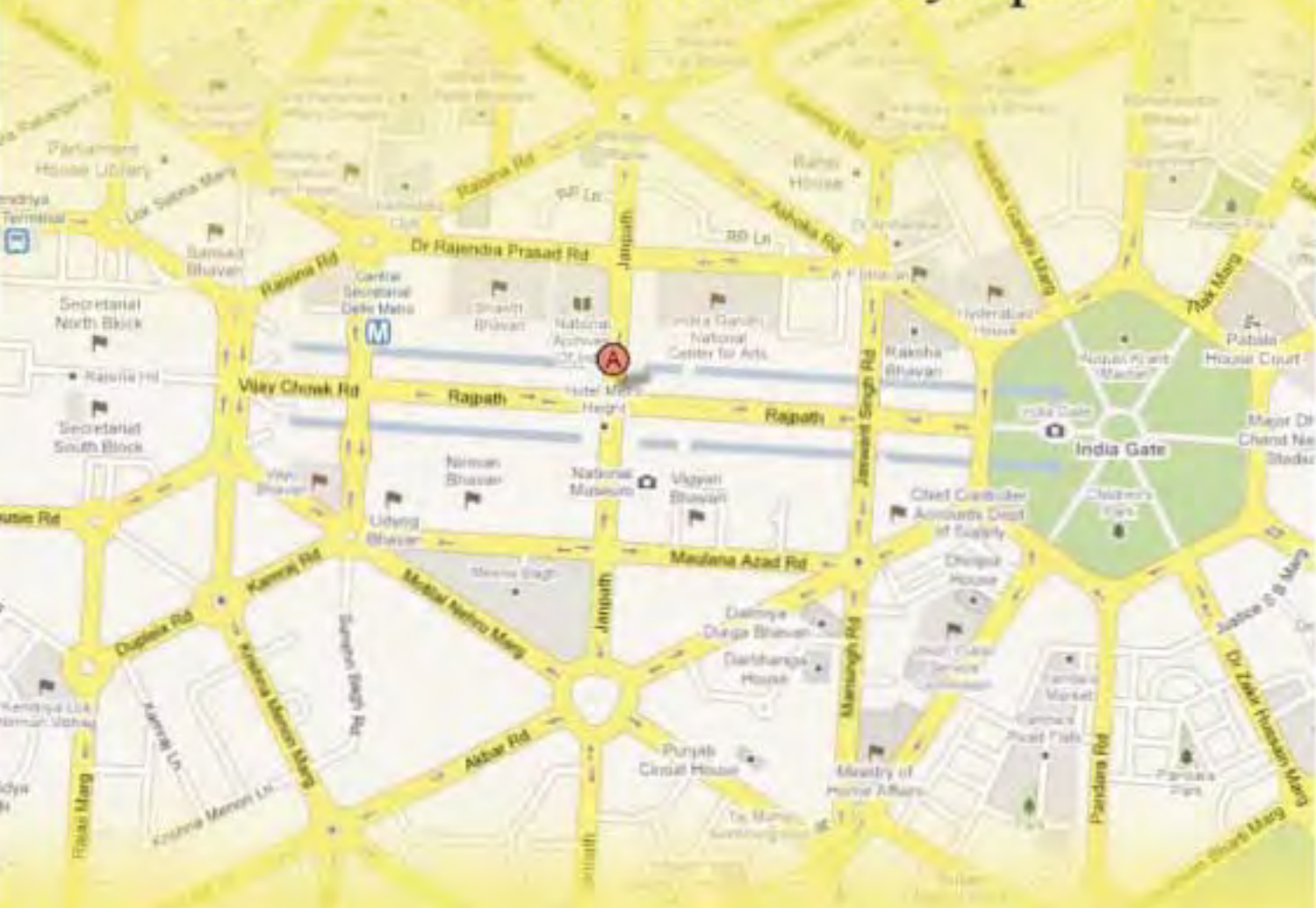


Freedom First

The Liberal Position

The return of one-party dominance?

Will all roads now lead to 10, Janpath?



A. K. Venkat Subramanian, IAS, R.I.P

A True Servant of the People

As an IAS officer of the Tamil Nadu cadre, he initiated various innovations during his tenure as Secretary, Transport, Food and Cooperation, Planning and Development and Development Commissioner. He served as Secretary, Consumer Affairs in the Union government and was, for six months, Officer on Special Duty in the Chief Minister's office in Chennai.

After retiring from government service, Mr. Venkat Subramanian took to public activism. It was as if he had not retired but continued in public service of the voluntary kind. His interest was in the realm of clean politics and citizens' participation in the electoral process beginning with the most important duty to exercise his and her vote. He was also deeply interested in environment issues.

Someone who made a careful study before taking up any cause publicly, Mr. Venkat Subramanian while studying the Conduct of Election Rules stumbled upon section 49-O of the Conduct of the Election Rules, 1961, under which a voter could decide not to record his or her vote. He was excited and was soon drawing the attention of the public to this provision.

It was in this connection that the Indian Liberal Group got in touch with the Catalyst Group which under his guidance has become a well-known institution in Chennai campaigning for citizens' rights and networks with other voluntary organisations in Tamil Nadu and other parts of the country. In Tamil Nadu he was coordinating the activities of 200 Citizen's Centres organised by the Trust with the Ford Foundation. He also edited *Kudimakkal Murasu* the Trust's monthly magazine in Tamil.

On February 13, 2004 on the invitation of the Indian Liberal Group and *Freedom First* he visited Mumbai and addressed a meeting on the role of the ILG in Mumbai in the elections to the Lok Sabha particularly with reference to what we can, as Liber-



als, do in arresting the degeneration of representative government.

Mr. Venkat Subramanian said that it was important to educate the voter on the value of his vote and encourage him to participate in activities to ensure fair elections at all levels. Such activities include, *inter alia*, (a) ensuring that candidates declare their background, assets and liabilities; (b) keeping an eye on the Electoral Roll in your constituency; (c) making sitting MPs who are standing for re-election accountable for their performance. He also spoke

about "The Protest Vote", i.e. Rule No. 49(O) in the Conduct of Elections Rules 1961 - and explained how it works. He was listened to with rapt attention.

We recall with nostalgia another visit that he made to Mumbai when he made it a point to meet people connected with *Freedom First* and the Indian Liberal Group. He persuaded us to accompany him in a visit to the Sales counter of the Maharashtra government printing press to see what they had on Dr. Ambedkar and bought various volumes of the collected works of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar and was thrilled when he was able to get two slim volumes of Mahatma Jotiba Phule's writings in English.

In the brief hours we were together we could see his concern for extending social justice and for bettering the lost of the economically deprived.

Mr. Venkat Subramanian died of a heart attack on September 1. He was only 69. He is survived by his wife and two daughters. To them we convey our deepest condolences. The people have lost a selfless and dedicated worker. His death further depletes an already shrinking tribe of men and women dedicated to the public weal.

May his soul rest in peace.

Freedom First

A Liberal Monthly – 56th Year of Publication
No.508 October 2009

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Between Ourselves...

The Return of one party dominance? We ask in the cover feature this time. Aren't we being 'alarmist'? You ask. Perhaps. But, as that old saying goes 'To be forewarned is to be forearmed'. For, members of your editor's generation who lived through a period of forty-plus years witnessing and experiencing a debilitating India, the prospects of once again being tied to the Family are foreboding. At least at that time there was a functioning Party claiming credit for leading the freedom struggle. It was captured by the 'Karta' or head of that family – a word Mr. Godbole prefers using in his article. Why and how it happened is known to most of us of the old generation, though not to many of this. From 1969 the Party was no longer the Indian National Congress led by Mahatma Gandhi; It was another Gandhi (no kin) the Congress(I) or Indira Congress which usurped the name with the 'blessings' of the Election Commission of India. The Family was back by default thanks to the inability of the Janata Party to work together after it had decisively defeated The Family. For that comeback, The Family should thank the RSS and the Jan Sangh. Thereafter it lost control of the country in 2004. Yet again The Family is seizing the opportunity provided by the Jan Sangh's successor the RSS sponsored BJP.

We do not go along with the BJP on a number of policies seen from a liberal perspective. But they are there, 118 of them, sent to parliament by the electors of India in the elections held this year. Not a small number. Sadly by the antics of their top leadership squabbling over non-issues, they have again imperilled our democracy. How so? Bapu Satyanarayana explains how; and even the non-issues – Jinnah and Pakistan – are discussed by Vedamurthy and the fallout – banning of the Jaswant Singh book - by Keshav Rau.

There is an interesting discussion, quite unintended but interesting nevertheless, on what kind of liberal values, Western or Indian, ought to be the basis for the re-emergence of a liberal political party? Which begs the question: Going way back into our history were we liberal at all. Perhaps this discussion was sparked off by a programme to which Freedom First was associated: The 50th anniversary of the founding of the Swatantra Party held in Mumbai on August 1.

Editor

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MANY VOICES

**"The deep moans round with many voices. Come, my friends
'Tis not too late to seek a newer world" - Tennyson**

"It is not the quantum of punishment but the certainty of punishment which proves to be an effective deterrent."

Supreme Court Chief Justice K. G. Balakrishnan,
September 13

The most potentially dangerous reality of the Sino-Indian relations today is India's abdication of vital national interests for the domestic political survival of ruling coalitions.

Dr. Subramanian Swamy, *The Hindu*, September 18

I'm not sure whether Jinnah was responsible for the partition of India then, but he is certainly dividing the BJP now.

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M. Karunanidhi
at a press conference, *DNA*, September 1

Every member of Parliament or the Legislative Assembly takes an oath to preserve, protect and uphold the Constitution. Tragically, every time our politicians ban a book or a movie, they violate the Constitution with impunity.

Lawyer Arvind P. Datar,
The Mumbai Age, 30 August

Musharaff is the darling (of the British and the Americans), who it is thought may yet deliver.

Sanjay Suri, in London, *Outlook*, September 14

India cannot simply throw its telephone book at Switzerland and ask if any of these people have a bank account here.

"An unnamed official at the Swiss Bankers Association" cited in an editorial in *Mint*, August 25

Does the RSS drill in the minds of its followers some simple axioms that are generally taken for granted? Like, for instance, always to speak the truth...?

Journalist/Cartoonist Rajinder Puri,
The Sunday Statesman, August 30

Many ask why I joined politics and then why

I left it. I joined because I was asked to and I left because I was inadequate for the job.

Film actor Amitabh Bachchan,
cited in *The Week*, September 13

"Tell us Minister (Shashi Tharoor), next time you travel to Kerala, will it be cattle class?" Reply posted by Minister Tharoor on Twitter "Absolutely, in cattle class out of solidarity with our holy cows."

Report in *The Statesman*, September 17

It is silly expression but meant no disrespect to economy travellers, only to airlines for herding us in like cattle. Many have misunderstood. Holy cows are not individuals but sacrosanct issues or principles that no one dares to challenge.

Minister of State for External Affairs,
Shashi Tharoor, *DNA*, September 19

Given the absurd way in which the Westminster system has developed in India, there is always an election round the corner.

Lord Meghnad Desai,
The Sunday Express, September 13

The bastards first used us and are now playing dirty games with us....Darling if the government plays any mischief with me, take a tough stand....They might try to get rid of me to cover up all the things they got done by me.

Pakistan's Nuclear Scientist A. Q. Khan in a letter to his wife Henny, cited in *The Times of India*,
September 21

A curious and typically sub-continental backdoor talibanisation is manifesting itself on India's college and university campuses. Prior to the commencement of the new academic year the managements....have notified stringent dresscode regulations for students – women students in particular. Skirts, jeans, t-shirts, sleeveless blouses have been outlawed...in indignant tones of righteousness"

Editorial in *Education World*, July 2009

From Our Readers

This is Bharat

I have gone through the article "Ganesh Chaturthi" by Suman Oak. I am not sure what purpose it would serve, except to hurt the sentiments of foolish people believing Hinduism and their mythological deities. Indian liberalism allows such thoughts on Hindus and their followers. Will it change the attitude of such people or irritate them? But, many would legitimately ask if the same writer has the same liberty to ridicule Allah, Prophet, or Jesus of the concept of immaculate conception. In a secular country, this is considered communal. If she questions why people in a tropical country, where high dignitaries wear 3-piece expensive suits with a tie, or criticize the dining or wining with couples, de-coupling themselves and enjoying "life" she will be called reactionary. THIS IS BHARAT.

G. Narayanaswamy
Chennai. admin@svco.in

*

Twitter Is Bitter

Shashi Tharoor, Shashi Tharoor
Did you twitter a costly error
Bringing cattle class into political class;
And being with holy cows and deemed an ass!

Humour and politics are far apart
Two CMs say, from ministership you depart
This is not UN and here it is no fun
Fly you can but crouched and glum

Sycophancy is an art you've to learn;
Loyalty you show and see how you earn
Laurels after laurels, beating a familiar drum
How hard it is we know but then have your rum.

Sadanand B Kumta, Pune.
sbkumta@rediffmail.com

*

"A Kick in the Head"

An exchange of views between writer and reader:

Dear Mr. Firoze Hirjikaka,

I always read with interest your Cornucopia column in *Freedom First*.

I have a small protest to make about your article "A Kick in the Head" in the September 2009 issue: It is about your old fashioned ideas about women, calling them "little" and with "elephant memory" etc. I may not like it, if my wife refers to me as "that little man..." in an article. Your articles always point out societal problems and you expect them to be tackled correctly by politicians and bureaucrats.

In such a background, I am amused to see you not heeding any of the doctors' advice. Hence one is likely to feel your opinions are just those of an arm-chair journalist.

Pramod Beri, Kolhapur.
admin@beriae.com

Dear Mr. Beri

Thank you for your email; and for being a faithful reader of my column. It is always a good feeling to know that one's words are not merely disappearing into the ether.

About the article in question; let me clarify that it was written with my tongue firmly in my cheek although it is true that I do have a love-hate relationship with doctors. Let me assure you that my wife has called me names a lot worse than "little man". Let me also clarify that I am no journalist - armchair or of any other variety. I am merely an ordinary citizen who likes to vent his frustrations with our political system occasionally and has been fortunate enough to be provided a platform to do it in.

May peace be upon you!

Firoze Hirjikaka, Mumbai.
Leonardo8_99@yahoo.com

*

The Apathy of Mumbai Voters?

A recent *Hindustan Times* survey underlines the apathy of the common people of Mumbai towards the electoral process and political parties. In a way the survey substantiates the fact expressed through lower voter turnout in a series of recent elections. It is a serious matter that average citizens of a city that elects more than a tenth of the state legislature (36 out of 288) feel that the most primary democratic process does not really affect their life. It could be easy to

blame the general attitude of Mumbaikars. However, there could be one plausible explanation for this fact. Over the past 10-15 years, the ability and the authority to make decisions regarding the future and fate of their city has slowly but definitely slipped out of the hands of the average Mumbaikar. Take examples of the problems related to roads or transportation in the city. There was a time when the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation was the body responsible for taking care of these issues. The average citizen perceived they had at least some control over these, through the Corporators they elected. But with the formation of bodies like the MMRDA and later the MSRDC, or creation of the authorities like MUDP and MUIP, control over these civic issues gradually went over to the State Government.

What is more important, the bodies and authorities of the State Government are not responsible to the people, in the sense the elected organs of the government are. Indeed, they are bureaucratic bodies reporting to the State Government or the Chief Minister. They make decisions on the infrastructure of the city consulting experts. In bracket, this means a few powerful lobbies having immense influence. The point is not whether the projects undertaken by these authorities yielded good or bad results for the city. The point, in fact, is the average citizens or even their representatives were hardly involved in the process of making crucial decisions. The decisions are at best given and at worst, imposed. The citizens cannot be blamed if they get a feeling that participatory democracy has become meaningless. The so-called autonomous institutions have alienated the citizens from the democratic process and this could well be an important (though not the only) explanation for the apathy of Mumbai citizens towards the elections.

Uttara Sahasrabudhe, Mumbai.
suttara@rediffmail.com

*

Do not be Afraid of Swine Flu

Reader M. B. Damania has sent us the following facts about Swine Flu for the information of our readers. These are from a circular by Dr Deepak Purohit district governor of the Rotary Club in Panvel, Maharashtra. Ed.

I agree that swine flu awareness is needed, but there is no need to be panicky and join the publicity propaganda being carried on by the media and others which spreads misconception rather than disseminating scientific information.

