

HUMAN RIGHTS IN ZIMBABWE

K. S. VENKATESWARAN

EVER SINCE the return of Joshua Nkomo to Harare from his self-imposed exile in London, there has been no dearth of apologists for the Zimbabwean regime. Constantly at pains to convince the world of Prime Minister Robert Mugabe's democratic credentials—even in the face of mounting evidence to the contrary—these apologists succeeded in scoring a minor talking point when, contrary to Western apprehensions, Mugabe not only ensured a safe return for his political opponent but even allowed him to reoccupy his seat in the Zimbabwean parliament.

The timing of Nkomo's return could not, of course, have been more favourable to Mugabe and his propaganda machine. Barely had Nkomo set foot on his native soil when the news came of the dastardly attack on Benigno Aquino, whose position in the Philippines was remarkably similar to that of Nkomo's in Zimbabwe. Sure enough, Mugabe's lackeys lost no time in capitalising on this entirely fortuitous incident, with gains that were politically not inconsiderable.

This spell of favourable publicity, however, came to an abrupt end when, in what is easily one of his most shocking acts as Prime

Minister, Mugabe ordered the re-arrest of six white Air Force officers immediately after they were acquitted by the Harare High Court of charges of sabotage and complicity with South Africa. These officers, who had spent over a year in detention, had complained at their trial that they had been brutally tortured before "confessions" were extracted from them—a complaint which the presiding judge, himself a prominent black African who had played a leading part in Zimbabwe's fight for independence, upheld.

And as if it were not enough, Mugabe was reported to have shamelessly justified his action by describing the British rule of evidence which disallows "confessions" obtained under torture as 'a stupid ass'. "It's one of those principles born out of the stupidity of some of the procedures of colonial times," Mugabe was quoted as saying.

Predictably, Mugabe's action, revealing as it did a cynical disregard for the rule of law, elicited a swift reaction both at home and abroad. Besides provoking a rash of resignations in the Zimbabwean Air Force the incident drew sharp protests in the international media. Said *The Times* (London): "There are occasions when an executive

might be justified in continuing to detain acquitted men: at times of severe civil emergency, for instance, and if there is a real and evident danger that the detainees might instigate disorder if they were at liberty. This is emphatically not the position in the present case. The Air Force officers are being detained for crimes of which they have been acquitted. Mr. Mugabe's government substitutes its writ for the courts and is scornful of 'legal technicalities'. Thus the protection all Zimbabwean citizens deserve from arbitrary arrest and imprisonment without due process disappears; liberty depends on the whim of one individual."

The sordid episode, which incidentally, is neither unprecedented nor extraordinary by the standards obtaining in most of the newly-liberated African states, raises issues which transcend considerations of injustice to merely a few individuals. Indeed, it brings into question the rationale behind decolonisation itself. The easy non-chalance with which constitutional niceties are given a go-by, and the utter contempt with which the barest essentials of due process are brushed aside should make every right-thinking person sit up and reflect on the larger question as to

whether at all the assumptions behind the grant of "self-rule" to states that are manifestly ill-equipped to sustain a democratic polity, are justified.

Meanwhile, if there is one redeeming feature about the unfortunate happenings in Harare, it is the remarkably independent and impartial manner in which the judiciary has acted. Severe political pressures notwithstanding, judges like Mr. Justice Dumbutshena (who delivered the verdict in the airmen's case) have displayed a courage and rectitude which would do any mature democracy proud. It is hardly surprising, therefore, that one of the first major targets of Mr. Mugabe's ire has been the judiciary. "In threatening to discard judicial independence," warned an observer not so long ago, "Zimbabwe threatens not only to discard what is most valuable in its colonial inheritance but also to exclude the most virtuous of its citizens from power." That, alas, would be a terrible tragedy indeed.

A CORRECTION

In our October issue we had published the "Manifesto of Freedom (1950)" on page 13, but had inadvertently omitted to mention that it was authored by Arthur Koestler. The omission is regretted.

