

Freedom First

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From Our Readers

On *Freedom First*

Thank you for sending regularly your valuable journal, which is always fair and constructive. It is because of this that you lack corporate support. Herewith a small contribution to *Freedom First*.

T. D. Tavaría, Mumbai

Maj.Gen. Eustace d'Souza (an excellent commentator!) mentions *Scientific American* in FF Jan.2010. May I enclose a recent article from *Scientific American* which will be of interest to you.

FF has many fine writers these days and is one of the world's great Liberal journals.

Robert W. Stewart, Perthshire, Scotland.

(The article Mr. Stewart has enclosed with his letter is on the likely impact of a local nuclear war between India and Pakistan on the global environment – Ed.)

When *Freedom First* Challenged Press Censorship

I was recently refreshing my memory of the dark days of the Emergency by going through the book "Decline and Fall of Indira Gandhi" by D. R. Mankekar and Kamala Mankekar when I came across the following interesting paragraph. I thought of sharing this information with my fellow readers and subscribers of *Freedom First*:

"Press Censorship

Judgment of Justice D. P. Mohan and Mr. Justice M. H. Kania, upholding M. R. Masani's petition [10-2-1976] about censorship of his magazine *Freedom First*: "It is not the function of the censor acting under the Censorship Order to make all newspapers and periodicals trim their sails to one wind or to tow along in a single file or to speak in chorus with one voice. It is not for him to exercise his statutory powers to force public opinion in a single mould or to turn the press into an instrument of brainwashing the public. Under the Censorship Order the Censor is appointed as the nurse-maid of democracy and not the grave-digger."

B. M. N. Murthy, Bengaluru.
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Maharashtra for Maharashtrians only

The Senas' "Maharashtra for Maharashtrians only" claim is patently parochial, divisive, separatist and secessionist. Political parties like the Shiv Sena and the Maharashtra Navnirman Sena are a threat to the unity of the nation. These extra constitutional authorities need

to be dealt with firmly. How can the Senas ignore the fact that the "outsiders" have contributed the lion's share to the growth of Mumbai, and that, without the "outsiders", life in the city will be crippled?

The Shiv Sena's Hindutva is a farce. The truth is that it is a party identified with the welfare of upper caste Maharashtrian Hindus. Nevertheless, one must agree with the Senas, that the influx into Mumbai needs to be controlled. The city does not have the infrastructure to accommodate more people. One can compare it with an over-inflated balloon that could burst any time.

V. V. Vijayan, Mumbai

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Of Non-Violence when Faced by Violence

This refers to Mr. Ajay B. Agrawal's article, "Of Non-violence, when faced by violence" (*Freedom First*, February, 2010)

I fully agree with the views expressed in this nonsense and forthright article and compliment the author. There should be a clear distinction of how a person behaves from that of a nation. Mahatma Gandhi was right in his own way of 'ahimsa'. But when a nation is under attack by some hordes whose mindset is at the level of the beasts, we cannot talk of peace with them. Gandhiji, uncharacteristically, approved sending the Indian army in October 1947, to defend Kashmir. Let us steel our nerves and resolve to face attacks of terrorists and wipe them out by giving unstinted support to our security forces without entangling them in unwarranted human rights violation cases. In fact, in a warlike situation, fundamental rights are suspended. Besides, only if we are secure within our borders, will we have the luxury of talking peace.

The theme of the 25 November, 2009 programme organised by the Foundation for Non-violent Alternatives and ICCF is based on misplaced idealism.

Saratchandra Panda, Bhubaneswar
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Indian Students in Australia

Sunita's comments (FF February 2010) on 'Indian Students in Australia' is well thought out but to blame the media frenzy for the furore caused by the attacks on students in Australia is like killing the messenger for the bad news. The frequency of attacks is worrying as well as the choice of the victims. Had it been the usual lawlessness - as seen in India - it would have been understood as failure of law enforcement but this goes beyond mere lawlessness. It is time Australia accepted

the fact that a few young men are going astray. It will not make Australia a racist country. By trying to cover up the misdeeds of a few hooligans, the Australian Government is opening itself to criticism of racial bias.

Ashok Karnik, Mumbai. avkay@mtnl.net.in

(Please also read Mr. Karnik's observations in his column *Point Counter Point* on page 16. Ed)

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Compulsory Voting

I am afraid that Shri R. C. Saxena's characterization of the Gujarat government's move to make voting compulsory as coercive, is unfair and unjust (*Freedom First* - February 2010). State and Union governments are spending several lakhs of crores of Rupees on welfare, especially of the poor citizens of this country. It is known that the latter are deprived of much of the entitlement that is being disbursed by various government agencies. And this happens at the lowest rungs of government like

the Panchayat and the District Collector/Commissioner. It is these bodies that have to be kept under surveillance and held accountable. This can be effectively achieved if every one, especially those for whom the welfare is meant, votes in the elections to various bodies. It cannot be that one has a right to welfare and is not responsible to see that his rights are realized by exercise of the vote that he has. Citizens have not only rights but have duties too. In fact, the Constitution was amended during Indira Gandhi's time to enumerate the duties of citizens.

Today every demagogue is talking of rights of children, of mothers, of women, of the disabled, of labour, of pensioners of gays, of animals and so on. We need to emphasize the duties of citizens, the most important of which, for our democracy is the duty to vote. There are 32 countries in the world where voting is compulsory. Those who do not vote are fined or otherwise punished.

Dr. T. H. Chowdary, Hyderabad.
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On Liberal Secularism

The concept of secularism is comparatively new for the world at large. And so far as the consciousness of all its implications are concerned, it is a most recent experience as such. If I may be allowed to say so, I would name the type of secularism most likely to take us to the goal of emancipation as liberal secularism, that is to say, the practice of secularism in the best traditions of liberalism.

It is the only potent weapon available to the democratic body politic to keep religion in its proper place. It respects the liberty of man as an individual in society and gives him an opportunity to choose religion for himself as an individual or discard it as a staff he no longer needs to walk erect in the sun

The problem of the hour is to find out which new sense of values is required to bring about the age of the moral man in society through a moral education. Moral education to be effective and progressive will have to be secular in the best traditions of the liberal philosophy of life – to live and let live and with a view to preserve that noble ideal to consider it our birthright to fight to the bitter end all those who will not allow us to live and let live.

This, I submit, is the task of tasks of our leaders today.

The late J. B. H. WADIA, a highly respected film producer and a Member of the Executive Council of the ICCF. He was also its Hon. Secretary for a number of years. This is an excerpt from his article. – Ed.

This month in March 1953

Many Voices

On one occasion Churchill was informed that Bevan (Labour leader) was ill. "Nothing trivial, I hope" said the Tory leader genially.

The Times of India, January 24, 1953

No Shaking Hands with Murder

Freedom First congratulates Ambassador Henry Cabot Lodge, Chief U.S. Delegate to the United Nations General Assembly, for categorically refusing to shake hands with Soviet Foreign Minister Vyshinsky. After Mussolini had aggressed in Abyssinia it is on record that Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru refused to meet Mussolini on the ground that he had the blood of Abyssinia on his hands. In that regard, times have unfortunately changed. Ambassador Lodge's action is, however, an echo of that act and recalls that Vyshinsky not only had the blood of thousands of members of the Russian Communist Party and others whom he helped to prosecute in the so-called Moscow "Trials" but is also the representative of a brutal imperialism which has the blood of Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Rumania and Bulgaria on its hands, not to mention North Korea, China and Tibet. It is time that the habit of shaking hands with murder became recognised for what it is.

Intelligence Oversight?

The Pros and Cons

Ashok Karnik

“How shall a democracy ensure its secret intelligence apparatus becomes neither a vehicle for conspiracy nor a suppressor of the traditional liberties of democratic self-government?”

Vice President M. Hamid Ansari, while speaking at a function organised by R&AW on January 19, 2010, broached the controversial topic of oversight of intelligence agencies in India. The point he made was that in a democratic country, intelligence agencies cannot be allowed to function without political oversight; a mere bureaucratic set up under the supervision of the executive is not enough. Security agencies all over the world are reluctant to expose themselves to scrutiny although many have had to fall in line and accept some degree of oversight. The VP has brought out the dilemma well and examined the changes in the situation which demand a fresh look at an old problem. His views demand study and an extensive debate on the next line of action. Some excerpts from his speech are published below to facilitate debate.

“There is no place where espionage is not used ... good intelligence often has made the difference between victory and defeat, life and death. By the same token, faulty intelligence leads to failures of varying degrees. Over time, reasons for failure are analysed and classified. These range from overestimation to underestimation, lack of communication, unavailability of information, received opinion, mirror-imaging, over-confidence, complacency, failure to connect dots and subordination of intelligence to policy. ... In an interesting passage in his book, the formidable Mr. Allen Dulles observed that ‘a good intelligence officer must have an understanding of other points of view, other ways of thinking and behaving, even if they are quite foreign to his own.’ ... a balance between secrecy, openness and efficacy on a continuous basis is thus essential. Much greater coordination is required to maximize results in complex situations. The time-honoured formula of “need to know” has to be modified by the requirement of the “need to share”. The point was driven home by an eminent leader very recently: ‘I’ll never fault anybody for not having full intelligence, what I will fault is when we have full intelligence that’s not shared.’

“This conceptual shift, from threat-based to vulnerability-based strategies, would necessitate a

comprehensive reorientation of the work of the State and therefore of its intelligence apparatus, its objectives and its work methods. Some of this is already underway in the light of the experience of the first decade of the 21st century; The extent and speed with which it is done may well determine success or failure in the foreseeable future. The conclusion is inescapable that in the world of tomorrow, the nature of intelligence required for comprehensive security would be qualitatively different. This would have implications for the methodology of acquiring and analysing it. ... Access to these skills, if not available in-house, would necessitate review of security rules that generally govern the functioning of intelligence organisations.

“A particularly serious problem relates to the misuse of intelligence. ... intelligence and facts were being fixed around policy of regime change (in Iraq). Failures propel thinking in the direction of correctives and reforms. These, together, propel thinking in the direction of accountability and necessitate oversight. Both are considered unwanted and bothersome by intelligence communities for reasons that range from secrecy and operational efficiency to downright contempt for any individual, body or arrangement that endeavours to assess their functioning. How shall a democracy ensure its secret intelligence apparatus becomes neither a vehicle for conspiracy nor a suppressor of the traditional liberties of democratic self-government? It is hardly necessary to remind an Indian audience that ministerial responsibility to the legislature, and eventually to the electorate, is an essential element of democratic governance to which we are committed by the Constitution. The methodology of this is in place for most aspects of governmental activity; the exceptions to it pertain to the intelligence and security structure of the state. How then is oversight and accountability ensured?

“The traditional answer and prevailing practice, of oversight by the concerned minister and Prime Minister and general accountability of the latter to parliament, was accepted as adequate in an earlier period but is now considered amorphous and does not meet the requirements

of good governance in an open society. Concerns in the matter have primarily arisen on two counts: (a) the nature and extent of supervision over intelligence services exercised by the political executive and (b) the possibility and scope of misuse of these services by the political executive. Both concerns emanate from the absence of specific accountability, on these matters, to the legislature.

“The problem is not a new one and has been faced by other democratic societies. In late 1970s opinion in the United States reached the conclusion that ‘oversight of the Intelligence Community is essential because of the critical importance of ensuring the nation’s security, as well as checking the potential for abuse of power.’ As a result, two congressional committees were established in 1976 and 1977. Despite this, the 9/11 Commission Report of 2004 found the congressional oversight of intelligence “dysfunctional” and recommended structural changes. A similar exercise was conducted in the United Kingdom through the Intelligence Services Act 1994 that established the Intelligence and Security Committee of Parliament to examine the expenditure, administration and policy of the intelligence services. Other countries like Canada, Australia, South Africa, Norway, Germany, Argentina, the Netherlands, Poland and Romania have also put in place similar mechanisms of public accountability.

“It has been argued that the scope of the mandate of the parliamentary intelligence oversight committee is crucial for its success. Three models of the mandate can be identified: (a) comprehensive to include both policy and operations, as in the U.S. and Germany (b) limited to matters of policy and finance, as in UK (c) focused on human rights and rule of law, as in Norway. The basic purpose of all three is to ensure that government policy in a given field is carried out effectively within the boundaries of the law. For this reason, it is felt that without access to some operational detail, an oversight body can have or give no assurance about the efficacy or the legality of the intelligence services.

“Given these models of calibrated openness to ensure oversight and accountability, there is no reason why a democratic system like ours should not have a Standing Committee of Parliament on intelligence that could function at least on the pattern of other Standing Committees. Since internal and external intelligence do not in our system report to the same minister, the possibility of entrusting this work to the Standing Committee on Home Affairs may not meet the requirement.

