamour, a demand for them. We knew about Gir Lions, yes. Bengal Tigers, yes. They are famous. But, hyenas!

Thinking hard about hyenas, there was churning in my mind, and suddenly it became clear. Yes, hyenas, the perfect predators, who remain on the prowl and lurk in the periphery, with hanging tongues and dripping saliva, to grab anything that is readily available without having to struggle. Any big kill they see, and they wait in the wings – in competitive groups – to move in, with their own appropriate timing. Give them an inch, and they will muscle in. One cannot just shoo them away, howsoever hard one may try. They pounce on everything, and once they grab, no one, absolutely nothing, can wriggle out of their clutches, their jaws. They are mean and shameless, selfish and cunning, also cruel and vicious, and yet, they can be sweet and humble in their own beaming pretentious way. If this is the species that is in demand, we have them in plenty – in various categories, different hues and of special quality. They are two-legged.

If anybody wants them, what are we waiting for? Send all of them, post haste, before the order gets cancelled. Dump the formalities and procedures and clearances. Execute the order first and fast. It does not matter if this species become extinct in India.

YES, WE ARE THAT SICK AND TIRED OF THESE TWO-LEGGED PREDATORS.

KASHINATH DIVECHA

Management Approach to Terrorism

Terrorists – R – Us

Sharu S. Rangnekar

A person becomes a terrorist when he believes “I am OK – You are not OK”

At one time terrorists were considered essentially Muslims. As somebody remarked, the majority of Muslims are not terrorists – but the majority of terrorists are Muslims. There was also a belief that these are uneducated or semi-educated people who are not very conversant with modern thinking and hence are led into fanatical beliefs.

Now, the real situation seems to be different. The terrorists seem to be belonging to all religions. Many of them seem to be highly educated and technology savvy. When we look at individual cases, we wonder how these people were led into terrorism.

Centripetal – Centrifugal Forces

The fact is all human beings are potential terrorists. All human beings are subjected to two forces simultaneously. One is ‘Centripetal Force’ which brings people together. The other is ‘Centrifugal Force’ which divides people into smaller and smaller groups hostile to each other. When we are very young – say four years old – we are told about what is good and what is bad that ultimately forms our morality: Telling truth is good, telling a lie is bad. Honesty is the best policy. Always be kind to animals. Give respect to elders, etc.

At the same time we get messages “who is good” and “who is bad”. This forms our prejudices about caste, community, language, state, religion, nation, etc. For example, as a high caste Hindu boy, I was given messages: Muslims are dangerous, Christians are unreliable, Punjabis are aggressive, Marwaris are stingy, Harijans are dirty etc.

Both the morality and prejudices we carry in our head as “parental messages”. As we grow and get our personal experiences some of these messages are changed. Not only the prejudices are changed but also the morality gets changed. For example: we are told “Do not touch somebody else’s property – that is stealing- that is bad”. It gets modified in many cases into a message: “Don’t touch somebody else’s property – if you are likely to be found out”. If you are found out, it may involve

punishment but if you are not found out that might be profitable.

Similarly we get experience about people of other castes, communities, languages, states, religions, nations and our experiences can modify our prejudice. For example: The first day at school I met a classmate. I asked him, “What is your name?” He said “Abdulla”. I immediately got scared because I knew Abdulla is Muslim and Muslims are dangerous - so Abdulla is dangerous. But in a few days of interaction I found he was a nice friendly person. That did not change my prejudice completely because I still felt Muslims are dangerous but Abdulla is an exception. Whenever prejudicial messages run counter to our experience, we make “exceptions”. However, if one is subjected to a cosmopolitan culture, one soon comes to an understanding that the person being good or bad does not depend on his caste, community, language, state or nation or religion. It depends on the person. This is what modifies the prejudices.

Terrorists – Terrorists Everywhere?

When we look at people around us, we have people who have prejudices - but many of the prejudices have been modified. The more interaction a person gets with other groups, greater is the chance that the prejudice may get modified; but in a few cases, the prejudice may get accentuated because of certain experiences of personal discrimination or through preaching about such discrimination from others. In a few cases this hostility through prejudice feeding on itself becomes very severe. At that stage an individual is ready to “sacrifice” to hurt the group he is hostile to. This is the basic ingredient of terrorism.

When the potential terrorist gets access to technology whereby he can do a great deal of damage to the group he is hostile to, he may become an active terrorist. The most dangerous terrorist is the one who feels that hurting some other group is more important than his own life. That makes for a suicidal terrorist who is the most dangerous type.

In summary, a person becomes a terrorist when he believes “I am OK – You are not OK” very intensively; would like to use violence to punish the not OK group and has access to appropriate technology to cause damage.

Dealing with Terrorism

Today the world is conscious that terrorism is one of the most urgent problems. To deal with terrorism we are moving in the direction of using technology to counter it and to recruit and train the manpower to handle it. This is a game where every move we make leads to a counter-move by the terrorists. Thus this becomes an unending game.

In the preamble of the UNESCO it is stated: “Wars do not start on the battlefields, but in the minds of men. And it is the minds of men the bastions of peace have to be built”.

To build the bastions of peace two steps have to be taken. Firstly we have to create counter propaganda about the contribution various groups are making for building India and ultimately for the improvement of the world. The collaboration in medical, scientific and particularly in computer and space exploration have to be emphasised. We have to ultimately forget the past which is full of acrimonious struggles and concentrate on the future where we can see greater co-ordination, co-operation and collaboration.

We have to also emphasis that the various groups have to live together. The TINA factor (*There is No*

Alternative) has to be emphasised. As Gandhiji use to say, “India is a land of minorities – there is no majority which can rule the others”. The world is also becoming a rule of minorities and getting along with others is an essential part. Being proud of your own culture is OK as long as it does not bring in the feeling of superiority-inferiority. The equality has to be emphasised to create the world culture which pervades the universe.

In the words of Iqbal (In his poem “*Naya Shivala*” New Temple) :

*Aa gairiyet ke parde ek baar fir utha de
Nakshe dui mita de, bichhadonkon phir mila de
Suni padi huin hain muddat se dil ki basti
Aa ek naya shivala is deshmein bana de
Shakti bhi Shanti bhi to bhaktonke geeton mein hai
Dharti ke basiyonki mukti pireet mein hai.*

Let us lift the barriers of alienation
Remove the hostility and get together the alienated people
For a long time our heart has been empty of affection.
Let us build a new temple in this land
Power and peace will be in the chants of the devotees
The occupants of this world have their emancipation in love.

* This is an outline of a presentation to the International Institute of Security And safety Management Conference on 14th November 2008.

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The Shoe Legacy



All dictators get their shoo dues, Wen Jiabao got his at London. Not all protesters are bad at aiming though, I reserve the rights to give a better one to Hu Jintao. Shoes are such a leveler; this one shoe has put Wen Jiabao on the same vicious pedestal as the war monger former American president. The engineer diplomat and smart Premier has suddenly become a dictator. Thanks to the shoe protester of London. An enthusiastic Indian activist said to me “we must all practice shoe throwing from today, who knows who would get the chance?”

Mr Kallianpur, long-time Tibet watcher and Friends of Tibet’s National Coordinator said “The protester should have first thrown the shoe at 10 Downing Street - for declaring Tibet as a part of China, a new blanket statement policy change.”