—Editor.

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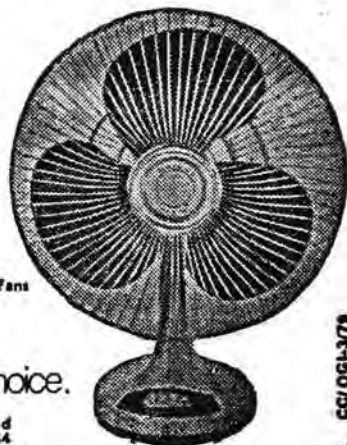
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AS I SEE IT

MINOO MASANI

AT LONG last, on September 23, the Supreme Court decided that execution through hanging by the rope should continue. Insofar as capital punishment is considered, the Supreme Court could not, even if it had so desired, have abolished it as only Parliament can do so.

My own response to the Supreme Court judgement is somewhat mixed. I am not against capital punishment for particularly heinous forms of murder, such, for instance, as the notorious case in Pune involving the four killers of the Sanskrit scholar, Mr. Abhyankar and his family. This is because I do not believe that all life is sacred but only "the good life", as the ancient Greeks described it, and the life of a cold-blooded murderer certainly does not qualify.

On the other hand, I am afraid the members of the Supreme Court have not sufficiently studied the pros and cons of the process of hanging. Their impression, that death is always instantaneous, is altogether wide off the mark. In a large number of cases death does not take place through the breaking of the neck, as is intended, but occurs through a slow and prolonged process of strangulation. May I commend to the learned judges and others concerned a perusal of a little book entitled "The Hangman's Handbook" by Duff? It was the skilful use of that book, among other things, that enabled my friend Arthur Koestler and Mr. David Astor to get capital punishment abolished in Britain.

Hanging is gruesome and degrading and should be abolished as a form of capital punishment. There are infinitely kinder ways by which society can end a man's life. Writing as far back as 1976, Dr. Hiranandani advocated pentothal injections. "You have to feel a complete disgust with killing," he said, "but if you have to do it, do it in the most compassionate manner possible ... The pain involved is not only in the hanging. It is in taking a screaming, tossing criminal to the gallows, out of his Death Row cell, down the corridor, out into the courtyard, on the trapdoor, tying the black hood on his head, fixing the knot under his left ear, and then pulling the lever ... I have seen a hanging. The body does not stop convulsing for 15 minutes. Has anyone tried cutting down a convict and asking him how he felt? How do you know he died immediately? How do you know he didn't feel the pain?" The two-metre drop is supposed to fracture or dislocate the cervical vertebrae, leading to either laceration or cutting of the spinal cord, numbing the convict below his neck. Every hangman

so far, however, has told of instances when he has had to enter the chamber below the gallows where the convict hangs and physically pull the convict from the knees down, thus hurrying the end. A well-known criminologist claims that five to ten per cent of all hangings are misadministered. Sometimes the convict suffocates because the hangman has botched the weights.

The most modern killer, of course, is the pentothal injection. Only one convict has died in such refinement—Charlie Brooks Jr., in Texas, in December last year. The injection apparently has no side discomforts: the convict slides into death as easily as if he were going to sleep. This procedure is used in the case of horses, dogs and other animals. Why should human beings alone be denied the benefit of this measure of compassion and humanity? The main problem is the doctors' reluctance. But the Chief Justice has remarked that several doctors have come to his chambers offering to do the job.

The matter cannot be allowed to rest there and I wish Mrs. Malti Singh and her associates of Amnesty International success, not in abolishing capital punishment, but in replacing hanging with a more civilised and humane form of execution and in securing for those sentenced to imprisonment for life the right to opt for immediate execution.

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THE LIES BEHIND KAL 007

Sqn. Ldr. S. K. BAIN (Retd.)

"WE ARE convinced that ICAO could not remain aloof from such a barbarous act. ICAO, as the specialised agency of the United Nations pledged to the promotion of air safety in all parts of the world, must strongly condemn this act, in accordance with the principles embodied in the Convention on International Civil Aviation and other international legal instruments... We support the assembly resolution calling for an investigation of the incident."