“In the same spirit, and keeping with the practice of other democracies such as the United States of America and the United Kingdom, the concerned agencies should

make public their mission statement outlining periodically their strategic intent, vision, mission, core values and their goals. Existing models range from periodic executive review of the mission statement to statutory definition of the function of these agencies. We need to study initiatives taken elsewhere and determine the extent to which we can proceed in the matter.

“The shortcomings of the traditional argument, of leaving intelligence to the oversight of the executive, became evident in the Report of the Kargil Review Committee and its sections on Intelligence in its Findings and Recommendations. It identified flaws, acknowledged the absence of coordination and of “checks and balances”, and noted the absence of governmental correctives. The Report referred to relevant systems in major countries but did not include in it their systems of oversight and accountability.

“Some correctives were introduced pursuant to the establishment of the National Security System and the report of the Group of Ministers on the reform of the national security system in its entirety. These improvements enhanced internal accountability and coordination but did not go far enough and did not put in place a more open system of public accountability. In the discussions that followed the publication of the Kargil Review Committee Report, and apart from inter-agency spats and the blame game, one informed commentator described it as a ‘substantive contribution in educating our Parliament and public opinion’ aimed at ‘introducing transparency in this sensitive sector’.

“Arguments tend to be condescending. They belittle the capacity of elected representatives to be responsible in matters of national security. It is argued that openness and public discussion would compromise the secrecy essential for intelligence needs to be examined carefully. Operational secrecy is one aspect of the matter and has to be maintained. The legislature, nevertheless, is the organ of the state that allocates funds and is therefore entitled to insist on financial and performance accountability. The proposed Standing Committee could fill this void.

“Let me conclude by saying that in a fast changing world, the challenges facing intelligence practitioners are enormous. Can they adapt their organizations, policies and practices to a world in which there is a qualitative change in the notion of security and in the nature of threats? Both compel a paradigm shift in procedures and objectives; so does the imperative of accountability in terms of democratic norms of good governance. Each of these needs to be factored into the work patterns of the

intelligence operative of tomorrow. A timely synthesis would pave the way for success.”

Future Course

The VP’s initiative is welcome. It is likely to be brushed under the carpet; intelligence Czars are reluctant to give up their imperial status. The major hurdle is the naiveté of our parliamentarians in intelligence matters. Even fairly competent Ministers are often misguided by bureaucrats who want to avoid being held responsible for failures. They play with charters of responsibility, shortage of resources, etc. and point the finger elsewhere. Some issues which deserve discussion are:

- i) It is reasonable to argue that in a modern democracy, no arm of the Government can be allowed to function without scrutiny; intelligence agencies do this and get away with it because they act behind an impenetrable veil. A way has to be found to remove this anomaly.
- ii) Will a Parliamentary Committee see through this veil and establish some degree of accountability on the intelligence agencies? The problem is that the integrity of our elected representatives is under a cloud; many of them are accused of crimes or having a nexus with criminals. Can they be entrusted with national security? Selection of members of the oversight

committee would become a bone of contention. A lot of thought needs to be given to this idea. The Vice President argues that this smacks of condescension; it is not only a prejudice but a genuine distrust of our political representatives.

- iii) A beginning could be made by leaving out intelligence operations from the purview of the oversight committee; only intelligence policy and funding can be covered by it (as in UK); gross failures can also be looked into; an intelligence audit would help keep the agencies on their toes and improve their functioning. Once a beginning is made and the parliamentarians acquire a degree of expertise, the scope of the committee can be expanded.
- iv) Another alternative is to study the architecture developed by other democracies like the USA, UK, Germany etc. and choose the parts that suit us best from their models. The ‘why’s and ‘how’s of their systems would obviate the need for us to reinvent the wheel.

The Vice President needs to be congratulated on starting a debate on a very important issue. Those concerned with national security should seize this opportunity to join the debate.

MR. ASHOK KARNIK formerly Deputy Director, Intelligence Bureau Government of India. ashokkarnik@yahoo.co.in

Our Vice-President’s Proposals on Intelligence Reforms

V. Balachandran

For over 60 years successive governments in New Delhi totally ignored intelligence reforms and continued the same structure as in the Colonial days when intelligence was used to spy on its citizens. This was partly on an inadequate understanding of the role of intelligence in a democracy and also due to a desire to keep sensitive things away from the public. Perhaps there was a sinister motive in this: Intelligence agencies were used to settle political scores and to get one up-man ship advantage over opponents, sometimes even within one’s own party. Intelligence personnel also reveled in this spooky system since they derived unseen power over other departments and all they had to do was to please the political bosses. They also did not have to be accountable to anybody. The reason why certain intelligence officials were preferred even after retirement and why allegations of gross misuse of secret funds were not probed can perhaps be explained to these factors.

As I said on September 25, 1999 in a piece in the *“Economic & Political Weekly”* reviewing Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan’s *“Perils of Government Secrecy”*: “We keep matters of state away from the public in ‘public interest’”.

However Vice-President Hamid Ansari’s remarks while delivering the fourth R. N. Kao Memorial Lecture at the RAW Head office on 19th January, 2010 came as a breath of fresh air towards making intelligence process a bit more transparent to fit into a democracy. He also stressed on its accountability. He began by extolling the services of the founder of our external intelligence and said that Shri Kao “confronted inter-agency contentions and achieved a historic success”. He was reiterating the well known fact that Shri Kao while creating a new department had to face the usual opposition from other wings of government bureaucracy including the mother agency “Intelligence Bureau” despite his proximity to Mrs.

Indira Gandhi. Shri Ansari's description of the utility of intelligence has been quoted in the excerpts of his speech and is stated by Ashok Karnik in the previous article. Admitting that intelligence is also sometimes wrongly utilized by policy makers, he said that introspection should be done after any major event when intelligence was part of decision making. The most important part of his oration was on shedding the present cloak of needless secrecy. He felt that this often worked to the detriment of public policy.

He felt that oversight and accountability need to go along with more public scrutiny of intelligence agencies' work. To this end he recommended the practice followed in US since the post-Vietnam era with having Congressional Committees to scrutinize the operations of intelligence agencies. In UK too public pressure has made them enact a law codifying Parliamentary oversight through "Intelligence Services Act 1994" which established the Intelligence and Security Committee of Parliament to examine the expenditure, administration and policy of the intelligence services. He said that even other countries like Canada, Australia, South Africa, Norway, Germany, Argentina, the Netherlands, Poland and Romania had also put in place similar mechanisms of public accountability. He advocated a Standing Committee of Parliament to oversee intelligence agencies. He also felt that the agencies concerned should make public their mission statement outlining periodically their strategic intent, vision, mission, core values and their goals.

It is not that such views were not put forward earlier. This writer for example had written a piece "Intelligence Reform" in the *Pioneer* of April 27, 1998: "Most of our intelligence agencies operate without any well-defined charter, much less by way of legal sanction, often poaching on other's turfs. There is no oversight worth the name and consequently no accountability.... In such a case should we not expect the elected representatives, the press and the tax payer to know at least the broad contours of intelligence activities on which enormous amounts are spent? Should we leave the onus of this discretion only to the intelligence chiefs?" I had continued to advocate this in several of my subsequent pieces. In those days I used to send my published pieces to Shri Kao who was often considered to be among those orthodox intelligence officers who favoured no public scrutiny. This impression arose because he steadfastly declined to pen down his memoirs including his great contribution to the successful completion of the 1971 Bangladesh liberation War where RAW had played a leading part. In fact some of us used to tell him that versions from several others had appeared but not of RAW and that he should correct this distortion. However all

he consented to do was to organize a small group under the late Col. Longer, military historian to write several volumes of RAW's historic role and keep the manuscripts safely with RAW. This he did after 1980 when Mrs. Indira Gandhi appointed him as "Senior Adviser". Unfortunately this was never published nor given to the National Archives.

However it is wrong to say that Shri Kao was opposed to public scrutiny. I have several letters with me conveying that he favoured such a step although he feared that the present complexion of our elected representatives did not inspire confidence that they would be able to discharge this important and sensitive responsibility. On May 1998 he wrote to me referring to my piece in the *Pioneer*: "I agree with your observation that the interest of the elected representatives of the people in knowing more about the work of the intelligence agencies is legitimate. It would be wise to accept this demand and to cooperate with the elected representatives in a selective manner". However he qualified this observation later in another letter. In response to my subsequent writings he wrote to me on March 27, 2000: "In the first few decades after August 1947, we seemed to be progressing in the right direction, but the present state to which our central and state legislatures have been reduced is deplorable. There is little sense of discipline or concern for the greater good of the country. In these circumstances, we should proceed with great caution, more so when we face almost insurmountable difficulties and threats internally as well as externally".

These wise words are relevant even after 10 years. The level of debates in our parliament and state legislatures has deteriorated further. Opposition parties and in some cases even coalition partners vie with each other in embarrassing their governments in leaking out sensitive matters even on national security. The debates following 26/11 indicate this tendency among our elected representatives and electronic media to emphasize on *side issues* blowing them out of proportion to cause sensation rather than debating on main recommendations pertaining to national security. In such circumstances could we reasonably expect them to discharge the responsibility of scrutinizing our intelligence priorities, operations etc without leaking some details on political considerations? The problem becomes acute when political parties change their attitude towards intelligence like the proverbial English weather. I had stated in my review on Moynihan's book on secrecy: "And we have a government which, while in opposition had wanted the intelligence budget to be revealed, now regressing into the dark labyrinths of secrecy by inventing yet another addition to their lexicon of patriotism of tabooing criticism of RAW, as

indicated during the Bhagawat episode”. I was referring to the clumsy way Admiral Vishnu Bhagwat was sacked by the NDA regime and his successor air lifted from Cochin by using an ARC aircraft which was not meant to be a VIP taxi. The then NDA government would not discuss why ARC aircraft was so utilized.

Having said all these it is high time that we introduced some accountability in our intelligence agencies without disclosing everything to the Parliament. This can be done in the following manner: *First*, we need to involve knowledgeable members of the public in fixing intelligence priorities in the modern era, considering that the talent available for such an exercise in any bureaucracy is limited due to its static thinking. It is for this reason that the Harold Brown Commission (1995-96) instituted by the US Congress which studied US intelligence requirements of the 21st Century interviewed 214 individuals of which 22 were academics and 25 from the corporate sector. Highlights of their report are available to the public.

As against this the “Saxena Committee” under NDA government which studied the intelligence reforms as part of the “Kargil Review Committee” operated in total secrecy without examining outsiders including even retired intelligence officials. Its findings although part of the Committee’s report were completely blacked out. *Secondly* intelligence operational plans, targets and budget including secret funds of each agency should be examined by a competent committee which should scrutinize major items of expenditure. Instead of a Parliamentary Committee, a small ministerial committee should go into this. *Thirdly* the same ministerial committee should go into the achievements of each intelligence agency in meeting the targets. *The final step* is codifying the charter and responsibilities of each intelligence agency on the lines of several laws passed in other countries which prescribe strict penalties for leakage of information by the organizations as well as by others including ministers and elected representatives. In 2007 Lewis “Scooter” Libby,

assistant to the then President George W. Bush and also Chief of Staff to Vice President Dick Cheney was convicted on a charge sheet filed by the Special Counsel for revealing the identity of their “deep cover” operative Valerie Plame to the media in 2003. At present neither RAW nor IB has any legal backing. There is reluctance by government in codifying such laws on the ground that secret services have to be hidden and denied. For a long time government used to deny that RAW ever existed despite it having a huge building in Delhi! On the other hand if there is no law it works to the detriment of officials without giving them any legal protection during their unconventional duties.

The misgivings of those who do not favour law can be allayed by showing them the text of USA’s “CIA Act” 1949 or UK’s “The Intelligence Services Act of 1994” creating Secret Intelligence Service (Popularly known as MI-6) and GCHQ. They can also peruse the web sites of USA’s CIA, UK’s MI-5 (Internal intelligence) or MI-6 (External intelligence) and see what all can be revealed to the public without jeopardizing national security. The duties of supervisory levels should be clearly spelt out in our law so that accountability and responsibility including for misuse of office or secret funds is fixed. The present outdated Official Secrets Act does not meet this requirement. If this is done such allegations of misuse of secret funds and various other misdemeanour could be promptly enquired into by competent legal authority instead of just appearing in the media again and again thereby lowering the prestige of the government. In several countries “Inspector General”, “Ombudsman” or “Commissioner” posted in each such agency who are Presidential appointees and who work independent of the departmental head are charged with the responsibility of conducting such enquiries. Their reports are not usually made public unless considered otherwise.

MR. V. BALACHANDRAN, former Special Secretary, Cabinet Secretariat, Government of India..

