

“We Tibetans have no political strings to pull, no money, no power, we have no crude oil to offer ...” – Tenzin Tsundue

Between November 20 and 24, 2006, Hu Jintao the President of Communist China and also notoriously known among Tibetans as the ‘Butcher of Lhasa’ was in India on a State visit. Indian officialdom in their anxiety to please this man tried to push the Tibetan refugees in India under the red carpet and to keep the Dalai Lama under wraps.

Well in advance of Hu’s visit, in fact as far back as March this year, Mr. Shyam Saran, Government of India’s Foreign Secretary was in Dharamsala to meet the Dalai Lama. Perhaps it was during this visit that he must have suggested that during Hu Jintao’s visit it would be best if the Dalai Lama did not make any public statements that could ‘embarrass’ the government. This would explain the Dalai Lama’s silence. But organisations like Tibetan Youth Congress, Students for a Free Tibet (India), Friends of Tibet (India) were both seen and heard. These three organisations took the opportunity to present the Indian Foreign Secretary with the following memorandum which said:

“We welcome you to Dharamsala, our temporary homeland, the exile residence of our leader His Holiness the Dalai Lama and the capital of Tibetans in Exile.

“We have been keenly following the recent developments on bilateral relations between India and China, especially the series of talks your government has been engaged with China on border issues. Recently the seventh round of border talks between India and China was held in Kottayam in Kerala, where you represented the Indian party.

“We are gravely concerned about the future of our country Tibet, which is still under China’s occupation. As the Government of India engages in serious border talks, we remain at a loss as to how to react as the two giant nations negotiate borders, and there is no Tibetan representation in the process.

“India has a very high authority to speak on Tibet, and the whole world respects India’s position on Tibet. We plead that as your government engages in discussions with China, they make no compromise on the rights of the Tibetan people.

“Further, as the President of People’s Republic of China Mr. Hu Jintao comes to India this May, may we plead again, for you to raise the issue of Tibet with him. Until the 1949 illegal occupation of Tibet by China, India never had any border with China. The border was between India and Independent Tibet. India even had a Representative in Lhasa when Tibet was independent. Since India’s signing of the 1954 Panchsheel agreement with China, India has compromised on its authority to

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speak on Tibet, and even today the policy continues.

“From 1959, since our first years of exile, India has been most kind and understanding to our struggle and has been most supportive. It is this help and support that has nurtured our dreams of a free Tibet, and the struggle lives on. For that, we remain grateful forever to the Government and the people of India.”

The memorandum was signed by Lobsang Yeshe, President, Tibetan Youth Congress Tenzin Choeying, President, Students for a Free Tibet (India), Tenzin Tsundue, General Secretary, Friends of Tibet (India).

In a manner of speaking the three organisations were serving notice on the Foreign Secretary that they had no intention of keeping quiet when Hu Jintao came a visiting.

Ideally the Government of India would have preferred that the Tibetans didn't demonstrate but if they did, there was little the Government could do other than token arrests, because India is a real democracy and not the spurious 'people's democracy' of the communist kind. So what they did with Indian demonstrators was to keep them behind barricades and away from eye contact with Hu and his entourage and to make preventive arrests. First diplomatic pressure on the Dalai Lama no to give any statements to the press or on TV; allow demonstrations but from a distance; and preventive arrest – of just one person who had outsmarted the police on two earlier occasions – of Tenzin Tsundue who was told not to leave Dharamsala till November 25.

In a statement he made on December 2, this is what Tenzin Tsundue had to say:

“Before it (the order putting him under house arrest) happened our local Superintendent of Police called me to his office twice and tried to advise me to keep silent. But when everything failed he slapped an official detention order on me saying I couldn't leave Dharamsala for 14 days. Hu Jintao, President of the People's Republic of China, was visiting India and the host government had

As Indian as I am, I am Tibetan. I am ashamed that free democratic India should welcome a man who has the blood of millions of men on his hands. The people of Tibet, the ordinary people of Tibet can never support any agreement that India signs with this murderous regime, because Tibet belongs to the Tibetans, not to the Chinese

Lhasang Tsering



Shibayan Raha, Campaigns Coordinator of Friends of Tibet unfurls the banner reading: "China Get Out of Tibet and Aksai Chin" outside the Taj Hotel, Bombay on November 23, 2006 just before Chinese President Hu Jintao's speech at the India-China Economic, Trade and Investment Cooperation Summit.

to keep me away from their diplomatic display of friendship and desire for business contracts - fearing I might repeat my protest stunts by inviting myself to their banquet table shouting "FREE TIBET".

“The order stated that I was detained due to my protests in 2002 and 2005 – when Chinese Prime Ministers Zhu Rongji and Wen Jiabao visited India – and also on “substantial evidence” of plans to protest this time and add Hu Jintao to the list. For the 10th April 2005 caper in Bangalore, I hid myself in the balcony of the bell tower atop India's premier science institution for 24 hours. I had climbed the building the night before China's Prime Minister was to address a conference in the Indian Institute of Science. So, as Wen Jiabao started his speech on the ground floor, I emerged onto the tower's balcony brandishing the Tibetan national flag shouting “FREE TIBET”. By unfurling a huge red banner reading “FREE TIBET” and flinging leaflets in the air, the massive media coverage meant to focus on the Chinese premier was instantly redirected on Tibet.