These are a few facts about swine flu that the public should be aware:

1. Swine flu, that is H1N1 flu is not new. It was first detected in 1987.
2. The infective stage of flu is 5 days, 1 day before and 4 days after the onset of the symptoms.
3. The best way to prevent it spreading is asking a patient having symptoms of flu like fever, cough and running nose to rest at home for 4 days so he does not transmit it.
4. Masks are of limited value if any, in this infectious disease; it can spread through droplets on your skin, through contact etc. I have seen that the masks in Pune are worn as fashion statement. While walking today morning I saw people wearing masks coming out for a morning walk with their dogs many wearing masks around their necks. These masks can act as vehicles to carry the virus. Instead, avoiding crowded places or cinema halls or malls where air conditioners are on, is advisable, because you get re-circulated air, where the virus density multiplies.
5. Death after H1N1 flu is not common. Infections like measles take a toll of thousands more every year. Swine flu is being blown out of proportion by the media creating hysteria among lay people.
6. Fever accompanied by respiratory distress, should be immediately notified which is likely to be a complication of H1N1 flu
7. The mortality is less than 0.01 percent of those affected, that means may be one in 10,000 affected is likely to result in a loss of life.
8. Two years ago SARS was blown out of proportion; what happened? We developed immunity to it in course of time. The swine flu virus is in the air; it cannot be stopped, Our body is already developing immunity, so there is no reason to panic. We need to take care of children and the elderly who have less immunity and should be discouraged from frequenting crowded places.

I am amazed to hear that people are selling masks for Rs.20 each. These are available for less than One Rupee in the market. So who is getting the benefit?

Contributed by M. B. Damania
permin@vsnl.com

The Return of One-Party Dominance?

– Great Danger

H. R. Babu Satyanarayana

Nobody need grieve what happens to the Advanis, Rajnaths or Jaswants but the greater danger is the impact on democracy in India.

Jaswant Singh, who occupied important positions in the Cabinet in the NDA government was expelled from Bharatiya Janata Party(BJP) of which he was a founding member because in his recent book 'Jinnah: India-Partition-Independence' Jinnah came in for praise while he denigrated Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Mahatma Gandhi and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru as architects for the vivisection of India.

Jaswant Singh with his clipped British accent, always impeccably dressed, scholarly and with a penchant for writing, looks so unlike the others in BJP and specially the saffron colour looks incongruent on him. Yet, if he has soldiered on for more than thirty years with the party which has had an uneven political history with the *Hindutva* tag uncharitably hurled at the party by its political detractors, it must be something to do with the discipline ingrained in him during his service in the armed forces from which he resigned in 1967. It is also because he must have been held in great respect by the leaders of the party and indeed he enjoyed the perks of high office.

However, the reasons for his expulsion are still obscure giving rise to all sorts of speculation in the media and it appears his writing raised the hackles of the coterie surrounding Lal Krishna Advani, and that the President of the party, Rajnath Singh in a sudden move declared him *persona non grata* and unceremoniously expelled Jaswant Singh without even the courtesy of calling for his explanation while Lal Krishna Advani kept an enigmatic silence.

The action of expulsion and the brusque manner of informing him telephonically conveying the decision by the party by the President provoked Arun Shourie who is held in high esteem and is equally high in the party hierarchy. The result was he let loose a string of choice epithets against the party leader that showed him in most unfavourable light; but to the delight of the TV media repeated it with relish while the viewers had a bellyful of laughter. It is rather an unedifying position to be seen in this light for a President of a main line political party.

Apparently, Shourie expected the same fate befalling him but it appears the BJP regained a semblance of sobriety and only asked for his explanation. The fact that according to Shourie, hardly a day had elapsed before the book was in the hands of the leaders meant that nobody had time to read the book of more than 700 pages and much less to digest its contents. Shourie has a redoubtable record, having worked with *The Indian Express* and is credited with insightful analysis of political developments with impeccable logic supported by facts and figures, besides holding important cabinet rank in the NDA government. Therefore, it logically implies that there were people close to the top leaders of the party who were waiting for an opportunity to target Jaswant Singh and the book was only an excuse for what he has written, which in any case is nothing new to attract such harsh reaction.

Now Jaswant Singh is courted avidly by the media and seems to be present everywhere. The book has been a hit in Pakistan. It is notable that during intense questioning by the media his answers were dignified and he did not lose his aplomb and has been careful not to join issue by criticising or blaming any leader despite the manner in which he was treated. At least the sale of his book which has already seen ten editions has been financially very rewarding but whether it is sufficient recompense for the trauma of being expelled from the party only Jaswant Singh can decide.

In the ebb and flow of tides of history some times tectonic movements occur giving rise to tsunami effect as a result of king sized personal egos for wielding power and influence, creating huge waves of political disturbances that sweep across the country leaving political debris that requires decades of cleansing of minds before normalcy can return. That is exactly what happened in the events leading to the partition of India which convulsed the nation in history's most tragic aftermath of destruction and killings which still echo in the corridors of power taking its deadly toll of Advanis and Jaswants who

are merely the victims of the legacy of the past. According to veteran journalist Kuldeep Nayar it is the British, the Muslims and the Congress in that order who contributed to the division of India. So, it would have been wise for Jaswant Singh not to have lifted the shroud from the mummy of Jinnah buried in the tomb of history knowing that Advani just escaped by the skin of his teeth for his statement on Jinnah when he visited Pakistan in 2005.

Nobody need grieve what happens to the Advanis, Rajnaths or Jaswants but the greater danger is the impact on democracy in India. The present tragedy is that it is only the BJP party with its considerable strength in the parliament which can keep the Congress in check from going on its wayward ways. The Congress has already established its stamp of dynastic rule by its overt and covert influence over the psyche of the *aam admi* who are their vote bank. This they have done almost insidiously by naming every conceivable institution or project after the name of Jawaharlal Nehru, Indira Gandhi and Rajiv Gandhi. Now Sonia Gandhi's name is creeping in. At the last count there were about 450 such central and state government programmes, projects and institutions involving huge public money that bear the names of members of this family. In other words it is free publicity at government cost. As everybody knows this is the age of publicity and its power to influencing the mind is great. The Congress has cashed in on this and has been deriving electoral benefits for four decades and more. Add to this the fact that any dissidence attracts severe strictures by the High Command and even senior leaders dare not speak their mind, the picture of abject surrender to authority is complete and is euphemistically called loyalty even though it is robbing the party of inner party democracy. A small example will suffice to what an extent such 'loyalty' is carried out. Recently, a minister in the Rajasthan Government led by the Congress forced school children to donate blood to please the President of the Congress!

Rahul Gandhi, the prime minister in waiting to inherit the dynastic crown, some time ago surprisingly admitted that there is no inner party democracy in the Congress. In fairness it must be said his utterances carry conviction that he is sincere and knows what is wrong with the party and has expressed the right ideas. It may be partly because he can afford to be more vocal by virtue of the position he occupies being the son of the Congress party President Sonia Gandhi. He can even get away with some politically

naïve statements which attracted criticism and as usual the spokespersons of the party can bail him out. It is too early to say how India will fare under his stewardship for, as of now, with the BJP in disarray, his chances of becoming the Prime Minister earlier than expected are very bright. On the other hand if history of his party is any guide, he will be sucked into the same political cabal that consumed his father.

Rajiv Gandhi too came with a lot of promise for he was young, handsome and dynamic; remember his famous statement that only 15 paise out of each rupee reach the project while the rest is eaten away by middlemen and in corruption. His name also figured in the pay off in the Bofors issue.

Already the Congress is exhibiting its incipient dictatorial tendencies and there is a dire need for a worthy opposition party to keep it in check if only for strengthening democracy. If not the result will be to embolden the Congress to irrevocably commit the same historic blunder for all its policy initiatives both overt and covert under the umbrella of secularism, tilting unabashedly towards minority politics which has a potential to widen the communal chasm. If BJP is in turmoil, it is like going through a test of fire and whether it will emerge chastened and reformed is to be seen. It did show that it was a party which fired the imagination of the people by its path breaking initiatives like the Golden Quadrilateral and Pradhan Manthri Sadak Yojana. There are other achievements too.

The Congress on the other hand with its rule of forty years showed little initiative and was content to plod on when all the world was marching ahead. It is the party under which corruption thrived and a statement coming from the former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi that corruption is a global phenomenon sent a wrong signal lending legitimacy to corruption. The effect is the nation is reeling under its stranglehold with corruption spreading like cancer.

But somewhere along the line BJP faltered and paid the price. However, the present turmoil in the party it is hoped will be like a cathartic release and hasten its re-emergence, for the alternative is too grim to imagine.

MR. H. R. BAPU SATYANARAYANA is a freelance writer based in Mysore. Email: what_option@yahoo.co.in

Rajaji, Jinnah and Pakistan

K. Vedamurthy

Astonishing, indeed, is that M. A. Jinnah, long dead, should continue to play a role in India is evidenced recently by the Jaswant Singh episode - as he did while alive!

In the early 1940s a fanatical fringe of self-styled saviours of the Hindu community called C. Rajagopalachari names for his 'sin' in suggesting a dialogue with Jinnah's Muslim League to thrash out the contentious issues between the Hindus and the major 'minority' community of India, the Muslims. It was not as if Jinnah or his Muslim League had shown any eagerness or even an inclination to 'negotiate' with the Congress led by no less a personage than Mahatma Gandhi. Actually, Jinnah had already declared that Hindus and Muslims were two nations!

As we read these 'stories' now in cold print, we will not be able to appreciate the circumstances that drove Rajaji to strike an understanding with the recalcitrant Muslim League led by Jinnah. It will be of interest to recall what the late Prof. Hiren Mukherjee, a veteran Parliamentarian of the Communist Party of India had to say in late 1971: "I have no means of being certain, but I have an idea that the Second World War shook him (Rajaji) deeply and brought out something of the clarity of thought and a bent for non-conformism which, though vitally a part of him as a particularly sapient human being, he had persuaded himself, under the Gandhi spell, to keep in cold storage. More than most of his colleagues, he reflected on the implications of the war on the world scene where, willy nilly, India also belonged. He sensed, besides, that the movement for Pakistan, crude and perverse as it might appear, should not just be attributed to Muslim intransigence but to deeper factors which could be disregarded only at the country's peril. It was, thus, that he alone of India's top-rung leaders offered a formula of rapprochement which touched the heart even of the recalcitrant Muslim League leaders, which if perceptively followed upon, could have given a less unhappy direction to our recent history." One has to presume the late noted Bengali litterateur had in mind the 'Rajaji Formula' also when writing these words - the 'Formula' which Gandhiji pleaded earnestly with Jinnah to consider favourably.

Sir Stafford Cripps came to India in March 1942.

In his biography of his maternal grandfather (*The Rajaji Story 1937-1972*, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Mumbai) Rajmohan Gandhi wrote: "And at first sight his (Cripps') proposals were not without appeal. He offered full dominion status after the war, with the right of secession from the Commonwealth, a constituent assembly whose members should be chosen by provincial legislatures or nominated by the princes; and, immediately, a national government composed of representatives of the leading political parties." Though the negotiations collapsed, as the British did not want to part with real power, it is interesting to know that another Bengali of undying international fame, Sri Aurobindo sent a request to Mahatma Gandhi through a personal messenger (S. Duraiswamy Iyer of Pondicherry Ashram) to accept the Cripps Proposals!

Rajaji was not one to give up. Said he: "The threat to India from Japan has precipitated matters ... I want a national army for which I want a national government. And I want a national front to secure a national government" He was for talks with Jinnah, conceding Pakistan 'in principle'. And he became overnight the most unpopular of India's top-rung leaders. V. Shankar, a trusted lieutenant of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, wrote: "It was well known that Rajaji did not agree with the official policy of the Congress on the war situation, nor on its relationship with the League. Few can deny that there was a great deal to be said for his viewpoints. He was, I think, one of the few leaders who could see the dangers of trimming their sails to the prevailing winds of fortunes of war. He could also project his mind forward to assessing the eventual consequences of such a policy. It would always remain a speculative 'if' of history as to what the course of events would have been if Rajaji had succeeded in his attempts to bring the Congress and the British Government and the Congress and the League together during the critical yet decisive war years. History may well say in the long run that at least that afforded the only possibility of preventing the partition of the country. Unfortunately, his own partymen took things amiss - and he became

the target of bitter attacks.”

In “Rajagopalachari’s Biography” C. R. Narasimhan his youngest son and a Congress Member of Parliament from 1952 to 1962, (Radiant Publishers, New Delhi) observes: “Had both sides, England less suspicious and India more self-confident, acted in a different way the history of political India would have been very different.”

Let this piece of recent history before August 15, 1947 close with a passage from ‘Rajaji’s booklet’, entitled “Reconciliation – Why and How” (cited in from page 111 of C. R. Narasimhan’s biography: “In spite of all that may happen in the immediate future India is bound to be free. What can Imperialism achieve by postponement of the inevitable? I have been appealing to our people on the basis of this faith in the inevitability of the future of India. I am convinced that under any decent settlement, whatever its shortcoming at the outset, we can achieve our goal. I have striven to turn the Congress from its policy of abstention and to participate in seizing opportunities as and when they come and to use the power of self-government to heal the diseases that subjection to external rule has developed. I have stood out for accepting a settlement as early as possible and for using the power and the opportunities obtained under it to form the habit of a common purpose which will cut across

clans, creeds, and communities and establish social and economic conditions that will help us to become a strong and united people free from the delusions generated by long foreign rule. I have faced odium by repeatedly urging this policy which looks like surrender when the air was surcharged with rebellion and resentment against Britain. I have done this because my sense of duty demands such reiteration, convinced as I am, that remaining in wilderness is like allowing full reign to reaction and this is not for a brief period after which everything could be set right when we come to our own, but which would extend itself up to the point of doing great and irreparable damage.”

C. R. Narasimhan comments ruefully: “The passage quoted above sums up Rajaji’s stand from 1937 onwards and up to the period of final settlement imposed by Lord Mountbatten in 1947. In this decade he worked with rare devotion to fulfil this self-imposed task, losing in the process ‘friendships’.”

Is it not an irony of history and ‘fate’ that even after the partition of the Indian subcontinent into Pakistan, India and Bangladesh, Muslims remain the biggest of secular India’s ‘minority’ communities?

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Banning Books: Time to Impose Curbs

Keshav Rau

Perhaps, the time has come for withdrawing the right of a state government to ban books and writings within the confines of its state. The Central Government’s powers also should be vested in an Independent Authority.

No sooner was Jaswant Singh’s book, *Jinnah – India, Partition, Independence*, released, several leaders of the Bharatiya Janata Party – at varied levels of seniority – vied with each other in condemning the author and the book. The condemnation was so strong and vociferous that the former Union Minister’s expulsion from the Party appears to have been the only next logical step that the big wigs in the Party, who had congregated at Simla, could have taken. Whether those who aired

their views on the 585-page book had read it within just 48 hours hardly matters because our politicians are known to make off-the-cuff remarks on all matters under the sun. The Party has some very set ideas about the country’s partition and the role played by Jinnah in it; expression of a contrary view and apportioning blame on a man like Sardar Patel would definitely raise the hackles of many in the Party. The expulsion of Jaswant Singh, therefore, shouldn’t come as a surprise. Denying him the freedom to express

his views cannot be trotted out as an argument because there is no such thing as inner-party democracy in our political parties.

The criticism by the BJP leaders, preventing Jaswant Singh from attending the Simla meeting and his expulsion from the party are all internal party matters, with which the general run of people in the country are not concerned. What is of concern is the crowning act of the Simla proceedings provided by Gujarat's Chief Minister, Narendra Modi, who banned the book in his State. One phone call from him in Simla to his officials back home and the book couldn't make its way on to the shelves of bookstores in Gujarat. Such a drastic step should disturb all those who cherish freedom.*

It's not that books have not been banned in this country in the past. The most notable of them that comes to mind is the ban imposed on D. H. Lawrence's *Lady Chatterly's Lover* in 1960. Then, in the nineties, the axe fell on Salman Rushdie's *Satanic Verses*. About six years back, James Lain's *Shivaji: Hindu King in Muslim India* was banned in Maharashtra. D. H. Lawrence's work came in for a similar ban in Australia, but with copies having been smuggled in and published widely, the censors relaxed their claws. In USA, the courts overturned the ban order. In Britain, because of a recent amendment to the law, the publishers were able to convince the jury that "the work was of literary merit", which was what the amended law required to be established to escape the ban.