The above is an excerpt from the speech of the Soviet delegate who had joined others in an unanimous ICAO resolution condemning Israel which had shot down a Libyan civilian airliner over the Sinai during the 1973 war with the Arabs. Israel had, of course, owned up the shooting and paid compensation for the 110 passengers killed.

ICAO is the apex body of international civil aviation under the UN, with headquarters at Montreal. It has 151 member-nations (out of the 156 UN members) who are signatories to the ICA Convention with an Annexe drawn up in 1944 and further modified and expanded in 1981 on the basis of the experience gained from the 1978 incident involving another Korean jet that had strayed into Soviet airspace and was shot. ICAO oversees the safety of international air passengers who numbered over 750 million in 1982, i.e., more than a fifth of the world's population.

The ICAO convened an emergency session on 15 September 1983 to discuss the Soviet action of 1 September. This time no war was in progress, and the victims were 269 men, women and children from 14 countries, including India. The Soviet Union maintains that it has done nothing wrong and that it will repeat its action, if necessary; it is refusing to pay compensation and is blocking all investigations by an impartial agency. Its argument is that the Korean jet was on a spying mission and had to be "stopped"; a subsidiary argument being that the only way available for stopping a 600 mph espionage jet was to pump into it a couple of modern air defence missiles.

As published flight paths show, KAL 007 appears to have deviated gradually from its path and was shot at on the fringe of Soviet airspace; the wreckage falling in the open sea quite far from the tip of Sakhalin island exposes the lie and canard spread deliberately that the plane had penetrated deep, by as much as 500 miles, into Soviet airspace. The aircraft was flying on route R20 designated by the ICAO which had assigned to the Soviet Union the international responsibility of providing 'separation' of civil flights in that zone. It means that the Soviet Union is responsible for guiding and helping regular civilian flights in this

zone in case of loss of direction or straying. The Soviet Union says it had tracked KAL 007 for 2½ hours off course, but it never bothered to guide it back to its correct path; instead it shot the flight the moment it came within its fighters' range.

ICAO conventions also make the following clear: (1) In peace time, a straying unidentified aircraft must not be assumed to be hostile; (2) All attempts must be made to identify such aircraft by flying round it with interceptors swinging the wing, by throwing landing light, etc., so as to draw its attention; contact should be made by international emergency frequency 121.5 megahertz (MHz) and, failing it, by 243 MHz. (In fact, the Soviet Union's Air Information Manual itself incorporates these instructions); (3) To prevent the use of force, ICAO embodies the principle that "the unique vulnerability of people aboard aircraft engaged in international air navigation and journey must be recognised and they should be helped by all means"; (4) The signatories to the ICA conventions are obliged to help search and rescue by allowing the affected nations in these operations and also to include them as observers in local investigation teams.

Instead of following the above Conventions, the Soviet Union is engaged in a massive vilification campaign against the unfortunate victims. It is refusing to submit any proof, such as its recordings of the pilots' conversations or radar records; worse still, it is denouncing the proof submitted by the aggrieved parties as false, and refusing to allow any investigation of the incident.

The spy theory, advanced by the USSR, is full of holes. The Americans have the most modern satellites, SR-71 special spy planes that fly at 2100 mph at 80,000 feet, and the latest version of U-2 (U-2R) which flies at 90,000 feet. Why should it engage a civil plane with 61 Americans (including Congressman Larry McDonald) for espionage in a heavily guarded area? Of course, the Soviets have an established record of mass murders which they endeavour to cover up by high-blast propaganda and counter-charges. It is hardly surprising, therefore, that they say that KAL 007 was sent by the CIA on a suicide mission to malign them.

The technical difficulties of modifying civilian aircraft to carry bulky aerial cameras and electronic scanners/recorders are such that any of the hundreds of technicians servicing these aircrafts in the various international airports are sure to discover these modifications. It is indeed naive to assume that any intelligence agency would work with such a risk of exposure.