The Message of Telengana

An irony of politics is that principles spouted by leaders lead to diametrically opposite results. Gandhiji’s satyagraha could not prevent violence – a harsh reality of post-Independence politics. Whatever the merits of a political demand ultimately it is the killer application of violence that decides. This, because it creates the TINA (There Is No Alternative) factor – one of the two factors that bend political will. The other of course is cynical calculation of vote bank arithmetic...

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All politics is local is an old adage. After the British left India we are experiencing the increasing assertion of regionalism. The demand initially was based on language. However Telengana has shown, the focus has shifted to economics. It is the economics-related grievance of Telengana being neglected which is the main reason behind the demand for a separate state. In short, economics is a centripetal force. Politics is a centrifugal force for regionalism and ethnic identity. That is the message of Telengana.

N. Vittal (former Chief Vigilance Commissioner), *Mumbai Mirror*, December 28, 2009.



Cornucopia

Firoze Hirjika

How Much Interference Will We Tolerate?

Why are we standing by meekly while, one by one, our personal freedoms are being whittled away?

Film maker Avdhoot Gupte has made a Marathi film titled ‘Jhenda’, which has characters loosely based on Udhav and Raj Thackeray. Why getting permission from two politicians to a fictional plot is required is a matter of conjecture, but nonetheless, they “graciously” consented. Now Nitesh Rane, who holds no official position, has insisted that Gupte make script changes related to another character who resembles his father, Narayan Rane.

It’s disgraceful enough that a total nonentity like Nitin Rane has the temerity to censor a film that hasn’t even been released, but it’s even more disgusting that the film’s producers are allowing him to do so. Are we living in a mature democracy or a fledgling banana republic? Don’t we have a censor board? Granted that the censor board itself sometimes takes arbitrary and apparently mindless decisions, but at least they have some authority.

And why are we, the people allowing this nonsense

to continue? Why are we standing by meekly while, one by one, our personal freedoms are being whittled away? It’s bad enough that we are forced to endure corrupt and inefficient politicians, municipalities and police. The only silver lining is that we are still a functioning democracy, with the right to express ourselves freely, live our won lives - and choose our own form of entertainment. If we lose that too, we may become the next Pakistan, or even worse, the next China.

In defence of the film makers, I have to admit they are merely looking after their self interest. If precedence is anything to go by, non-obedience to these petty and opportunistic diktats is likely to result in vandalism and even a halt to their movie being shown. And we are to blame for that. We grumble and write self-righteous letters to the editor. But, in practical terms, we do nothing. If we don’t raise our voices now, a day may come when we are not allowed to.

Sena Is Stuck In A Time Warp

Propriety in politics has never bothered the Shiv Sena, of course, but never before has the Sena shot itself in the foot so spectacularly.

News items: Shiv Sena activists target Shahrukh Khan for advocating the inclusion of Pakistani cricketers in IPL. They visit a multiplex and burn posters of his latest film. Bal Thackeray lambastes Mukesh Ambani for stating, in a forum, that Mumbai belongs to all Indians. Thackeray issues a diktat to his followers that Rahul Gandhi is to be greeted with black flags, during his city visit, by daring to suggest that Mumbai is not the exclusive property of the Marathi *manoos*. All these incidents illustrate the growing frustration – bordering on desperation – of the Shiv Sena.

Rahul Gandhi’s local train adventure on Friday may be termed as a political stunt, but its impact was immediate and devastating. It left Udhav Thackeray stunned and forced him to make pathetically lame comebacks, like claiming it as a victory for the Sena because it forced Gandhi to change his planned itinerary, did not convince anybody, and probably not even himself. Behind that

youthful, affable exterior, Rahul Gandhi is proving to be a very astute politician with a fine sense of political timing.

Bal Thackeray, on the other hand, appears to be losing it. Thackeray is reported to have said that Rahul Gandhi is “frustrated”. In my opinion, it is Thackeray and the Shiv Sena that is displaying increasing sense of frustration by dragging politics – never held in high regard in the first place – to a new low. Propriety in politics has never bothered the Shiv Sena, of course, but never before has the Sena shot itself in the foot so spectacularly.

The Shiv Sena seems to be stuck in a time warp from which it cannot, or does not want to emerge. They are living in a fool’s paradise, convinced that the street smart tactics that worked in the 1960s and ’70s are still relevant. *Tamashas* like tearing up posters and bombastic,

Cont’d. on p.22

Mumbai For Maharashtrians

- Rahul Gandhi's Immature Utterances

Keshav Rau

It should not be forgotten that it was the bravery displayed by the Maharashtra Police – despite not being as well equipped as the NSG commandos or the terrorists – that resulted in the capture of Kasab.

When the National Security Guard (NSG) forces were in their last stages of bringing to an end the siege of some prominent places in South Mumbai like the Taj Mahal and Trident Hotels, Cama Hospital, C.S. Terminus and Nariman House, a mischievous message was flashed by someone on his/her mobile to proclaim that it was *not* the Maharashtrian commandos, but those belonging to U.P., Bihar, Punjab and other parts of the country who had come to the rescue of Mumbai. The SMS also wondered where Raj Thackeray and the Marathi *Manoos* people were in that hour of crisis. Within seconds the message was flashed all over the country, with further punch and venom being added to the original as it was passed across from one cell connection to another throughout the length and breadth of the country. Some media persons of the Indian TV channels, who were at their hysterical best while stationed outside the Taj and the Trident, promptly repeated *verbatim* the message on their channels with the kind of glee which conveyed endorsement of the sentiment expressed in the message.

Fanning the Flames?

It has now become common for cell phone users to receive, day in and day out, all sorts of messages – mischievous, hilarious jokes, rumours, exhortations, so-called attractive bargain offers etc – and they are generally not given much serious thought. This one about 26/11 was, no doubt, discussed – and also endorsed by several – for a few days, but after a few days it wasn't talked about much. It would have been forgotten had not Rahul Gandhi raked up the sentiment conveyed in the message once again in his recent speech in Bihar.

Obviously playing on the Bihari sentiment, Rahul Gandhi said: "In Maharashtra, MNS leader Raj Thackeray keeps saying 'throw out people of Bihar and U.P.' But, who killed the terrorists who had attacked Mumbai? They were the NSG guys from Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and from the rest of the country.

At that time they did not say throw away Biharis ... If terrorists have to be fought with, let Biharis remain there. [Mumbai]" *The Hindu*, 2 February 2010.

It could be safely inferred that Rahul Gandhi wants to stress that (a) Maharashtrians in charge of security at that point of time in Mumbai did nothing to take on the terrorists; (b) people from Bihar, U.P. and the rest of India (excluding Maharashtra) employed in the NSG are the only ones who are capable of handling such a situation; (c) at the material time on 26/11 there was no Maharashtrian in the NSG team which handled the terrorists attack; (d) if the Shiv Sainiks and the MNS-ites relent on their opposition to UP-ites, Biharis etc., migrating to Mumbai in search of employment, Mumbai will be safe from such terrorist attacks. Probably, at a later stage, he may go on to suggest that the NSG should not recruit any Maharashtrian. Then why not purge the entire Maharashtra Police of Maharashtrians!

No doubt, it was the NSG commandos who gunned down the terrorists who had been holed up in the Taj, Trident and Nariman House, but at the same time it should not be forgotten that it was the bravery displayed by the Maharashtra Police – despite not being as well equipped as the NSG commandos or the terrorists – that resulted in the capture of Kasab, the only one among the 9 or 10 to have been nabbed. In the process, one of the three Assistant Police Inspectors of the Maharashtra Police (all Maharashtrians) died. Three senior and bright Police Officers – again all Maharashtrians – also died while taking on the terrorists. It should also be remembered that the scale and complexity of the operation called for pressing into action a force trained and equipped for the purpose. No police force – whether of Maharashtra or of any state – could have handled it all by itself.

Shiv Sena's Moorings

The argument that Mumbai belongs to Maharashtrians and people from other states need to be thrown out is not a new one. It needs to be tackled with firmness and maturity – certainly not in the way Rahul Gandhi has chosen to do. Bal Thackeray launched the Shiv Sena in the early '60s to secure jobs for Maharashtrians, and in the process targeted the South Indians (particularly Tamilians) residing in Mumbai for his show of wrath. Now it's people from U.P. and Bihar.

Besides, its dominant philosophy, like that of the RSS, has always been a strong one of *Hindutva*, which places the Muslims all the time in front of the party's "firing range". It has also taken on the job of moral policing of the citizens of Mumbai, and here also it has found support from the groups associated with the Sangh *Parivar* like the Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad.

The rise of the Shiv Sena and its breakaway Maharashtra Navnirman Sena (MNS) headed by Bal Thackeray's nephew, Raj Thackeray has been possible because of the inaction shown by the parties in power – for the major part, the Congress – out of fear that it would result in large scale violence in Mumbai. The only person who displayed some guts was an ex-Shiv Sena politician, Chhagan Bhujbal, who, as the State's Home Minister in 2000/2001 ordered the arrest of Bal Thackeray. Technical though the arrest was, it sent out a salutary message that the city would not go up in flames by such a step.

What's Sauce for the Goose...

While Rahul Gandhi – and like him several others – is justified in debunking the "Mumbai for Maharashtrians" cry of the Shiv Sena, he should also ponder over what is the type of pronouncement that is being made by a Chief Minister in his own backyard and belonging to his own Party, Sheila Dikshit of Delhi. In a recent statement, she attributed the ills of Delhi to the "migrants who are coming into Delhi". Who, pray, are the migrants? The entire State of Delhi consists of migrants and no one but migrants – whether they are Punjabis, Haryanvis, UP-ites, Biharis, Bengalis, South Indians etc. Sheila Dikshit herself is a migrant. Has Rahul Gandhi or his Party ever pulled up Sheila Dikshit for such a remark? Or did they disassociate themselves from such remarks? No – not even after the Shiv Sena and the MNS applauded the statement of Sheila Dikshit. Some years back, Delhi University Colleges resorted to introducing tests, interviews, personality tests etc., over and above the cut-off marks required to be scored at the school leaving level for being considered for admission. All this was done with a view to keep out as many students from Bihar as possible.

Migration is Inevitable

People migrating from smaller towns to the bigger ones, particularly the Metros, will continue unabated, however vociferously the local groups or regional parties oppose such migration. A burgeoning population, breakdown of the joint family system, scaled down land holdings, heightened aspirations of the growing numbers of literate youth, scarce opportunities available to fulfill these aspirations are factors which compel people to migrate to bigger towns. It is inevitable. In the larger States like

U.P. and Bihar, no attention to development was ever paid by the parties in power, the trend having been set by the Congress itself which remained in power for long years during the prime ministership of Rahul's grandmother and great grandfather. The U.P. leaders then, as a matter of fact, raised backwardness to the level of a virtue.

In retrospect, it should also be acknowledged that the Shiv Sena could become a force to reckon with only because a perception had gained ground in certain quarters – on fairly justifiable grounds – that the initial batches of migrants into Mumbai who secured employment were able to obtain employment for their kith and kin back home also by managing with the employers some sort of "preferential treatment". This process got multiplied rapidly. It was this "preferential treatment" which Bal Thackeray could exploit with resounding success. Some two decades after the Shiv Sena started its onslaught in Mumbai, the North-Eastern States also revolted against Bengalis and Marwaris for cornering jobs and business opportunities, resulting in PSU Banks and Government of India Undertakings withdrawing all Bengali officers from their North Eastern offices and replacing them with officers from other parts of the country, giving the latter quite a few incentives.

This historical background has not been narrated to in any way justify the violence and reign of terror let loose by the Shiv Sena and the MNS in Mumbai, which have destroyed the basic character of the city. The Shiv Sainiks have taken things too far. The way forward is not to advance arguments like saying that the city's entire infrastructure, transport system etc., will be thrown haywire if there is an exodus. Nor will Rahul Gandhi-type of statements improve matters. For one thing, there will never be an exodus of outsiders from Mumbai – barring a few stray instances of groups of people moving out. For another – and this is very important – constantly harping on Mumbai being saved only by outsiders in the 26/11 terrorist attack is only going to alienate a large section of Maharashtrians who otherwise are totally opposed to the Shiv Sena and its tactics or have no leanings towards it.

Law and Order Must be Enforced

What is required is really well planned strong measures against acts of violence, threats of disruption of normal life and holding the city to ransom. There may be some initial violent reactions to such measures, but it would be worthwhile putting up with it. Rahul Gandhi and his party should send out this strong message to the Chief Minister. Also, instead of hopping around all over the

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Comrade Jyoti Basu, RIP

He Turned West Bengal into “Waste Bengal”

M. D. Kini



Basu's rule was “ a terrible tale of calculated destruction of West Bengal in the name of ideology...Entire generations of educated middle class Bengalis were forced to seek refuge in other states or migrate to America as Jyoti Basu worked over time to destroy West Bengal's economy...”