In the three instances cited, the Government of India as well as the Maharashtra Government *had* an *arguable case* to impose the ban. In the first one, on grounds of obscenity and having a potential of depraving and corrupting young minds. In Maharashtra, Shivaji is virtually worshipped and critical references about him are bound to inflame passions and cause a riot-like situation. Similarly, on Rushdie's book, it could be argued that it had the potential of incurring the wrath of a very large section of the population in the country. If cogent grounds like obscenity, vulgarity, hurting the religious sentiments or beliefs of a section of society, causing a law and order situation, threat to security of the State could be made out, there could be justifiable – or at least arguable – reasons for a ban. For making out such

grounds, there has to be proper application of mind on the part of the authorities concerned.

However, in the case of Jaswant Singh's book, the manner in which the decision was taken and conveyed by the Gujarat Chief Minister to his State, on the face of it, leads to the unmistakable conclusion that there was no *application of mind whatsoever*. The only ground as announced by the BJP leaders was that the author blamed Sardar Patel, a revered son of Gujarat, also for the partition of the country. Their contention was that the Sardar's contribution in bringing round the 600-odd princely states within the Indian Union was immense, and the country owes a deep debt of gratitude to him for that. For the BJP, giving respect to the Sardar – and by implication not leveling criticism at him – is part of its core beliefs. The contents of the book not synchronizing with the core beliefs of the Party provided Modi "sufficient" ammunition for the ban.

Every political party is entitled to – rather should have – certain core beliefs. But anything written contrary to those core beliefs cannot entitle a state government or the Central government – even if the party whose core beliefs have been attacked is in power – to clamp a ban order on such writings. A Party's beliefs are distinct and separate from the State's requirement and justification for imposition of a ban. Jaswant Singh has written what he considers to be the role played by the Sardar in the partition of the country. He came to those conclusions after doing some research on the subject. It's not the first time that such conclusions have been drawn about the Sardar. Reference, for example, to Maulana Azad's *India Wins Freedom* would be very relevant in this context. So, too, *From Curzon to Nehru* (Durga Das) and *Witness To An Era* (Frank Moraes). If the principle espoused by the BJP for imposing the ban is to be accepted, the Congress Party would have had justification in banning innumerable books which have come out after Independence critical of Nehru and his policies. The Mahatma has also come in for critical comment on quite a few occasions. Once Acharya Kripalani wrote an article expressing doubts whether non-violence was an article of faith with the Mahatma or merely a tool for gaining independence. Men like Gandhi, Nehru, Patel being political figures, criticism of their actions, beliefs, policies etc. is bound to be there.

Apart from the fact that the Gujarat Govern-

* Since this was written, the Gujarat High Court has struck down the ban order.

ment has no arguable ground for banning the book, the State Government's decision raises a fundamental issue of the rights of the people living in Gujarat. While people in the rest of the country can read the book, people in Gujarat can't. Is it not a case of discriminatory treatment meted out to people in Gujarat? No doubt, James Laine's book on Shivaji was banned only in Maharashtra, but the rest of the country was also denied access to the book because the publishers [Oxford University Press] had withdrawn it from India even before the ban was imposed.

Perhaps, the time has come for withdrawing

the right of a state government to ban books and writings within the confines of its state. The Central Government's powers also should be vested in an Independent Authority to decide on such matters. Appeals against decisions of such an Authority should lie only in the Supreme Court. Tolerance of expression of a contrary point of view is part of the various Freedoms enshrined in our Constitution. In order that those Freedoms are further guaranteed and reinforced, such a drastic step is, perhaps, called for.

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Banned Books Week: Celebrating the Freedom to Read

September 26 - October 3, 2009

Banned Books Week (BBW): Celebrating the Freedom to Read is observed during the last week of September each year. Observed since 1982, this annual American Library Association (ALA) event reminds Americans not to take this precious democratic freedom for granted. BBW celebrates the freedom to choose or the freedom to express one's opinion even if that opinion might be considered unorthodox or unpopular and stresses the importance of ensuring the availability of those unorthodox or unpopular viewpoints to all who wish to read them. After all, intellectual freedom can exist only where the freedom to express oneself and the freedom to choose what opinions and viewpoints to consume are both met. As the Intellectual Freedom Manual (ALA, 7th edition) states:

Intellectual freedom can exist only where two essential conditions are met: first, that all individuals have the right to hold any belief on any subject and to convey their ideas in any form they deem appropriate; and second, that society makes an equal commitment to the right of unrestricted access to information and ideas regardless of the communication medium used, the content of the work, and the viewpoints of both the author and receiver of information. Freedom to express oneself through a chosen mode of communication, including the Internet, becomes virtually meaningless if access to that information is not protected. Intellectual freedom implies a circle, and that circle is broken if either freedom of expression or access to ideas is stifled.

Although they were the targets of attempted bannings, most of the books featured during BBW were not banned, thanks to the efforts of librarians to maintain them in their collections. Imagine how many more books might be challenged – and possibly banned or restricted – if librarians, teachers, and booksellers across the country did not use Banned Books Week each year to teach the importance of our First Amendment rights and the power of literature, and to draw attention to the danger that exists when restraints are imposed on the availability of information in a free society.

Banned Books Week is sponsored by the American Booksellers Association; American Booksellers Foundation for Free Expression; the American Library Association; American Society of Journalists and Authors; Association of American Publishers; and the National Association of College Stores. It is endorsed by the Center for the Book in the Library of Congress.

COURTESY: Center for Enquiry on Campus (September 18) based in Amherst, USA. Website: centerforenquiry.net

Can we not think of a similar effort in India? Perhaps the Indian Committee for Cultural Freedom, the publishers of Freedom First ought to take the initiative – Ed.

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.

Jinnah Again

1) There is a new academic debate whether Jinnah was responsible for the partition of the country. As a truth finding exercise, such research is welcome although its utility is doubtful. We now have L. K. Advani certifying that Jinnah was a secularist at heart, Jaswant Singh claiming that it was Nehru and Patel who handed over Pakistan to Jinnah and the formidable K. S. Sudarshan, former RSS chief, giving another certificate to Jinnah that in opposing the Khilafat movement, Jinnah had shown that he was a genuine secularist. Each has picked up some point in Jinnah's political career to support his argument. Analysing solitary events to jump to conclusions about a leader's political contribution is a risky enterprise. As a corollary, it would be possible for other researchers to point out that Gandhi, Nehru and Patel were the real communalists. Wonders will not cease! The only clear truth is that if Jinnah did not partition India, he, after his death, has indeed partitioned the BJP.

1) Advani could be excused to have used a diplomatic visit to Pakistan to praise its founder while pointing out that Pakistan had drifted away from its founder's ideals. Jaswant Singh has no need for an excuse as he claims to be searching for truth. Sudarshan has the habit of proving his erudition; forgetting that in his tenure Advani was made to resign the party post for praising Jinnah. All the three may be right in what they said but why judge a person like Jinnah piecemeal? Instead of selectively picking isolated gems from his long life, why can't a holistic study of the man be attempted? We are confused! Let us have the unadulterated whole truth. This way Hitler can be lauded for making Germany the strongest nation in the world, Stalin for making Russia a world power and Mao tse Tung for culturally transforming China. The down sides of all are to be ignored? This is a parody of truth.

RSS - BJP

2) BJP's suicidal gyrations resemble the lemmings' march to death. The unending drama in the 'party with a difference' brought its relations with the RSS into focus again as even the critics of their relationship eagerly waited for the RSS to intervene. The Sar Sanghchhalak's press conference (August 28) was covered avidly by the media; there were speculations that the RSS would give an ultimatum, a time-table to end the squabbles and give a road map for further action. Arun Shourie had already advocated RSS take over of BJP's reins. Mohan Bhagwat, the Sar Sanghchhalak, belied all expectations and declared that it was up to the BJP to sort out its problems. The media then tried to find a hidden message in the non-message of Bhagwat. All kinds of speculations were made, forgetting that RSS had no wand to put BJP's humpty dump together.

2) RSS control over the BJP is a matter of debate for decades. The Janata Party committed harakiri on this issue. That the RSS has a say in BJP's overall policy formulation is not doubted; what is not known is whether the RSS can control developments within the BJP. RSS wants the BJP to follow its basic ideology of Hindutva, give paramount importance to national interests and retain integrity in the dishonest business of running a political party. The RSS can hardly ensure that all these caveats are followed. As Bhagwat spelt out, the RSS can only offer advice if asked for. The fact that all BJP leaders make a pilgrimage to RSS office seeking advice is another matter. When advice becomes an order or warning or even an ultimatum, is the secret. In any case, the RSS cannot run a mass organisation like a political party even if tries to. BJP's problems cannot be solved by the RSS. BJP has to recover from its downward spiral on its own or sink.

The Ghost of Kandahar

3) The mistakes of the past continue to haunt us. Advani is being hauled over the coals for denying the role he played in releasing terrorists in exchange for the 160 odd passengers of the hijacked Indian plane to Kandahar at the turn of the millennium. The surrender to the terrorists' demands is haunting the then NDA leaders after almost 9 years. When the BJP attacked the Congress for its weak response to terrorism, the Congress hit back pointing out the abject surrender at Kandahar. As election rhetoric, it was forgivable although all parties were equally guilty of surrender. However, Advani's attempt to distance himself from that decision has caused embarrassment as his erstwhile colleagues, and now adversaries, have come out with claims that Advani was a party to the Cabinet Committee's decision to accept the terrorists' demands. Advani has failed to clarify whether he had opposed the decision and reluctantly agreed to go with it to maintain unanimity in the Cabinet. His silence damages his credibility at the end of his long political life, which is a sorry spectacle. Here is wishing that he comes out with some plausible explanation!

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

3) The real tragedy is not what the NDA Government did or what Advani's role was. The decision to surrender was an all party decision. We remember the spectacle of the relatives lying prostrate in front of the PM's residence begging the Government to do something to get their dear ones back. The media added to the frenzy attacking the Government for doing nothing. The only exception was the widows of the Kargil martyrs who pleaded against surrender. To our national shame, the country surrendered; the government had no strategy alternative planned in advance and no policy directive to fall back on. In this country, there is no advance planning; everything is dealt with on ad hoc basis. And so was Kandahar. And so was 26/11 in Mumbai. Every thing comes as a surprise for which there is no answer. Tactical and strategic planning for all kinds of crises is the need. That is the lesson to be drawn instead of brow-beating over who did what 10 years back.

Of Perception, Taste and People's Priorities

Washington DC, Metro Station, on a cold January morning in 2007. The man with a violin played six Bach pieces for about 45 minutes. During that time approximately two thousand people went through the station, most of them on their way to work. After 3 minutes, a middle aged man noticed there was a musician playing. He slowed his pace and stopped for a few seconds, and then hurried to meet his schedule....

4 minutes later:

The violinist received his first dollar: a woman threw the money in the hat and, without stopping, continued to walk.

6 minutes:

A young man leaned against the wall to listen to him, then looked at his watch and started to walk again.

10 minutes:

A three year old boy stopped, but his mother tugged him along hurriedly. The kid stopped to look at the violinist again, but the mother pushed hard and the child continued to walk, turning his head all the time. This action was repeated by several other children. Every parent, without exception, forced their children to move on quickly.

45 minutes:

The musician played continuously. Only six people stopped and listened for a short while. About twenty gave money, but continued to walk at their normal pace. The man collected a total of \$32.

1 hour:

He finished playing and silence took over. No one noticed. No one applauded, nor was there any recognition.

No one knew this, but the violinist was Joshua Bell, one of the greatest musicians in the world. He played one of the most intricate pieces ever written, with a violin worth \$3.5 million dollars. Two days before, Joshua Bell sold out a theatre in Boston where the seats averaged \$100.

This is a true story. Joshua Bell playing incognito in the Metro Station was organized by the Washington Post as part of a social experiment about perception, taste and people's priorities.

The questions raised: In a commonplace environment at an inappropriate hour, do we perceive beauty? Do we stop to appreciate it? Do we recognize talent in an unexpected context?

One possible conclusion reached from this experiment could be this:

If we do not have a moment to stop and listen to one of the best musicians in the world, playing some of the finest music ever written, with one of the most beautiful instruments ever made.... How many other things are we missing?

Contributed by Mr. Asralul Haque.
From the *Life Without Limits* newsletter

Issues of Higher Education in India

P. R. Dubhashi

"A University stands for humanism, for tolerance, for adventure of ideas, for secret of truth, for onward march of the human race towards ever lasting goals of life."

- Convocation Address by Jawaharlal Nehru, Allahabad University, 1948

Thoughts are expressed from time to time regarding various facets and issues relating to higher education in India. Not all of them are necessarily consistent with each other. They are even mutually contradictory and can even prove misleading. The Knowledge Commission was expected to give a sense of direction. But it itself, proved to be a divided house. It's Vice Chairman and some members resigned. It faced the opposition of the Ministry of Human Resource Development. Now a new minister has taken over. Will he be able to steer clear of contradictions and provide positive leadership to take higher education in India in the right direction? This requires that there should be a clear ideological outlook relating to higher education.

Ideology of Higher Education

At present, we seem to be in the grip of an over riding ideology which is governing our economy, polity, technology, society and culture. This is the ideology of marketisation, globalization, privatization and liberalization which is also powerfully influencing our educational system.

The ideology of marketisation has led to the 'commodification' of everything. Education is one such 'commodity' to be bought and sold in the market. An educational institution is a shop where 'education' is

bought and sold. The type of education provided and its 'quality' depends on demand and supply in the market.

This concept of education is a far cry from the classical liberal ideas of education in Europe as also from our own ancient traditions. Cardinal Newman in spelling out the goal of universal education observed that it should produce a 'gentleman' with good judgment regarding right and wrong. More recently Edward de Bono said that education should produce a thinking individual. In a scintillating convocation address to Allahabad University delivered in 1948 Jawaharlal Nehru said, "A University stands for humanism, for tolerance, for adventure of ideas, for secret of truth, for onward march of the human race towards ever lasting goals of life."

In today's system of higher education in India, we seem to have given a go by to all such ideas and concepts. Young people wish to go in for courses which would launch them on a remunerative career. More the money they can earn, the better. In taking such courses of education, students pay scant attention to their own likes and dislikes, their inclinations and capabilities. Till recently medicine and engineering were the top courses in demand. Now since medicine has become an expensive, long drawn out course with no guarantee for immediate pay back

because it takes a long time and equipment to settle as a doctor, the students have turned away - even though the nation, especially in the rural areas (and the world at large) requires qualified doctors. Now the students are going to courses for computer engineering, information technology, management, animation and gaming because on graduation, they can get remunerative jobs. No wonder traditional arts and science courses have no takers. Good students don't take them. Students do not want to go in for pure sciences and mathematical courses.

A leading scientist C. N. R. Rao has drawn attention to this phenomenon and has warned that if this goes on, there will be no 'science teachers'. This would have disastrous consequences because science is the foundation of technology and without a sound foundation of science no country can progress. Scientific research will come to a stand still. Also neglect of literature, philosophy, history etc. lead to lopsided education and an unbalanced society. That is why Yashpal Committee has recommended an interdisciplinary approach to higher education even in technical institutions like the IITs.

There is a tremendous competition for the limited number of seats available in the small number of IITs and IIMS and other institutions of technical education.

Students have to get top ranks in CET or other entrance examinations. Under the pressure of competition, students concentrate on passing examinations with high rank rather than acquiring knowledge and skills and enjoying the process of acquisition of knowledge for its own sake and the depth of understanding it provides. Students even spend large sums by way of fees on coaching classes which prepare students for competitive examinations. While coaching classes are full, classrooms in colleges are deserted.

The liberal outlook on education has given way to purely utilitarian and commercial outlook. Education is looked upon as an instrument for producing human resources needed by the economy. Educated and trained human resources have become a scarce commodity specially in the context of demographic changes in the advanced countries like Japan and Germany and other European countries where gerontocracy prevails. Young human resources are in short supply. This has put India with its young profile (50% people less than 25 years in age) in a position of advantage. India can be the factory for producing human resources for the rest of the world.

Drastic Expansion in Number and its impact on quality

It is in the context that the Knowledge Commission has called for drastic increase in institutions of higher education like IITs, IIMs, and Universities, India needs a minimum of 1500 universities, according to the Chairman of the Knowledge Commission Sam Pitroda. Following the recommendations, the Union Government announced the setting up of thirty new Central Universities and sev-

eral new IITs and IIMs.