I hope the shoe was a cheap Chinese shoe that must have been produced somewhere in the backyard of Guangdong or Fujiang. Thank you from Dharamshala. The Tibetans and Tibet supporters in London did a great job at the protest.

TENZIN TSUNDUE / www.friendsoftibet.org/tenzin/



Cornucopia

Firoze Hirjikaka

Subverting Due Process

Defending an accused, no matter how heinous his crime, is a constitutional imperative

There is a sort of mass hysteria being created around the offer of some prominent Mumbai advocates to defend the captured terrorist, Ajmal Amir Kasab. The lawyers are being accused of being, at best, misguided, or even worse, traitors to the nation. Can anything be more absurd? The latest victim of this media trial is advocate K.B.N. Lam. As a Parsi myself, I feel embarrassed that some members of my supposedly enlightened community have issued a social boycott against Lam.

What countless number of our citizens do not seem to appreciate is that defending an accused, no matter how heinous his crime, is a constitutional imperative. Under our criminal justice system, every single person accused of a crime is entitled to a legal defence. This is not open to interpretation. Under the present circumstances, this may appear to be a silly system, but it is followed in most of the world's democratic and developed nations: So there must be some merit in it.

For sure, the captured terrorist is an inhuman monster and deserves to be hanged – and he probably will get the death penalty. But that does not translate into

a licence to subvert due process. You cannot just drag the man out to CST station and hang him in public, as the Shiv Sena is demanding. Public lynchings have been outlawed in most civilized countries of the world since the past two hundred years. We cannot go back to the Dark Ages.

And why is it assumed that providing a legal defence to Kasab will somehow facilitate his release? Judgments and verdicts depend on hard evidence - and the evidence against the terrorist is pretty overwhelming and watertight. Unless the prosecution messes up its case – the chances of Kasab being acquitted are remote in the extreme. I am reasonably sure that Mr. Lam has no sympathy for the terrorist. On a personal level, he probably despises Kasab as much as the rest of us, but he is conscientious enough to realize that the law of the land must be followed if we are to be regarded as a civilized nation; and not as barbarians. Most of us may not like what he is doing but, at the very least, he deserves our respect. He certainly does not deserve his home to be invaded and vandalized by a bunch of hoodlums.

Is India's Diplomacy Working

No matter who their President is, America will give priority to its self interest.

Many political commentators are wondering whether the advent of Barack Obama as President of the US will make any change in America's attitude towards Pakistan and India, particularly in the aftermath of the Mumbai terror attack on 26/11.

The obvious answer is that the only thing India can bank on from the US, no matter who their President is, is that America will give priority to its self interest. However, India can subtly manoeuvre the US to its own advantage - and I believe our government is doing it. This has resulted in Pakistan toning down its initial intransigence and flat denials; and making at least a show of wanting to cooperate with India.

The Indian government has been criticised for making empty threats of "keeping all options open", thereby implying that a military strike on Pakistan,

while unlikely, cannot be ruled out. It is this implied threat that is making the US put pressure on Pakistan to address India's concerns vis-a-vis the Mumbai terror attacks. The last thing America wants is a military escalation, not out of any genuine concern for India or Pakistan, but because it would afford Pakistan a heaven sent excuse to shift its focus from the war against the Taliban and divert its troops to the Indian border. Pakistan's initial intransigence was aimed at provoking India for this very reason. America and the West are now putting pressure on India to "solve" the Kashmir issue for the same reason - which also is what Pakistan wants.

Pakistan initially engaged in the war against the Taliban in order to - as General Musharraf put it - to prevent being bombed back to the Stone Age. Subsequently, it found that the role of being the US's ally against the war on terror was highly beneficial. Under its

guise, Musharaff milked the United States out of billions of dollars, most of which was used to arm itself against the real enemy - India. The reality is that Pakistan's heart was never in its fight against the Taliban, because a significant proportion of its population is openly sympathetic towards the Taliban, whom they regard as their Islamist brethren. However, Pakistan is well aware that, no matter how much the US may suspect its motives, it is indispensable to the US in the war against terror. Pakistan has America over a barrel, so to speak - and it is not going to let the latter forget it.

For Love Or Money

The murder of the young BPO employee Paloma Fernandes, while tragic, is also symptomatic of today's instant-gratification society, especially among the young.

The tale is a fairly common one. A young girl, living alone in a big city and holding down a good job in a Business Processing Outfit (BPO), makes friends with a young man in the next apartment. They become romantically involved. Due to the recession, he loses his job and begins to make financial demands on the woman. Finally, she has had enough and tells him it's over. A few days later, he goes over to her apartment and stabs her several times. In a final act of desperation, he stabs himself. He survives; the girl dies.

The murder of the young BPO employee Paloma Fernandes, while tragic, is also symptomatic of today's instant-gratification society, especially among the young. The older generation, growing up in more austere economic times, knew that they had to strive patiently for something they wanted. But today's youngsters want it all - and they want it now. The offshoot of this is that their tolerance levels are very low and many of them are unable to handle rejection in a mature manner.

That is why India's seemingly ambiguous position is working to its advantage. The government's response to 26/11 may appear wishy-washy and irrational, but there is a method to the madness. It is keeping America on tenterhooks; and compelling it to turn the screws on Pakistan. India's political acumen in foreign affairs may have finally matured, insofar as it has learned to recognise global realities. This is a far cry from the days of Nehru and Indira Gandhi - when India was an economic basket case and hence figured nowhere in world rankings - but our leaders insisted on giving portentous opinions on world affairs, that nobody listened to.

The young man, Aquino Martis, probably could not accept that fact that his girlfriend was drifting away from him. In addition, he probably had to endure frequent taunts from the girl and her parents about his jobless status. Already possessing low self esteem, the final rejection from the girl he thought he loved probably drove him over the edge. To his warped way of thinking, if he could not have her, no one else was going to. Perhaps when he realized the enormity of what he had done, he made a ham-handed attempt to end his own life.

sThis is what happens when things come too easily for you. To make matters worse, over-indulgent parents mistakenly foster the belief in their offspring that they are entitled to the good things in life, even without sacrificing for them. In this case, what should have been a lovers' quarrel has tragically and needlessly resulted in the loss of a promising young life and the ruin of another one.

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Deaths that Made Even Top Doctors Wonder...

This case happened in a hospital's Intensive care ward where patients always died in the same bed and all on Sunday mornings at 11a.m, regardless of their medical condition.

This puzzled the doctors and some even thought that it had something to do with the supernatural. No one could solve the mystery as to why the deaths took place at 11 a.m.

So a world-wide expert team was constituted and they decided to go down to the ward to investigate the cause of the incidents. So on the next Sunday morning few minutes before 11 a.m. all doctors and nurses nervously waited outside the ward to see for themselves what the terrible phenomenon was all about. Some were holding wooden crosses, prayer books and other holy objects to ward off evil.....

Just when the clock struck 11... and then..... then..... then.....

Turn to page 19 to know what happened

Profiles of Indian Liberals

Justice Nitoor Srinivasa Rau



(1903-2004)

B. Leela

Nitoor was unique among South Indian Liberals in many respects. He was a Gandhian before he becomes a votary of liberal humanism, and his devotion to the Mahatma continued all his life.