When Jyoti Basu passed away on January 17, 2010 many hailed it as the end of an era not only for West Bengal but for India itself. Some bemoaned

the fact that he missed being the first communist prime minister to head a national coalition government. He was acclaimed as the longest ruling chief minister. He distributed land to the tillers. His advice was sought to form governments of India and was looked upon as an Elder Statesman. These compliments came from newspapers, TV reporters, some Congress politicians and members of the erstwhile Third Front.

After the fulsome praise from politicians and the media had run its course, came critical assessments from well known columnists and commentators. They were more circumspect and more truthful.

“Jyoti Basu's life was a tragedy” observed Ashis Nandy, eminent sociologist and author, and that is the headline of Sheela Bhatt's piece in *India Abroad* (New York, January.29 2010). Journalist Kanchan Gupta called him “Destroyer of West Bengal” in the daily *Pioneer* (January 10). Swapan Dasgupta, said that Basu's rule took West Bengal out of the mainstream of development in India, and “Basu's legacy is negative”. When zamindari was abolished in 1952, it started the end of feudalism, says Dasgupta, and land reforms were its consequence. Basu cannot claim any special credit for it.

Basu was the Chief Minister for 23 long years (1977-2000) and if we include the earlier United Front government dominated by the CPM, it would be 33 years (1967-77). In this long tenure in office, what did he do for West Bengal apart from land distribution?

Ashis Nandy made the keen comment that the Indian communists have a colonial mind-set and not a

creative mind-set like the Chinese or even the Russian communists. “Basu”, he said, “had a colonial education. Indian Marxists took Marx literally; they took it as gospel European truth. Indian Marxists could not take the risks that the Chinese or even the Russians did. China and Russia were not directly colonized. They could play a bigger game by modifying the Marxist text. They used Marx creatively...I would say Basu's life was a tragedy. He could not take land reforms further to play the bigger game...”

After land reforms, Basu and CPM were keen to consolidate their power through various trade unions of government servants, the police, of enterprises in the private and public sectors. The party and the state became almost one. This explains their long reign in West Bengal. Their imagination and vision could not go any further.

The “New Class”

Writing in *The Times of India*, Mumbai (November.4, 2009), under the headline, “Waste Bengal”, Saugata Roy, pointed out: “A section of the ruling CPM, which had won the hearts through land reforms in the late seventies tuned into tormentors as in Geroge Orwell's *Animal Farm*. Slowly, sons of the soil – *Mandis*, *Murmus*, *Sorens*, and *Tudus* – lost out to *dikkus* (foreigners) like *Sarkars* and *Pandeys* in the party hierarchy. Many in the new breed turned into ‘party managers’, travelling in air-conditioned cars and running the party from the headquarters”. It was indeed a new class highlighted by Milovan Djilas in his famous book of the same name years ago. The people's anger erupted when the government and the Party tried to take over their land in Nandigram which was distributed to them earlier by the same Party government.

The Party would resort to strikes and *bandhs* (close) at the drop of a hat in the ‘fifties and ‘sixties – increase in bus fare, tram fare, wages, trade union rivalry were all occasions to go on strike. Calcutta (now called Kolkata)

which boasted of many engineering industries was the industrial capital of India with its proximity to areas with iron, steel and coal when India became free. It could well have become the industrial capital of India; but the communist trade unions made it the strike capital of India. A new form of strike called 'gherao' (surround) was invented by which the management was surrounded until it agreed to the demands of the workers. This form of blackmailing became their favourite weapon. This made industry to migrate to Western India – to Maharashtra and Gujarat. The flight of industry was also facilitated by the 'freight equalization' policy of the government of India with regard to steel and coal.

Industrial Decline

The industrial decline in West Bengal has been summarized by some economists of leftist persuasion led by Abhijit Banerjee, Pranab Bardan, Kaushik Basu and seven others in their article, "Strategy for Economic Reform in West Bengal", (*EPW* Special Article, October 12, 2002). The following paragraphs summarize the industrial situation at the end of Jyoti Basu's regime:

"The crude facts of the last 20 years about the relative position of West Bengal industry are nothing short of stunning. In 1980-81 West Bengal produced 9.8 per cent of the industrial output produced in India. In 1997-98, which is the latest year for which we have the numbers the share was 5.1 per cent, up from a nadir of 4.7 per cent in 1995-96. Organized sector employment actually declined in West Bengal over the period 1980-9; in particular employment in the organized private sector went down from 10.84 lakhs all the way to 7.99 lakhs."

The authors found a similar pattern in foreign trade. The Kolkata airport and port handled about 10 per cent of the imports and exports from the country in 1985-86 which came down to around 4 per cent in 1998-99. West Bengal was the second most industrialized state even in the mid-1960s but by 1995-96 it came down behind Karnataka and just ahead of UP in terms of the share of output from industry. And they add, "What makes these numbers even more striking is the fact that this happened in a period of relative peace and political stability in the state after the turbulent 1960s and the repressive 1970s...."

The authors went on to draw attention to the fact: "Most remarkably, all this happened in a period when the industrial growth rate in the country as a whole accelerated:

the rate of growth of industry value added was 7 per cent in the 1980s and 6.7 per cent in 1990s compared to 5.5 per cent in the 1960s and 1970s. This was after all the period of the software boom and liberalization, the period that put Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Delhi on the industrial map of India. It would almost seem that West Bengal opted to step off the bus just as everyone else was getting in."

The article mentions 'rampant and institutionalized corruption in the middle and lower rungs of the government' and particularly PWD, police, excise, irrigation and public procurement agencies. A CAG (Comptroller and Auditor General) report discovered that of the 11 statutory corporations and 69 public sector companies - 'not a single one has paid a dividend to the state government for 1999-2000, as in most years in recent history'. It was a severe condemnation of the Communist rule and offered many suggestions to recover the lost glory of West Bengal in all spheres – hi-tech industry, higher education, power supply, credit, de-reservation of agro-industries from small-scale sector, contract farming, role of multinational companies, Chinese strategy of labour-intensive small-scale industry ironically called as 'people's capitalism'.

Middle Class Driven Out.

Kanchan Gupta describes Basu's rule as "a terrible tale of calculated destruction of West Bengal in the name of ideology," and adds: "Entire generations of educated middle class Bengalis were forced to seek refuge in other states or migrate to America as Jyoti Basu worked over time first to destroy West Bengal's economy, chase out Bengali talent and hand over a disinherited state to Burrabazar traders and wholesale merchants who overnight became 'industrialists' with a passion for asset-stripping and investing their 'profits' elsewhere". The 'Sheffield of the East' became a vast stretch of wasteland, he observes.

Marx had predicted communism after the demise of capitalism. Indian communists never allowed capitalism to produce goods at least in their pocket boroughs – Kerala, West Bengal and Tripura. They killed industries in the private sector with increasing demands by the workers and made public sector enterprises inefficient. The communist dilemma was real. If capitalism succeeds in producing goods for the masses, workers may not heed

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To speak good of the evil dead is to speak evil of the living good.

A. D. Gorwala in Opinion

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.*

Indians in Australia

1) Racial treatment meted out to Indians in Australia has become an issue over the last 6 months or so. Apart from the frequency of attacks (over a hundred last year?), the response of Government officials there is disturbing. After every attack, the standard Australian response is that it is not yet clear whether it was racially motivated and further investigations are needed; legalistically correct but morally an ostrich-like response. What is clear as day light is sought to be covered up in red tape. If that is not enough, Indians are advised not to carry expensive items like cell phones and cameras in order not to tempt the poor Australians. What takes the cake is the finding of a Commissioner of Police that Indians are safer in Australia than in India. This smacks of greater prejudice than that shown by ignorant hooligans. It required further evidence of apartheid by way of refusal of entry to Indians in a hotel in Melbourne, for some official to admit that there is racial prejudice in Australia. Considering the supercilious response of the Australian Government, the Indian Government was at last constrained to advise Indian students not to go to Australia, although that does not meet the problem.

No problem is too small or too trivial if we can really do something about it.

Richard Feynman

1) Some of our own social scientists, who specialize in self-flagellation, have made common cause with Australians in arguing that India should not point a finger at Australia because we are ourselves not free of racial intolerance, lawlessness, rape of foreign tourists et al. Social misbehaviour or crime in one place is no excuse for similar barbarian conduct elsewhere. Otherwise, third world citizens everywhere would be kicked in the teeth with the excuse that the situation in their own country was no better. It must be remembered that the media which is being criticised for whipping up hysteria over the attacks in Australia was responsible for exposing the sordid rapes in Goa too. The Australian High Commissioner in India has argued that Indian students take up night jobs in Australia putting themselves to risk and they stay in cheap neighbourhoods adding to the risk. This is like digging for excuses to deny what is staring everybody in the face. The other ostensible reason is that educated Indians take up jobs which the Australians should get; a very valid point but it is up to the Australian Government to decide what jobs foreigners (Indians) should be allowed to hold, not for street thugs to beat up Indians. It is perhaps time that all offences against Indian students are treated *prima facie* as racist and then work backwards to prove that these were not so; or else they will never find evidence that the attacks were racist. It is appreciated that everybody cannot be given security as demanded by Indian students down under but the minimum expected of a civilized society is to recognize that there is something terribly wrong in what is happening. If that were done, the Shiv Sena would have found no ground to warn Australian cricketers against playing in India. It is a distasteful response to a distasteful situation. Now there are reports of some Indians being caught molesting Australian girls or making bogus claims of being racial victims. If there are 'ugly' Indians in Australia, they should be exposed but 'ugly' Australians should be exposed too; one set of rogues does not cancel out the other.

Pakistan's Jugglery

2) A failing state, Pakistan cannot be expected to be very rational in its international responses. After 26/11, Pakistan refused to accept that the terrorists were Pakistanis. Dockets of evidence later, Pakistan demanded that India provide further evidence of the complicity of its agencies or its state actors; the game continues after more than one year after the event. It latched on to our PM's declaration that like India, Pakistan is also a victim of terrorism. Taking the plea further, Pakistan has now

2) India's concern is not whether Pakistan is able to manage its own affairs. In humanitarian spirit we may wish it well but in practical sense we can do little. All that we ask is that the terrorists coming across the border from Pakistan should not have the support of the Pakistani state; as long as the ISI does not help L-e-T/Jaish-e-Mohd etc, we can understand Pakistan's helplessness before the terrorists, although it is guilty of creating the Frankenstein in the first place. It is true that the way out of the present logjam is through a negotiated settlement. Since those who hold power in Pakistan i.e. the army and the political leadership have both shown preference for verbal gymnastics and not a true desire for settlement of disputes, there

argued that since it is itself suffering from suicide bombings, it cannot guarantee that another 26/11 will not take place in India. Any country would be ashamed of admitting that it cannot control lawlessness and there is no guarantee that its people will not attack another country. The truth is very disturbing but we always knew it. Pakistan's claim of being a law abiding country was exposed long ago. After 26/11, Pakistan has moved from no Pakistani is involved – to provide more evidence – to we are taking all legal action – to it is up to the Courts – to Taliban will be rooted out – to we cannot do anything! In spite of Pakistan's 'denial mode', talks between the two countries are about to restart, which is a good sign but hopefully Pakistan will not enter another word game afresh.

is an attempt to improve relations through people to people dialogue; its success is not guaranteed as trust deficit is very great. The rejection of all Pak players by the IPL franchisees has hurt the innocent cricketers but the franchisees had to watch out for public resentment to Pak players being paid crores of rupees by Indian businessmen. Sports and politics should not be mixed and the best players should be on view but such sentiments count for little in a surcharged atmosphere. Pakistani reaction to this snub is immature as could be expected. All said and done, our relations will continue to be bedeviled till Pak's sincerity in curbing terrorism becomes credible.

In the lobby of a Moscow hotel across from a Russian Orthodox monastery: YOU ARE WELCOME TO VISIT THE CEMETERY WHERE FAMOUS RUSSIAN AND SOVIET COMPOSERS, ARTISTS, AND WRITERS ARE BURIED DAILY EXCEPT THURSDAY.

Reign of Enforcers

3) It is common these days to hear sundry organisations declare that they would not allow certain events. In a civilized society, it is the Government which bans programmes, not non-state actors. Government has the monopoly over use of legitimate force; others can protest, carry out propaganda but they are not allowed to use physical force to stop what they oppose. However, we seem to have entered an age where non-state actors are allowed to assume coercive powers. To take a few examples, there were declarations that the film 'Zenda' would not be allowed to be screened, another would be stopped because its name was offensive, non-Marathi taxi drivers would not be allowed to ply their vehicles in Mumbai, Australian cricketers will not be allowed to play, Pakistani cricketers should not be selected for IPL 3 etc. In Rajasthan, 'Akbar Jodha' was opposed; now there is opposition to a film called 'Veer'. Shah Rukh Khan became an object of hatred because he espoused the cause of Pak cricketers in IPL 3. Earlier, there were attacks on paintings and books. This can go on and on as small groups with some muscle power impose their will on others. By pushing their aggressive agenda, without fear of penal action, miniscule groups succeed in acquiring power beyond their capacity. It becomes a habit to hit at every thing that does not fall in line with their thinking. Soon there may be an Enforcement industry providing jobs to hooligans.