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CULTURAL ROUNDBOUT

S. I. CLERK

MAY TO September is reckoned to be a dull season in the local art world. No good local artist would have his/her one-man exhibition in these months. To enliven things, Jehangir Art Gallery started an annual feature called the Monsoon Show six years ago. Their 1983 Monsoon Show was directed at encouraging some of the young promising artists just out of the J. J. School of Art. There were some 70 works by 13 artists including two sculptors and a ceramist. Photographs by Memant Pithwa, drawings by Montosh Lall, Varsha Kulkarni, Randive's miniatures, Sudarshan Shetty's collages, Maria Nashrulla's face studies, Ravindra Salve's masks and Nandita Nadkarni's ceramics deserve mention. Above all, the Gallery did well in projecting some of the budding potential talents which deserve an active patronage. To set an example, the exhibition also included paintings by the senior established artists Ram Kumar and Husain.

* * * *

Alliance Francaise had a small but attractive exhibition of a dozen woodcuts by the internationally famous Indian sculptor Amarnath Sehgal. These graphics, each accompanied by the artist's own short poems, appeared to be independent of his sculptures and evinced a different facet of his personality. To mark "Janmasthami"—the birth of Lord Krishna—the Prince of Wales Museum and the Museum Society of Bombay co-sponsored an interesting exhibition of the traditional art and artifacts on the theme of Lord Krishna at the Coomaraswamy Hall. The collection consisted of exquisite miniatures in Kangra and other schools, Nathdwara *pichhwais* and paintings, various artifacts such as musical instruments, *ganjifa* cards, ivory inlaid boxes, spoons, lamps, etc., all depicting Lord Krishna in various moods and poses. There were also some classical bronzes and other sculptures from Nepal to South India. One only missed a well-brought-out catalogue. These exhibits were from a private collection and we do not often get an opportunity to see well-organised private art collections.

* * * *

Unlike the fine art world, our theatres remain active even during the summer and the monsoon—the show must go on. Thus, we had Alyque Padamsee's *Evita* a grand musical presented most lavishly with some highly imaginative sets and lighting. It is a veritable visual and audio treat. In its own way it seems to have set a new record in the local theatre world in that its maximum ticket is priced at Rs. 100. But then, it is overall typical Alyque Padamsee with all his strengths and weaknesses.

* * * *

The American Center (USIS) organised a grand John Huston Film Festival from 10 to 27 September. There were five shows every day (including the three weekends)—all packed and testifying to the hunger of Bombayites for American classic films. The Festival offered nine films: "The African Queen", "Beat The Devil", "Red Badge Of Courage", "The Asphalt Jungle", "Night Of The Iguana", "The Man Who Would Be King", "The Misfits", "The Maltese Falcon" and "Treasure Of The Sierra Madre" each outstanding in its own way, marked by either the human drama, story (by such famed writers as C. S. Forester, Arthur Miller, Tennessee Williams and Rudyard Kipling) superb acting or technique.

With over 30 memorable films to his credit, John Huston is still active at 77. His forte appears to be to relate a story as faithfully as he can *vis-a-vis* his material. As a director he has said somewhere that he has no standard approach to actors. Even more important, he looks upon the camera as yet another actor on the set.

These facets contribute in no mean measure to the brilliance of films such as "The African Queen" (1951), "Night Of The Iguana" (1964), and "The Misfits" (1961). "Treasure Of The Sierra Madre" has his own father, Walter Huston, in the role of the gritty old prospector which won him an Oscar.

Sometime ago, the USIS had organised a similar festival of films by John Ford. One welcomes such festivals as they offer one an opportunity of studying a series of films made by a given director over the years. And usually most of the films screened are worth seeing over and over again being genuine classics.