The erstwhile State of Mysore and Coastal Karnataka have been specially fortunate in being blessed by a number of nonagenarians and cente-

narians. Some of them have legendary reputations beginning from M. Visvesvaraya of revered memory who set very high standards in public life; A.N.Murthy Rao who made Socrates and Moliere household names in Kannada; Masti who stood like a lone star; Sivarama Karanth who can be compared with Tagore for his many sided versatility. The late Nitoor Srinivasa Rau was not only in this galaxy but gave it a stellar lustre.

Born on August 24, 1903 young Nitoor had his primary education in different parts of the old Mysore State and completed his Matriculation at Shimoga in 1919. This gave him an exposure to different places of Mysore and helped him to empathize with different people and surroundings. His mother passed away early and his formative years were spent in the homes of his uncles M. Hiriyantha, the great student of philosophy to be acclaimed internationally and M. N. Krishna Rao who later became Dewan of the State. He married the latter's daughter. It is worth recording that his father instilled a deep admiration for Ram Mohan Roy and Veeresalingam Pantulu as well as for Mahatma Gandhi.

Collegiate Education and Gandhiji's Influence

Rau opted for science education and joined the Central College, Bangalore, the then only college imparting science education. His passion for Science led him to opt for Physics. He participated in almost all the activities of the College – was a keen sportsman and was the Secretary of the Karnataka Sangha and also played an important role in the Scout Movement. M. R. Sreeivasa Murthy his teacher in the school had already inculcated in him interest in social work. Rau wanted to take up research and join the prestigious Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore, but a major illness prevented this and he was persuaded to opt for a Law degree at Madras Law College. What the world of Science lost was a gain to Law!

A new national mood was sweeping over Mysore and parts of Karnataka in the 1920s when he was in the Central College. He paid a visit and had a 'darshan' of Tagore the poet, when he visited Bangalore. In 1920 he attended the Nagpur Congress and met Gandhiji in person. The future leaders Gangadhar Rao Deshpande and Hardikar were emerging as potential leaders and were active; the message of Gandhi emphasizing Hindi and doing away with untouchability were gaining new adherents.

Law as a Career

Nitoor Srinivas Rau was the first Mysorean to pass the Law degree in 1st class from the University of Madras (1926). His classmates in Madras College included H. V. R. Iengar who later became the Governor of the Reserve Bank of India, Tiruvengadacharya (Madras Advocate General) and Seshachalapathi (Judge, Hyderabad High Court). After completing Law and qualifying for the Bar in 1927, he set up practice in Bangalore in 1928.

Nitoor was unique among South Indian Liberals in many respects. He was a Gandhian before he becomes a votary of liberal humanism, and his devotion to the Mahatma continued all his life. Liberals have had an ambivalent attitude towards the methods of the Mahatma; though they admired him for his sterling qualities and his passion for spiritualizing politics, yet had reservations about the methods adopted by him, e.g., non-cooperation, satyagraha, boycott of public institutions etc. Nitoor had no such reservations. The early involvement in Gandhian ideals instilled by his father was to deepen and pervade his politics and civic engagements.

Gandhiji and Congress Politics Enter Mysore

He had a major share in popularizing Gandhi among the masses. Along with his wife he translated Gandhiji's autobiography as well as his commentary on the Gita into Kannada and also established a publishing house, 'Satya Shodhan Pustak Bhandara' for propagating the works of the Mahatma. For nearly four decades, the house engaged itself in two things – one to publish books in Kannada and raise the status of the language in the country and

the other to popularise writings in the language. Several major writers were fostered, promoted and published by him viz. V. Sitaramiah, Rajaratnam, P. T. Narasimhachar, Samsa, Kshirasagara, K. V. Puttappa, Gorur Ramaswamy Iyengar. These established a distinctive Kannada literature and sensibility. One of the most important of the ventures was perhaps the very first of a *childrens' cyclopaedia* in any Southern language: *Balaprapancha* by the polymath Shivaram Karanth. Specially designed for children with profuse illustrations, notes, printed in specially imported paper, it has remained a landmark in Kannada publishing history.

Secondly and equally importantly, the Office of the 'Satya Shodhan' almost replicated the Persian Cafes, where literary eminences would gather in the evenings and discuss politics, art, and literature. G. P. Rajaratnam, P. T. Narasimhachar, Gorur, Masti, V. Sitaramiah and many others would visit the office. People like Bendre and Shivaram Karanth would make it a point to visit and spend time in the 'Pustaka Bhandara' and meet their peers.

What should have been a minor communal struggle in Bangalore (July 29, 1929), was mismanaged by the Diwan. Critical comments on the developments in a local journal invited the wrath of the government; the editor, the author of the offending comments, the printer and publisher were tried for sedition and put behind bars for nine months. Nitoor argued on behalf of them in the District Magistrate Court. This was perhaps the first of political convictions in the State. It resulted in the strengthening of the Congress in Bangalore and soon North Karnataka was to be drawn into the vortex of the national struggle. The British retaliated against the incipient civil disobedience movement; the office of the Congress Committee at Dharwad was closed. The party went underground with Bangalore becoming the epicenter. Nitoor with R. R. Divakar and Kamaladevi Chattopadhyaya ran the clandestine movement. With the arrest of all cadres, in 1942, Nitoor with his close colleague and friend H. R. Venkataramiah looked after the Congress administration.

D. V. Gundappa and Nitoor Srinivasa Rau

The Gokhale Institute of Public Affairs an independent non-communal organization was founded by D. V. Gundappa, doyen of Kannada literature. Gundappa drew his inspiration to start an institution from the life and labours of Gokhale. He fully shared the ideal of Gokhale 'to spiritualise politics'. After the demise of D. V. Gundappa in 1975, Justice Nitoor Sreenivasa Rau who was close to Gundappa guided and fostered the destiny of the Gokhale Institute. The Institute has many activities including training the young to become model citizens and also helps them to build qualities of leadership and encourages them

to work for public cause.

Unlike D. V. Gundappa the liberal polymath, the world of Nitoor ran on different grooves. He did not take part in political institutions of the State for he was deeply engaged in the profession of the law. He was never a member of the State's Legislative Assembly, but he had broader engagements like, the Kannada Sahitya Parishad, the struggle for a unified Karnataka. Also it is likely that the establishment till the merger had its own reservations about his political correctness though this is a matter of speculation. Public and private engagements took a heavy toll of his leisure and he seems to have been content in being involved in these.

However, after independence he occupied official positions relating to law, such as Advocate General of Mysore (1953). Knowledgeable sources acknowledge the immense benefit that the government got because of his sagacious advice. Later he was to be Judge of the High Court of Mysore (1955) and a year later Chief Justice of the same court. The high esteem in which he was held is testified by his being appointed the first Central Vigilance Commissioner of India. As a Judge he was noted for his patience, his careful guiding of especially junior lawyers. Encouraging them to study their briefs and examine the pros and cons of the cases, they were engaged in, particularly the cons. He appeared to be taciturn, but those who knew him testified to the warmth beneath. Learned bodies sought his association as did the Indian Law Institute. The International Law Association; only a few of the institutions that he was associated with are indicated here.

Several awards came his way. The Dakshina Bharata Hindustani Prachar Sabha conferred on him a D.Litt. in 1961 and he was awarded the Kannada Rajyotsava Award in 1997.