3) It is not as if there is no merit in those who oppose certain developments. A movie may contain some offensive language; there may be a sound reason why people are angry with Australia; there is enough reason to hate what Pakistan has done to us; local people deserve to get taxi licenses. There are endless causes that can be espoused. The point is that in a democracy, there are ways of expressing anger. Threatening others is not the way. The code of civilized behaviour does not permit it and no Government should allow it. There should be room for honest disagreement; those favouring good relations with an adversary are not traitors. Organisations that have peripheral influence now would grow in strength through their adventurism. The victims of coercion are not generally strong as they are isolated. It is for the Government to recognise the danger signals and stamp out use of force by non-state actors. To be fair, the Government allows such threats to go unpunished because the thinking is that it is better not to give importance to such issues as they peter out over a period of time. This may not be true any longer, as more irresponsible groups emerge on seeing the success of others. Enforcers must be stopped in their tracks.

India and China – the Essential Difference

Our contrast with China, with which we are often compared in the global context, is extremely striking when it comes to freedom of expression and open debates. A recent example of the paranoia of the rulers of China is the harsh treatment of human rights activist Liu Xiaobo, sentenced to 11 years in prison on Christmas day last year in Beijing. His crime was "inciting subversion of state power". He was accused of writing Charter 08 which attracted more than 300 Chinese signatures in December 2008. Its publication marked the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

N. Vittal, Mumbai Mirror, January 25, 2010.

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

Is Religion Becoming A Bad Word in the West?

Firoze Hirjikaka

In their zeal to appear secular, the establishment in the West has almost made religion a bad word. A few years ago, there was a huge brouhaha in America about school prayers; and if I recall correctly, a courthouse in the US got into trouble because it had a sculpture of the Ten Commandments at the entrance.

I was brought up to believe that religion, among other things, preaches tolerance; tolerance for another's faults, tolerance for opposing points of view and tolerance for a different set of beliefs. However, today it seems that religion is veering more and more towards extremism. There is, of course, the much publicized extremism of Islamic fundamentalists, who commit unspeakable atrocities in the name of Allah. But at the other end of the scale, there is a kind of reverse extremism among people living in Western countries.

I am talking about the policy of separation between church and state. I find no fault in this, but it appears that in their zeal to appear secular, the establishment in the West has almost made religion a bad word. A few years ago, there was a huge brouhaha in America about school prayers; and if I recall correctly, a courthouse in the US got into trouble because it had a sculpture of the Ten Commandments at the entrance.

Now a Christian teacher in Britain has lost her job home tutoring children too sick to attend school, because she offered to pray for a sick child she was tutoring. She was visiting the home of the child when she spoke about her belief in miracles and asked whether she could say a prayer. When the child's mother informed her that she and her husband were non-believers, she did not go on. Nonetheless, the parents lodged a formal complaint with the teacher's managers, accusing her of talking about her faith with the child. The teacher was told that her sharing her faith with a child could be deemed to be bullying; and she was fired. Her crime was that she told the mother that there were people praying for them, and asked the child if she could pray for her. Just a year ago, a community nurse was suspended last December after offering to pray for a patient. Fortunately, she was reinstated after community members raised a hue and cry.

I can understand the intent – and even the necessity – for separating church and state. History is replete with examples of the clergy blatantly interfering in affairs of state. Some Popes in the Middle Ages even set themselves up as absolute rulers. And in centuries

past, the Church has spread its tentacles in most aspects of public life. Even atrocities like the Spanish Inquisition were sanctioned by the State.

Now it seems we have come full circle. The desire to be politically correct has become so acute in the West that it is sometimes carried to ridiculous lengths. In France, Christian school children are not allowed to wear a cross on any parts of their bodies. In another European country, some schools banned the displaying of Nativity scenes. And as described above, it no longer has just nuisance value. People have lost their jobs and livelihood because of this absurd obsession.

Personally, I have always been skeptical of organized religion and the clergy. From the first century onwards, the clergy has sought to control their "flock" through intimidation, indoctrination and inducements. Original sin, hellfire and damnation; and rewards in heaven are some of the popular weapons employed. The priestly class, in all religions, has the arrogance to indoctrinate the laity into believing that God can be reached only through their intervention. This is total nonsense, but the myth has been perpetrated down the centuries as a tool to exercise control over the "ignorant" masses.

That said, I readily admit the 'masses don't really mind being gullible; especially when it comes to a subject as complex and bewildering as God and religion. They prefer to let the "experts" do the heavy thinking and just tell them, in simple terms, what they are expected to do to remain in the Almighty's good books. Religious symbols are a big part of this; crosses, rosaries, St. Christopher medals. Thousands of Christians feel a sense of comfort carrying them around, although there is no real evidence that they work. However, they don't do any real harm; and for the authorities to object to this is being just plain stupid.

India, where I live, is constitutionally a secular nation, but we have a different concept of secularism.

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Should India Make Up With China NOW?

Ram Narayanan

My on line dispatch of February 9, 2010 titled provocatively, "Should India make up with China NOW by surrendering territory or later when China will take it forcefully?" has produced interesting feedback from former diplomats, high ranking retired military officers, foreign policy experts and other knowledgeable observers of the India-China scene. Here is a selection of the on-line debate, for Freedom First readers, limited by space constraints.

Should India make up with China NOW by surrendering territory that the latter is asking for, instead of waiting for a time when China will take it forcefully? Or is India ready or getting prepared seriously to protect its territorial integrity?

Mr. B. S. Raghavan a retired IAS officer, who has held high positions in the Government of India wrote an article in the *Business Line* of July 6, 2009. The introductory and concluding paragraphs in his article say it all.

“—The vista stretching before India and China, if only they join hands and march in step, is unparalleled in its grandeur...There can be no match to the combined synergy of two oldest civilisations, accounting for more than one-third of the human race, with cultural links going back to the time China came under the spell of Buddhism...”

“The President/Prime Minister of the People’s Republic of China and the Prime Minister of India can solve the problem in a single sitting by keeping the big picture before them, by sweeping away the clutter of the past, and by mustering a statesmanlike spirit and a long range vision.”

The full article is available at <http://www.thehindubusinessline.com/2009/07/06/stories/2009070650390900.htm>.

In response, Col. Hariharan had the following questions:

1. What is the hurry to give away Tawang, and take what? The territory we are already holding? An undemarcated border? How about consulting the people who populate the disputed areas before we hand them over to the Chinese? Is it not germane in settling national strategic issues, rather than the honchos of India and China deciding over a cup of tea?

2. Is China ready for a link up with India and abandoning its global ambitions, even if we are?
3. To my mind the phalanx of India-Russia-China-Japan B. S. Raghavan speaks of in his article ignores historical realities of relationships of these nations. Moreover, how does one bring about this when Europe and America watch such a global development with a wary eye?

Mr. B. S. Raghavan replied : “A very important point to note in the *People’s Daily* article is that in its reference to the need for give-and-take in settling the border dispute, it has not gone into specifics or preconditions – that is, it has not rubbed in its claim for Arunachal Pradesh nor its rejection of the “illegal” McMahon Line. In other words, it seems to have left some room for manoeuvre...”

“It is very easy at such junctures to indulge in jingoism to win the applause of the multitudes and very difficult, and of course unpopular, to keep one’s head and work for a win-win solution. Greatness of a nation or a people lies in the statesmanship it can summon in sensitive situations. I wish somebody would impress this on our policy makers.

When I responded to this with the question: Since China is unlikely to agree to any sort of settlement short of surrendering Tawang, is India ready for that? Mr. Raghavan answered that “ India should be mentally prepared for some territorial sacrifice to buy peace and harmony. I don’t take a cynical view of China as some brainwashed jingoists do...”

My own view is that it would be unwise for India to purchase peace by surrendering territory that is now part of India.

Having visited China four times during my career as a marketing consultant and having dealt with the Chinese both at the professional and government levels pretty extensively, I have a fair knowledge of how the Chinese think of themselves. They will not brook any country

coming in the way of their pre-determined objective of becoming the number one superpower in this century and keeping that position. America they are prepared to tolerate for some time till they take over, but if India at any time starts making faster progress than China - woe to the Indians. Remember Munich? No attempt to appease the Chinese by territorial concession will satisfy the dragon. Therefore, India needs to be prepared to defend its territorial integrity by building up its armed forces to the requisite extent that will ward off any conceivable Chinese threat. Fortunately, it's possible for India to upgrade the quality of its armed forces far above China's, because unlike China, India has access to the world's best weapons systems and weapons technology.

There were over 70 responses to the question. Space constraints prevent all 70 being published. Less than half of those who participated in this on-line debate find mention. Also there have been many repetitions which have been edited. If you wish to read the full text please write to me at ramn_wins@roadrunner.com.

Retired Lieutenant-General J. F. R. Jacob, the Chief of Staff of the Indian Army's Eastern Command that vanquished the Pakistani army in the war of 1971:

"The Chinese want the whole of the Tawang tract upto and beyond Senge, that is well south of our main defences south of the Se La Ridge. If given to them, they will have easy access to the plains of Assam as also to Tashigong in Bhutan, which we are committed to defend ... and thence to the plains. Walong which they also want is in our territory some 70 miles inside. Possession is 90 % of the law...We should not talk anymore, but continue to hold our territory. If we are strong they dare not do anything.

Retired Major General Afsir Karim: The solution is a status quo. Aksai Chin cannot be taken back and Arunachal Pradesh or any part cannot be bartered. I believe China will be willing, provided some other conditions not directly related to the border dispute, are met. These conditions have to be discussed in a comprehensive dialogue held at the highest level. Preparedness to meet any armed aggression is a *must* even if an agreement is reached with China, but jingoism has no place in this process.

Arvind K Mathur, an Indian American Military History buff: There is an old saying in the military " battles are lost in the minds of generals, not on the battle field". Ask an Indian farmer if he will give up his land...Why do these analysts believe that India is incapable of defending herself against China? .. I reject the idea that the Chinese will let us live in peace if we let them have the land that they

look for. Note that this land is not important to them they just want it. So its not that if we give it to them they will say thank you and go about their business - no they will now be emboldened and ask for something else, may be the entire Indian Ocean.

Retired Admiral Arun Prakash, till recently India's Chief of Naval Staff: Does no one remember history and the wages of appeasement? ...Chamberlain's famous declaration on return from Munich in 1938, " It is peace for our times...." will go down as the most pathetic last words ever.... Let there be no doubt that China is a hegemon which wants to give India another knock to ensure that we know our (Number 2) place in Asia. Give away Tawang today and they will demand Arunachal & Ladakh tomorrow. Given visionary & resolute leadership India can stand up to China and make them back off.

Arvind Virmani, author of, "From Unipolar to Tripolar World: Multipolar Transition Paradox, 2009": One simple question needs to be answered first: Is there any China sponsored global or continental (Asia wide) organisation (economic, social or security related) to which India was invited to be a full fledged founder member? I am not aware of any!

Retired Major General E. D'Souza, PVSM: I faced the Chinese in 1965 at Natu La. To me it is abundantly clear that we would be totally out of our minds to do so. I am convinced that we must stand fast and quietly go on girding our loins as we are now doing. (*Freedom First* readers will recall his many articles on the subject the last of which was in the January 2010 issue)

Madhav Nalapat, Professor of Geopolitics & UNESCO Peace Chair at the Manipal Academy of Higher Education. The Chinese are not interested in Tawang, but are using that to ensure Indian compliance on the "Dalai Issue" — the matter that is their deepest concern. Should we make concessions on that, they will agree to the *status quo*. So our friends are being needlessly generous, when they say that India should give away territory. Generally, that is a bad idea, including when the Obama team wants India to surrender Kashmir.

Mohan Guruswamy, China expert and author of the well acclaimed recently published book "Chasing the Dragon": Will India Catch-up with China?": No strategically minded India will allow the Chinese sub Himalayan space so near the Brahmaputra valley. The Himalayas are our natural boundary and China must remain on the other side of it.