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The NAM Crisis

NITIN G. RAUT

Addressing the UN General Assembly last month, President Reagan could not have been more forthright and blunt in saying, "Indeed client governments of the Soviet Union who have long since lost their independence have flocked into the non-aligned movement and, once inside, have worked against its true purpose". Truth could not have been more expressive when Reagan continued, "Pseudo non-alignment is no better than pseudo arms control" in an apparent dig at the Soviet Union's perceptible disinterest in any serious talks on arms reduction.

Non-alignment, conceived at the height of the cold war frigidity, was only to ensure that the newly-independent states steered clear of the NATO-Warsaw Pact confrontation when the US talked of "sweeping back the Red tide" beyond the walls of Berlin and beyond the borders of Eastern Europe, and Krushchev boasted: "We will bury you".

Over the years, non-alignment has become a facade for many nations to conceal their true alignment. At a time when the Big Two are making attempts, however half-hearted, to talk with each other, the relevance of non-alignment itself is at stake. The Non-Alignment Movement (NAM) is becoming increasingly bogged down under its own weight and far from being at the cross roads of history, is afflicted with a purblind anti-West mania which it is carrying like a dead albatross round its neck.

When President Reagan talked about the drift of NAM from "genuine non-alignment" he referred precisely to an issue which the NAM has itself been fighting shy of. The NAM has usually taken the easy way out by referring vexed geopolitical problems to committees—a diplomatic way of deferring decision-making when it comes to calling a spade a spade. Indeed the conduct of NAM is anything but that of genuine non-alignment.

The NAM has consistently maintained a policy of double standards in dealing with the two Super Powers. At the last NAM conference in New Delhi, while the US was roundly condemned on Diego Garcia along with the other favourite whipping-boy, Israel, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan was mentioned in a manner which just fell short of justifying it.

In the light of this, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's Speech at the UN General Assembly was a bundle of contradictions. Her strident call for disarmament showed little realisation that the Third World nations (the bulk of which comprise the NAM) are themselves the largest recipients of armaments from the Super Powers. NAM's obsession with the alleged US involvement in South America is only matched by its ostrich-like attitude in the crises involving its own members, as, for instance the Libyan invasion of Chad and its support to the Polasario guerillas, the Syrian occupation of Lebanon, the Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia, the Iran-Iraq conflict, to mention only a few. In fact, in the game of destabilisation and foreign intervention Cuba's Fidel Castro has a notorious reputation contrary to all the proclaimed ideals of the NAM. Under the guise of supporting "liberation movements" the Soviet-Cuban combine has installed puppet Communist regimes in African states, like Mozambique, with impunity. Indeed, Mrs. Gandhi, when repeatedly questioned by reporters at the UNO on Afghanistan angrily burst out: "I refuse to use certain words merely for Afghanistan when a large part of the world is ignoring an almost similar situation and interference..." One wonders which "large part of the world" the Prime Minister was referring to when NAM, of which she is the Chairperson, is itself 101-strong in 157-member UNO. Secondly, does the mere refusal to use certain words change a situation?

The Prime Minister also decried Big Power interference in the internal affairs of the Third World nations. This, coinciding as it did with the revelations in the Indian Press of Mrs. Gandhi's recent letter to Soviet President Yuri Andropov seeking the latter's help in restraining the CPI in its opposition to the ruling party, lends a touch of tragic irony. Mrs. Gandhi's correspondence with Andropov through a member of the CPI, as also her complaining to the late Soviet President Leonid Brezhnev during his December 1980 visit to New Delhi about the opposition of Left parties to her rule, can by no stretch of the imagination be interpreted except as an invitation to interference in the internal affairs of India. The Soviets, of course, are just looking out for such

"invitations". Who, then, is encouraging the Big Powers to meddle in the internal affairs of the Third World?

The credibility of NAM can be gauged from the disastrous failure of Mrs. Gandhi's global summit at New York. Apart from France, it was a disparate group with more than half of those attending being Soviet client-states. The lukewarm response, even from NAM members, reflects the lack of NAM's self-confidence, as also their dubious "non-alignment". Both the US and the USSR are content in keeping NAM as a testing ground for their respective political hegemony. Otherwise there is no explanation why even the majority of pro-Soviet members should have kept away from the New York gathering.