“India was therefore worried that the nation's security might be breached for the third time. So 15 policemen in plainclothes with four cars and two motorbikes were deployed to observe my activities. The police joined me everywhere – in the toilet, at meetings and restaurants, and even watched me buy the morning's newspapers. At our police headquarters I had my mug shot taken twice to be circulated, along with the detention notice, to all police stations in Himachal Pradesh, not to mention Agra, Delhi and Mumbai – the cities Hu was to visit. By then I was finding everything amusing since I live frugally and save rupees by always walking up and down the hill roads in this district in the lower Himalayas – and suddenly there

were all these cops following me. My Tibetan friends started calling them my “bodyguards”.

“By then the news of my detention spread like wildfire across all the media. Letters of support were pouring in from all corners of the world. Young Tibetans were inspired and fired by the detention notice and so my friends were saying, “Let’s all go to Delhi if Tsundue can’t”. Then six major Tibetan NGOs banded together and orchestrated the “Chalo Delhi” Tibetan People’s Movement to mobilize a huge gathering of Tibetans in Delhi to sit there in protest. When this was posted on the internet, Tibetans and Tibet supporters the world over sent donations to ensure the success of this spontaneous movement.

“This in turn inspired me. Creating a Tibetan Movement from within the Tibetan community has been an important focus for me. And when I saw the flowering of this momentum being created before my eyes I saw no reason to escape Dharamsala and go anywhere! So on the day when our people were being bussed down to Delhi, I met the chief of police again and requested smooth and safe passage for those demonstrators and a guarantee of police protection for our people who would sit in protest in Delhi.



Lhakpa Tsering, the Regional President of Tibetan Youth Congress sets himself ablaze outside the Taj Hotel, Bombay on November 23, 2006 just before Chinese President Hu Jintao’s speech at the India-China Economic, Trade and Investment Cooperation Summit.

“Then I decided to stay put in Dharamsala. But I made it very clear to the police that the moment our peaceful public protest was disrupted by them we would have to play the old cat-and-mouse game. That evening when almost a thousand emotionally-charged Tibetans gathered at McLeod Ganj square to board the buses for Delhi, I looked at the police surrounding us. No lathis. No side arms. The police hierarchy had kept their promise. But that night they stepped-up their vigilance on me with around 20 policemen and a fleet of cars and motorbikes choking the tiny congested square.



Protest Against Hu Jintao in New Delhi.

“The protest went smoothly with police protection; the police again kept their promise and even escorted the protestors to Delhi’s protest site. India supported us when we lost Tibet in the Chinese invasion. After 47 years in exile, we were once again fighting China. India’s new found support has resuscitated our dreams of a free Tibet. On the other hand, India’s policy that Tibet is a part of China – the policy inherited from the British Raj – has placed India herself in a dilemma today.

“We Tibetans have no political strings to pull, no money, no power, we have no crude oil to offer in exchange for help; what we have is only history and truth. Our struggle is based on truth, and Non-violence is our principle of life. For the truth we fight for we are willing to sacrifice everything - even our precious human lives.”

There were demonstrations in several cities and towns of India. Demonstrators both Indians and Tibetans were arrested and released the following day. It was all done in a civilized manner and not as Hu Jintao would have handled it in Lhasa for which he earned the epithet ‘The Butcher of Lhasa’.

SVR

A trip organized by Friends of Tibet to Dharamshala left me panting for breath both literally and figuratively. Before leaving for this trip I had a vague idea of the Tibetan issue; China occupying the Tibet. The trip was an eye-opener into the real suffering of Tibet by communist China. Please excuse me if this write-up sounds anti-China but by the end of the trip I was ready to negotiate with Osama Bin Laden and get his help to torch the communist regime.

Aditya

Point Counter Point

Ashok Karnik

Every issue has at least two sides. A wise man studies all sides before coming to a conclusion. This is an attempt to debate opposing viewpoints so that a considered opinion can be formed.

Musharraf's *In the Line of Fire*

● General Musharraf's "In the Line of Fire" has created quite a stir. It is obviously not likely to be appreciated in India but in the West, Musharraf is credited as being a sharp, smooth operator who speaks out his mind. The TV-dominated US society likes telegenic personalities and admires people who speak out their mind. Musharraf is considered a more appealing personality than the doddering, old Indian leaders. Musharraf's image as a valiant ally in the fight against terrorism carries the day. His half-truths (or lies?) are generally ignored. Besides, he has allowed the press in Pakistan to remain free, unlike most dictators, and corruption levels are not as high as they were before him (?). Is he the saviour Pakistan needs?