Under the pressure of demand, a rapid growth of these institutions has become a necessity. An enormous number of young people with high aspirations can be an asset to India if they can be given knowledge and skills required in the modern economy and society governed by modern technology like that of the internet. If there is no adequate number of institutions of higher education, the youth would remain unemployable and get frustrated and rather than they being an asset, be a liability posing grave danger to society.

Those belonging to affluent sections of society (and even the not so affluent) seek entrance in the institutions of higher education in advanced countries like USA, Germany and Australia. It is estimated that their number is about 3.5 million and they spend \$13 b. on pursuing education abroad. It is, therefore, rightly argued that this amount could be invested within the country to set up quality institutions of higher education.

Privatisation of Education

It is rightly stated that the number of institutions of higher education required to be setup is so large that they cannot be set up by government alone. A larger number of institutions have to be set up in the private sector. Educational institutions in the private sector are not unknown in India. During British rule, public spirited Indians like Lokmanya Tilak and Lala Lajpatrai took a lead in setting up such institutions. Their outlook was essentially nationalistic. They were educationists. They wanted qualified Indians with patriotic spirit to come out of these institutions.

Today the outlook of these who have come forward to set up

such institutions in the private sector is very different. They look at it as a lucrative business opportunity. And there are those, who have political connections (some times politicians themselves) who use political influence to get generous concessions from government in many forms including large tracts of land at convenient locations at throw away prices. They call themselves 'non-aided' institutions but they get government aid in the form of concessions which is considerable. Moreover as they call themselves as non-grant institutions they think they are at liberty to charge whatever fees they deem fit, not to talk of donations, open or clandestine, from rich families and the NRIs. Money rather than merit is the criterion for admissions. Students of rich families with poor academic performance get admission to highly regarded professional courses, creating frustration amongst those students who cannot afford to pay highly fees or donations and at the same time do not find a place in the limited number of seats available in governmental institutions. The academic standards of these private institutions of higher education are often below standard. The teachers are not full time but on a contract basis or just guest lecturers. The infra-structural facilities like libraries and laboratories leave much to be desired. And yet government cannot set at them right because they have political connections and support. They have grown from strength to strength making the educational enterprise into a flourishing business. Rather than being affiliated to established universities inviting university regulation, they have successfully claimed the status of Deemed Universities whose number has grown by leaps and bounds.

The HRD Minister in the last UPA Govt. was liberal in according the status of regular Universities to institutions previously known as deemed universities. Their number has gone upto 125. Kapil Sibal the new HRD Minister has now declared that his Ministry would be examining whether such full-fledged status to these 125 institutions was justified. USA has several private universities like Harvard and Yale which are world famous institutions of excellence in teaching and research. Our private universities are a far cry from these celebrated institutions in USA.

Entry of Foreign Universities

Another way of augmenting facilities for higher education is the entry of Universities in UK, USA into India. They could set branches or facilities to enable Indian students to pursue their courses obviating the necessity of going abroad. In the beginning like the entry of multinational, the entry of foreign universities was also looked at with suspicion. But now the benefits of such entry of Universities from abroad is being increasingly recognized. Not only would they augment the facilities, they would bring new and higher standards and pose a challenge to our institutions of higher education which have been suffering from stagnation. They could introduce new ideas of course content and methods. They would also stimulate research. The foreign University Bill would facilitate the process.

State of Indian Universities in the Public Sector

India has a long tradition of higher education. The first Indian Universities, Bombay, Calcutta and Madras were set up way back in 1854. Subsequently many new

Universities came up especially after independence; but it is now realized that University education in India leaves much to be desired.

The courses are not updated; students miss classes; standards are not rigorous; innovative methods like project work do not have a place. Research is lacking and hence the productive relationship between teaching and research is non-existent. The infrastructure is crumbling. Administrative lapses in the conduct of examinations and declaration of results are frequent bringing the university into disrepute.. The blame is put on the unwieldy administrative structure of the Universities. They are set up under an Act of the legislature. Universities have their own system of self governance with their statutes and ordinances. But the University Act itself contains provisions curtailing the autonomy of the University. The Vice Chancellor (VC), the academic head of the University is appointed by government and it is often said that political influence and lobbying takes place in such appointments. A VC who owes his appointment to political factors cannot provide independent leadership. Politicization seriously erodes the academic and administrative autonomy of the University which is a *sine qua non* for the existence and development of Universities of excellence.

The VC is assisted by an administration headed by the Registrar. But both the VC and the Registrar often lack administrative capabilities leaving things to lower level clerical staff who are found to be negative in dealing with the students and the community. There is no sense of understanding between the academic community and the administrative staff. The academic staff feel that they do not get adequate administrative

support.

The University has its governing system in the shape of executive committee, Senate (Court) and the Academic Council. But often these institutions follow the model of political institutions. The meetings tend to be stormy and long drawn out and initiatives proposed by VC can get stalled. The concepts of academic sanctity and autonomy are sacrificed at the altar of politics and governmental interference.

Regulatory Institutions

Then there is the issue relating to regulatory institutions. At present we have the University Grants Commission and the Council for Technical Education and professional institutions like the Medical Council. The UGC was mainly setup to provide grants for Central Universities, This grants to State Universities – the largest of institutions in the country were limited. And yet they laid down qualifications and pay scales. This imposed a uniformity which is not in consonance with the different types and standards of institutions and created disincentives. A greater measure of flexibility is needed. The All India Council of Technical Education acquired a bad reputation because of questionable practices relating to giving sanctions. The Knowledge Commission has recommended a Single Regulatory Authority of Higher Education in the country. The entire issue of financing, and regulations of institutions need to be examined at length. The All India Association of Indian Universities should discuss the subject at its annual conference.

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in endowing

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Proteins, Carbohydrates,
Good Fat, Minerals
&
Vitamins !

CHOLESTEROL
0%



Cashew Kernels **Nutrient Values per 100 g**

Proximates

Water	5.2	g
Energy	566	kcal
Energy	2369	kJ
Protein	18.22	g
Total lipid (fat)	46.92	g

Minerals

Calcium, Ca	37	mg
Iron, Fe	6.68	mg
Magnesium, Mg	292	mg
Phosphorus, P	593	mg
Potassium, K	660	mg
Sodium, Na	12	mg
Zinc, Zn	5.78	mg
Copper, Cu	2.195	mg
Manganese, Mn	1.655	mg
Selenium, Se	19.9	mcg

Vitamins

Vitamin C	0.5	mg
Thiamin	0.423	mg
Riboflavin	0.058	mg
Niacin	1.062	mg
Pantothenic acid	0.864	mg
Vitamin B-6	0.417	mg
Folate, total	25	mcg
Vitamin E	1.458	mg_ATE

Cashew Kernels **Nutrient Values per 100 g**

Amino acids

Tryptophan	0.287	g
Threonine	0.688	g
Isoleucine	0.789	g
Leucine	1.472	g
Lysine	0.928	g
Methionine	0.362	g
Cystine	0.393	g
Phenylalanine	0.951	g
Tyrosine	0.508	g
Valine	1.094	g
Arginine	2.123	g
Histidine	0.456	g
Alanine	0.837	g
Aspartic acid	1.795	g
Glutamic acid	4.506	g
Glycine	0.937	g
Proline	0.812	g
Serine	1.079	g

All Values as per USDA
Nutrient data base of
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Banishing the Concept of Foreign Aid

Sanjeev Sabhlok

In a civilized free society no one can, or should, be self-sufficient.

Division of labour is a typical feature of free societies by which each worker specializes and produces only a small part of what he will ultimately consume. The rest of his needs are met by exchanging, in the marketplace, the goods or services he produces. Therefore no one is self-sufficient. But this does not (or should not) imply dependency. Indeed, the citizen of a free society is an exemplar of self-reliance and independence, and declines charity unless he is in desperate need.

Unfortunately, the concepts of self-respect and self-reliance are totally missing from arguments made by those who insist on increasing foreign aid. Thus, in 2007 the philosopher Peter Singer asked rich countries to spend \$808 billion each year in foreign aid.¹

Aid Violates Human Dignity

The liberal opposes foreign aid. He believes that except for life-threatening emergencies, no one has the right to help us without our prior consent. Self-respecting people insist on being left alone to determine their own destiny, no matter if it leads them to privation and distress. Far better to live in self-created poverty than to receive foreign aid that humiliates the recipient while exalting the donor.

It is one thing for rich nations to trade with poor nations but quite another to look down upon them

by foisting unwanted foreign aid. That their 'generosity' is suspect is evident from the many trade restrictions they impose on developing nations. It is high time for the West to stop this farce and stop carrying the 'white man's burden'. Let the poor nations be left to their fate.

Poverty is *Never* Caused by Shortage of Foreign Aid

The liberal opposes foreign aid because he knows that foreign aid has nothing to do with removal of poverty. Poverty has *never* been caused by a shortage of foreign aid! Recipient countries can, if they want to, bootstrap themselves and become wealthy in less than a generation by adopting the policies of freedom. Capitalism can readily – and without fail – transform poor societies into wealthy ones. But poor countries choose to decline the medicine provided by the Adam Smith pharmacy, preferring the sweet poison administered by Karl Marx & Co., instead.

Therefore, if countries like India want to be poor, what can foreign aid do to stop their desperate mania? Throwing money into such socialist dens of corruption can't ever help the poor, anyway. In such countries, foreign aid quickly finds its way into Swiss bank accounts of corrupt politicians and bureaucrats. Even where aid is directly supervised by donor nations (as in Afghanistan or Iraq) corrupt practices can easily creep

in because no one is accountable. As Peter Bauer found, foreign aid usually makes poverty worse.²

Countries like India can, if they want, readily eliminate poverty by using a negative income tax regime (see my article in the August 2009 issue of *Freedom First*). But they don't want to eliminate poverty. They want, instead, corruption-ridden subsidies and misdirected wasteful programs. And if that is what they want, then that is what they should get. Why should foreign nations interfere by giving foreign aid?

Aid Arms Dictators and Increases Genocides

There is also a deeply sinister side to foreign aid. Foreign aid is fungible. During a drought, local politicians would have bought food worth Rs. X of their country's own money for the poor; but with foreign aid taking care of food, they can happily divert Rs. X to purchase guns. Aid therefore strengthens totalitarian dictators and increases genocides and global terrorism.

Teach the Poor to Fish, Don't Give Them Fish

The most important argument against foreign aid is that it is only a palliative. Charity can give people fish to eat today but it can't teach them to fish. It also becomes additive, particularly for bureaucrats of international organizations

who need poverty in order to protect their jobs.

The permanent cure for poverty is therefore clear: not to keep giving fish but to teach the poor how to fish. Genuine well-wishers of the poor should therefore stop all charitable work and become equal partners and friends of the poor. They can, as part of this role, teach poor nations about freedom and good governance. Taking this approach is not only ethical, cheaper, and far more effective; it will also ultimately protect the West from terrorism.

But before the West can think of teaching freedom to poor nations, it must throw open its markets and eliminate trade barriers. Its credibility will remain suspect until it actively supports free trade.

Having done that, it can adopt a range of respectful methods to teach the poor nations. One way could be to make the classics of freedom (such as books by Adam Smith and John Locke) readily available at low cost in bookshops in poor nations. Apart from this general educational approach, it is crucial that Western nations do not *directly* teach poorer nations; for that could be interpreted as racist arrogance. Freedom must be promoted through poor nations' own nationals.

Developing country liberals can be supported by giving them scholarships to study in good Western universities provided they commit to return to their countries afterwards. Forming official partnerships with poor nations should also be explored. One example could be the secondment of developing country bureaucrats to local, state and federal governments of the West where they will pick up the processes of good governance. Finally, policy partnerships can be created through which the rich and poor countries jointly work on agreed policy areas such as regulatory reform.

No matter which method of engagement with the poor nations is chosen, one thing is clear: that the calls by international organizations and utopian philosophers to establish global foreign aid 'targets' should be rejected outright. The best foreign aid target is precisely equal to zero; not one cent more.

Compensation for Pollution

There may be cases, unrelated to foreign aid, where rich countries can be called upon to transfer funds to poorer nations. This can arise where developing countries experience negative externalities from pollutants such as greenhouse gas emissions emitted

by rich countries. I should note here that this argument is contingent on unequivocal proof of harm (particularly in the case of CO₂, there are numerous dissenting views about whether it is a pollutant in the first place). Such compensation must not be made out to the governments of poor countries. Instead it should be transferred to private businesses that 'clean-up' the environment, such as by growing new trees.

Freedom Team of India, and Adharshila

The Freedom Team of India (<http://freedomteam.in/>) has now floated Adharshila, a concept that involves creating ground-level branches to promote liberal ideas. The team has also established a Speakers Panel comprising eminent Indian liberals. An increasing number of opportunities therefore exist for all Indian liberals to get involved. Please join! Even small contributions of your time and effort will quickly add up.

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¹ Singer, Peter, 'Giving till It Doesn't Hurt', *The Age*, 6 January 2007.

² See Peter Bauer's 1991 book: *The Development Frontier: Essays in Applied Economics*.

On Foreign Aid

The Congress Party's pattern of planning is based on extensive foreign aid that hangs on the slender thread of international peace which may snap any day. The Swatantra Party is totally opposed to the policy of huge foreign debts being incurred without any plan or prospect of adequate exports to enable India to discharge these obligations. The Party will endeavour its best to halt this grievous programme without damage to the national reputation. The Party will support and encourage the flow of foreign capital into private enterprises in India which would contribute to rapid industrial progress.

From The Swatantra Party's General Election Manifesto of 1962

The Swatantra Party is Needed, Provided ...

L. N. Godbole

Today the Swatantra Party is virtually non-existent. If it is not there, it needs to be re-invented.

In 1959 I had joined Sydenham College in Mumbai as a lecturer. The establishment of the Swatantra Party by Rajaji was an event of that era. What did it stand for? Swatantra Party was different from the Communist or Socialist parties. It was also different from the Congress. But they had accepted the basic postulates of an adversary culture and the existence of Class in the Anglo-Saxon manner. During my college days I had read the Communist Manifesto in a small print edition. I had found the book logical, moving and right. I could have joined the Communist Party. Socialism was in the air. But I had also read 'Animal Farm' and 'Brave New World' as set texts for my English paper before graduation. This was enough for me to turn away from Communism.

As an interested young person I was not attracted towards the Swatantra Party. Why? I am trying to search the reasons now when the fiftieth anniversary of the Swatantra Party is being observed because I see now the importance of that party in retrospect in the political development in India in the intervening years. Today that Party is virtually non-existent. If it is not there, it needs to be re-invented. In any vibrant democracy there have to be alternative ideas before the people. They must have choice. Unfortunately for India we have no choice on the political stage.

1959 was also the time of the Bhoodan movement. I remember

reading the publications of Vinoba Bhave in Marathi. He was expounding Sarvodaya, a totally different ideology based on a classless society. He rejected the division of society into 'Haves' and 'Have-nots'. He said each one of us is a 'Have' and must contribute to society from whatever he has. Sagely, he kept Sarvodaya away from party politics and therefore it still remains a living Thought. This was obviously in consonance with the idea of *Advaita* as popularised by Sankaracharya.

That was also the time when the agitation for Samyukta Maharashtra was in full swing. The atmosphere was charged with all these political developments. It was all in favour of *Change*. In my view, at that time, the Swatantra Party seemed to us to stand for the *status quo*.

In 1935 Nehru supported the founders of the Congress Socialist Party (CSP), like Achyutrao Patwardhan and Minoo Masani. Nehru did not join the CSP because he was clever enough to realise that leaving the company of Mahatma Gandhi would deprive him of a mass base and throw him out of the political mainstream. He could become Prime Minister only if he remained with Gandhi. He continued to be in the Congress as a protégé of Mahatma Gandhi while his Socialist friends broke away from Congress and formed the Socialist Party in 1948. Masani who had resigned from the CSP by that time however did not join the

Socialist Party. Nehru took over the *karta*-ship of the Congress from Gandhi and that brand name is still used by his successors-in-title. 'Socialistic pattern of Society' continued as a pet topic of the sermons by Prime Minister Nehru since 1952.