For NAM to bray over the Shatilla-Shab'ra massacre while tempering the criticism of the Soviet shoot-down of KAL civilian airliner may be a question of using "certain words" but the inevitability of double standards in moralising cannot be evaded. Mrs. Gandhi's hysterical reaction to the US antagonism to NAM by criticising American policy of double standards does not augur well for a Prime Minister who is trying to project herself as a world leader in her capacity as Chairperson of NAM.

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BOOK REVIEWS

INDUSTRIAL CIVILISATION & GANDHIAN ECONOMICS By J. S. Mathur; 1971; Pustakayan; Pp. 175; Rs. 13.

THIS IS a book published as far back as 1971, i.e., 12 years ago. Readers may, therefore be tempted to ask: "Where is the need to notice it now?" The answer is that, with our experience of the working of the Indian economy since Independence, on the one hand, and the fast-being forgotten theories of the Father of the Nation, on the other, time has come for an impartial person to take stock of things and to judge which of the two ought to be our eventual choice. The author has not only marshalled Mahatma Gandhi's observations, especially on some controversial questions but has also adduced the views of several eminent individuals such as Bertrand Russell in support of these observations. There must, indeed, be something in what all these great personages have said, and it would be unjust to dismiss them in a facile manner, as many people are sadly prone to doing of late.

Before considering the observations themselves, it occurs to this reviewer that the reader must draw a line of demarcation between what Gandhiji actually said and what others have interpreted him to have said or meant to say.

At the outset, it would be wrong to regard Gandhiji as an economist or to describe his views pompously as "Gandhian Economics". It is clear that he did not accept the prevailing economic concepts. For instance, he was against construing economics as it is generally done, as "the science of wants". How could one who so eloquently argued the case for reducing wants countenance the prevailing economic view that the more one wants the more one is "advanced" (or is it "civilised")? Gandhiji's economics was concerned more with the individual than with his wants. In retrospect therefore, one is bound to agree with Gandhiji that, to the extent that the individual tended simply to increase his wants, whether justified or not, he was not making any progress at all. Here is the spiritual element that Gandhiji introduced into economic thinking, although it would be wrong to rush to the conclusion that he (Gandhiji) was a sworn spiritualist, notwithstanding the fact that he was a firm believer in God. He was, if anything, a pragmatist. After taking stock of people and things around him, when he arrived on the scene, he was convinced that, for a poor country like India the pursuit of wants just for the sake of keeping up with the Joneses was hardly the right thing to do. Instead, Gandhiji wanted to ensure for every Indian two square meals a day. This meant not only more production but also a more equitable distribution, and

he was not sure that those engaged in trade and, later on, in industry would want to ensure such a consummation, for their yardstick naturally would be profit and not satisfaction of the consumer. Hence his repeated insistence on village self-sufficiency.

Gandhiji not only wanted village industries and handicrafts to be revived, but he also wanted them to cater to all the basic needs of the village and if possible, for being exchanged for those other needs which their village could not provide for. It is only after satisfying the country's internal demands that he wanted Indians to think in terms of exports. He made due allowances for the need to earn foreign exchange; he knew India could not afford to be an insulated economy in a growingly inter-dependent world. For this reason, he wanted the village artisan or worker to take pride in producing the finest ware for export purposes. He was not at all for sacrificing quality for quantity.

In 1935, Gandhiji wrote in *Harijan* to explain why he was in favour of reviving the village: "The revival of the village is possible only when it is no more exploited. Industrialisation on a mass scale will necessarily lead to passive or active exploitation of the villagers as the problems of competition and marketing come in. Therefore, we have to concentrate on the village being self-contained, manufacturing mainly for use. Provided this character of the village industry is being maintained, there would be no objection to villages using even modern machines and tools that they can make and can afford to use. Only they should not be used as a means of exploiting others."