The book is useful not because of the facts (or fiction) in it but because it throws light on the personality of the author. There is little doubt that Musharraf is smart. His smartness covers up the shortage of wisdom. In diplomacy, what is unsaid is often more important than what is said. Musharraf, rightly called the motor mouth, talks too much and believes that he is always right and all others are mostly wrong. He has no fear that his "terminal inexactitudes"—to use a Churchillian phrase—would cost him dear. Since he has emasculated his political opponents, there is nobody in Pakistan who can seriously challenge his evasion of reality vis-a-vis Agra, Kargil, ISI's role, Taliban, terrorism et al. His tight-rope walk between anti-terrorist crusade and covert support to militants/ Al Queda is a risky endeavour. How long mere smartness can serve when it is statesmanship and wisdom that it needed to pull a country out of crisis is the question.

Mohd. Afzal – To Hang Or Not To Hang

● Mohd Afzal Guru's death sentence has raised a serious debate over capital punishment on the following grounds:

- a) Capital punishment is *per se* unacceptable in a civilized society
- b) Eye for an eye policy has not stopped terrorism. Instead, it has given rise to more and more acts of revenge and has led to greater militancy.
- c) The situation in the Kashmir valley has become explosive and the death sentence would make it worse. Political wisdom demands that it should be commuted.
- d) Legally, the death sentence is not justified since Mohd. Afzal was not a direct participant in the attack on Parliament on December 13, 2001.

- (1) Various political parties, including the ruling Congress party in J&K or at least its Chief Minister, most other parties in J&K, the leftists all over the country, have demanded commutation of the death sentence. In fact, only the BJP has vehemently opposed any change in the sentence given by the Supreme Court and has appealed to the President to turn down the mercy petition filed by Afzal's family.
- 2) The opposition to commutation of the death sentence is based on the following:
 - a) The argument that capital punishment is unacceptable in a civilized society has been considered by the Supreme Court and upheld again and again. There is no point in raising the issue now, particularly when the matter is so politicized. If those opposing capital punishment are so vocal now, why were they silent when Dhananjoy Chatterji, the rapist murderer of a Calcutta girl was hanged last year after spending over 13 years in jail? The same principle could have been applied to him although he was guilty of a spine-chilling, heinous crime.
 - b) The argument that the sentence would give rise to further militancy is self-defeating. Leniency shown to terrorists has never brought down terrorist activities. In fact, it is always considered a sign of

weakness on the part of the State, which in turn gives a fillip to terrorism.

- c) Political expediency to assuage the feelings of the masses would destroy the concept of the rule of law. No terrorist can be punished as his organisation can always drum up support to oppose the punishment.
- d) If Afzal's life is to be spared for the sake of his family, what about the families of the heroic policemen who were killed during the attack on Parliament? Have victims lost all relevance in the eyes of those pleading for mercy for the murderer?
- e) The Supreme Court has now clarified that caste, religion, political considerations should not have any bearing on mercy petitions to be decided by Governors and the President and that such decisions should be open to judicial scrutiny.
- f) Finally, has Afzal expressed regret over the attack and is amenable to reform? Punishment has two aims, retribution and reform. Does a terrorist genuinely accept that terrorism is wrong or is he trying to exploit all avenues provided by our legal system to destroy the State?

Executive vs. Judiciary

- The ongoing battle between the judiciary and the executive is fascinating but worrisome. The two arms of the nation's being are locked in conflict, which is not a welcome sign for our democratic system. The system that has survived for over five decades has suddenly developed fissures. Is it due to intemperate and immature political leadership or is it because of the Judiciary's attempt to control what is not its to control?

- It is true that judiciary is considered the last hope for the hapless common man. However, should the judiciary try to enforce executive actions that the executive cannot conceivably take? Should it not take into account the feasibility of the action demanded? For example, the various time frames imposed by the judiciary for demolition/sealing the 'illegal' shops in New Delhi could not be adhered to by the Delhi administration; it entailed untold human suffering.

For the common man, judiciary is the last available resort to fight a capricious and unresponsive executive. It finds no remedy in the processes the executive follows. The executive's failure to provide redress and act even when an injustice done is obvious, forces the judiciary to intervene.

The fact that the Government does not abide by the Court's orders and the Court is required to revise its orders again and again is not a healthy development. The same is the case with the Ulhasnagar (Maharashtra) illegal constructions. The Government of Maharashtra had to come out with an ordinance to circumvent a judicial decision. Can the executive not be more forthcoming before the courts and admit that the wrongs done cannot be rectified without causing harm to more innocent people? Therefore, a decision on the first wrong needs to be tempered with what the Government can do to right the first wrong without causing further havoc. The remedy perhaps lies in the Government honestly submitting to the courts its limitations, instead of manipulating matters through ordinances and hasty legislations to circumvent court orders. More important issues like Office of Profit Bill, Reservations, disqualification of MPs and the idea of putting certain legislations beyond the scrutiny of the courts (in the Ninth Schedule of the Constitution) are waiting to explode. If that happens, it will be a sad day for the country.

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

Men fight for Liberty and win it with hard knocks. Their children, brought up easy, let it slip away again, poor fools. And their grandchildren are one more slaves.