Lawrence Prabhakar, Professor of Political Science, Madras Christian College and Strategic Affairs Analyst:

Let me critique the propositions and outline why it is untenable in the strategic sense:

- (a) By what measure do you sue for peace; is it on concrete power profile terms that is reciprocal of mutual sharing and giving up of territory for a concrete long-lasting political settlement or is it merely the angst from a bully power; By the way what does China give up? (b) In the recent history of China “settling its border and boundary disputes” there is not a single instance in which “Peaceful China” has reciprocated on territorial settlements including its strategic partner Russia. By the way Strategic Partner Russia is quite wary of China although it enjoys a flourishing commercial relationship with China. Russian officials recently have expressed much concern about China’s military and strategic modernization and Chinese designs on Siberia. The Russian-Chinese friendship or strategic partnership is evident as long as powerful USA lasts.

...Please remember no authoritarian power in the ancient or contemporary period would ever prefer peace when it is on the ascendant; Peace among democracies is possible and workable when they trade on strong economic salients.

...once India succumbs, then ASEAN would be a simple pushover on the South China Sea disputes; that leaves a jittery Japan that either stiffens up with its “normal” military power exercising its nuclear and missile options. It also exposes Russia into new strategic uncertainties. China then expands to an assertion with the Euro-Atlantic power with the demand that they share a duopoly – an uneasy one; with nuclear deterrence and space warfare on the anvil, China would simply sweep the Asian landmass with no deterrent power until it reaches the Greater Middle East and the Eurasian landmass. These are some heady geopolitical shifts that can be anticipated.

Let me state, China would not attack India as long as India has the conventional, land-air and naval forces in formidable order of battle and of course keeping a robust nuclear posture that is offensive. This includes a robust thermonuclear deterrent – one that is *tested* and deployed. Nuclear Deterrence and that too with an offensive accent alone can deter China.

Even if we go by the formula of reciprocity and exchange, as pointed out by Mr. B. S. Raghavan, what worked with Russia would not work with India and China since there is steep power asymmetry. As world-class practitioner of power, China goes by the principle of power peers and not power asymmetry.

Pareesh Patel, President and CEO of a software company with offices in the US and in India: India gave back gained land to Pakistan after the war of 1971... did it help forge peace?

Pramitpal Chaudhuri, Prominent journalist and Foreign Editor, Hindustan Times: The basic flaw in Mr Raghavan’s thesis is that it assumes that it is only the border dispute that is getting in the way of a Sino-Indian rapprochement. Having met dozens of Chinese officials, journalists, diplomats and foreign policy analysts over the years I think it is safe to say that China has not the slightest interest in partnering with India on the geopolitical front...President Narayanan when he met Jiang Zemin told us how he was bluntly told by the Chinese leader, “we are your superior in everything except software; that surprised us; but I think it is only because of your knowledge of English.”...I’ve also noticed that the Chinese rarely mention the border dispute. They see it as an Indian obsession and have always said “let’s ignore the border and move on to other things.” The only gesture they would appreciate would be for India to hand over the Dalai Lama in a cage. This doesn’t mean India and China cannot and should not work out a *modus vivendi*. but India would have to earn China’s respect, most notably on the economic front, before Beijing would be interested in treating India as a geopolitical partner. A Chinese business student told his Indian hosts on a recent visit, “Your capital is no better than a second tier Chinese city.” For his government, India is no better than a second tier country.

Retired Col. Rakesh Prasad Chaturvedi: Our forward postures in Arunachal have deterred ingress. And if it was not for our indifferent political masters, we would have a far better infrastructure there, to match Chinese preparation in Tibet. Unfortunately our administrators and policy makers don’t come through as a cogent strong willed lot. Tibet has all but been given away on the logic Mr Raghavan is now propounding. And to what effect?

Sreeram Chaulia, Associate Professor of World Politics at the O. P. Jindal Global University in Sonapat, Haryana: I’m afraid Raghavan is building castles in the air by assuming China can just walk in and take Tawang without costs. What he should be talking about and we all should pay attention to is whether our nuclear arsenal meets the shifting definition of a credible deterrent. Brahma Chellaney has been correctly arguing that this is the most critical defence we have in the light of the growing military gap with China. It is pointless to debate the inevitability of losing Tawang when it is not actually inevitable ... Scholars like John Garver have shown through elaborate research that Pakistan is China’s all weather partner which Beijing will never ever sacrifice, least of all for friendship with an India that shelters the Tibetan movement.

Sumeet Chhibber, an independent analyst in the US: Have the Chinese indicated that the border dispute boils down to the ownership of Tawang? No!

Retired Brig. Suresh Nair is an infantry man who has intimate knowledge of India's armed forces' capabilities against China and the terrain on the borders.

Land and territories in my view are not major considerations for China in its attitude to India. China has enough territory even for its huge population, grabbing another few sq. kms. will not give it any major gains. If it was so why did they withdraw in '62?

Taiwan now and Hongkong earlier were different, it was a question of ideology and principles. So what are the Chinese up to as far as India is concerned? A million dollar question, which eludes the right explanation.. So whether India 'concedes' territory or not, in my opinion, will make no difference to the relationship as we have to see the grand strategy behind the Chinese moves. Territory is just a pressure point to be applied at their convenience.

As long as the mighty Himalayas lie between India and China (God made geography but once), it will never be a cakewalk for the Chinese, if India is prepared to slog it out. They can line up the entire PLA but the gates are small in the mighty mountains and entry will be restricted. Of course that is just a simplistic way (in lighter vein) of putting it. The Chinese are well aware of that too and being the wise men from the land of Sun Tzu they are unlikely to get into any tangle which they are not sure of.

T. V. Parasuram, veteran journalist and retired *Indian Express* and Press Trust of India Special Correspondent in Washington DC and former Indian Army Observer with 26 Div.: When a foreign potentate visited China, according to custom, he would give a present to the Emperor and receive a gift in return. However, the way the Chinese historian wrote about it and filed it in secret archives was that the foreign ruler "paid a tribute" to the Chinese emperor and the son of heaven in return gave the visitor a gift. By using the word "tribute" the Chinese rulers secretly claimed the territory of the visitor as part of the Chinese empire – a claim to be enforced when China became stronger and the territory of the ruler who thought he was giving and receiving gifts in Beijing. Unlike India which historically has been multilingual, multicultural and multi-religious, the Chinese believe that their way is not only superior but also the only one for a "civilized person" to live by.

Vijendran Rao, a retired senior scientist who has lived through the freedom movement and the aftermath of

independence: The current joke going the round here is 'What Russia could not achieve with Communism, China will achieve with Capitalism - in strangling the West'. China knows how to use your own innovations to devour you.

Dinesh, a technology entrepreneur in the US: I continue to say that India needs to do what's in India's long term interests and only thing India needs to worry about is self interest, nothing more nothing less. If ceding some territory which the British annexed long time ago and handed over to us, and we neglect that territory and its habitants, do we really have a moral right to keep it? Shri Raghavan has provided a workable solution and if the Chinese agree to that (which may be quite a difficult task), I think the rest will fall in line - Japan, Russia, ASEAN, US or Europe. Pakistan does not even count, really.

I personally am convinced that a friendly China is in our interest economically, strategically, and in all which ways; as it is a neighbouring power with many thousand kms. of border with us. US, Japan, Europe and Russia are distant powers, who will leave India any time they feel like. We need to create an Asian Century or association with China like what Charles DeGaulle created with Germany in the form of EU and now peace prevails for 65 years in that fighting piece of land for the first time in its known history. Finally if India and China can get together all others will fall in line. .

Ted Raman, who describes himself as an "ardent Silicon Valley Indophile": I like Shri Raghavan's pragmatic idea; a) India, as it is, cannot deal effectively even with Pak; b) India has no friends to count if trouble starts with China or Pak. It has even less friends now than 20 years ago and after 20 years will have even less. China will see to it that its proxy Pak will dog India, and get what it wants without moving a finger; c) I have talked to some army folks about Arunachal. The people there are referred to as Chini even by Indians. And they don't care if they are with India. India cannot take care of its own, as it is; d) Pak ceded territory to China 50 years ago has benefitted tremendously; e) If India acts now, it has a chance to save the western front; f) India is sinking billions in arms, without an end to the tunnel. At this rate there is no catching up even with Pak; g) On the other hand a deal with Beijing would normalise the eastern front. We have done this to Bangladesh; even ceded territory. In addition, making peace with China will kill two birds: One, it will ensure an era of peace in the East. Two, It will make Pak cool its behaviour.

Retired Vice Admiral Premvir Das, a former Director General Defence Planning Staff: The presumption that India should hand over territory, read Tawang, (the Chinese

already hold everything else) before the Chinese take it over forcibly is so utterly defeatist! It assumes that we will not be able to beat the Chinese when even much poorly equipped Vietnam did this so easily back in 1978.

C. V. Ranganathan is a former ambassador of India to China: I am perhaps in a minority of one who believes that while the border question is very important to solve it is not very urgent given the *impasse* in negotiations. Secondly those who believe that China will take what it wants by force at a future date are Indo pessimists who grossly underestimate the capabilities of our armed forces. 2010 is not 1962.

Retired Major General Sheru Thapliyal: 1. We have no coherent and well thought out China policy in place. 2. Our politicians and foreign policy establishment are still traumatised by '62 war while the armed forces have got over it. Chinese have only contempt for the weak. .If you wish to realise your potential of becoming an Asian power, you have to stand up to the Chinese. 5. We need to go proactive. We need to ask the Chinese to vacate Aksai Chin. Our claim line there should be the international border which was handed over to us by the British.

A. Madhavan is a retired career diplomat of India: My belief is that a nation which is at odds with a stronger neighbouring nation should not begin by indicating a mindset hinting at the offer of concessions beforehand to sue for peace and abiding harmony. To do so would only aggravate the disparity between the two countries, inviting the hawks in the other country to press for more concessions. China wants to foreclose the rise of India as an Asian rival and will continue to try and 'encircle' India by tightening geopolitical bonds with our neighbours, mainly Pakistan, Nepal and Myanmar, with Sri Lanka, Bhutan and others also helping in their own way. Third, the link-up of Russia, China, Japan and India as a kind of New World League of Guardians is like the 'dream team' which cricket fans like to conjure up. There are too many friction areas among and between these countries to be smoothed out in a grand alliance of Guardians for Eternal Peace. The US may be the sole superpower in a declining phase, but it can last a century or more. I think the border problem remains insoluble because neither India nor China can begin by making any territorial concession that cuts into the claim that each has made, citing dubious historical validation. India has inherited the British Raj, China the Chin empire and later acquisitions, including Tibet.

Dr. M. M. Reddy is Professor of Pediatrics at UCSD School of Medicine in the US: Let me make a brief comment on the suggestion that China can easily defeat India and forcibly take what it wants. So long as Pak has nukes and

a population of 170 million, no power on earth can physically occupy any major portion of their country without incurring unacceptable damage. If it is not possible for USA and India to contemplate direct military action, how these guys imagine that the Chinese could think of it even in their stupidest moments to take on a politically conscious nation of 1 billion people with about half of them being well educated middle class., with world class industrial complex, having nukes and missiles that can reach Beijing and Shanghai, with full support from every civilized nation on earth. I believe that if a war between India and China were to break out, India must derecognise Chinese sovereignty over the entire autonomous region of Tibet and recognise the Tibetan Government in exile so that the conflict should be seen by the civilized world as a war of conflicting ideologies and not as a war with conflicting territorial claims. In this scenario, His Holiness, the Dalai Lama's appeal to boycott Chinese goods will translate into economic and diplomatic nightmare for the Chinese communists.

Saro Timiri is an IT professional in the US: Japan is a great power aspirant herself. She joined Britain/France in the first world war in the hope of annexing German territories in East Asia as spoils of war. When the US posed a power challenge in the Pacific, she did not hesitate to take the initiative on Dec. 7, 1941. While Hiroshima/Nagasaki temporarily ended the military route for great power, by no means has it been discarded completely. The economic route to great power was pursued to keep Japan as an active player in the world stage as well as build up the resources required for a future military resurgence. Given that intent and their current close ties to the US, Japan is hardly compelled to join any India-China "phalanx". Even if the India-China team comes to be, China has invested far too much in Pakistan over the past 35 years (since Pokhran 1974) to just pull out the tent pegs and leave. As any great power would and should, China – even in a partnership – would continue to maintain atleast one hedge (Pakistan) against its new partner (India).

There is one silent/unmentioned assumption in Mr Raghavan's proposal - that the US will not do anything to prevent the formation of a team that will challenge it for top spot in a decade or two. Seriously?