His personal qualities endeared him to one and all. Courtesy personified, he encouraged people to excel themselves. People all over world never failed to pay a visit to meet him and spend sometime and they always departed richer from the interaction. His phenomenal memory has been testified to by everyone and happenings half a century back would be recalled as though they took place yesterday. Of him it could be said that he had no enemies, a *veritable Ajatasatru!* If he spread anything, it was goodwill, cheer and optimism and people left him feeling that the World is Indeed a Good Place to Live in.

He passed away on August 12, 2008, 12 days short of his 101th birthday.

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Mythical Barriers to Joining Politics

Sanjeev Sabhlok

So why aren't liberals contesting elections regularly and in sufficient numbers?

The February issue of *Freedom First* carried some of the best writings published in this magazine over the past fifty years. But most of these writings perhaps fell on deaf ears, for they advocated freedom at a time when few Indians cared about freedom. Indeed, Indians don't seem to care much about freedom even today. Law and order has deteriorated, and corruption has become entrenched, but defenders of liberty are nowhere to be seen on the political stage.

Since the Swatantra Party wound up in 1974, virtually no liberal has bothered to contest elections. Yet the basic entry fee for contesting elections in India has remained low – merely a security deposit of Rs.10,000. There is also no obvious shortage of people with liberal inclinations. And while many young liberals with families may be hard-pressed to contest elections, thousands of retired liberals can surely be mobilized for the defence of liberty.

So why aren't liberals contesting elections regularly and in sufficient numbers? Are they scared of 'dirty' politics and electoral violence? Do they believe elections are too costly? I will show below that these barriers are not as bad as we make them out to be. In any case, the existence of such problems is all the more reason for us to join the fray and fight to change the system.

Myth 1: Indian Elections are Excessively Violent

The belief that our elections are excessively violent is somewhat overdone. Of course, there is some electoral violence, but its magnitude is small in comparison to India's size (we should avoid comparing India with developed countries at this early stage of our development). Of our six lakh villages, only a few hundred will experience violence, with possibly a few hundred people injured and a dozen or two killed. Booth-capturing is also the exception than the norm. Similarly, the Indian Police is particularly good at protecting candidates: virtually no candidate is assaulted or killed of the many thousands who contest. And so, while we should take due precautions, merely contesting elections won't (generally speaking) kill us.

Myth 2: Money Wins Elections

The second myth relates to money. We know that many parties spend crores of rupees in elections. Accordingly I was recently told: "You require at least 2 crores to fight a parliament election." True, most corrupt parties do such things but why should we copy these corrupt gangsters? Aren't we different? We believe in integrity. We do not break the law, even though we disagree with it (I strongly disagree with limits on electoral expenses). We must therefore stick with the Rs.25 lakhs expense limit prescribed for parliamentary elections. Raising this amount is far easier than raising Rs.2 crores, particularly for outstanding liberals with good networks.

Then there is the belief that money buys electoral results. It is thought that *basti wallahs* sell their votes for "Rs.250/- cash, a packet of Biryani and a sachet of country arrack". But the reality is that voters take money from whosoever gives it to them, but then vote (in the quiet secrecy of the polling booth) for the candidate they actually believe in. I know of a politician who disbursed Rs.35 lakhs in slum areas in Mumbai in a single night but lost the election! In any event, bribing *every* voter can be astonishingly expensive, costing over Rs. 30 crores per constituency! No one spends that much in any election.

At the broader level, I question why even Rs.25 lakhs is really necessary. Some reflection will show that electoral results depend primarily on the following four things.

- a) **The message.** While the average voter is not interested in the details of policy, he wants to know what the proposed policies will mean for him. A well-tailored campaign can make a great difference, and that does not mean throwing money around.
- b) **Time spent talking to the electorate.** Good candidates spend a lot of time in their constituencies to build networks of supporters.
- c) **Quality and commitment of the candidate.** Good candidates speak coherently and demonstrate

commitment to their constituents' interests.

- d) **Credibility of the bid.** The Indian voter is highly strategic and doesn't waste his vote on independent candidates or on ill-prepared 'one-man political parties'. He wants to know that the candidate he will vote for has a *genuine* chance of becoming a part of government.

While money can facilitate these things, it is not the key driver of success. If liberals do their homework and work as a team, then even Rs. 25 lakhs won't be needed to win. Ask the Janata Party which trounced the corrupt Congress of 1977. Or ask the Telugu Desam of 1982, or Asom Gana Parishad of 1985. Many of these parties were formed weeks before elections and barely spent any money, but won huge majorities.

Time to Stop Making Excuses!

If contesting elections is not that dangerous nor that expensive, then why do we find so many excuses? Highly successful organisational leaders tell us with a serious face that they "don't have the leadership capability to lead India". If even these excellent people think they can't lead us politically, then who can? The local gangster?

Nandan M. Nilekani of Infosys wrote in *Imagining India* that he is "quite unelectable" – thus conveniently washing his hands off politics. Apart from the fact that it is highly presumptuous for anyone to assume the response of the voter, all that the voter really wants is a demonstration of good citizenship, not some mythical glorious leadership. I therefore ask Mr. Nilekani and others like him to stop

making excuses and join politics as good citizens. Give our voters a chance to elect good people.

Maybe (I hope I'm wrong on this one!) some liberals have big egos which will receive a rude jolt if they lose elections. If the idea of losing elections prevents people from contesting elections, let me assure them that fighting elections honourably will be seen by every right thinking person as a sign of good citizenship. Indeed, the benchmark in politics is so low that *any* good person who enters politics will be highly regarded. Beyond that, the true liberal must *never* be bothered about victory or defeat. We are obliged to do the right thing irrespective of results. The fight for freedom is too important for us to make our fight contingent on future success. Let us first get out there and fight for our freedoms. Let the fight succeed whenever it will; that is not for us to worry about.

A Good Liberal Platform Needed

The real gap today is *not* of funds or potential leaders, but of a platform where good people can assemble and offer a viable alternative to the voter. That is what the Freedom Team of India (FTI) aims to become. FTI has now developed a professionally designed website (freedomteam.in) and well-written brochure. Please take a look at these for yourself and ponder your future plans. Do you want to continue making excuses for the rest of your life or are ready to work as a team to start defending your liberties?

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"The Fault Line is not between wealthy and poor, but..."

The great fault line today is not between wealthy and poor, but between those still invested in this society and those who have effectively checked out. The checked-out classes love to read feel-good stories. The newspapers oblige, burying news about flooding and hunger and millions of easily averted deaths, depriving India's change agents of knowledge of what needs changing. The comfortable follow politics the way others follow heavyweight boxing. Over Black Labels with soda and ice, they grumble about spectacles like the ideas-free parliamentary debate. But they rarely vote, rarely run for office themselves and rarely work to reverse things. The disinterest of the thinking classes frees politicians to play their game unsupervised, with the pesky duty every five years to gather the consent of the unlettered poor.

Excerpted from "In India, idealism falters in the face of power" by Anand Giridharadas, *New York Herald Tribune*, August 14, 2008.