Minoo Masani and Rajaji, the two founders of Swatantra Party were also members of the Congress in the early part of their political career. Congress was a pan-Indian Nationalist movement and not really a political party prior to 1947. Gandhi, in his last days, had therefore advised its dissolution. This Congress had organised itself in a decentralised manner on linguistic lines as State Congress Committees. It wanted the Indian federation also to be re-organised on a linguistic basis. Many old political leaders and civil servants were against re-organisation of States of a federal India on linguistic basis. The idea of linguistic states started in Andhra Pradesh. The Fazal Ali Commission had made its recommendations in 1955; Maharashtra and Gujarat were denied linguistic states of their own and kept undivided as a bilingual Mumbai State in 1956.

For a young man like me, Samyukta Maharashtra was an important emotional issue and those who did not favour it, in my view, were enemies of the people of Maharashtra. Eventually Maharashtra did come into existence on 1 May 1960 after violent agitation in Mumbai and other

places in Maharashtra.

What was the social pattern obtaining in India in 1947? The idea of a leader is enshrined in the word *Karta*. Society is considered as a Hindu Undivided Family (HUF); and an aggregate of such HUFs is Caste. *Karta*, HUF and Caste are three basic units of Indian Society. An all-pervasive State as an entity with its geographical boundaries are new ideas brought in by British Rule. The Nation-State was a new social entity even in Europe back in the 19th century, when British came in as rulers.

Mahatma Gandhi was a *karta* of a political formation or a large HUF named the Indian National Congress from 1920 to 1947. Jawaharlal Nehru was a disciple of Gandhi and was nurtured as a political heir by him. Nehru was the son of a rich lawyer who had a roaring legal practice involving Zamindari disputes. Jawaharlal Nehru was educated in England and he had acquired a flavour of the period, "Socialism" by reading about it in Marxist literature. He visited USSR and was taken in by the achievements of Leninist-Stalinist regime and by their Gosplan. He had no practical experience of any vocation, business or calling or of running an organisation. He ignored the human cost that this Socialist experiment in the USSR had caused.

As an Indian Brahmin, Nehru was carried away more by words rather than reality. That was his inheritance of *Manusmriti* as a Brahmin. He also collected a coterie of Kashmiri Brahmins around him. Educated people in India even today think in English and deal in words such as 'Aam Adami', 'inclusive growth', 'global warming' and so on. Jawaharlal Nehru was a clas-

sic case. He was an example of the entrenchment of caste and inheritance from father to son. By his own admission he was Hindu by accident of birth. Otherwise he was a British gentleman who read and thought in English. He was a foreigner or stranger in India, and therefore more easily acceptable at a all-India level. He could think only in English. Jawaharlal was reluctant to be a *Karta* of his HUF (that is India as a Nation) because of his Englishness. He was the last Englishman who ruled India for a full 16 years immediately after the Independence in 1947.

India is full of communes which are called Hindu Undivided Families. HUF must have a distinct *Karta*. This is accepted as a social fact by the people of India. It is in essence a commune which takes care of its members from birth to death. Entry into the family is by birth or marriage and therefore offers durable certainty. It provides to an individual a safety-net, old-age pension, medical care, and even orphanage and all this in a completely decentralised manner. India did not become communist because it was a 'commune-ist' by its tradition of Hindu Undivided Families bound together by Caste bonds and inhabiting small geographical areas, as their defining identities. This is a fact of life in this decentralised/fragmented society and this is ignored by all political parties and their English educated leaders. At heart we accept only Delhi as a High Command. State leaders are foisted by the High Command. In English it is called High Command; in Hindi it is called *Karta*.

The real native thinker was Vinoba. He did his thinking in Marathi. We have a classic example of English thinking of the brilliant ICS official, C. D.

Deshmukh and Marathi thinking of *desi* Brahmin Acharya Vinoba Bhave who were almost contemporaries with the same regional, cultural and language background. In 1965 when the anti-Hindi agitation was in full swing in Southern India, CD as a true ICS, suggested that all Indian languages should adopt the Roman Script. Vinoba on the other hand, suggested Devanagari as a common optional script (not a Common language). If people found the arrangement better they will accept it and it will stick. He did not want a common language (Hindi) but a common script (Devanagari) as Roman is the common script in Europe. Vinoba thought like an Indian. CD thought like an Englishman. The State of Baroda (Vadodara) where Vinoba studied had this practice of optional script of Devanagari for the Gujarati language. The Raja there was of Marathi descent and the populace was Gujarati. In the common script, Marathi and Gujarati do not look that much different at all. Vinoba must have had this easy practicable solution in his mind when he suggested the common script. He had better ground knowledge. This difference of thinking in English and Marathi by two eminent intellectuals is based on two different perceptions of the same reality faced by the country in terms of national integration. English thinking was based on distinctions and from the rulers' point of view. Marathi thinking is that of a fellow citizen and seeks consensus and commonality. The idea of division of Society between 'Haves' and 'Have-nots' are natural in an adversarial culture. In this Land of Sankara, the great Advaitist, we have tried to enshrine the ideas of 'Haves' and 'Have-nots' under the pretext of Socialism which itself was added in 1976 into the Preamble of our

Constitution.

In India even God is decentralised and is present in every household. Modern computerisation is a centralising phenomenon but became popular only when PCs came into use. As mainframe machines their use was restricted to a few big organisations. Personal Computers are now found in every other household.

All the leaders of the Swatantra Party thought in English. They looked at India with English eyes. Congress of Jawaharlal Nehru and Swatantra Party of Rajaji were two groups of people who either talked of Socialism or of Free Enterprise in 1959 with common mindset that was English. Their basic idiom was English which Indians did not understand. Not just on linguistic basis, but the culture/ethos that language brings in with itself. Gandhi was different. He challenged the adversarial culture of the British. He denied the British Jurisprudential norms which are based on such a culture. He emphasized harmony rather than justice. That was more Asian or Confucian. Other leaders wanted to be Western. They could not connect to India, and failed as political leaders, whereas Gandhi became a national leader. He wanted to change India.

Our leaders talked of harmony in labour relations and enacted the Industrial Disputes Act. They wanted to manufacture welfare by passing laws with scant preparation for its implementation. We are votaries of litigation. We are adding litigants in Consumer Courts, Human Rights Commissions, Right-to-Information Offices etc. We simultaneously shout about a backlog in Courts. Gandhi

wanted to nip this in the bud by boycotting the Courts. Nobody took his call seriously as litigation and legal practice was a main source of Income for most of our politicians, then as now.

Swatantra Party attracted Rajas because Rajas thought it was pro-status-quo. People wanted change. But change in an Indian idiom. In sum, Swatantra Party as well as the Communist Parties have failed in India to different extent, because of their basic mistaken perception about Indian Society with its basic decentralisation, HUF, Caste and *karta* as pivotal points. They understood these words in English and not in any Indian language and thus their response was suitable for an English speaking society and not an Indian one.

Take another catastrophic choice of word – Secularism. Earlier there were only hundreds of castes like Brahmins, Marathas, Mahars or faiths like Muslims, Jews or Parsees and they lived like separate castes and retained their identities without enmity except localised group skirmishes. Secularism was translated as *Nidharmi*. In India Dharma is understood as a way of life. How do you live without Dharma? Dharma is not religion in the English sense. There were no worthwhile organised religions in India like Roman Catholicism or Protestantism as were present in Europe and England. Destroying these rigid religious structures of organised religions by chanting the word Secularism became an acquired fetish with Jawaharlal Nehru, even in the absence of such rigid structures on ground! Gandhi all along was talking of *Sarva-dharma-sambhav*, (and not Secularism) an idea seeking commonality and not differences.

You cannot ignore this reality of differing castes, customs and modes of worship, if you are wise to see beyond them. We may have to re-invent or call it a new avatar as Swatantra Party in the true tradition of India that is Bharat. It has to stand differently from Communist, Socialist, Religionists and Casteist parties. It can be an All-India Party only if it grows beyond Caste, Region and Religion. But it does not have to deny the past, caste or modes. What is Swatantra Party's perception of these fundamentals; De-centralisation, *Karta*, HUF and Caste, will be crucial for its future. Singular emphasis on economic ideology of free enterprise is an Anglo-Saxon mercantile perception of society. They are finding it difficult to sell it now in their own countries after the latest financial meltdown. They are seeking governmental intervention. They have to teach their people to save and build Capital. They have to return to the protestant work ethic. Intelligent people like Pranab Mukerjee and many leftist economists are already advocating Nehruvian Socialist solutions for today's problems. The policies which created Permit-Licence-Raj are now being advocated as solutions in a post meltdown era. This is a daunting spectre. Unless basic perceptions are different in the Swatantra Party from Congress, BJP or Communists, it will have no political space or future. If the Swatantra Party's takes are different from existing political parties then it will certainly have a grand future.

While everyone seems to be treating the Swatantra Party as a has-been, I see its need in right earnest in the national interests of India.

Dr. L. N. Godbole, a practitioner of Management and a thinking thinker about business and society.

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Firoze Hirjikaka

For the Love of God

The greatest gifts God has granted to us humans are a thinking brain, free will and the ability to make sensible choices.

Two items in today's paper got me thinking about this whole business of human beings and deities. The first concerned four members of a family, who drowned while attempting to immerse their Ganpati idol off the sea coast off Versova beach. The second reported a landslide at Saki Naka, caused by heavy rains that took considerable life and property. However, a temple located in the colony escaped without significant damage.

Indians, as a rule, have almost blind faith in the power and benevolence of their gods. But it seems that the gods are not always that kind, or fair. Take the case of the family who drowned. They were performing a religious duty by carrying their god on their shoulders, when tragedy struck. Shouldn't the deity have saved them? How could he visit such a tragic fate on his devotees? Moreover, this incident is far from being unique. There have been innumerable occasions when pilgrims have met with a fatal accident while travelling in an overcrowded bus or a recklessly speeding bus to a place of worship to pay obeisance. Shouldn't they be rewarded for their piety? Why are they being punished instead?

So are the gods benevolent, or are they vengeful? The simple answer is that they are neither. For sure, the Almighty – in whatever form He is worshipped – expects a certain degree of faith and acceptance, but not at the expense of common sense. If you put your hand in the fire, you are going to get burnt, regardless of the fact that you were chanting the name of Allah or Hanuman at the time. The greatest gifts God has granted to us humans are a thinking brain, free will and the ability to make sensible choices.

If you act like a fool, you will face the consequences. And once retribution has been visited, it is equally senseless to accept it as your destiny, which is presumably controlled by the gods.

Ridiculous as it seems, this fatalism and notion of divine intervention is fostered by our entertainment media. Nauseatingly cloying statements like "it's all in the hands of Bhagwan/Allah" have become staples on television and Bollywood movies. They may make the audience feel good, but they are actually encouraging the comfortable, though totally erroneous notion, that we are not responsible for the consequences of our actions.

Now consider the temple which was spared by the landslide. Many residents of the devastated hutment colony hailed it as a miracle, a proof of the immense power of their god. And the press, as is their wont, played it up. A little application of logic and common sense, however, would have told them that this is hardly the truth. The temple survived because it was probably the only solid structure in the colony, built of bricks, mortar and ferro-concrete and resting on a solid foundation. It was unlikely to be badly damaged by mud and a few boulders falling on it. The hutments, constructed of bamboo poles and tin sheets loosely tied together, did not stand a chance. There was no miracle here. It was simple physics.

Those who are so fond of quoting scriptures as a demonstration of their faith would do well to remember this dictum: God helps those who help themselves.

Impossible Dreams

A recent global report has it that Mumbai lags behind even Colombo in the Human Development Index.

The Chief Minister of Maharashtra, Ashok Chavan, like his predecessor, seems to have a flair for making outlandish promises that are virtually impossible to accomplish. He promises to make Maharashtra a global state in five years, where ev-

ery resident will have an annual income of at least one lakh. Does the honourable CM think the residents of Maharashtra are gullible fools? Well, perhaps we are for we keep electing these charlatans again and again.

I don't recall how many years ago this fanciful nonsense about transforming Mumbai into another Shanghai surfaced, but it seems to rear its head with distressing regularity. The tragedy is that none of our "leaders" have any notion of what "becoming Shanghai" involves. These worthies make frequent "study" trips to foreign shores - all at tax payers' expense - and come back with some innovation in a developed city that impresses them. Then they grandly announce that something similar will be implemented in Mumbai. It's bad enough that the announcement is made without even determining the feasibility of the project; they seem to labour under the delusion that

this is all it takes to turn Mumbai into a "world-class" city.

The reality, of course, is far less optimistic. In fact, it is downright depressing. A recent global report has it that Mumbai lags behind even Colombo in the Human Development Index. A country touted as the next economic superpower cannot make its financial capital more livable than a third world country that for years was debilitated by a civil war. What dream world are these ministers living in. It is enough to make one throw up.

Our Politicians Will Always Find A Way

No sooner does a politician become a minister or an MLA, he displays an evangelical zeal to induct his wife, son, daughter, son in-law into the same profession.

Our "honourable" leaders have recently been scrambling to get pet projects cleared before the election code of conduct comes into force. In time-honoured tradition, the overriding motive is not so much public good as private financial gain. The most blatant of these is the rush to hand over prime government land to favoured builders in Mumbai. Bowing to public and media criticism, the Chief Minister has belatedly announced that the redevelopment will be deferred until greater "clarity" is obtained.

Although it is an encouraging development, in this case, that media and public opinion has succeeded in thwarting the plans of unscrupulous public officials to fill their pockets with unaccounted cash, it may yet prove to be a Pyrrhic victory. One can usually rely on the ingenuity and tenacity of our politicians to get their way in the end. Let me cite a recent example.

The BMC has proposed the construction of underground car parks at various locations in South Mumbai. One is not aware if tenders were issued and evaluated, but the BMC was on the point of awarding the lucrative contract to the son in-law of senior Shiv Sena politician, Manohar Joshi. The BMC is controlled by the Shiv Sena. Initially, both the Congress and the NCP raised objection to this.

This is one of those rare occasions when 'politics as usual' served a useful purpose. The Congress/NCP's vociferous objection to awarding a lucrative BMC contract to Manohar Joshi's son in-law was very

likely a case of sour grapes; they probably wanted the contract to go to one of their own favourites. Whatever the motive, it succeeded in nipping in the bud the distressingly commonplace practice of politicians to afford unfair advantage to their kin or to their party members. One may recall the controversy over the Crawford Market redevelopment proposal which was rammed through the BMC by the ruling Shiv Sena without even a debate. It was only the watchfulness of the Heritage Committee that thwarted their nefarious design.

Political parties, other than the Congress, publicly lament the dynastic politics of the Nehru-Gandhi clan, but it is really a case of the pot calling the kettle black. Members of all political parties play the same game. No sooner does a politician become a minister or an MLA, he displays an evangelical zeal to induct his wife, son, daughter, son in-law into the same profession. To be sure, some of them come up with imaginative excuses for doing so, but they don't fool anybody. The primary motive is always financial gain.

That was then. The latest news is that, displaying its customary disregard for ethics and public opinion, the BMC has managed to push through the award of the contract to the *damaad* (son-in-law). This time the Congress did not raise a murmur. No doubt, the Congress corporators have been included in the "deal". This, after all, is our India, where money is the most powerful god of all.

If Gandhiji Were Alive Today

– In Free India he is Everywhere, Yet Nowhere

S. V. Raju

In keeping with his philosophy of a minimal state Gandhiji would have approved the liberalisation of the economy and globalisation. At the same time he would have counselled moderation.

Mahatma Gandhi was assassinated on 30th January 1948 five months after India attained independence. I was then fourteen, living in Bombay (now Mumbai). I do not recall being particularly shocked by the news. When the news came over the bulky valve radios (Valves resembled electric bulbs; those days there was no TV, nor transistor-based portable radios that could be run on batteries where electricity was not available). People were convinced Gandhiji was killed by a Muslim. The shock was when it became known that he was killed not by a Muslim but by a Pune Brahmin by name Nathuram Godse. There was fear of reprisals among members of this community in Pune, I was told, but hardly any in Bombay or elsewhere. I do not remember any major reaction or “backlash” of the kind there was when Mrs. Indira Gandhi was killed by her Sikh bodyguards and there followed a massacre of the Sikhs in Delhi. Of course the whole country was numbed into silence throughout the country over the killing of the Mahatma - State mourning for seven days and thousands of condolence meetings and things like that.