This brings us to Gandhiji's view on the use of machines. It is doing great injustice to him to argue that the Mahatma was against the use of all machines. He was certainly not against the use of machinery that saved or reduced human toil. Indeed, he was not even opposed to the use of power by village industries, if this saved a worker toil and increased his output, without displacing any worker. In other words, Gandhiji was opposed only to those sophisticated machines that replaced human labour and added to the manufacturers' profit whilst enhancing the poverty of the workers by rendering them unemployed. Herein also lies his distrust of *automation*—"a process of production that attempts to perform by machinery all the functions hitherto performed by human beings". He was also apprehensive that "automation would encourage concentration of economic power and financial control over the production and distribution of goods and services". Here is what Gandhiji himself said on the subject: "I am not fighting machinery as such, but the madness of thinking that machinery saves labour. Men 'save labour' until thousands of them are without work and die of hunger on the streets. I

want to secure employment and livelihood not only to part of the human race, but for all. I will not have the enrichment of a few at the expense of the community..."

Besides his call of "back to the villages" and his condemnation of urbanisation and mechanisation, Gandhiji also propounded another of his controversial theories—the theory of trusteeship. This goes a step beyond GDH Cole's concept of a social economic order. Gandhiji's ideal was "equal distribution", although he feared it may not be realised. By economic equality, he did not mean "possession of an equal amount of worldly goods by everyone"; when arguing for trusteeship, he was only voicing his concern that peace would not reign if gross inequalities persisted.

The greatness of Gandhiji lies in the fact that he was never averse to admitting the limitations of his theories. Even in regard to trusteeship, he conceded it had yet to prove its worth. Today, when the selfishness of man has reached its peak, the moment seems to have arrived when this concept needs to receive not only a second, but also a considered look.

—R. V. Murthy

FROM THE HORSE'S MOUTH**

**THE SIKKIM SAGA by B. S. Das; Vikas; New Delhi; Pp. 166; Rs. 75.00.

HERE IS perhaps the most vivid, "story" of how Sikkim became the twenty-second state of India by the 38th Amendment of the Indian Constitution in April 1975. The author was appointed the Chief Executive of Sikkim in April 1973 and headed the state administration till Sikkim became an associate state of India in September 1974 and hence what he writes is a first-hand report from a position of importance.

The book offers a historical background (albeit in a broad outline) right from 1641 when some Tibetans overran the region inhabited by *Lepchas*. In 1817 Sikkim signed a treaty with the East India Company and became a *de facto* protectorate in 1861. The Indian independence struggle did influence/inspire the political leaders of Sikkim who in 1947 demanded Sikkim's merger with India on the same basis as the other princely states. Despite Sardar Patel's pragmatic views to the contrary, Nehru's idealism prevailed and a treaty was signed in 1950 retaining Sikkim's status as a protectorate. The Maharaja soon claimed to be "Chogyal" (a Tibetan title indicating the ruler's supremacy over secular and religious matters). However,

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when he went beyond internal affairs and came into conflict with Delhi, the anti-Chogyal political parties in Sikkim sought India's assistance, and Delhi did not miss the opportunity this time (1973).

The author writes: "The situation was grim when I assumed charge. There was a total collapse of the administration." And he describes the events leading to the Agreement of May 8, 1973 between the Chogyal, the leaders of the political parties representing the people of Sikkim and the Government of India which, in short, "killed" Chogyal's ambition to make Sikkim a sovereign state and made it clear that he was subordinate to New Delhi.