Know Our Neighbours

[Continuing the Cover Feature, 'Know Our Neighbours' (Freedom First, October 2008)]

Suresh Chandra Sharma

Afghanistan

“Conquering a country while mounted is easy; dismounting and building up a nation is difficult.” - Genghis Khan

Afghanistan is a buffer state which served as a spring board for invasions into India. There are more than seven ethnic groups and eight languages. Pashtuns, comprising 40% of the population, are ethnically close to the Pathans of North West Frontier Province (NWFP) of Pakistan. The country gained freedom from Britain over its foreign affairs on 19 August 1919 and has been beset with civil wars since 1970. The Soviet Union invaded the country in 1979. After initial success they were forced to withdraw due to the collapse of the Soviet economy and massive aid by USA and Saudi Arabia to the jihadis. Pakistan Army personnel and Mujahdeen from Saudi Arabia and Chechnya joined the Jihad against the Soviets. Some of these rebels spilled over into Kashmir but the Government of India did not complain either to the USA or Saudi Arabia.

Taliban Take Control

The USA showed no interest in the future set-up of Afghanistan and left it to Pakistan. In a move brokered by the UN, Afghan prime minister Najibullah was to leave Afghanistan by plane; instead he and his wife were hanged. Soviet origin arms and guns left behind were shipped to Karachi and passed on to the rebels. This helped in the capture of Khost in 1991. After a brief spell of rule by the Tajek faction of Rabani and Massoud, the Taliban appeared on the scene in 1994 and gained control of 95% of the country by 2000. The Tajek leader Massoud controlled the Northern region. During Taliban rule from 1995 to 2001, the people, particularly women, suffered violation of human rights. Three countries, Saudi Arabia, UAE and Pakistan recognized the Taliban regime. The USA was interested in keeping good relations with the Taliban in order to exploit the oil/gas resources of Central Asia. This proposal, however did not get the support of the Taliban.

‘Operation Enduring Freedom’

Investigations into the blasts of the Twin Towers in the USA established the complicity of Al Qaeda, founded by Osama Bin Laden a Saudi national, from Sudan to

Afghanistan where he found support for his war on the USA. The US demanded that Osama be handed over to them. When the Taliban government declined the US and allies launched ‘Operation Enduring Freedom’ (OEF) on 7 October 2001. It was not authorized by the UN Security Council and was not a NATO operation. It was claimed by the US and its allies as an act of self-defence authorized under Article 51 of the UN Charter. Its objectives were to dismantle the Taliban regime, destroy terrorist camps and infrastructure in Afghanistan and capture Osama. Under pressure from USA, Pakistan too joined the war on terror and extended transit facilities to the Coalition Forces. Saudi Arabia, UAE and Pakistan withdrew recognition to the Taliban regime in September 2001. The Northern Region Army of Massoud collaborated with the USA. The OEF was conducted by about 22000 troops out of which USA contributed 19000 and 3000 troops were from 26 countries. After 9 days of heavy fighting in Kunduz, the Taliban surrendered and the population of the city came out on the streets in their hundreds to welcome Northern Alliance troops. It is believed that about 5000 Taliban and a few hundred Pakistan military personnel were airlifted to Pakistan shortly before the surrender at Kunduz. The request for this evacuation was made by Musharraf to Bush to save Pakistan’s self-respect. The frustrated US troops could only watch this from the surrounding hills.

The Coalition Forces made rapid progress. By the end of November, the Taliban controlled only 4 out of 30 provinces. The Taliban leader Mulla Umar and Osama slipped out of Kandahar. Hamid Karzai was chosen as the interim President in 2002. He was confirmed as President in the elections of 9 October 2004.

Resurgence of Taliban

The Taliban regrouped themselves in the border region of Pakistan. Recruits came from both sides of the border. Pakistan’s para-military forces manning the border posts did not interfere with the jihadis and Pakistan’s military operations were of little use. The strength of the Taliban is estimated to be 10,000.

International Security Assistance Force

Alongside the OEF, a second military operation, International Security Assistance Force [ISAF] was authorized by the UNSC on 20 December 2001 commanded by NATO on 11 August 2003. It was set up by the international community to stabilize the country. On 5 October 2006, all operations were taken over by ISAF. By June 2008, it had grown to 53000 troops from 43 countries.

The task of the reconstruction of Afghanistan is beset with difficulties arising from ethnic and sectarian conflicts between Tajeks and Pashtuns and between Shias and Sunnis. The turf war between Saudi Arabia and Iran for influence is another obstacle. The international community has pledged USD 4.5 billion for reconstruction. It is of interest that India is constructing roads and hospitals which will benefit Afghanistan. China is prospecting for minerals and has already discovered copper for which they are now proposing co-development. It will be of benefit to China as well. Afghanistan is believed to have deposits of gold, silver, zinc and uranium. Pakistan is using the Taliban to check India's influence. There are frequent attacks on Indian aided projects. The last one was on the Indian Embassy in Kabul. On 27 April 08, an unsuccessful attempt was made on the life of Karzai.

Split With Pakistan

Frustrated with the double game of Pakistan of not taking action against the Taliban in the frontier region, NATO troops started hitting hostile targets across the border. On 10 June 2008, 11 Pakistani para-military guards manning the border posts were killed in a bombing strike called by NATO. This action made the USA unpopular in Pakistan. The US officials called it a tragic mistake. The *New York Times* correspondent visited the site in July and learnt from the local villagers that Pakistan soldiers had fired on the Coalition troops first. The villagers also mentioned that the Pakistan Army had only made a show of action against the militants by firing on empty houses. But the militants foray into the heartland of Punjab has compelled the Pakistan Government to act. The Pakistan Army is claiming significant success against the rebels.

Analysis of 'Operation Enduring Freedom'

The Coalition Forces were able to unseat the Taliban rule but Osama and the top Taliban leaders managed to escape to Pakistan. Pakistan has been placed in a strategically untenable position. The militants and their sympathizers do not want Pakistan to support the US forces. Pakistan was happy as long as the militants attacked targets in India and Indian or American assets in Afghanistan. They have now carried out attacks in the heartland of Punjab. Pakistan's double game has recoiled

on itself.

The OEF was supported by the Northern Alliance troops and in the initial phase there were only a few American troops. America's contribution was largely fire support and intelligence gathering. The Northern Alliance has now been placed at a disadvantage after the formation of a predominantly Pashtun government. The partners of the erstwhile Northern Alliance have re-established themselves as warlords in their respective regions. The result is that there are large areas with no authority. Military operations were launched in a hurry. Lack of proper political preparation makes it harder to achieve military success and difficult to translate military victory into political gains.

The Future?

A weak national authority, division of the army on ethnic lines, balance in favour of warlords, and attack by Pakistan-based militants and crisis in the US economy carry the possibilities of a failed state. The economy of Afghanistan cannot support a national army. India's plans for a gas pipeline from Iran or Central Asia are not realistic and for the present we should shelve it. UK, Germany and Canada appear to show signs of strategic fatigue and do not want to send more troops or prolong the deployment of the existing troops. The USA may send additional 6000 soldiers from Iraq. More troops are required to restore stability.

Saudi Arabia, apprehensive of increasing Iran's influence in Afghanistan is trying to broker a peace between the Karzai government and Taliban. This move has been welcomed by Germany and Pakistan. Iran and the Northern Alliance are not likely to be happy due to their experience of the actions of the Taliban when in power. It could lead to a demand for autonomy by the Northern and Western provinces. The attempt to distinguish between Taliban and Al Qaeda is futile. There are no moderate Taliban.