Why was I not shocked as much as many others were? I was not a unique case; I do not remember too many of my classmates in school perturbed when we returned to our classes after the

holiday declared to mourn his death. In retrospect, my reaction can, at best be described as ambivalent. Perhaps it was due to the fact that I was born into a Brahmin family that had both Gandhi-haters and Gandhi-devotees. I had three uncles. The first was a hardcore Hindu Mahasabha man whose hero was V. D. Savarkar. Nevertheless I always saw my uncle wearing khadi! Perhaps this was not so surprising because in the early years of Gandhiji’s leadership he was perceived by the Hindu Mahasabha as a religious leader of a mass movement against the British. Incidentally, the Gandhis, Indira, Rajiv, Rahul *et al* were no relatives of the Mahatma. Gandhiji was a Gujarati from Junagadh and Mrs. Indira Gandhi the daughter of Jawaharlal Nehru belonged to a family of Kashmiri Brahmins who had settled in Allahabad. The Gandhi that Mrs. Indira married was Feroze Gandhi. He belonged to a Parsee family also settled in Allahabad.

My second uncle was a votary of the then Indian National Congress (what passes for the Indian National Congress of today is a mere splinter group, a ghost of what was once a gigantic movement for freedom). His hero was Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru whom he copied not only in his dress (in khadi of course) but in deportment as well. My third uncle was apolitical though he supported the

Congress, when it came to voting, for instance. I do not remember seeing him wear handspun clothes other than in the occasional raw silk kurta on ceremonial or festive occasions. Then there was my father an unabashed admirer of the British raj. He detested Gandhi, khadi and the Congress. He was convinced that when the British withdrew India would descend into chaos.

As it happened, I spent the impressionable days of my youth with my apolitical uncle and was exposed to the other two only occasionally who lived in the deep south.

The assassin, Nathuram Godse and his accomplice, Narayan Apte, were hanged. Nathuram’s brother Gopal and two others were sentenced to life imprisonment for their part in the conspiracy. Gopal Godse was released after 18 years in jail. In the course of an interview to *Time* magazine (February 12, 2000 *Time on-line*) Gopal Godse who was then 80, in reply to a question as to why they killed Gandhi, replied that they did it because of his appeasement of Muslims. The immediate motive for the assassination is usually ascribed to a fast unto death that Gandhiji undertook on January 13, 1948 to compel the Government of free India to reverse a decision to withhold the transfer of 55 crore rupees to the



In the technology universe, 'innovation' is a largely ambiguous term. It is often interpreted to be the result of a bolt of inspiration that strikes when one is idly staring into the blue. Or a product of genius that is the sanctified domain of the few.

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Government of Pakistan. The transfer had been specified in the partition agreement, but the Indian government had refused to comply with it, because of continued Pakistani occupation of disputed parts of Kashmir. Gandhiji broke his fast, because the Indian government immediately paid the balance amount of Rs.55 crores to the Government of Pakistan. This drew the ire of a fanatic fringe of upper caste Hindus led by Godse and his ilk who decided to terminate Gandhiji. They apparently thought that with him out of the way the "appeasement" of minorities would end or at least be a lesson for those who pursued the Gandhian brand of "secularism" – *sarva dharma samabhava*.

Thus it was that Independent India had the benefit of Gandhiji's physical presence for a mere five months. I use the word "physically" decidedly as we shall see presently.

I said earlier, I was fourteen when Gandhiji was removed from the scene. For India it was a tragedy of unimaginable proportions more than the assassins could have imagined. Tragically the charge of "appeasement" gained strength in the years that followed and came to be notoriously known as vote bank politics. This however is another story. By killing Gandhiji the assassins deprived the Indian people of his moderating influence and the government of a constructive but stern critic whose criticism the government would not have been able to ignore. Perhaps had he lived the history of post independent India might have been different.

Much of what I have written so far is not likely to be new to my generation – the generation that was too young to participate in the

freedom movement and too old to be in the fortunate company of the "midnight children". Ours was the generation which straddled two regimes – the last decade of colonial rule and the 60 plus years of free India 15 years of which were during Gandhiji's lifetime, and 60 years without him.

Gandhiji's autobiography was published in two volumes – the first in 1927 and the second in 1929. Written in Gujarati they were translated into English by his trusted lieutenant Mahadev Desai. I did not read it till 1958. Frankly I decided to purchase a copy of his autobiography entitled "The Story of My Experiments with Truth" from the local Khadi Bhandar after reading a brochure published in the United States in 1957. What was unique about this brochure was that it contained 24 quotations on democracy culled from Gandhiji writings. The brief introductory note in this brochure was memorable, as relevant today as it was in 1957. Among other things, this note by a well-known political scientist Norman Palmer said:

"His legacy is Indian independence through non-violence; his search for truth is his meaning to all men.

"But his own words are the most eloquent testament of his love and faith in humanity. In these words truly all men are brothers."

What were these "words"? Here are just a selection of 5 from the 24 quotes in the brochure:

1. I am not interested in freeing India merely from the English yoke. I am bent upon freeing India from any yoke whatsoever.
– *Young India*, June 12 1924
2. Mere withdrawal of the English is not independence. It

means the consciousness in the average villager that he is the maker of his own destiny, he is his own legislator through his chosen representatives.

– *Young India*, February 13, 1930

3. Democracy is not a state in which people act like sheep. Under democracy individual liberty of opinion and action is jealously guarded.

– *Young India*, March 2, 1922

4. Real Swaraj will come not by the acquisition of authority by a few but by the acquisition of the capacity by all to resist authority when it is abused. In other words, Swaraj is to be obtained by educating the masses to a sense of their capacity to regulate and control authority.
– *Young India*, January 29, 1925

5. A born democrat is a born disciplinarian. Democracy comes naturally to him who is habituated normally to yiled willing obedience to all laws, human or divine. I claim to be a democrat both by instinct and training. Let those who are ambitious to serve democracy qualify themselves by satisfying first this acid test of democracy. Moreover, a democrat must be utterly selfless. He must think and dream not in terms of self or party but only of democracy.

– *Harijan*, May 27, 1930

Today every town, city and metro has one or more roads named after Mahatma Gandhi not to speak of the ubiquitous statues and busts of the Mahatma. His picture is on our currency alongside the national symbol and the national motto "*Satyam Eva Jayate*." And yet, look at the record. Can anyone deny the fact that what Gandhij 'preached' is remembered just one day in the year – on his birthday on October 2 to be quickly forgotten for the rest

of the year? Can anyone deny that the quality of our democracy has suffered grievously; that we have fallen far short of the acid test of democracy: "discipline" and a "willing obedience to all laws human or divine" that Gandhiji prescribed?

I consider his aphorism on the importance of ends and means the most important and the least observed.

Take the Kashmir question. Gandhiji supported the sending of Indian troops to drive out the Pakistan raiders (their soldiers disguised as raiders). He preached non-violence but as he clarified, his non-violence was the non-violence of the brave. Pandit Nehru had promised at the time of the accession of the princely state of Jammu & Kashmir to the Indian Union that when the raiders were driven out a plebiscite would be held to determine the will of the people. This promise was not fulfilled on the plea that parts of the State continued to be occupied by the invaders. Gandhiji, had he been alive long enough would not have bought this excuse but would have compelled the government of India to honour its pledge. If the plebiscite had been held in the 'fifties or even the 'sixties the people in the Kashmir Valley would have overwhelmingly voted in favour of the state's integration with India and we would not be witnessing the continuing, and escalating, conflict in that State.

The abolition of privy purses by reneging on a contract entered into by Sardar Patel as Deputy Prime Minister and Home Minister, with the princes assuring them financial grants in return for their giving up their princedoms was another instance. Gandhiji would not have approved the breaking of a solemn covenant by the then

government of India. Perhaps had he been alive the government would not have dared to do so.

Gandhiji would have encouraged the Government of India to be part of the nuclear non-proliferation treaty dictated by the fact that the first priority for any government is to improve the quality of life of its people by concentrating on reducing hunger, ensure primary education, and health care and creating opportunities for employment.

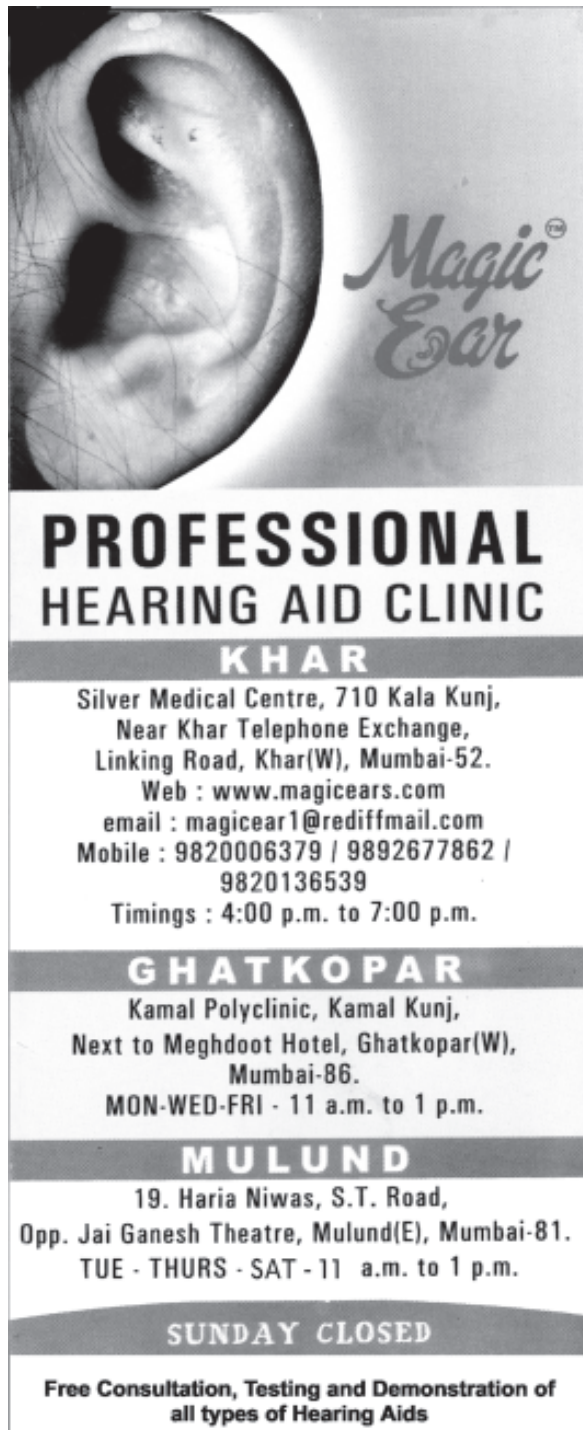
In keeping with his philosophy of a minimal state Gandhiji would have approved the liberalisation of the economy and globalisation. At the same time he would have counselled moderation. As he said way back in 1921 "I do not want my house to be walled in on all sides and my windows to be stuffed. I want the cultures of all lands to be blown about my house as freely as possible. But I refuse to be blown off my feet by any." He would have cautioned against excessive consumerism, and would have strongly advocated inclusive growth.

In all this the Gandhian touch

could have played a corrective role.

Note: This is a condensed version of an article written in 2008 for the National Council of Rural Institute (NCRI), who were planning a special volume on "Gandhi Today". The volume was not published. I have therefore taken the liberty of publishing it in this issue Gandhi Jayanti 2009. Ed.

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The Life and Times of Marquis de Condorcet

A French Prophet of the Law of Progress



(1743-1794)

‘Justice’ has been a topic of intense debate since time immemorial. Nobel Laureate Dr. Amartya Sen, in his latest work *The Idea of Justice* published recently charts the evolution of the concept over the centuries and argues for a new way of looking at justice. The book which has received critical acclaim has led to intense debate afresh in intellectual circles on the concept of justice. At a time when India continues to grapple with its unrealized goal of inclusive economic growth and the new UPA government is focusing on the issue to bridge the widening gap between rich and poor in its development perspective, Dr. Sen’s focus on ‘justice’ in his book is timely. Dr. Sen notes that the approach developed in his latest work is much influenced by the tradition of ‘social choice’ theory initiated by the French prophet of the law of progress, Marquis de Condorcet (1743-94) in the 18th century, rather than that of the theory of ‘social contract’ enunciated by J. J. Rousseau, a quarter century before the French Revolution. It is therefore appropriate at this point in time, to know a little more about the life and times of Condorcet and his contribution to the social thinking of his time and its relevance to the present times.

V. Krishna Moorthy

Condorcet had great faith in humanity and its ability to progress with the help of philosophers such as Aristotle. He envisioned man as continuously progressing towards a perfectly utopian society, for which he stressed that man must unify regardless of race, religion culture or gender.

The West’s greatest contribution to civilization has been a vision of secular knowledge in the service of human rights and human progress, which launched the modern era for the whole world. The growth of educational opportunity in erstwhile France and the idea of Universal Rights of Man helped the advent of the French Revolution. J.J. Rousseau’s *The Social Contract* published 30 years earlier had introduced the idea which later inspired the rallying slogan ‘Liberty, Equality, Fraternity.’ He had also invented the “General Will”— the rule of justice agreed upon by assemblies of free people whose interest is only to serve the welfare of the society and of each person in it, to achieve these goals. Those who did not conform to the General Will were deviants, and were to be subjected to necessary force by the Assembly.

The French Revolution drew its intellectual strength from men and women like Marquis de Condorcet, also known as Nicolas de Condorcet. He was a French philosopher, mathematician and an early political scientist. He was the last of the French *philosophes*, the eighteenth-century public philosophers who immersed themselves in the political and social issues of their times. Condorcet took a leading role when the French Revolution swept France in 1789,

and championed liberal causes. By 1789, his contemporaries like Voltaire, Diderot, and his mentor, the economist and statesman Anne-Robert-Jacques Turgot etc. all had died. Condorcet was the only one in their ranks who live to see the French Revolution, which he embraced totally and laboured in vain to control its demonic force.

Hailing from an ancient noble family of France, Condorcet, was born on 17 September, 1743 in Ribemont, Aisne, the northernmost province of old France. His ancestors belonged to the Order of the Sword, traditionally devoted to military service, with a higher social status than the high civil officials of erstwhile France. Condorcet did not choose military service, to the utter disappointment of his family and instead launched his career as a mathematician. He published several papers on the subject, the first one in 1765 entitled ‘Essai Surle Calcul Integral’ which was well received, and followed it with another in 1772 on Integral Calculus.

Condorcet was recognized worldwide and worked with well known scientists like Leonhard Euler, Benjamin Franklin etc. His contemporaries were Leonhard Euler and Pierre Simon de Laplace, though he was not of that high rank as a mathematician. Yet, at the age

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of twenty-five, he was elected to the Academie des Sciences, and at thirty-two became its Permanent Secretary. In 1780, at the age of thirty-eight, he was accepted into the august Academie Francaise, arbiter of the literary language and pinnacle of intellectual recognition in his country. He became an honorary member of the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences in 1785.

Mathematics and Social Sciences

Though he entered the scientific profession of mathematics, Condorcet's principal accomplishment was, in the field of social sciences. He was a pioneer in the application of mathematics to the social sciences, an achievement he shared with Laplace. Though not very successful, Condorcet made minor advances in mathematics and used the techniques he invented in the study of political behaviour. Inspired by the idea that was central to the Enlightenment agenda, Condorcet believed that what had been accomplished in Mathematics and Physics can be extended to the collective actions of men in society. Condorcet's 1785 *Essay on the Application of Analysis to the Probability of Majority Decisions*, one of the most important of his works, is considered a distant forerunner of present-day Decision Theory.

In 1774, Jacques Turgot, the French economist was made the Controller General of France under Louis XVI, and Turgot appointed Condorcet as Inspector General of the Monnaie de Paris. When Turgot was dismissed from the post in 1776, Condorcet submitted his resignation which was not accepted, and he continued in the post till 1791.

The outbreak of the Revolution in 1789 was a watershed in

Condorcet's life. He turned abruptly, from scholarship into politics, shifting his focus from mathematics to political matters.

Condorcet served two years as an elected member of the Commune of Paris. Later, when the Legislative Assembly was formed in 1791, he became a Deputy for Paris. Condorcet was immensely popular and was appointed one of the Assembly Secretaries. Thereafter, he was elected Vice-President and finally as President. When the Assembly was succeeded in September 1792 by the National Convention and the Republic was established, Condorcet was elected as representative for the Department of the Aisne, part of his native province of Picardy.