- D. H. Lawrence, 1922

Terrorists *Are* Criminals

“You are not an enemy combatant. You are a terrorist. You are not a soldier in any war. You are a terrorist. To give you that reference, to call you a soldier, gives you far too much stature.”

This judgement demands reading. Not for the flag waving but for the clarity of distinction between soldiers and terrorists. And therefore the response of a justice system.

Remember the terrorist, Richard Reid, who got on a plane with a bomb built into his shoe and tried to light it? Did you know his trial is over? Did you know he was sentenced? Did you see/hear any of the judge's comments on TV or Radio? Everyone should hear what the judge had to say.

Prior to sentencing, William Young, U.S. District Court Judge asked the defendant if he had anything to say. His response: After admitting his guilt to the court for the record, Reid also admitted his “allegiance to Osama bin Laden, to Islam, and to the religion of Allah,” defiantly stating, “I think I will not apologize for my actions,” and told the court “I am at war with your country.”

Judge Young then delivered the statement quoted on January 30, 2003, in the case of the United States vs. Reid:

“Mr. Richard C. Reid, hearken now to the sentence the Court imposes upon you.

On counts 1, 5 and 6 the Court sentences you to life in prison in the custody of the United States Attorney General. On counts 2, 3, 4 and 7, the Court sentences you to 20 years in prison on each count, the sentence on each count to run consecutively. (That's 80 years.)

On count 8 the Court sentences you to the mandatory 30 years again, to be served consecutively to the 80 years just imposed. The Court imposes upon you for each of the eight counts a fine of \$250,000 that's an aggregate fine of \$2 million. The Court accepts the government's recommendation with respect to restitution and orders restitution in the amount of \$298.17 to Andre Bousquet and \$5,784 to American Airlines.

The Court imposes upon you an \$800 special assessment. The Court imposes upon you five years supervised release simply because the law requires it. But the life sentences are real life sentences so I need go no further.

This is the sentence that is provided for by our statutes. It is a fair and just sentence. It is a righteous sentence.

Now, let me explain this to you. We are not afraid of you or any of your terrorist conspirators, Mr. Reid. We are

Americans. We have been through the fire before. There is too much war talk here and I say that to everyone with the utmost respect. Here in this court, we deal with individuals as individuals and care for individuals as individuals. As human beings, we reach out for justice.

You are not an enemy combatant. You are a terrorist. You are not a soldier in any war. You are a terrorist. To give you that reference, to call you a soldier, gives you far too much stature. Whether the officers of government do it or your attorney does it, or if you think you are a soldier. You are not - you are a terrorist. And we do not negotiate with terrorists. We do not meet with terrorists. We do not sign documents with terrorists. We hunt them down one by one and bring them to justice.

So war talk is way out of line in this court. You are a big fellow. But you are not that big. You're no warrior. I've known warriors. You are a terrorist. A species of criminal that is guilty of multiple attempted murders. In a very real sense, State Trooper Santiago had it right when you first were taken off that plane and into custody and you wondered where the press and the TV crews were, and he said: “You're no big deal.”

What your able counsel and what the equally able United States attorneys have grappled with and what I have as honestly as I know how tried to grapple with, is why you did something so horrific. What was it that led you here to this courtroom today?

I have listened respectfully to what you have to say. And I ask you to search your heart and ask yourself what sort of unfathomable hate led you to do what you are guilty of and admit you are guilty of doing. And I have an answer for you. It may not satisfy you, but as I search this entire record, it comes as close to understanding as I know.

It seems to me you hate the one thing that to us is most precious. You hate our freedom. Our individual freedom. Our individual freedom to live as we choose, to come and go as we choose, to believe or not believe as we individually choose. Here, in this society, the very wind carries freedom. It carries it everywhere from sea to shining sea. It is because we prize individual freedom so much

cont'd. on p.11



Cornucopia

Firoze Hirjikaka

Freedom of Expression: How Far Can We Go?

The recent controversy over the decision of a Berlin opera house to cancel a staging of Mozart's opera, "Idomeneo", brings into focus the eternal debate: at what point does freedom of expression degenerate into license. The opera company was worried about probable backlash resulting from a scene which showed the severed heads of Mohammed, Buddha and Jesus. The German Chancellor, Uma Merkel, has come out strongly against this action, calling it an assault on the freedom of expression so cherished in the West. This will undoubtedly earn her a standing ovation from liberals around the world – maybe deservedly so.

The opera company's apprehensions are understandable. Staging a provocative scene like that mentioned above is practically guaranteed to invite violent protests from Muslims and, perhaps, some right wing Christians as well. The world wide protests – often deteriorating into pure hooliganism – over the infamous Danish cartoons: and the more recent brouhaha over the Pope's comments on Islam, are still fresh in memory. So it really comes down to a delicate balancing act. Sure, freedom of expression is noble and a birthright and all that stuff, but how far can it be allowed to go? Do we need to draw the line somewhere?