PS: The Taliban have extended their violent attacks to areas near Islamabad and have interfered with the supplies to NATO forces. Unable to control the Taliban, the Pakistan Government has struck a ceasefire deal with the Taliban in Swat. This has not been welcomed by NATO, India and Afghanistan. USA has increased pressure on Pakistan and may link aid to Pakistan's efforts to check extremists. USA has ordered additional 17000 troops to Afghanistan and alternative supply routes are being arranged via Iran and Central Asia.

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From Our Readers

The Nuclear Deal

This refers to the letter from H.R. Babu Satyanarayana on the 123 Agreement and the Hyde Act in the December 2008 issue of *Freedom First*.

Nobody grudges Mr. Shourie his eminence, or doubts his erudition. But nobody, least of all, Mr. Shourie can claim to be the Grand Panjandrum of all knowledge. In the specific case both he and Mr. Sinha, who appeared in the television interview with *Times Now*, had either not done their homework or their replies involved malicious political expediency. In calling them “stupid” I merely accused them of the former, rather than the latter, which would have been much worse.

I agree that the last word has not been said. It never will be, till everyone who wishes to be involved in the debate fully understands the issues. For instance the Hyde Act is domestic or internal legislation. If the US chooses by legislation to compel itself to follow a certain course in a future about which it can now know nothing, it is merely curtailing its own future freedom of action, but that is its business. The Hyde Act cannot “prevail over” the 123 Agreement. These are two completely different animals. Besides, irrespective of how microscopic the print is in the Hyde Act, it cannot apply to a sovereign nation not conquered by the US. Simple.

The 123 Agreement is between two sovereign countries, India and the US. As an honourable nation we are expected to abide by it. But unlike the Hyde Act which the US must enforce upon itself, we are already getting into the looser realm of “international law” in which this agreement cannot be “enforced”. If law involves the enforcement of behaviour, there is, in effect, no such thing as “international law”. Remember Munich (1939), ‘Peace in our time’ and the famous dismissal of the agreement by Hitler as a “scrap of paper”? That too was an agreement between two sovereign nations. So was the infamous no-war pact that Hitler signed with Stalin, and reneged from in 1943.

Mr. Satyanarayana seems to have a selective memory. Has he forgotten the vote of confidence that Mr. Singh sought in Parliament? Mr. Singh need not have. It was up to the opposition to bring forward a vote of No Confidence. They could not. Yet he went ahead to seek the Confidence of the House, and he won it. I don’t think, given the vitiated atmosphere in Parliament during the vote, we should grudge Mr. Singh his democratic credentials.

Coming back to basics, even the Hyde Act says

that the US will behave in a certain manner in the event of an explosive test. My article on the subject was the first in India to raise the issue of non-explosive testing with high-speed computers that, incidentally, was endorsed by Arundhati Ghosh (no less) in an article in the *Hindustan Times* a fortnight later.

Can the US re-impose the NSG embargo? If it could persuade 45 nations to agree to lift it, logically it should be possible to persuade them to re-impose it. Logically yes it can. Is it probable? The answer is No. For two reasons: First, having persuaded 45 countries to act in a certain way it is not going to be easy to persuade them to do the exact opposite. When it was originally imposed in 1974 there were just five nations involved. Second, because India is signing a number of agreements with a great many of those 45 for the supply of nuclear plants, generating equipment and fuel, France included, none of them will look favourably upon an American insistence that they should re-impose the embargo. It goes against their commercial interests, as stated in my article on the nuclear deal. This entire issue was also brought out quite convincingly by Michael Krepon of the Stimson Centre quoted by me in my article, “Lucky Again?” in the November, 2008 issue of *Freedom First*.

Let us have some confidence in ourselves and in our ability to deal with other countries without being eternally terrified of “*daal me kaalas*”.

Sharad Bailur
Email: sharad.bailur@gmail.com

Islamic Banking

This refers to the item “Islamic Banking” in *Freedom First* of January 2008.

I recall conversation with a young entrepreneur in Dacca in the 1980s.

“Our country has now prohibited interest on loans from private parties. Instead profit sharing is allowed. The usual terms are that the share of the lender will not be less than 17.99 per cent. They are trying to cheat Him. Will He spare them?”

Brigadier Suresh Chandra Sharma (retd)
Email ID : brigs@vsnl.net

(Cont'd. from p.12)

This is what happened:

Santa Singh, the part-time Sunday housekeeper, entered the ward, unplugged the life support system and plugged in the vacuum cleaner.....

Darwin, Monkeys And All That (Cont'd. from p.2)

to know, was it through his grandfather or his grandmother that he claimed his descent from a monkey”.

“... Huxley snapped his knee and astonished the grave scientist next to him softly exclaiming “The Lord hath delivered him into my hands.”

“The Bishop sat down amid a roar of applause and a sea of fluttering handkerchiefs. Now there were calls for Huxley ...”

Huxley gave an exposition of Darwin's ideas and asserted that Darwin's theory was “more than a hypothesis. It was the best explanation of species as yet advanced. He touched upon the Bishop's obvious ignorance of the sciences involved ... and in tones even more grave and quiet, said that he would not be ashamed to have a monkey for his ancestor; but he would be “ashamed to be connected with a man who used his great gifts to obscure the truth ...”

This was received with great acclamation; the audience which had been hostile gave him as much applause as the bishop had received. Huxley had “committed forensic murder with a wonderful artistic

simplicity, grinding orthodoxy between facts and the supreme Victorian value of truth-telling.”

In the U.S., anti-Darwin and anti-evolutionist theory and anti natural selection have had a long history well into the twentieth century. In Tennessee, in March 1925 was passed a legislation forbidding the teachings of Darwin's theories as contrary to the Biblical theory of man's creation. John T. Scopes, a teacher of biology taught Darwinism and the State tried to prosecute him. W. J. Bryan respected and long time public figure was appointed State Prosecutor. In defence of Scopes was Clarence Darrow, a firebrand lawyer who argued the case with eloquence. Darrow's brilliant cross-examination of W. J. Bryan did greatly to discredit fundamentalist interpretation of the Bible and its philosophy of creation. Scope lost the case and it remained for the Tennessee State, Supreme Court to acquit him on technical grounds - which Darrow did not want. He wanted the acquittal on Constitutional grounds. The anti-evolution legislation was not repealed till 1967 though the trial effectively put a stop to other States legislating similarly.

DR. R. SRINIVASAN, Retd. Professor of Political Science Mumbai University and Associate Editor, Freedom First.

End of Economic Ideologies? What Next? (Cont'd. from p.4)

and their advisors, create conditions for boom and bust, and for economic exploitation and corruption.

2. The Bretton Woods world of IMF and World Bank is past history. Power is shifting from the Atlantic to the Pacific, to the emerging BRIC countries. This must reflect in the new globalised Economic Order, with the West being forced to change its protectionist policies for its bloated farmers and high-cost manufacturing to recognize the new economic power beyond the G-8. No less the double standard of practicing protection for the rich and free trade for the poor. America has to give itself a new Global Dream, Europe a realistic balancing role, Japan, China and India a new peaceful Asian thrust. How can economic power be realistically shared by the G-20 and more? The West has to face a major reversal of colonial power and prosperity. How will its politics adapt, - as in climate change -, before serious consequences for the world as a whole? There is no ideology there. Only hard pragmatism, especially in WTO and UNCTAD.
3. The world international clearance system at Basel seeks to adopt to the new pattern of international finance

flows, and their implications for every exchange, trade and global economics beyond the Atlantic community.