Sharad Bailur is a retired banker and communications specialist in India. He is on the editorial board of *Freedom First*, a magazine that was started by Minoo Masani. He occasionally writes for magazines and journals in India and abroad: Interesting construct. Unfortunately I expect India would prefer to go on the basis of whatever experience it has had of China and of the knowledge it has of its mindset. Our experience between 1951 and 1962

was not good despite our perpetual hand of friendship and of “Panchsheel”. I am fairly convinced that China is not interested in territorial gains. But there are a number of things that must be addressed: China has great power mentality. It will only accept India as a vassal or subsidiary, not as an equal friendly partner. Besides we are in no position to demand that kind of equality. In its quest for economic super-powerdom, China is tying up resources all over the world. India is nowhere in the contention. Besides, it will be in competition. Why should China tolerate a competitor? While it very well for us to say what a wonderful phalanx of super powers we shall be, have we asked China what it thinks of the idea? China might in fact wish to ally with the US given a choice! The issue of territorial concessions pales in comparison with the strategic issues involved. The Chinese would look upon India as little more than a large neighbourhood dog that is friendly and wags its tail even when India has surrendered the whole of Arunachal, Aksai Chin and whatever else it demands. One does not form equal partnerships with neighbourhood dogs even if they are big, friendly and nice.

Sunil Erraballi is a Silicon Valley entrepreneur: I agree with you – this idea (territory for peace) is very dangerous. India is no tin pot country for China to walk in. India also has nuclear arms and unlike in 1962 it will use its air force in an event of a Chinese attack. In addition to building up its defenses, India needs to focus on its economy and continue to unshackle it from the corrupt bureaucracy and reduce the huge infrastructure deficit. In addition education should be given a very high priority – it will help the economy and India will be more productive with an educated populace.

V. V. Raman is Emeritus Professor of Physics and Humanities at a US university: India will be (perhaps) the first nation to cede its territory voluntarily to a foreign power for fear of being overcome, although Indians have done that in earlier centuries to the Moguls, the Portuguese, the French, and the British: always to “buy peace and security,” but in fact out of a sense of a national sense of impotence. Whoever makes such suggestions is either naive about China’s long-range hegemonic intentions or surreptitiously/unconsciously colluding with the Chinese, and makes the whole proposition sound so sweet: Become part of a two-winged global power that will dominate the world. I feel sorry that China’s overwhelming power has reduced some Indians to this state of willingness to surrender to that growing giant that is seeking every chance to dilute India’s power and prestige in the free world.

Sumit Das Gupta is a computer science specialist: I am aghast at the notion that a learned scholar believes that

China will drop its belligerent tone just by getting Arunachal Pradesh from India. If we succumb so easily, it will then lay claim to Nepal, Bhutan, Sikkim, the Darjeeling area, etc. If anyone thinks that China will accommodate India in a power sharing agreement is naive at best and dangerous at worst. If China is truly well-meaning, will it back off and let Tibet go its own way? Why not demand to see this latter event occur as proof of intent before anyone in power in India contemplates the idea of forfeiting land, that is real, for peace that at best may be ephemeral.

C. M. A. Nayar is an electrical engineer who splits his time between India and France. He is very knowledgeable on strategic issues:

I feel it will be necessary to answer the following questions before we can come to a logical conclusion.

1. Will China continue to remain as one Nation in the coming two decades. Will there be political instability in China if and when the Communist Party loses grip on the Nation. In such a situation, will Tibet, Xinjiang and a part of Yunnan province remain as part of China? If not, the whole border situation could change from India’s point of view? In my view, the Communist Party will lose grip on the nation within a decade. Early indications will start coming out during the transition of Power from Hu Jintao in 2013. China calls its system of government as the “Dictatorship of the Proletariat” but in reality it is a “Dictatorship of the Elites”. Li Jinping (6th rank in Politburo) and Xi Kequiang (7th in rank in Politburo) who are the main contenders to succeed Hu Jintao may not get the Presidency and the Power may go into the hands of a hard core Communist (probably with Military background) for a short period marking the beginning of a totally repressive regime as also the beginning of the disintegration of China . Tibet, Xinjiang and part of Yunnan could become independent and a major part of the remaining China will continue to be China . In this situation, India will not have any land border with China. Even in the present situation where India has a very long land border with China, I do not think there will be a war between India and China on this issue. However, India has to be militarily ready to face any eventualities. In this bizarre world, only the strong are respected!
2. Has any Head of the Government in India (for that matter even the Parliament) the power to transfer Indian territory to another country? My Answer: The government does not have the power to transfer any Indian territory to another country. All that the government can do is to make border shifts at points where the border was not really defined. It is my

understanding that plebiscite is not possible under the Indian Constitution. Plebiscite was an interim measure accepted at the instance of the British for carving out Pakistan from India. I do not think we have the right to go for a plebiscite even in disputed Kashmir now.

3. Can China and India be two nations with complementary interests? Irrespective of all the probable internal problems, China will continue to be an economic power house. China's domestic growth will be very good but its exports will decline considerably. China's competitiveness in export depends on four major elements: low labour cost, subsidized energy cost, very low bank interest and export incentives. China will be compelled to withdraw the subsidies on energy cost and bank interest due to domestic pressure. USA and Europe will also introduce protectionist policies for saving their own economies. Under these circumstances, India could have an opportunity for increasing trade with China. India, however, will have to ensure that the trade balance will remain even and India does not become a dumping ground for Chinese products. In my view India and China will always remain two competing adversaries .
4. Can USA be a reliable ally for India in its quest to achieve international stature ? History shows that USA has never been a reliable ally to any one. This is basically because USA is bothered only about its own self-interest (this is true with most of the nations) and USA will dump any one, once the utility to USA is over India, therefore, has to be very careful in her relations with USA. Russia has always been more useful to us in many difficult situations. India will have a lot of opportunities to work together with Russia for mutual benefit .

In conclusion I would say:

1. India will have to have an independent policy for relations with other nations mainly to protect her own interest. The old concept of Power Blocs will not be good. In any case, being part of a Power Bloc with China or USA will be dangerous for India. India, China and USA will be three nations which will decide the destiny of the world in future along with EU.
2. India cannot afford to make a settlement with China on the border issue by abandoning our right to any part in our possession now . There is no urgency to settle the border issue with China now. However we should be militarily ready to face any eventualities.
3. China will be a competitor to India in every field and

this competition should be put in a healthy background.

And, finally, some constructive, practical suggestions from Robinder Sachdev on how to sort out the India-China imbroglio:

Robinder Sachdev is president of Imagindia Institute, an independent think tank dedicated to promoting the imagination and public diplomacy of India across cultures.

His thoughts: In response to your question, I am toying with an idea of the next version of Panchsheel (it may have nothing in common with the earlier paradigm, apart from the fact that this is also based on 5 points).

- a. India accepts status quo on the North West with China
- b. China accepts status quo on the North East with India
- c. India reiterates its official line on Tibet
- d. China commits to status quo and realism on Tibet (i.e. the Dalai Lama and Tibetans have a home in India now, and their mutual discussions may proceed as between two parties, with no political interference by India)
- e. China and India set up an "Indo-China Bureau on Innovations for Development". The bureau will be significantly funded, and housed with proper infrastructure in Beijing and Delhi. The bureau will function like a mix between a think tank, social entrepreneur, incubation center, and investment bankers to actively and urgently focus on innovations and solutions for creating jobs, poverty alleviation, energy security, and food security. The bureau has to have real teeth, and be structured like a semi-private enterprise, and top talent from both countries drawn to work in it. The annual review meeting of the Bureau will be chaired jointly by the Prime Ministers of both countries, and held by rotation in Beijing in Delhi annually.

These may be the next Panchsheel of China-India relations. simultaneously, apart from mutuality of China-India relations, in parallel, India makes three key strategic thrusts:

- a. One, to deepen, stabilize and mature its relationship with Russia;
- b. Two, push for peace, stability and economic development of South Asian neighbours; and,
- c. Three, push for economic diplomacy in a broader South East Asia (including pushing Indian business to invest in viable infrastructure, mineral resources,

education, healthcare, and such projects in these countries)

MR. RAM NARAYANAN is an American of Indian heritage

who promotes US-India friendship and cooperation as a 100 percent not-for-profit labour of love, via his website <http://www.usindiafriendship.net/>. His mailing list of 18,000 plus focuses on India, US-India relations and the security aspects of this relationship.

Cornucopia (*Cont'd. from p.8*)

jingoistic statements serve no purpose than to provide the Sena "warriors" with a brief photo op.

Mumbaikars have long seen through the hollowness of the Shiv Sena's "patriotism". It is easy to shout empty slogans against those, like SRK and Mukesh Ambani, who are too mature to respond to such childishness. It is anything but brave to show "righteous

anger" against Pakistan and Australia – while they are secure in their Mumbai stronghold. We have become accustomed to the hypocrisy and ineptitude of our politicians, but the Shiv Sena has taken it to a new level. They have completely lost the plot; but are either too blind, or too stubborn to see it.

MR. FIROZE HIRJIKAKA can be contacted at leonardo8_99@yahoo.com

Mumbai For Maharashtrians (*Cont'd. from p.9*)

country, he should concentrate on his home state, U.P., and strength his Party so that it comes back to power and concentrates on development – just as Nitish Kumar is doing in Bihar. It's also not going to help his party or boost his image if he repeats his recent statement that had a member of the Nehru dynasty been in power at the material time, Babri Masjid would not have been

demolished. He should know that people still remember that it was his late father who paved the way for the demolition by permitting *shilanyas* at the disputed site. That was when Rahul was in his teens.

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Comrade Jyoti Basu, RIP (*Cont'd. from p.11*)

their call for strike, bandh and gherao. An American labour leader had remarked in Mumbai in the late 'fifties that the Russian workers may own the car factory, but the American workers own cars. Does it matter to the worker who owns the factory if he is given a fair deal?

A Closed Mind.

The tragedy of the Indian communists was its colonial mindset as Ashis Nandy has explained in his comments. They were text book communists unlike the Chinese, who are pragmatists, especially Deng Xiaoping who had famously declared that it did not matter whether the colour of the cat was white or black as long as it could catch the mice and went on with his industrialization promoting capitalism both native and foreign. Of course,

it is easy to change policies in a totalitarian polity. Indian communists had no clue as to how to go about it in a democratic polity. Democracy believes in debate, discussion, and consensus. Indian communists' allergy for private enterprise and private initiative made West Bengal an industrial desert. They literally made West Bengal into a Waste Bengal!

Marx did not live to see what difference democracy can make to the lives of the people. Power to change societies comes from the ballot-box, not from the barrel of the gun. Basu and his friends saw the change but ignored it.

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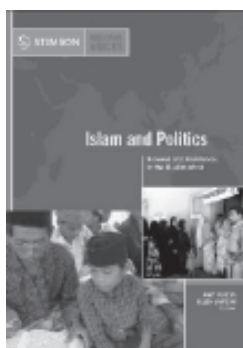
Is Religion Becoming A Bad Word in the West? (*Cont'd. from p.14*)

For us, secularism means not divorcing religion from public life, but being tolerant of all religions. This is the ideal. The unfortunate reality is that tensions between religious groups does exist and are often exploited for selfish purposes. But religion is interwoven in all aspects of our daily lives; and politicians are no exception. It is not unusual for newly elected government ministers to have a religious ceremony performed before they take up office.

I'm not saying that the Indian version of secularism is better. However, for many people, prayers and rituals are very much part of their daily lives. Some have real faith, others use it as a crutch when times are bad. And these people are found everywhere, cutting across class, political affiliation or social standing. Making religion politically incorrect can only do more harm than good.

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BOOK REVIEWS



ISLAM AND POLITICS edited by Amit Pandya and Ellen Laipson ● Published by Henry L. Stimson Center, 1111, 19th Street, NW, 12th Floor, Washington DC 20036 ● www.stimson.org ● Year of publication : 2009 ● Pages : 120 ● Price not mentioned.

Reviewed by Brig. S. C. Sharma (retd.) adviser to the telecom industry and a freelance writer. Email: brigsc@gmail.com

The book offers an overview of salient aspects of the relationship between politics and Islam and the significance of religion in the practice of statecraft.

The Muslims of South East Asia are more moderate than those of the Middle East but Wahabism has brought in fundamentalist thought in many countries. South East Asia has witnessed a resurgence of Islamic identity and religiosity. They are demanding imposition of Sharia at in the name of democracy, forgetting that the essence of democracy and justice is equality before the law.

The Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt

Diaa Rashwan gives an account of the progress of the Muslim Brotherhood [MB] organization in Egypt. It was founded by Hasan al-Banna in 1928 and was inspired by the writings of Sayyad Kutb. It was initially a puritanical religious movement. An assassination attempt on Nasser in 1954 led to violent conflicts with the Government. A large number of university graduates joined MB at this stage resulting in a more modern outlook. Its flexibility has helped it spread to 60 countries. It is committed to rule by Islamic laws and there is ambiguity regarding rights of women and minorities. It now wants to participate in the elections. Since Egyptian law does not give legitimacy to parties based on religion or having branches in foreign countries, it will have to jettison its infrastructure to enter the election process. In the elections in 2005, MB candidates participated in the elections as independents and won 20% of the seats. A debate is now going on in the MB whether to transform the organization into a political party or to float a separate party under its control. The paper is silent about the incidents of violence against foreigners and minorities.