There is no argument that the human race has become more "civilized" over the centuries – particularly in the area of being allowed to speak one's mind. A thousand years ago, anyone who dared to speak out against injustice or criticize the king – or even a Squire – was likely to be sent to the gallows. This still happens, of course – except that the form of execution has become more "efficient" – in some dictatorships and banana republics; but, by and large, the human race has become more tolerant.

The French and Russian revolutions helped to demolish the myth about the divine rights of kings and czars: and the American Declaration of Rights was a supreme moment in history; putting hitherto unimaginable ideas into the minds of common citizens. Democracies flourished and – imperfect as they are – have emerged as the most enlightened system of government in human history.

Freedoms – of speech, of thought and of the power to choose one's leaders – flourished and grew exponentially. Soon, the liberties bequeathed to ordinary citizens by the toil and sacrifice of generations of brave men became a given. People took them for granted and inevitably, lost the desire – or felt the need to protect them. Worse, the intent of the original freedoms granted by their forebears got trivialized and manipulated to serve less than noble ends. America, for example, considered the right to sue

as a fundamental right – which it is – but took it to sometimes ludicrous extremes. The right to bear arms – which, at the time it was framed, – was meant to protect homesteaders in a still wild and untamed land – degenerated into a near license to shoot at anyone who caused annoyance. Modern day anarchists considered it their right to burn the flag and spew venom at the very nation that had nourished them.

It took a terrible tragedy like 9/11 to make Americans realize that the freedoms they enjoyed were not perennial or immutable. What was given could be taken away. Sometimes people needed to endure irritants – and even some hardship – for the common good. The euphemistically-titled "Patriot Act" and the very recent "Detainee Trial Bill" almost unobtrusively whittled away at our freedoms. The fall from grace became evident in more mundane ways too. Getting on a plane was no longer as easy as catching a train: curbside check-ins became a fond memory and invasive, insidious security checks became the norm. Suddenly, some of the practices Americans had contemptuously scorned in "less-civilized" nations came home to haunt them. They needed to look over their shoulders; self-censor emails they sent out (they could be legally intercepted) and what they spoke over the phone (their conversations could be recorded and retrieved). The surprising fact is that many Americans have accepted these infringements on their liberties without too much protest. Fear is a very powerful motivator.

Which brings us back to the German Chancellor. No one can fault her statement on moral or ethical grounds. However, when the probability of a violent backlash is overwhelming, is it practical - or even sensible – to take the high ground? Voltaire may have been prepared to defend to the death people's right to say what they want; but are we? Will not the same diehards who are now applauding Uma Merkel condemn her if their homes and shops are torched? Purists may argue that giving in to threats of violence is a sign of cowardice – even moral decay. But are we willing to risk the consequences? Our forefathers had the courage – some may argue – and it is because of their fortitude that we enjoy the liberties we do today. True; but our forefathers were made of sterner stuff. Can today's pampered generation, to whom creature comforts have become paramount, be expected to bite the bullet and take what comes? I hardly think so.

Freedom of expression is a precious gift; but let us not take it too far. Like an overstretched elastic band, it can snap and bite the hand that holds it. Let freedom ring, by all means, but let us temper it with a little common sense.

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

Maximum Good of the Nation or Reservation?

Feroza Seervai

There is a contradistinction between pushing the maximum number of unready aspirants into top educational institutions through reservation, and achieving the good of the State.

Opening wider the doors of institutes to those not prepared for them, and shutting them to the general category, is a self-destructive strategy.

Politicians pushing for reservation desire and intend to achieve the maximum good of the country – its inhabitants. For this, quite another strategy is required. The President of India, not a politician, immediately came up with the right strategy, when he recommended increasing the number of institutes, so that we would not need reservation. Heads of institutes said the same. As thousands of crores are required for national schemes, so too for this scheme.

It is common knowledge that many a student who is unready for pursuing courses of study for which he opts, is frequently unable to complete the course. Principals have said so in public, and journalists have written about it.

It is, on the other hand, just not true that such aspirants lack the degree of innate intelligence of general category students: the deprived “BC” students are not, by and large, less intelligent. Deprived students exist among the rich too: financially well-provided children, young people, lead lives of deprivation when their parents are a dull, docile lot, unable to supply mental stimulation to them, or, are a lot who virtually neglect them, are too busy and pre-occupied to even give them or show them love, a lot who ill treat them. Any school or college counsellor will tell you about the intelligent student who, due to such deprivation, performs far below his capability.

I hate the phrase “backward class”. It is, in fact backward, thoroughly uncultured, to use the phrase. It militates against human dignity. Shows total absence of sensitivity. Like words which worldwide are “politically incorrect”, whose use can render you liable for prosecution in some jurisdictions, the phrase is, indeed, politically incorrect, in my view.

We have among us deprived groups, (economically, socially, personally, educationally, mentally deprived persons) and among them may be the wealthy and the well-placed. The sooner we acknowledge that there are no “backward classes”,

the better. Adequate schooling is believed to be, and often is available in the schools charging thousands of rupees per annum. But, some other schools also prepare students adequately.