4. Most immediately, what are the most pragmatic ways of getting out of the developed world recession before it becomes a long term depression, as after 1929. Can the West renew itself first? What will be the role of India and China in particular, the best hopes of economic machines still growing over 6% GDP?
5. At the end of the day, 6 billion competitive people will have to ask themselves how they can wisely live sustainably on a planet with limited natural resources and no serious conflicts for water, food, energy and other basic resources? The 21st century has to find global statesmanship, innovative productivity or see humanity perish in the last wars of survival.

PS: And now Satyam to remind India to **Regulate** effectively, not **Control** for ‘Sauda’.

MR. A. D. MODDIE was in the first batch of the IAS (1947-48); thereafter as representative of industry to government. Author of ‘Brahmanical Culture and Modernity’, ‘Failed Mahabharata’ and ‘Witnesses to our Times’.

Book Review



LENIN'S BRAIN AND OTHER TALES FROM THE SECRET SOVIET ARCHIVES by Paul R. Gregory, published by Hoover Institution Press, Stanford University, Stanford, CA 94305-6010, www.hooverpress.org ● Year of publication 2008 ● Number of pages 164 ● Price: Cloth \$20.00; Paperback \$15.00

Reviewed by S. V. Raju, Honorary Secretary, Indian Committee for Cultural Freedom and editor *Freedom First*.

The author Paul R. Gregory is a Hoover Institution research fellow, an endowed professor in the Department of Economics at the University of Houston, Texas and research professor at the German Institute for Economic Research in Berlin.

The archives of the Hoover Institution on War, Revolution contain authentic material on Russia's political social and economic history in their collections of Soviet state and party archives.

The book is dedicated to Robert Conquest on his ninetieth birthday in recognition of his contribution to exposing "Stalin's Terror, his secret police and the great famine of the early 1930s" and for his "remarkable scholarship and intuition".

In a perceptive article "Russian Dance – The Return of the Tyrant" (*Mint*, December 31), Siddharth Singh draws attention to a recent poll by a Russian TV station of the 12 greatest Russians. Stalin emerged 3rd in the list. He was followed by "Lenin, the poet Alexander Pushkin, Peter the Great, the novelist Fyodor Dostoevsky." But what is of significance is the absence from the list of eminent Russians like nuclear scientist turned human rights activist Andrei Sakharov, writers Boris Pasternak, Leo Tolstoy, Alexander Solzhenitsyn, and composer Pyotr Tchaikovsky. Siddharth Singh attributes this to the wave of nationalism sweeping Russia and, riding on this wave is none other than that former KGB *apparatchik* Vladimir Putin, currently Prime Minister. He is emerging as the dictator of Russia – with the approval of a majority of the Russian people.

The dismantling of the Soviet Union, the heady days of *Glasnost* in the early nineties led to the opening of the secret archives of the defunct Soviet State and of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. The public gained access to information of what really went on behind the "Iron Curtain" between 1917 and 1990. Many who fled the Soviet Union and sought refuge in the free world had stories to tell. The Soviet archives give hard evidence of the veracity of these stories by these escapees (whose

action was described as "voting with their feet"). Paul R. Gregory's book of 'short stories' is based on such evidence and therefore credible.

As John Raisian, Director of the Hoover Institution observes in the foreword: "Paul Gregory has selected fourteen tales, some horrific, some puzzling, and others simply entertaining to provide an inside look at how the Soviet dictatorship worked - how to go to war (Afghanistan), how and why to execute or imprison more than a million of its own citizens (the Great Terror) how to honour its saints (the story of Lenin's Brain)...these fourteen short stories, taken together, produce a surprising deep understanding of totalitarianism."

The story is told in fourteen chapters. Each chapter is an episode; and all are very readable and absorbing. Of the fourteen, due to space constraints, your reviewer has chosen just two. These two are: Chapter 1: The Katyn Massacre; and Chapter 3: Lenin's Brain.

The Katyn Massacre

In the April of 1940 Soviet troops of the NKVD, later to be re-named the KGB, secretly murdered twenty two thousand Poles. That was the period when the monsters Stalin and Hitler were friends. A year earlier, in August 1939, the two had signed what came to be known as the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact. It was a mutual non-aggression treaty. It included a secret protocol whereby the Nazis and the Communists divided the independent countries of eastern Europe - Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, and Romania - into Nazi and Soviet spheres of influence respectively.

These twenty two thousand Poles, were shot one by one, over a period of one month, by the Soviet Red Army's firing squads (because they had not yet possessed the technology of mass murder perfected by the Nazis). These unfortunate Poles were prisoners held in various camps in Soviet-occupied Poland and the then western provinces of the Soviet Union, Belorussia and Ukraine. Of these, 4,421 were shot in the Katyn forest on the Polish

side of the Polish-Russian border. 'Katyn' became the symbol of the 1940 Soviet massacre of Polish officers held in Soviet POW camps." The word became synonymous with what we now call 'killing fields". Naturally Pol Pot like Stalin was a Communist too.

In June 1941 Hitler reneged on the Pact and German troops marched into Soviet Russia. The invading Nazis came across the scene of the massacre in the Katyn forest, launched an investigation (in a typical case of the pot calling the kettle black). The Nazis announced to the world the brutality of the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union declared their innocence and blamed the Nazis for the massacre. Stalin's successors tried to keep this up until Gorbachev who had decided not to use force to retain the Soviet Union's eastern empire was finally compelled to admit that the massacre was indeed ordered by the Communist Party of the Soviet Union on the orders of Stalin. To placate the grieving and angry Polish people, he even had a memorial put up for the slain Polish soldiers at the site of the massacre in the Katyn forest.

Lenin's Brain

To the communists and many who are identified as belonging to the 'Left' Marx is their god and Lenin his prophet. Vladimir Ilyich Lenin, the Soviet Union's first supreme boss, died in 1924. Three months later the Politburo decided to deify him by embalming him and preserving his body for display at the Lenin's Tomb in Moscow – which became a place of place of pilgrimage for the communists of all shades of red. It is also a tourist attraction. This is widely known. What it not, is the attempt made by Stalin and his minions to subject Lenin's brain to a scientific study to establish that Lenin was a genius, no less, as "such a study" wrote author Gregory, "would have suited Stalin's plan to confer sainthood on Lenin". Imagine how 'St. Lenin' would have sounded!