Condorcet, unlike many of his contemporaries, advocated a liberal economy, free and equal public education, constitutionalism and equal rights for women and people of all races. Condorcet was unfailingly kind and generous to others. He was passionately committed to the ideal of social justice and the welfare of others, both as individuals and as a group. At considerable political risk, he opposed the colonial policies of France. A great liberal, Condorcet was a staunch follower of the English philosopher John Locke. He believed in the natural rights of men. Like his contemporary Immanuel Kant, Condorcet sought moral imperatives that lead rather than follow the passions. He joined Tom Paine to create, *Le Republicain*, a revolutionary journal that promoted the idea of a progressive, egalitarian State. Condorcet had a photographic memory and believed that knowledge was a treasure to be acquired relentlessly and shared freely.

On human nature,

Condorcet was a nurturist. He believed that the mind is moulded wholly by its environment. The quality of human life, he insisted, can be improved indefinitely. Condorcet was a historicist, believing that history can be read to understand the present and predict the future. He was fully committed to the ideas of the unity of the human race. Condorcet was a humanitarian, who saw politics as less a source of power than a means of implementing lofty moral principles.

Throughout his brief political career, Condorcet stayed away from partisan politics —though, he was identified with the moderate Girondists, and he had friends amongst the leftist Montagnards. After the popular insurrections of 1793, the more radical Montagnards controlled the National Convention and then the Committee of Public Safety ruled France during the year-long terror. Robespierre, the leader of the Reign of Terror, who believed that the goals of the Jacobins were noble and pure, overtook the Revolution in 1793. His fellow Jacobins across France implemented Rousseau's necessary force that included summary condemnations and executions, for all those who opposed the New Order. Nearly 300,000 nobles, priests, political dissidents and other troublemakers were imprisoned and 17,000 of them died within the year.

During this spasm of official murder, Condorcet who opposed the death penalty to King Louis XVI fell from hero to criminal suspect. He was arrested by the orders of the National Convention and thrown into the prison at Bourglala-Reine, though for a while he fled and hid himself for eight months, wandering about for several days, homeless. It was during this period

of his hiding and stay-in on the rue Servandoni, Condorcet, desperately insecure and with no books, relying only on his prodigious memory wrote his masterwork, *Sketch for a Historical Picture of the Progress of the Human Mind*, an intellectual and social history of humanity. Published posthumously in 1795, it is considered as a major text of the Enlightenment and of historical thought. The work, relentlessly optimistic in tone, contains little mention of the Revolution and none of Condorcet's enemies in the streets of Paris. It was considered a remarkable achievement of both mind and will.

It is ironic Condorcet was sentenced to death for criticizing the Constitution drawn up by the Jacobin-dominated National Convention of the then France. Condorcet was captured and mauled by the villagers, when he was on the run, and died on the floor of a cell in the jail at Bourglala-Reine, and luckily, he was spared the guillotine. The death could either have been, poison, trauma, or heart attack, though suicide was ruled out then.

The essential nature of the end of Enlightenment, the blueprint of which, Condorcet, who had been called the Prophet of the Laws of Progress, was busy preparing in late 1793 and early 1794 was incorporated in the *Sketch for a Historical Picture of the Progress of the Human Mind*, can be traced to his death on March 29, 1794.

Condorcet strongly believed that social progress is inevitable. His sense of assurance arose from the conviction that culture is governed by Laws as those of Physics and strongly believed that humanity is destined to a more perfect social order ruled by science and secular philosophy. Condorcet's

last work narrates the history of civilization as one of progress in the sciences, shows the intimate connection between scientific progress and the development of human rights and justice and outlines the features of a future rational society entirely shaped by scientific knowledge. This can be adduced from a study of past history. He insisted that history is an evolving material process. Condorcet boldly asserted: "The sole foundation for belief in the natural sciences, is the idea that the general laws directing the phenomena of the universe, known or unknown, are necessary and constant. Why should this principle be any less true for the development of the intellectual and moral faculties of man than for other operations of nature?"

Similar ideas and thinking was already on in those turbulent times of erstwhile France. Emanuel Kant, in 1784, had expressed the germ of the same concept, observing in particular that man's rational dispositions are destined to express themselves in the speeches as a whole, not in the individual. Leibniz had spoken of the Present big with the Future. Forty years before Condorcet wrote *Sketch...* Turgot, his friend and sponsor had written that "all epochs are fastened together by a sequence of causes and effects, linking the condition of the world to all the conditions which have gone before it." As a consequence, "the human race, observed from its first beginning, seems in the eyes of the philosopher to be one vast whole, which, like each individual in it, has its own infancy and its own conditions of growth."

Condorcet had great faith in humanity and its ability to progress with the help of philosophers such as Aristotle. He

envisioned man as continuously progressing towards a perfectly utopian society, for which he stressed that man must unify regardless of race, religion culture or gender. Writing in the final chapter of his work, *The Tenth Stage: The Future Progress of the Human Mind*, Condorcet was highly optimistic of the man and the future, and observed that when all humanity has attained a higher level of civilization, nations will be equal, and within each nation citizens will also be equal. Science will flourish and lead the way. Art will grow in power and beauty. Crime, poverty, racism, and sexual discrimination will decline. The human life span, through scientifically based medicine, will lengthen indefinitely. This great hope of Condorcet for a progressive society with a just and humane global order, in spite of the great scientific progress and achievements over the last two centuries, is yet to materialize even after a lapse of over two centuries of his death! Was he too Utopian? May be! Condorcet was interred in the Pantheon in 1989, in honour of the bicentennial of the French Revolution.

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Rites, Rituals and Festivals (9)

Suman Oak

The foundation of the intellectual aspect of Indian Culture was laid down by our ancient sages. They strived to progress from ignorance to knowledge. What these sages discussed, debated and passed on to the later generations was beyond the understanding of the common people. The other aspect i.e., social conduct was taken care of by intelligent but shrewd and sharp men with very little consideration for the lofty philosophy of the sages. For a peaceful society they strengthened the social structure laid down by the Varnashrama system. For the moral rectitude of the masses they reinforced ritualistic devotion by writing the Brahmanas that gave concrete shape to rituals of worship and thereby assimilated almost all tribes and their deities into the eclectic Hindu religion. Most of us accept the role assigned to us and faithfully observe all traditionally inherited customs and rituals. We have got to overcome this weakness and inertia and start thinking afresh about our customs and ritual.

The intention, here, is not to condemn all rites, rituals and festivals outright but to look at their utility, propriety and necessity critically, and loosen their grip on the minds of our people. (For the full text of this introductory note to the series please see the January 2008 issue of FF (No.488) or email us at freedom@vsnl.com for the text. – Ed.

DEEPAVALI

Deepavali I (also known as Diwali) literally means festival of lamps. This is a six-day festival marking the end of *Ashvin* and the beginning of *Kartik*, the 7th and the 8th months respectively of the Hindu Lunar Calendar. This is festival time in the middle of *Sharad Ritu*, i.e. Autumn, when the monsoons retreat, the skies become clear and the harvests are in.

As usual many mythological stories are told about the origin of this festival. Ram along with Seeta made a triumphant return to Ayodhya after spending 14 years of exile in forests and conquering the demon Ravana. The last day of *Ashvin* is the day of *Nirvana* (emancipation from the material body to spirituality) of Mahaveer the last *Teerthankar* of the Jain Religion. In order not to let the light of knowledge that Mahaveer brought be extinguished, the Jains worship Jeeneshvar-Mahaveer by observing the festival of light. Mahaveer's *Nirvana* begins a new era called 'Nirvan Samvatsar'. It is also the day of Ashoka's universal conquest and the coronation of Vikramaditya. This era is therefore also called 'Vikrama Samvatsar'. Most of the age-old rituals are no more in vogue and the festival is mainly an

excuse for celebration, feasting and enjoyment for six days. Each day has a myth attached to it.

On the first day called *Vsubaaras* (twelfth day of the second half of *Ashvin*) a cow and its calf are worshiped. This makes us aware of our responsibility towards dumb animals.

The second day is *Dhanatrayodashi* when Yamaraj, the god of death, is offered lighted lamps. The mythical story for worshipping Yamaraj runs thus: Once the God of Death Yama asked his heralds if they feel distressed while snatching the souls of living beings and wish to have pity on them. To this the messengers related one instance. "The son of a king named Hemraj was destined to die on the fourth day of his marriage as divined by Satavi (goddess Durga in her vulgar, reviling disposition.) The prince was married in due course and while the celebrations were not yet over, we had to snatch his soul; but we were extremely distraught. We pray you, Lord, to suggest a way to avoid such untimely deaths." So the god of death suggested "Those who offer me lighted lamps on the day of *Dhanatrayodashi* will be spared the agony of untimely death." This started

the ritual of lighting lamps. Ayurvedic practitioners celebrate this day as *Dhanvantari Jayanti* because *Dhanvantari*-the inventor of Ayurveda- was born on this day.

The third day of Deepavali is *Narkachaturdashi*. The mythological story of this festival tells us that Lord Krishna returned home on this day very early in the morning after killing the demon *Narkasura*. Nanda gave him an elaborate massage of fragrant unguent and a lavish bath. We, humans, are supposed to enjoy this luxury without any particular achievement, if we can afford it. The fourth and the most important Deepavali day is Lakshmi pooja on the new moon day. The myth tells us that Vishnu, Lakshmi, Kubera, Yogini, the gods to be worshiped on this day and the rest of them who were imprisoned by the demon Bali, were released from prison on this day. On being released they rushed to *Ksheerasagar* (the mythical ocean of milk) and slept in it. To commemorate this act of the mighty gods, we humans are expected to indulge in all sorts of creature comforts during the day and worship Lakshmi and Kubera in the night. Around midnight the *alakshmi*, i.e. all the rubbish collected from the house is thrown out of the house. This day is celebrated

in various ways in different parts of India. The traders worship their inkpot, account books and a rupee coin as emblems of the goddesses Lakshmi and Saraswati. A new account book is opened with appropriate rituals and reverence. In Rajasthan a cat is considered Lakshmi and worshiped, thankfully only on this day. In Bengal Kali *pooja* gets precedence over Lakshmi *pooja*. In Nepal dogs, cows and bullocks are worshiped. There it is a custom to play dice on this day and in the pursuit of riches many become paupers. In Amritsar the Sikhs celebrate this day as the *Suvarnamandeer* foundation day. The fifth day is *Balipratipada*. On this day the (so called demon) king Bali and his wife Vindhyaavali are worshiped. Offerings made to them consist of meat and spirituous liquor. The last day of Deepavali is *Yamadivitiya* or *Bhaubeej* (in Marathi). On this day a sister is supposed to give her brother a massage with fragrant unguent and a lavish bath in the morning. In the evening she waves a platter with lighted wicks, etc. round the face of her brother. (Women perform this act for their men on several occasions but not the other way round even if the woman becomes the president of the nation!) The brother gives his sister a gift.

The story of *Yamadivitiya* too needs to be critically analysed to expose the hypocrisy and double standards of our religious practices. The first of the three peculiar myths that we shall analyse is the story of the demon Narkasur. Sri Krishna's wife Satyabhama accompanies him when he proceeds on his crusade to fight Narkasur. The demon Narkasur was very cruel and had imprisoned a large number of young princesses. He also wanted to marry all of them all. When Lord Krishna finally got him, he did not beg for mercy or ask for a boon for himself or his sons. He asked Krishna to grant him, on behalf of all creatures, that anybody who takes a

bath before sunrise on this day should be spared from the agony of hell. Lord Krishna had to grant him that boon. Later the Lord was obliged to marry the maids whom the demon had planned to marry! So say our *Puranas*.

The second story is that of king Bali who was a mighty king. Being a demon he was an enemy of all the gods. He did not incarcerate helpless maids. Instead he held all the mighty gods in his prison. To free the gods Lord Vishnu had to approach him in the form of a dwarf-'*Vaman*'- the fifth incarnation of Vishnu in which he prevents Bali from obtaining the dominion of the three worlds. The dwarf asks Bali for land just enough to accommodate three foot steps of his. When Bali grants him his wish the dwarf grows so large that his first step occupies the whole earth, the second the sky and then Bali bends before the Lord and offer his own head for the dwarf's third step. The Lord puts his foot on Bali's head and pushes him down right into the netherworld. As a result of this deceitful act the gods are freed and imagine what they do! They all rush to the *Ksheerasagar* and sleep happily there. All these incidents took place during the middle four days of Deepavali. But again like Narkasur what did the brave Bali ask of Lord Vishnu? He said, "My Lord, for the sake of the peoples' welfare grant me a boon that all those who make an offering of lamps to Yama (not himself) during these days should not be made to suffer in hell." Granting him the boon the Lord said, "Although I have defeated you in order that people remember you for ever, I grant you that, they will celebrate a festival in your honour on the first day of the month of *Kartik*." In fact Bali was a very responsible and a just king, committed to the welfare of his subjects. People were very happy under his rule. He is worshiped even today by the people praying for his return. Today we do need a just ruler like him.

The third story is that of *Yamadivitiya* - the last day of *Deepavali*. Yama's sister Yami got fascinated by Yama and begged him to take her as his wife. Yama steadfastly refused her request and Yami got wild with him. Yama calmly persuaded her to desist from such an immoral aspiration and saved her from committing a hideous sin. All brothers are therefore expected to save their sisters from such immoral acts and protect them. Celebrating *Yamadivitiya* will remind both the brothers and their sisters of their duty. Notice the double standard as well as prejudiced and small minded attitude of our *Purankaars* towards womenfolk.

Deepavali is not much of a religious ritual but is primarily a celebration of social life at a time when nature scatters her bounty generously. Every one wants to enjoy the fruit of his labour of the whole year. People clean their houses and decorate them. Children build mud models of forts and portray significant historical events round them. People of all religions, castes and creeds forget their enmity and bitterness, visit each others and participate in the celebrations enhancing general bonhomie. All this is certainly commendable. But quite often it turns into vulgar display of riches; e.g. the ear splitting crackers, the blinding bright lights, the lavish swasteful parties, pandering one's spendthrift children, compulsive shopping, etc. encouraged by consumerism. Not only does such conduct pollute the environment but it adds insult to the injury suffered by the vast majority of the downtrodden of our country. Deepavali offers the occasion for us to learn to strive for an equitable society.

MS. SUMAN OAK is a freelance writer, retired Lecturer on Education, SNDT University, is associated with *Streehitakarini*, Centre for the Study of Social Change and the *Andhashraddha Nirmoolan Samiti*.

BOOK REVIEWS



DRAGON'S SHADOW OVER ARUNACHAL – A Challenge to India's Polity by R. D. Pradhan ● Rupa & Co. 7/16, Ansari Road, Daryaganj, New Delhi 110002 ● Year of Publication: 2009 ● No. of Pages 168 ● Price Rs.395

Reviewed by Mr. Ashok Karnik, formerly deputy director, Intelligence Bureau, Government of India. He writes and lectures on national security issues. Email: ashokkarnik@yahoo.co.in

This small book deals with an all important area of India's defence concerns, particularly now when China has started casting its avaricious eye on our eastern borders. The author, R. D. Pradhan, was secretary to Y. B. Chavan when he became Defence Minister in the wake of the 1962 debacle. Obviously, he was privy to internal debates over what went wrong in the disastrous 'war' with the Chinese. He was later the Home Secretary and again privy to Government's views on Chinese designs. He later became Governor of Arunachal Pradesh. He is thus eminently suited to write about the Chinese dragon

The first part of this book contains pen portraits of the cultural life of local tribes, their Buddhist religious heritage and the fascinating and breathtaking landscape of the State. He writes from first-hand experience as Governor. It is useful as a tourist guide. It is the second part which deals with the complexity of the international boundary with Tibet/China and India's major concern in the area. Despite debate on legal, cartographic and historical facts the two sides have been unable to accommodate each other's view point. The author presents both views dispassionately. In a few pages he presents an extremely complicated issue, on which tomes have been written. He does not take sides. He presents the dilemma succinctly by quoting some

historian's comment on Nehru:

"In trying to save the peace of the world, we sacrificed an unarmed neighbouring country and also our own vital interests."

In contrast with Nehru's attempts to win China's friendship, Vallabhbhai Patel struck a very pragmatic note. His letter to Nehru in 1950 warning of the Chinese danger spelt out the problem precisely: He stated "...even though we regard ourselves as the friends of China, the Chinese do not regard us as their friends ...we have to consider what new situation now faces us as a result of disappearance of Tibet ... and expansion of China almost up to our gates." (It is included as an Appendix). Patel's statesman-like appreciation of the geo-political situation is a tribute to the man. As if to defend Nehru, the author paradoxically quotes Nehru's instruction to our new Ambassador to China in 1958: "I don't trust the Chinese one bit, despite Panchsheel and all that. The Chinese are arrogant, devious, hypocritical and thoroughly unreliable. In fact, they have deliberately chosen to be anti-Indian." How Nehru managed to get betrayed by the Chinese despite such clear understanding of their true nature is a mystery in itself.