“BCs” have attained doctorates and hold responsible posts of excellence, yet the general mindset tragically and erroneously relegates “BCs” to being of poor intelligence.

However, intelligence and the potential for skill do not reach their highest functional level unless they have been cultivated, trained, practised, and development of personality has been addressed. The deprivation which befalls many intelligent persons, is the lack of these. The sort of schooling they have received has left them hopelessly unprepared for institutes of higher learning. That is the deprivation which results in dropouts.

Any educationist, any armed services officer will confirm that many a time, the new deprived recruits, later known to have high innate intelligence, at first give an impression of being “dumb”. After a time of learning and training, they flower magically, show their high intelligence and capability. Conversely, those coming from comparatively privileged backgrounds, with different experiences in their environment and in their homes, turn out

to be of limited intelligence and learning capacity, although on arrival, they have shown superficial brightness, mostly because of their backgrounds.

Dropouts do not invariably fail through lack of innate intelligence and potential: they have entered the course without the necessary preparedness. It happens also to some who have gone in through money power, depending, to a large extent, on their not-so-good academic preparation. If a competition were held for testing native intelligence, in activities in which all competitors are equally without experience or training, they will finish neck and neck, in half the cases, academic preparation notwithstanding. This is because in distributing intelligence, God does not distinguish between the “man made classes” – religious, socio economic, geographic, racial, or whatever. Different activities require different types of intelligence as well as experiences. When difference is noticed, although superficially it may appear as a difference in intelligence and the capability to successfully complete the course, in many instances, it is likely to be only a difference in the school preparation.

COURTESY: *The University Woman*, June 2006.



A Tribute to Milton Friedman

Subroto Roy

Milton Friedman, who died on 16th November 2006 in San Francisco, was without a doubt the greatest economist after John Maynard Keynes. Before Keynes, great 20th century economists included Alfred Marshall and Knut Wicksell, while Keynes's contemporaries included Irving Fisher, AC Pigou and many others. Keynes was followed by his younger critic F. A. Hayek, but Hayek is remembered less for his technical economics as for his criticism of "socialist economics" and contributions to politics. Milton Friedman more than anyone else was Keynes's successor in economics (and in applied macroeconomics in particular), in the same way David Ricardo had been the successor of Adam Smith. Ricardo disagreed with Smith and Friedman disagreed with Keynes, but the impact of each on the direction and course both of economics and of the world in which they lived was similar in size and scope.



Milton Friedman
(1912-2006)

Friedman's impact on the contemporary world may have been largest through his design and advocacy as early as 1953 of the system of floating exchange-rates. In the early 1970s, when the Bretton Woods system of adjustable fixed exchange-rates collapsed and Friedman's friend and colleague George P. Shultz was US Treasury Secretary in the Nixon Administration, the international monetary system started to become of the kind Friedman had described two decades earlier.

Equally large was Friedman's worldwide impact in re-establishing concern about the frequent cause of macroeconomic inflation being money supply growth rates well above real income growth rates. All contemporary talk of "inflation targeting" among macroeconomic policy-makers since the 1980s has its roots in Friedman's December 1967 presidential address to the American Economic Association. His main empirical disagreement with Keynes and the Keynesians lay in his belief that people held the intrinsically worthless tokens known as "money" largely in order to expedite their transactions and not as a store of value – hence the "demand for money" was a function mostly of income and not of interest rates, contrary to

what Keynes had suggested in his 1930s analysis of "Depression Economics". It is in this sense that Friedman restored the traditional "quantity theory" as being a specific theory of the demand for money.

Friedman's main descriptive work lay in the monumental *Monetary History of the United States* he co-authored with Anna J. Schwartz, which suggested drastic contractions of the money supply had contributed to the Great Depression in America.

Friedman made innumerable small contributions too, the most prominent and foresighted of which had to do with advocating larger parental choice in the public finance of their children's school education via the use of "vouchers". The modern Friedman Foundation has that as its main focus of philanthropy. The emphasis on greater individual choice in school education exemplified Friedman's commitments both to individual freedom and the notion of investment in human capital.

Friedman had significant influences upon several non-Western countries too, most prominently India and China, besides a grossly misreported episode in Chile. As described in his autobiography with his wife Rose, *Two Lucky People* (Chicago 1998), Friedman spent six months in India in 1955 at the Government of India's invitation during the formulation of the Second Five Year Plan. His work done for the Government of India came to be suppressed for the next 34 years. Peter Bauer had told me during my doctoral work at Cambridge in the late 1970s of the existence of a Friedman memorandum, and N. Georgescu-Roegen told me the same in America in 1980, adding that Friedman had been almost insulted publicly by V. K. R. V. Rao at the time after giving a lecture to students on his analysis of India's problems.

When Friedman and I met in 1984, I asked him for the memorandum and he sent me two documents. The main one dated November 1955 I published in Hawaii on 21st May 1989 during a project on a proposed Indian "perestroika" (which contributed to the origins of the 1991 reform through Rajiv Gandhi), and was later published in Delhi in *Foundations of India's Political Economy*:

Towards an Agenda for the 1990s, edited by myself and W. E. James.