Islam in the Philippines

Amina Rasul considers violence by Muslims in Philippines to be due to marginalization, poverty and undemocratic regimes. She resents that the push for autonomy by the Moros (indigenous inhabitants of the Philippines comprising numerous ethnicities and languages) is labeled as terrorist activity. More than 12000 people have been killed in the Moro insurgency. It cannot be overlooked that terror acts have been committed by members of the Moro movement and these have to be met by force. There is the usual appeal for understanding the Muslim viewpoint. That can be possible only when the Muslims also give up the demand for a separate state and move away from violence.

Religion in Afghan Politics

Prabhakar Sharma discusses the role of religion in Afghan politics. There is need for integrating religious leadership into the political mainstream to build stability. Afghan rulers have traditionally maintained good relations with the clergy. President Karzai asked them (the religious leaders) to issue an edict against the Taliban's call for holy war. Their influence has eroded during the last six years due to dependence on the international community. Further, establishment of courts has deprived the *ulema* of their legal responsibilities. These courts have not yet spread to the rural areas where the people still rely on tribal elders to settle disputes. The Madrassas run by the clergy are looked upon as a source of Taliban resurgence and are not supported by the Government and the international community. A negative attitude exists towards Muslim countries like Egypt, Iran, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia that are funding the madrassas. The clergy has lost credibility and is easy prey to anti-government elements. The author is happy that the former Foreign Minister under Taliban rule, Mulla Mutawakkil has joined the main stream. The process of reconciliation with the former Taliban is a controversial proposal and can recoil.

In Thailand

The Muslim majority provinces in the South were annexed by Thailand in 1906. The Malay speaking people of this region feel offended if they are referred to as Thai Muslims. This is in sharp contrast to the Muslims in the North who have been well integrated into the larger civil society. A nationalist movement during the 1939-45 World War period was put down by force. Numerous political groups have been formed during the last 50 years, but no single group has come forward to claim leadership of the separatist movement. Imtiaz Yusuf points out that

both ethnicity and religion, are at the root of the demand for secession. A number of youth go to Egypt, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia for higher religious education. They support a puritanical form of Islam. The Organization for Islamic Conference has recommended granting authority to this region to manage its own affairs within the sphere of the Thai constitution. Peace and reconciliation is possible only if the Muslims in the South give up violence and an intolerant form of Islam.

Madrassas in Pakistan

Khalid Rahman's paper deals with the emerging trends in *madrassas* in Pakistan. It is based on empirical research carried out in 56 leading *madrassas*. Originally, the *Madrassas* included subjects other than religion in their syllabi. The British started new schools to train students for administrative duties and teaching in *madrassas* got restricted to religion only. The same trend continued after 1947. Due to the role played by the *madrassa* students in Afghanistan, the international community considers them to be a breeding ground for terrorists. In spite of a ban, foreign students study in these institutions, who on return to their homeland preach an intolerant form of their religion. There is a public demand and government pressure for a change in the working of *madrassas*. The author has mentioned that English is being included in some of them but inclusion of mathematics and science has not been thought of. At present the objective is religious education. They do not have a steady source of income and rely on *zakat* and sale of hides of the sacrificed animals.

Amit Pandya's paper attempts to provide an understanding of Islam's role in politics and the place of jihad. The anti-Western sentiment amongst the Muslims is based on a clash of objective interests and not merely on religion and culture. It is important to separate religion, the political and cultural content of the movements in Muslim societies. Muslim societies are trying to cope with economic development, corruption and governance. The support to violence varies from tolerance of violence to its practice. The leaders of Muslim movements claim to seek justice for all, including for the non-Muslims. Pandya points out that none of the Islamic movements have lived up to their professed values. His reference to state terror against Muslims in India ignores ground reality.

Many Muslim intellectuals note that the word jihad occurs 41 times in the Quran and never in the context of war. They suggest that divinely sanctioned violence is legitimate but do not clarify as to how divine sanction is to be obtained. The claim that jihad refers to spiritual and moral struggle is far from its practice all over the world.

The NWFP (North West Frontier Province) province

of Pakistan is an exception for there is here a pacifist movement. The ANP (Awami National Party), which is a successor to the legacy of Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, also known as Frontier Gandhi, is the ruling party there. Frontier Gandhi had led the movement for freedom through non-violence preached by Mahatma Gandhi. This exception cannot, however, be taken as a general rule.

Jihad is central to Islamic understanding of itself. It is a source of anxiety in the West. The growth of external religious symbols like the *burqa*, transnational loyalty to Muslims in other countries and threats by a religious group to turn UK into Bosnia add to this anxiety.

The Muslim world talks of aggression by the West during the last three centuries but ignores the aggression by the Muslim countries during the previous six centuries. To them it was liberation as Muslim religion is the only true religion. The book is recommended reading for it brings out well, the apprehensions and views of the Muslim world and understand the role of religion amongst them. It is only half the story and there is an equal need for the Muslims to appreciate the anxiety amongst the non-Muslims due to the impact of their religion on politics.

And they say Kashmir belongs to them!

'An ingenious example of speech and politics occurred recently in the United Nations Assembly that made the world community smile.

A representative from India began: 'Before beginning my talk I want to tell you something about Rishi Kashyap of Kashmir, after whom Kashmir is named. When he struck a rock and it brought forth water, he thought:

'What a good opportunity to have a bath.' He removed his clothes, put them aside on the rock and entered the water.

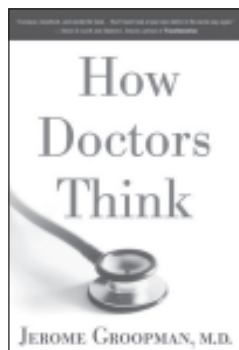
When he got out and wanted to dress, his clothes had vanished. A Pakistani had stolen them.'

The Pakistani representative jumped up furiously and shouted, 'What are you talking about? The Pakistanis weren't there then.'

The Indian representative smiled and said, 'And now that we have made that clear, I will begin my speech.

'And they say Kashmir belongs to them'

From the Net contributed by Mayur Kotak,
mayurkotak@gmail.com



HOW DOCTORS THINK by Jerome Groopman M.D. ● Published by Byword Books (P) Ltd., GF-15 Virat Bhavan, Mukherjee Commercial Complex, Delhi 110009 ● Year of Publication : 2009 ● Pages : 319 ● Rs.395 ● email: bywordbooks@gmail.com

Reviewed by Nikhil Datar MD, Commonwealth Professional Fellow (2009-10); Consultant Gynaecologist: Dr Balabhai Nanavati Hospital; Assistant Honorary Gynaecologist: Dr. R. N. Cooper Hospital; Chairman Medicolegal Cell, Association of Medical Consultants. Email: drnikhil70@hotmail.com.

How Doctors Think is an interesting book written by Jerome Groopman who is himself a physician. The book is an analytical survey of human behaviour of doctors while diagnosing and treating their patients. It is a sincere, unbiased attempt to present the difficulties: the uncertainties of the human body; scientific reasons for making judgemental errors on the one hand and external market influences on the other.

The author has used simple anecdotes from his personal and professional life to analyze the various aspects of reaching the diagnosis, usually correctly and some times wrongly. He has tried to simplify the jargon of medical words to make it understood by the common man. Surely, doctors and health care professionals will be able to relate these experiences more directly with their own life experiences.

One of the stories ("Surgery and Satisfaction") is a *must read* especially for the doctors. Here the author narrates his own experience as a patient going to five different consultants. All the consultants are well established and had different perception and understanding of the problem, its treatment plan inspite of the same set of investigations! The author introduces some interesting terminologies such as "commission bias", "search satisfaction" which lead doctors to act differently. He also gives a message to patients on "what to expect" after the surgery or the treatment. Complete recovery cannot be matched with fully physiological outcome is a very important message which the reader should understand.

The author discusses some other interesting aspects of training and practice in the various stories he narrates. The typical theoretical training for a doctor is to systematically go through the logical process of reaching the diagnosis. However the aim of practical training is to enhance the doctors' skills to make quicker decisions. He has discussed an enlightening study of top radiologists who are given a set of X rays to report. The study depicted significant intra-observer (same doctor differing from his previous opinion) and inter-observer (difference of opinion between the two doctors findings). Taking it further he proves that in search of positive findings to clinch the

diagnosis, a negative finding, say absence of the normal structure, is more likely to be missed! A clue to a physician what to search for may enhance his capacity to pick up specific findings but on the other hand may cause bias and the search for the "unknown" may stop!

The author has skilfully brought out the importance of clear communication between patients and doctors and between doctors.

The book through these stories and experiences rationalises the role of beliefs and religion, especially when relatives are going through tough times. Faith or rather blind faith makes people passive accepting the course of events as God's will. The author in one of the stories depicts how faith can make a person a productive partner to recognise uncertainty and contribute to the search for a solution.

In another interesting essay "Marketing, Money & Medical Decisions" the author makes a well balanced criticism of these external influences on doctors while making decisions. The ethical principles of the pharmaceutical industry and medical practitioners are not always congruent to one another. These decisions are sometimes at the edge of ethics but underpinned with human behaviour and psychology.

It is very interesting to understand that there is usually no "culpability" when doctor performs wrongly. The expectations of society of impeccable accuracy of diagnosis at lowest cost *vis a vis* human nature, behaviour, mind of a doctor and the human body of the patient, leads for a time to frustration. The book disproves that "only bad doctors make mistakes." It further goes to confirm that doctors are human beings, capable of making mistakes, subject to significant human limitations, can be emotional and are not infallible. They do need support, help, training and re-training.

The last bit of the book is an important epilogue for patients. This is very valuable to everyone in the health care profession too as it suggests practical tips to avoid mistakes and errors which could be detrimental to all concerned.

Between Ourselves ...

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India's Vice President Mr. Hameed Ansari recently delivered the 4th R. N. Kao memorial lecture on the subject "Intelligence for Tomorrow". This was a seminal address on the need for the country's Intelligence Agencies to be accountable to Parliament. Ashok Karnik and V. Balachandran both intimately involved in national security concerns discuss the implications of the Vice President's speech. While both are agreed on the need for accountability the debate is on the contours of the nature of such 'Intelligence oversight' by an oversight committee of members of parliament. Will members of such a committee comprising elected members of parliament rise above partisan politics in the national interest, particularly when our nation is facing multiple threats within and without? Will Intelligence Agencies known to have allowed themselves to be used by politicians particularly those belonging to ruling parties at any given time, play an impartial role refusing to be influenced by partisan and/or personal interests? Is the modification of the formula "the need to know" be expanded to "and the need to share". These and more of the issues arising from the Vice President's speech are dealt with in this month's main topic.

In January we had reported at some length the proceedings of a seminar on India-China relation. Last month Mr. Ram Narayanan, an American of Indian heritage who promotes US-India friendship and cooperation via his website, asked a provocative question to visitors to his site: "Should India make up with China *now* by surrendering territory or later when China will take it forcefully?" He received answers from as many 70 persons comprising former diplomats, high ranking retired military officers, foreign policy experts and others. Not all *Freedom First* readers follow such "Online" discussions. We decided therefore to share with you a selection of replies to this Online debate; also because it completes the January discussion referred to above. Perhaps the 21st century will be remembered as the century of an India-China confrontation, much in the same manner as the confrontation between the USA and USSR in the 20th.

Finally a reminder: The discussion on "Paid News" will take place in Mumbai on Saturday 6th March 2010 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. followed by lunch, at the Indian Merchants' Chamber. If you wish to participate please email S. V. Raju at jurasv@gmail.com or fax at 22843416 or speak to him on 9820016392.

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Publishers: Indian Committee for Cultural Freedom (ICCF), 3rd Floor, Army & Navy Building, 148, Mahatma Gandhi Road, Mumbai 400 001.
Phone: +91 (22) 2284 34 16 • E-mail: freedom@vsnl.com
Published by J. R. Patel for the Indian Committee for Cultural Freedom (ICCF) and printed by him at Union Press, 13 Homji Street, Fort, Mumbai 400 001. Phone: 22660357, 22665526.
Typeset at **Shubham Print & Web** 59, Dr. V. B. Gandhi Marg, 1st Floor, Fort, Mumbai 400 001. Phone: 2284 2619 • Mobile: 98929 21277
Single Copy: Rs.10 • Annual: Rs.150 (Add Rs.50 for outstation cheques) • Overseas (11nd Class Air Mail) Annual: \$20 or £10
Cheques to be drawn in favour of **ICCF** and mailed to the publishers at the above address.