The "Dragon's Shadow" makes it clear that China has never accepted the McMahon Line while

India has made the Line its basic premise. China insists on the traditional, customary Line, which in effect means the Inner Line which runs south of the Himalayan slopes. The author holds that India unnecessarily sticks to a purely legalistic position instead of adopting a flexible position of give and take. He believes that the Deng package offered in 1980 to accept pre-1962 *status quo*, was the best India had but was rejected by India. The Chinese position has hardened since then and after declaration of Arunachal Pradesh as a State, it has become positively bellicose. He believes that Deng was prepared to accommodate India in the East in order to secure the Chinese gains in the Western sector. Now the Chinese are keen to claim Arunachal Pradesh because of its natural resources. One is not sure what exactly the Deng package entailed, what were the hidden provisos the Chinese are so adept at concealing and bringing up unexpectedly at the last moment. Is it the famous Chinese practice of saying 'what is mine is mine and what is yours is also mine'?

The author admits that it is difficult to understand what the Chinese actually want. On what basis does he still believe that India should give up its legalistic position? He is also critical of India's 'forward policy' of establishing its check posts on the border and describes "Operation checkerboard" of the Indian Army

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as being provocative. If we give up the legal position on McMahon Line and stop establishing our posts on the border, what is there to prove that the border is ours? We

gave up one trump card of Tibet; now should we give up the legal argument too?

The book leaves us where

we started but at least it makes us think anew of the problem we face. We must thank the author for re-examining the old postulates.



BREAKING FREE OF NEHRU: LET'S UNLEASH INDIA! By Sanjeev Sabhlok ● Publisher: Anthem South Asian Studies, C-49, Kalkaji, New Delhi 110019 ● Pages: 290 ● Price: Rs. 495. This book is now available free online. Visit <http://bfnsabhlokcitiy.com>

Reviewed by S. V. Raju, formerly Executive Secretary, Swatantra Party. Currently editor, *Freedom First*. Email: jurasv@gmail.com

The title is explicit, leaving little to the reader's imagination. That's typical of the author of this book. I have had the pleasure of knowing Sanjeev Sabhlok. Met him first at a conference he had convened at the Habitat House in New Delhi in January 2004 (to discuss the potential for the emergence of a liberal party) and to which he had invited me; subsequently through the occasional email; and since March 2008 as a regular contributor to *Freedom First* with his column "Come on Liberals: Let's Change India".

The book is well organised and the narrative style absorbing, and quite passionate. You get the feeling that he is talking to the reader one to one. The preface explains who he is, why he resigned the IAS, how he got to write this book which in draft form had the benefit of critical comments from those who were broadly in agreement with the general tenor of his views.

The preface is also quite exhaustive, some 22 pages; so impatient is he to unburden himself, that the preface tells it all – almost! "The real choice before us today" he writes "is between two western models of governance – socialism and capitalism; between the life-denying concept of equality and the life-sustaining concept

of freedom." Freedom, to the author of this book is the flip side of capitalism and vice-versa. He *does* anticipate that this perspective might not be acceptable to everyone who upholds the sanctity of the liberty of the individual vis a vis the State and society.

There are six chapters in all, two appendices, a copious 5 pages of printed notes and a reasonably informative index.

Chapter 1 begins with what he describes as a "stylized overview of the history of our freedom and divides it into three phases: First phase: pre-battle of Plassey 1757; second phase: 1757 -1947; third phase: post independence.

Taking a critical look at India in Phase 1, Sanjeev Sabhlok concedes that India had "cultural unity based on Hinduism". Citing historian Vincent Smith's Oxford History of India (1958), 'Indian unity rests upon the fact that...India primarily is a Hindu country' the author accepts the fact that "Hinduism has therefore had a significant influence on the concepts associated with freedom," but the "individual still did not count for much being merged into collective identities such as caste." For instance "very rarely do we find an individual artist's name acknowledged in an Indian painting or sculpture.... even today beauti-

ful paintings are sold without individual signature." Or, unlike the Magna Carta, "no argument to advance justice or freedom was articulated in ancient India." Yet another marker to indicate the absence of individuality was the "uniquely Indian trait of obsequiousness" particularly "towards 'seniors' in India." Indians despite the foreign invasions by sea from the West were insular, perhaps because of difficulties of travel that prevented Indians from to travel to the lands of the colonisers or perhaps it was due to the "great haughtiness among the Indian elites who believed they needed to learn nothing from others ..." Frogs in the well – that is what our ancestors were for most of our history prior to 1757."

Phase 2 the period between 1757-1947. Indians were quick to learn English as it helped Indians secure jobs as clerks which it did, but also opened the "Pandora's Box of knowledge." Indians were "quick to become aware of the enormous leaps made by Western political thought over the centuries with men like Raja Ram Mohun Roy Mahadeo Govind Ranade, Gopal Krishna Gokhale and Pherozeshah Mehta "catching up with the liberal ideas and start demanding self-governance." Along with this also rose the "competing theory of socialism (or communism). Both rejected feudal-

ism but, unlike the freedomwallahs, the socialists/ communists wanted to revert to the tribal state. The two distinct philosophers of these competing "Western ideologies" were Adam Smith and Karl Marx.

But only a few Indians like, Tagore and Gandhi raised the "broader issues in relation to freedom" even if these were "incidental to the focus on self-rule and opposing racism". Sabhlok gives full marks to Gandhiji's philosophy of non-violence: "the most awe inspiring independence movement the world has ever seen...far ahead of its time in its principle-based standards of political protest....His exposition of the equality among peoples and of non-violence protest were significant contributions to the freedom of mankind as a whole."

In the 3rd phase: Independence and Freedom are not quite the same points out Sanjeev Sabhlok. "Independence is at best a minimum condition. It is very poorly related to the level of freedom prevailing in a society," The author, clearly an incurable romantic, writes: "freedom needs constant attention, even fawning and at times ferocious battle to protect it against the enemies of freedom. Very reclusive, reluctant, but the most beautiful and graceful lady of all, is freedom"! He cites with enthusiasm Rabindranath Tagore's famous poem in *Gitanjali* "Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high..." pointing out that nowhere in this poem (written in 1912) does Tagore talk about independence. "Tagore's poem is truly embarrassing to socialists. Each of Tagore's lines resists socialism." He interprets the poem as Tagore "asking ...each individual to achieve this 'heaven of freedom'". The Tagore poem points to an enabling role for government." And

has a dig at Nehru "Nehru never reminded us of this embarrassing poem." Ah! but his daughter's censors did! In 1976 when Minoo Masani then editor of *Freedom First* decided to reprint this poem to protest the infamous emergency and submitted the issue to the government's censor under the censorship rule then in force, the poem was censored and its publication disallowed on the ground that it endangered national security and encouraged disaffection!

It is essential to understand the philosophical framework of what the author means by "freedom" to appreciate the rationale for his all out attack on Nehruvian socialism which did reach "dizzying heights of incompetence." As someone who not only lived through those years of avoidable scarcity, misery and misgovernance but had the added opportunity, as the executive secretary of the Swatantra Party, to fight for "freedom" there is little that this reviewer finds wrong in his high voltage criticism of the Nehruvian era. This reviewer recalls an article by Rajaji in *Swarajya* (March 4, 1961): "The egalitarian socialism of the Congress is a fallacy and a fraud, a mere election-carrot for the donkey the Congress takes the electorate to be. We must kick the rider from our back, rider and carrot. The mechanism of wealth production is something quite different from the socialism of the Congress, which ignores the incentive, the capital, the frugal management and the output of work needed for increase of wealth." This quote fully justifies the grief expressed by the author for missing out on "the opportunities we have had in the past 60 years to bequeath to our children the greatest possible country on earth."

In a passage headed "Redis-

covering Rajaji" Sabhlok observes: "Rajaji, however, was no match for Nehru. Nehru was far more charismatic and popular. He also had populist policies." True. Also true is his observation "Rajaji was also just too far ahead of his times." But his next statement is only partially true: "People simply didn't understand what he was saying, and he did not have sufficient time left to explain to them what he wanted to stay." Oh they did. Rajaji's big success was his denouement of socialism, even if he did not live long enough to strengthen the foundations of the party he started, and this, it must be underlined, he managed in Nehru's lifetime; his daughter Indira Gandhi who ruled longer than her father 'managed' by corrupting and destroying the character of the people. After imprisoning a veritable phalanx of opposition leaders during the emergency she disfigured the preamble to the constitution by adding the words "socialist" and "secular" to describe the Indian Republic.

The author is also an incurable optimist. Quoting with approval a statement by S. P. Aiyar, a political scientist that the challenge lay in finding "solutions appropriate to given situations but only those compatible with freedom" the author observes: "The good thing is that while the Indian government is not the best protector of freedom in the world, it does not censor books of this sort. It does not prevent people from talking about their views. Its laws almost fully protect our freedoms. We are almost there! Just a nudge to our system of governance – including making our government get out of things where it has no business to be in, and rebuilding our political and bureaucratic institutions to make them compatible with transparency and accountability that

are the hallmarks of freedom; and we could soon have the freest country in the world – and thus ultimately the greatest”.

So far this review has covered only the preface and the first chapter. There are five more chapters. Merely mentioning their titles give an indication of the range of his endeavour – From the macro observations in Chapters 1; Overview of a Free Society Chapter 2 ;Problems with our Constitution (3) ; to micro diagnoses and offering cures in Chapters 4: Causes of Political Corruption in India; 5: Why is our Bureaucracy so Inept? 6: Unleashing India.

In the little space left for this review I shall refer, briefly, to just one of them: Chapter 3: “Problems with our Constitution”. This reviewer does not claim any special qualification to comment on the Constitution. Nevertheless he finds it difficult to understand the obvious ambivalence of the author on its merits. For instance even while agreeing that the Constitution has “served us reasonably well” and “has done us far more good than harm” he says elsewhere it is an “abstruse and distant document not easily understood, not of much interest to most of us....Evaluating its merits I find our Constitution a mediocre product.” compared for instance to its US counterpart.

Describing the Constitution as a “social contract” and drawing attention to the fact that it has been amended 94 times, Sanjeev Sabhlok considers “the time has come to completely review and remake our social contract. A statement that he makes which this reviewer finds patently unfair “The Constitution that we got was a hotchpotch compromise between the whims of the 299 people on our Constituent Assembly not the resonantly clear voice of freedom. Maybe, but then should we make the best the enemy of the good? There are numerous troublesome matters that need attention, as the author himself details in his book. Surely the Constitution has not come in the way. Liberal critics of the numerous amendments to the Constitution have pointed out that every time the Indian Constitution was amended it resulted in the contraction of the freedom of citizens, whereas the few times the American constitution was amended it was to expand freedoms. In other words blame the carpenter not his tools.

As for the whims of the 299 people, let us be grateful that our leadership including Nehru had the wisdom to nominate men and women of calibre to add to the elected members of the Indian Legislative Assembly which included quite a number of liberals. It might

also be recalled that the socialists boycotted the Constituent Assembly because it was not an elected one. Frankly, your reviewer, shudders to think of the kind of Constitution we would have had if its members had been elected on the basis of adult franchise. Not a liberal statement to make, but an honest one that many secretly felt but did not articulate! Remember Nehru’s Congress swept the polls in 1952 and 1957!

Be that as it may, this book offers valuable inputs not only of problems arising from Nehruvian socialism but also point the way out even if some of them could be of the extreme kind that need further discussion – as for example the suggestion to dump the Constitution!

Regular readers of *Freedom First* have the benefit of reading issues raised in the various chapters in his book which are not referred to in this review but feature in his column “Come on Liberals, let’s Change India.

The author deserves to be thanked for the massive effort he has put in presenting his case for what amounts to be nothing less than revolutionary changes (not reforms as he suggests in the Preface) to ‘unleash India’. Well worth the buy and acquire fresh insights.



The Swatantra Party was founded on August 1, 1959. In the 1967 elections to the 4th Lok Sabha, less than ten years of its founding, the Swatantra party emerged as the largest party in the opposition in the fourth Lok Sabha with 44 seats and recognised by the Election Commission as a national party. Yet, by 1974 this Party ceased to exist nationally. What happened?

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THE INDIAN TRICOLOR by Lieutenant Commander K. V. Singh (Retd.) ● Published by Rupa & Co. 7/16, Ansari Road, Daryaganj, New Delhi 110002 in association with Flag Foundation of India ● Year of Publication: 2005 ● No. of Pages: 302 ● Price: Rs 295.

Reviewed by Col. T. S. Tanwar (Retd.). Currently he is shaping his venture in the HR field as 'Veterans Manpower and Allied Services Pvt. Ltd. at Navi Mumbai. Email: tstanwar@gmail.com

The author has also written books titled "Our National Flag" and "Colourful World of Flags." In this book under review, 'The Indian Tricolour', the author has compiled important facts on the evolution of the flags, the Indian *Dhvajas* and the evolution of the Indian National Flag, as part of the India's Freedom struggle culminating in Indian Independence on 15 August 1947.

A few years back Mr. Naveen Jindal, an Industrialist contested in the Supreme Court the various restrictions placed on the display of our flag and succeeded in getting the flag freed from the stranglehold of the government and enabled the common man to use it as his own, with due respect and dignity.

The various chapters weave interesting historical facts, events and personalities relating to the freedom struggle. The Appendices contain useful archival information which would enhance the reader's knowledge. There is interesting coverage of the role played by Indian women in the freedom struggle and in bringing forth the Indian Tricolour or Tiranga as the National Flag.

A flag raises powerful emotions and pride. In earlier times, the standard served as the rallying point for soldiers and capture of the enemy's standard was considered to be a great achievement. There are 54 countries that now have a tricolour as their national flag.

In the Indian context, Sister Nivedita, an Irish disciple of Swami

Vivekananda, was one of the first to conceive the idea of a national flag for India presumably on a visit to Bodh Gaya in 1904, when she saw the Vajra – Chinha. However on August 7, 1906, the first anniversary of the movement opposing the partition of Bengal a tri – colour (with green, yellow, and red stripes and eight lotuses, *vande mataram* scripted in blue, a sun and a crescent moon) was unfurled at Parsi Bagan Square (Greer Park renamed Sadhana Sarkar Udhan) in Calcutta. But after the annulment of the partition of Bengal, this flag became part of history. The urge to have a national flag found fresh impetus among the Indians overseas. In the chronology of dates and events that followed, the name of Madame Bhikaji Rustam Cama shines for it was her forceful speech and unfurling of an India Tri-colour at an international forum for the Second International Socialist Congress, on August 22, 1907 at Stuttgart Germany, that drew the attention of many countries.

In the *Azadi* (freedom) movement, in 1921, Gandhiji's approval of a tricolour with a charkha, became synonymous with the Congress Party, and was referred to as the National Flag. On July 22, 1947 the Constituent Assembly adopted the resolution defining the National Flag of free India. It was on the night of August 14-15, 1947 that Dr. (Mrs.) Hansa Mehta presented to Dr. Rajendra Prasad, Chairman of the Constituent Assembly, a Tiranga on behalf of the women of India. It was hoisted on the Central Dome of the Council

House on August 15, 1947 with a thirty one gun salute and recognised as the symbol of the newly born independent State of India. The flag hoisting ceremony at the Red Fort was held on August 16, 1947 but thereafter it coincides with the Independence Day celebrations on August 15, each year.

Interestingly in the past five and half decades of Independence, the common man lost the essence of the Tiranga and its historical evolution because of the Government of India's Flag Code.

It was the patriotic spirit of Mr. Naveen Jindal, that led to a historic Supreme Court judgement on January 23, 2004, holding that the right to fly the National Flag freely with due respect and dignity, was a fundamental right. As a result of this crusade, both Mr. Naveen Jindal and Lt. Commander, K. V. Singh the author of this book, are optimistic that with this symbol of freedom, Indians world over would feel happier and proud, enhancing their sense of patriotism, and rising above divisive feelings of caste, religion, and region.

The author sincerely hopes that all Indians will also realise the important significance of the Tiranga in their lives as a symbol of freedom.

The book is reasonably priced and is recommended as a book of reference in all schools, colleges and institutional libraries for the benefit of the younger generation.

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