The other document on Mahalanobis is published in *The Statesman* today for the first time, though there has been an Internet copy floating around for a few years. The Friedmans' autobiography quoted what I said in 1989 about the 1955 memorandum and may be repeated: "The aims of economic policy (in India) were to create conditions for rapid increase in levels of income and consumption for the mass of the people, and these aims were shared by everyone from P. C. Mahalanobis to Milton Friedman. The means recommended were different. Mahalanobis advocated a leading role for the state and an emphasis on the growth of physical capital. Friedman advocated a necessary but clearly limited role for the state, and placed on the agenda large-scale investment in the stock of human capital, encouragement of domestic competition, steady and predictable monetary growth, and a flexible exchange rate for the rupee as a convertible hard currency, which would have entailed also an open competitive position in the world economy ... If such an alternative had been more thoroughly discussed at the time, the optimal role of the state in India today, as well as the optimum complementarity between human capital and physical capital, may have been more easily determined."

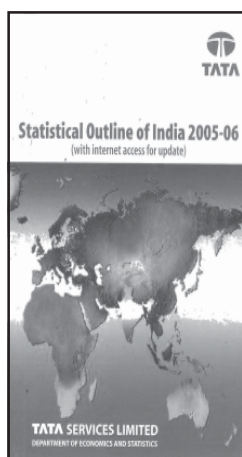
A few months before attending my Hawaii conference on India, Friedman had been in China, and his memorandum to Communist Party General Secretary Zhao Ziyang and two hour dialogue of 19th September 1988 with him are now classics republished in the 1998 autobiography. Also republished there are all documents relating to Friedman's six-day academic visit to Chile in March 1975 and his correspondence with General Pinochet, which speak for themselves and make clear Friedman had nothing to do with that regime other than offer his opinion when asked about how to reduce Chile's hyperinflation at the time.

My association with Milton has been the zenith of my engagement with academic economics, with e-mails exchanged as recently as September. I was a doctoral student of his bitter enemy yet for over two decades he not only treated me with unfailing courtesy and affection, he supported me in lonely righteous battles: doing for me what he said he had never done before, which was to stand as an expert witness in a United States Federal Court. I will miss him much though I know that he, as a man of reason, would not have wished me to.

MR. SUBROTO ROY, an eminent economist and Consultant Editor, *The Statesman*.

Book Review

Statistical Outline of India (2005-06)



The popular Tata publication, *Statistical Outline of India (2005-06)*, in keeping with state-of-the-art technology, now provides access to a new web site, www.statisticsofindia.com, developed exclusively for S.O. subscribers. Apart from providing regular update on major macro economic indicators, the site also contains value added information in the areas of economic policy, WTO, etc. Other features of the site include calendar of upcoming economic events and a review of new publications.

This user-friendly pocket edition covers a wide spectrum of relevant and useful data. The statistical tables track crucial economic and social parameters at domestic and international levels. S.O. is indispensable to all those who are interested in factual data relating to the Indian economy, Chambers of Commerce & Industries, economists, researchers & students among others.

S.O. is a prized corporate gift. It is also available in the form of a CD-ROM.

Significant additions intersperse across sections: ● City-wise Consumption Pattern (Social Sector and Levels of Living) ● Category-wise Receipts and Payments in the Tourism Industry (Foreign Trade & Payments) ● Impact of Natural Disasters (Social Sector and Levels of Living) ● Offices of Commercial Banks in India and Abroad (Money, Banking and Insurance) ● Composition of Non-Performing Assets of Public Sector Banks (Money, Banking and Insurance)

The CD-ROM version of S.O. 2005-06 comes with hi-tech features such as: Facility to export data to Excel spreadsheets ● Convenience to convert data into graphs ● Search utility function to aid data location ● Links to related data ● Password utility to protect unauthorised access ● Printing/Fax compatibility.

Corruption and Parking Violations

Who rang up 150,000 unpaid parking tickets in New York City over five years?

Diplomats from the United Nations...

It wasn't the folks from Canada or the United Kingdom... Between the two, there wasn't a single parking violation. Meanwhile, diplomats from the African nation of Chad had an average of 124 parking violations a year.

What does this have to do with getting rich? Let me explain...

It turns out, the amount of corruption in a country is highly correlated to the amount of income per person in that country.

So if you want to turn your dollars into more dollars, you've got to be investing in countries that have very little corruption, or, probably even better as an investor, countries that have made significant improvements in the level of corruption in recent years.

The *Economist* magazine says, "In the case of parking violations, diplomats from countries with low levels of corruption behaved well, even when they could get away with breaking the rules. The culture of their home country was imported to New York, and they acted accordingly."

Chad has the dubious distinction of being the world's most corrupt country, according to the latest Corruption Perceptions Index put out by Transparency International. Canada and the United Kingdom, it turns out, are even less corrupt than the United States, according to the study.

When it comes to generating wealth, corruption matters.