The Institute of V. I. Lenin, established soon after his death was "the repository for Lenin's writings and for other Lenin memorabilia. Among its most unusual items was Lenin's brain, preserved in a formaldehyde solution in a glass jar". The story of the study of Lenin's brain from 1925 to 1936 is told in a "sixty page collection of documents from the Central Committee (of the CPSU's) files." A single specimen of Lenin's brain (rather than the entire brain) was sent to Berlin for study by a renowned German scientist, Oskar Vogt of the Neurobiological Institute of the Kaiser Wilhelm Institute. Two communist physicians from Moscow were sent to work under the German scientist. Under pressure from lobbying Russian scientists Stalin sanctioned funds for a "Medical Commission for the Study of the Brain of V. I. Lenin" which resulted in the creation of the "Institute of the Brain". With

some reluctance, the Politburo agreed to the appointment of Oskar Vogt, as the chairman of this Institute. The reluctance was because the Party would not have been able to control the German scientist if his findings did not confirm that Lenin was a genius. What added to the nervousness was a public lecture by Vogt in Berlin. Based on the specimen of Lenin's brain sent to him, Vogt cited another German specialist as saying that the kind of brain structure revealed by the specimen of Lenin's brain could as easily be a characteristic of mental retardation. The then propaganda head of the Central Committee of the CPSU took offence at the "number of evil remarks about Comrade Lenin" in the bourgeois press. Fortunately for the CPSU, Vogt himself fell out of favour with Hitler, lost his job in the Kaiser Wilhelm Institute. It also ended his Chairmanship of the Institute of the Brain in Russia.

The Brain Institute now headed by a Russian scientist reported soon thereafter that they had completed the study. Their report concluded that Lenin's brain "possessed such a high degree of organisation that even during the time of illness, regardless of great damage (as a result of a stroke), it functioned at a high level."

The Report, was never made public. It was consigned to the archives in the section that included misdeeds or crimes! Why in this section? Because, as author Gregory points out, the 'crime' that the Lenin brain file disclosed was the extreme elitism of the Soviet regime! Although the Soviet Union was a 'worker-peasant state,' workers and peasants were not in charge; the state was run by a Stalin or a Politburo. Workers were controlled by "wise and even genial Bolsheviks" who knew what was good for the masses. The Soviet scientists compared "Lenin's brain with those of leading figures of the sciences and arts to demonstrate that Lenin's brain was superior even to prominent scientists and literary figures."

There was another reason why Stalin decided that the report should not be released: "One explanation" wrote the author of this book, "may have been that by 1936, at the very time when Stalin was executing his most prominent rivals, he did not want to remind the CPSU of a 'genius' Lenin who might have treated his enemies more humanely".

With a narrative style that is simple and lucid the book makes fascinating reading proving the wisdom of that age old adage that 'truth is often stranger than fiction. Well worth the buy to read and understand the evils of communism based on material sourced from their own state archives. US President Ronald Reagan described the Soviet Union as an "Evil Empire." There is enough evidence in the Russian archives to justify this label.

Why I Admire

Marcus “Banger” Trescothick



When asked to write about someone I admire, many great people instantly come to mind. There were the world leaders: John F. Kennedy and Winston Churchill. There were the great artists and composers: Claude Monet, Leonardo

da Vinci, Mozart and Beethoven. But I am going to tell you about a man who ticks none of these boxes. He was successful when representing his country, but what really draws me near to him is the way he dealt with personal setbacks, how he turned his life around.

Marcus Trescothick was never a natural high scorer in country cricket along the lines of Graeme Hick or Mark Ramprakash. His batting style was simple but all too often it did not work. He was regarded by many as a “journeyman county cricketer”, having neither the fluent technique (he never moved his feet) or the correct mindset (his nickname “Banger” demonstrated his love of sausages) for international cricket. Yet this man was the highest run-scorer of all home test series between 1999 and 2005, and became a lynch pin of the side.

He impresses me as a man, not just a cricketer. In 2005 his father-in-law fell off a ladder while he was doing maintenance at Trescothick’s house. Despite the tragedy of a close relative in a coma, he stayed on tour with the team. He was always strong and willing to give his all for his country. It is particularly poignant that this is exactly what happened.

In March 2006, Trescothick flew home mysteriously from the India tour for “personal reasons”. It transpired that he was suffering from a “stress-related illness” and, despite an early century in the 2006 summer, it was clear he was not right. He pulled out of the Champions Trophy to recover for the Ashes tour, but prior to the First Test, he suffered a recurrence and had to fly home.

He came back to county cricket with a smile on his face, and was determined to enjoy his cricket. It would have been easy for him to try to play half-heartedly for his country, but I will always admire him for putting his life before his cricket. When he announced his retirement, he thought about the England team, believing they would be better off looking forward without him.

So here’s to Marcus Trescothick, a great cricketer, but an even better man.

ABHISHEK. A is a college student.

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Between Ourselves ...

“500 and Counting” has been reasonably successful. Many of our readers have even taken the trouble of emailing or telephoning us to tell us how much they liked the 500th number of *Freedom First*. A couple of readers felt that we ought to have had many more articles from past issues. One reader even suggested two from each of the 500 issues should have been included. We would have loved to do it had all those Corporates to whom we addressed our appeal for advertisements responded positively. The number of articles was dictated by the funds that were available. We can say with some satisfaction that we received just enough to pay our bills and come out with our books balanced – more or less! What particularly delighted us in this venture was the generous donations from some of our subscribers – quite unprecedented in the history of *Freedom First*’s constant struggle to make both ends meet. To them and to those who helped us secure advertising support we owe a debt of gratitude we can only say “THANK YOU VERY MUCH INDEED!”

And so we move into the first issue of the next 500. If you, dear subscriber, desire it we can go on – and who knows, even make it “1000 and Counting” – a mere 499 issues away! I am hoping some of our very young readers will read this and say ‘why not’!

But for now it’s back to business. For the April issue, coming as it does on the eve of the General Elections to the Lok Sabha, the topic is “Our Institutions are Under Siege”. The cover feature will seek to turn the focus away from divisive and peripheral issues to real ones that concern the integrity of the nation and the need to strengthen its democratic moorings. We have approached well known experts to write for us on the subject. If you have a take on this then share it with us. You can write in your views preferably by email (if you can). The deadline: On or before Saturday March 14.

Editor

Many Voices

Smart parenting is when we see the writing on the wall before we do the writing on the will.

Sociology Professor Dipankar Gupta,
The Times of India, December 27, 2008

It is harder for a three-year-old to get into the nursery sections of some leading Delhi schools than for undergraduates to gain admission into one of the 13 Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs), Harvard University, Yale University, Oxford University and Cambridge University.

A report in the *Hindustan Times*, February 10

Sustained prosperity has a vital prerequisite – a stable society with justice for all

Author Rajni Bakshi, *Mint*, October 23, 2008

...an elite living in gated communities, opting out of public spaces and never standing in queues loses touch with reality on the one hand and, on the other, hastens the institutional decline that it loves to talk about.

Niranjan Rajadhyaksha, Columnist & Managing Editor,
Mint, January 29

If there is one thing we can be confident of, it is this: democracy will not be subverted by the people; but the people will have to be constantly watchful of those who claim to represent them.

Pratap Bhanu Mehta, President, Centre for Policy Research, Delhi, *The Indian Express*, January 1

If 2008 reinforced faith in democracy, it seriously undermined the authority of expertise, at least about social phenomena.

Pratap Bhanu Mehta, President, Centre for Policy Research, Delhi, *The Indian Express*, January 1

He (Dr. Y. V. Reddy, recently retired Governor of the Reserve Bank of India) basically believed that if the bankers were given the opportunity to sin, They would sin.

An unnamed Banker speaking to Joe Nocera of the *New York Times*, published in *Mint* December 22, 2008

B. Ramalinga Raju (of Satyam notoriety) was scheduled to be here (Davos) for a session for “Educating the next wave of entrepreneurs” – A close shave that.

Rohini Nilekani, *Mint*, January 30

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