Talking about his own role, Das admits that he was essentially an instrument of converting a protectorate into a state of India. On a personal level, he gives full credit to the Chogyal for his generosity and character in "thinking well of me and even (having) developed a degree of affection" despite the fact he was more or less the instrument of his fall from power. The book has an interesting chapter on "The Women": Sarah Lawrence (nee Hope Cooke), the young American wife of the Chogyal; Cocoola, Chogyal's sister and Elisa Maria Kazini from Belgium who married Kazi Lhendup Dorji, the people's leader—all three ambitious persons "fishing" in the troubled waters of the state for personal gain. Then there was Rani Bhuvaneshwari Devi, an Indian advocate and the legal adviser of the Chogyal; she encouraged him to give a fight. However, "the main actor in the Sikkim saga was of course Mrs. Indira Gandhi... she had all the cards up her sleeve and her ruthlessness was unmatched." It all sounds like exciting fiction but then at times, truth is stranger than fiction!

Das also discusses the various male personalities as he knew them. And there is a chapter on Sikkim as an Indian state. In a way, the transfer from the Ministry of External Affairs to the Home Ministry has not been a very happy one for, the author is convinced that it was not realised in Delhi that the newest state with its tribal culture and strategic position "needed a different style of governance and handling". Thanks to the various blunders of the Indian government nationalism and communalism are slowly emerging today in this sensitive state. And the Gorkha League of Darjeeling is demanding a Gorkhaland, an enlarged state of Sikkim with Darjeeling as part of it.

Das is both descriptive and analytical. His direct personal involvement with his "subject" makes his book lively and prevents it from being relegated to the bookshelves of an university library. While being of general interest, it is also of particular value as a reference book for the scholar.

—S. I. Clerk

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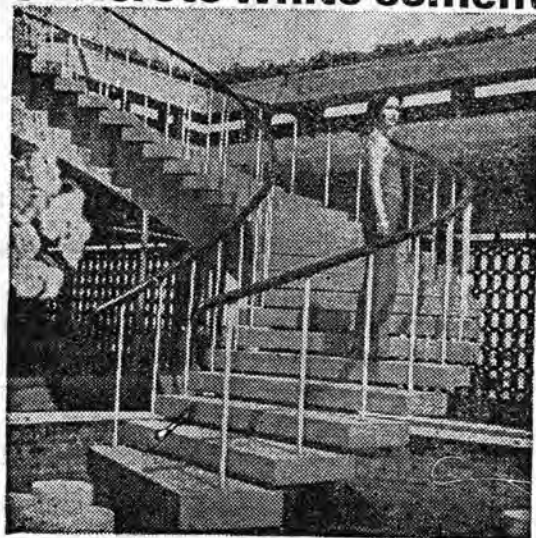
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WITH MANY VOICES

A new law of evidence in Pakistan, approved by the Council on Islamic Ideology, in effect equates the value of the testimony of one man with that of two women.

—Michael Hamlyn in *The Times*, September 8.

Eighty? I am 20 years old, four times over.

—Colette quoted in *The Economist*, July 9.

The Labour Party is a child of the collectivist epoch which is now coming to an end. If the choice is between Thatcherism and Labourism, Thatcherism has power on a plate.

—David Marquand in *The Times*, September 6.

Any man's face, at the moment it gets slapped, becomes the face of Christ.

—Leon Bloy quoted in *The Observer*, July 17.

In these Regulations a reference to a Regulation is a reference to a Regulation contained therein, a reference in a Regulation or the Schedule to a paragraph is a reference to a paragraph of that Regulation or the Schedule and a reference in a paragraph to a sub-paragraph is a reference to a sub-paragraph of that paragraph.

—From Statutory Instrument 856, the Teachers (Compensation) (Advanced Further Education) Regulations quoted in *The Times*, July 7.

The misery of being exploited by capitalists is nothing to the misery of not being exploited.

—Professor Joan Robinson quoted in *The Economist*, July 16.

Mr. James Callaghan, the former Prime Minister, appealed to Mr. Enoch Powell's heart. This was particularly strange, Mr. Powell's heart is an organ whose existence is officially denied by Mr. Callaghan's party.

—Frank Johnson in *The Times*, July 12.

As in West Africa, so now in Southern, Sandhurst is ousting the L.S.E.

—*The Economist*, July 16.

We marry each other for better or worse, but never for lunch.

—Clive Jenkins quoted in *The Times*, July 18.