Income per person in Chad is about \$600 – or \$50 a month. Meanwhile, income per person in Canada and the United Kingdom is around \$35,000 a year. (This data is nominal GDP per head, from the IMF.)

What country is the least corrupt? According to Transparency International, it's Iceland... and that lack of corruption has helped lead to spectacular wealth creation.

Iceland's ICEX-15 stock index is up 400% in the last five years. And it's up 1,700% since the Index started in 1992. Property prices have doubled in just a few years. And can you believe this? Income per head in Iceland is actually higher than Canada and the United Kingdom. It's true.

I have put millions of investment dollars to work in Iceland over the years. Three years ago, I invited my subscribers on a trip to Iceland with me. Thirty folks came. We visited a few companies and met with local brokers. I wanted my readers to see what I knew... that Iceland is a great – and safe – place to invest. Readers who invested back then made a lot of money.

Now, we're investing in Iceland again... In the latest issue of *True Wealth*, I recommended a stock that trades in the U.S. that has spent hundreds of millions of dollars investing in Iceland. And of course, I reiterated my favorite investment for the next 10 years, which is a specific Icelandic bond.

Iceland is a great example of an uncorrupt country.

Courtesy: *Daily Wealth*, on the Internet.

Terrorists Are Criminals (cont'd from p.6)

that you are here in this beautiful courtroom. So that everyone can see, truly see, that justice is administered fairly, individually, and discretely. It is for freedom's sake that your lawyers are striving so vigorously on your behalf, have filed appeals, will go on in their representation of you before other judges.

We Americans are all about freedom. Because we all know that the way we treat you, Mr. Reid, is the measure of our own liberties. Make no mistake though. It is yet true that we will bear any burden, pay any price, to preserve our freedoms. Look around this courtroom. Mark it well. The world is not going to long remember what you or I say here. The day after tomorrow, it will be forgotten, but this, however, will long endure.

Here in this courtroom and courtrooms all across America,

the American people will gather to see that justice, individual justice, justice, not war, individual justice is in fact being done. The very President of the United States through his officers will have to come into courtrooms and lay out evidence on which specific matters can be judged and juries of citizens will gather to sit and judge that evidence democratically, to mold and shape and refine our sense of justice.

See that flag, Mr. Reid? That's the flag of the United States of America. That flag will fly there long after this is all forgotten. That flag stands for freedom. And it always will.

Between Ourselves ...

In the October issue of *Freedom First* we had narrated the response of a subscriber who did not approve of the monthly arising from a mistaken impression. We now reproduce a letter from another subscriber who welcomes the monthly! This is what he wrote: "It was a pleasant surprise to see *Freedom First* in its new avatar as a Monthly. Frankly it is a welcome move for people like me who have been addicted to your wonderful magazine for years, but used to find it difficult to plough through many pages in one sitting. Often I would lose my copy before I finished it. The twelve page version is highly readable and continues to re-charge our batteries every month. Please keep up the good work, as I know the difficulties of bringing out such a publication."

Suggestions have been received from some readers that we should have a readers column. We welcome the suggestion and invite letters from our readers on anything published in *Freedom First* or on any other matter that they feel is important or interesting or both.

PS. We receive queries from our readers regarding *Freedom First*. Often we anticipate these questions and deal with them on this page. Perhaps it might be a good idea if when you get your copy you turn to page 1 before moving on to read the inside pages. Just a thought.

Editor

Many Voices

Belief in astrology, miracles of godmen and vastu shastra is on the rise, rather than decline as Nehru had hoped. Nehru's vision of scientific temper has fallen by the way side. Do we live in the 21st century or the 18th?

Astrophysicist Jayant Narlikar,
The Times of India, Bangalore, November 18

The social harm of setting free a thief or robber for want of evidence acceptable in a court of law will not have quite the same impact as setting at liberty a terrorist because there is not enough proof of his guilt, only strong suspicion.

Eminent jurist Fali Nariman,
The Indian Express, November 29

It is not the survival of the fittest but of the filthiest in South Asia today. No method is considered bad enough to get what one wants.

Kuldip Nayar, *The Asian Age*, August 21

In the next ten years, the Centre will have a tough time trying to keep the north east in India.

Guwahati journalist D. N. Bezboruah,
The Week, November 26

(American) Conservatism is in crisis. Everyone is saying so, and everyone is right.

Senior Editor Ramesh Ponnuru,
National Review, November 20

In our country, the lobbies of organized labour and those of industry are quite vocal. But unfortunately the peasant, who is the backbone of our entire economy, has a very feeble voice.

Madhu Dandavate, from a speech in the Lok Sabha in 1985 and cited in *Janata*, November 19

India's future is not bright even though in urban India the ubiquitous malls, coffee shops and brand new cars give the impression of fast paced growth.

Vivek Raju, *Education World*, November 2006

Even in secular New Zealand it occasionally happens that when people learn I am an atheist they say "So you believe in nothing".

Bill Cooke Editor, *The Open Society*,
Volume 79, Number 3

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Phone: +91 (22) 2284 34 16 • E-mail: freedom@vsnl.com

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