

SEPTEMBER 1973

EDITOR: M. R. MASANI

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING

Indo-Iranian Relations

Geeta Doctor

FROM the momentum of interest that is building up around Iran in the Indian press these days, one would imagine that the lost Continent of Atlantis itself had emerged from the Indian Ocean. No doubt Iran's rise to power has been remarkable, but in a country with 11 per cent of the world's proven oil resources, which in 1972 alone brought in \$2,800 million, it is hardly unexpected. Nor has her progress, spectacular as it is, been entirely unforeseen, starting as it did with the White Revolution in 1963, and bringing about, under the firm guidance of the Shah, a social and economic reform that would pull Iran right out of the dark ages and place it among the forefront of the countries in Asia. That we should view these developments with interest is understandable. What is unfortunate is that the interest should be tinged with anxiety that is largely a result of being suddenly confronted with the realization that Iran is setting out to be the "biggest military power east of Suez and west of Japan". In this context, while welcoming India's current efforts at patching up relations with Iran, it would not be unfair to wonder whether it is going to be a classic example of locking the stable after the horse has bolted.

It is a regrettable but true fact that, despite links forged by tradition and sentiment, India's relations with Iran in the last few years have been far from satisfactory. They have been characterized by distrust, disinterest and disillusionment which have neutralized even the most determined efforts at friendship. It is a feeling which surfaces every now and then in the 'Letters' column of leading newspapers, crying, "Iran cannot be trusted" to which the corollary is "Iran is arming Pakistan against India". Indeed there is an audible sigh of relief when Iran, after making her periodic affirmations of good will in private, feels it necessary to repudiate them in public. This was the case when Shri M. C. Chagla visited Iran when he was

Foreign Minister. This has also been the recent experience of a visiting journalist who made headlines of Iran's good intentions towards India, only to find them hotly denied the next day. Obviously Iran finds it embarrassing to have her declarations of good faith shouted aloud from the roof tops, and it is time we

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IN THIS ISSUE

The prestigious International Institute for Strategic Studies has recently published figures which show that on land, sea and air alike the armed forces of India outnumber and out-gun the combined forces of Iran and Pakistan. In the light of this, Mrs. Geeta Doctor has contributed a valuable corrective to the prevailing hysteria in New Delhi. Her article may well have been entitled "How not to turn a friend into an enemy."

In the face of conflicting statements from Moscow and New Delhi, we present our readers with detailed data prepared by an expert about what goes on in Comecon to enable them to judge whether it is in India's interest to join that organisation of Communist States.

Mr. Lewis H. Gann is a Senior Fellow of the Hoover Institution at Stanford and is the author of several books on the problems and countries of Africa. We carry an abridged version of a most stimulating article of his in *Survey* which, though not written about India, shows clearly the way in which our own "New Class" in New Delhi exploits the myth of "Neo-Colonialism".

Reviews of two books and our Drama Critic's contribution to the controversy over *Godspell* make up the rest of the issue.

Between You & Me and The Lamp Post



Peking Quotes Your Editor

IT is amusing to read the Chinese News Agency *Hsinhua* quote with approval your Editor's Inaugural Address to the Swatantra Party Convention last April. This belated pat on the back goes to Mr. Masani who, it is claimed, "took the Indian Government to task for serving the Soviet expansionist activities in the Indian Ocean." It is for the first time, writes Mr. Tiwari of the *Express News Service*, "that the Chinese News Agency praised a rightist Indian party."

Evidently, the Peking interpretation is based on the following extract from Mr. Masani's Address:

"Time does not permit of my dealing at any length with the state of our international relations and the low ebb to which our reputation abroad has fallen. Suffice it to say that since the ill-advised Defence Treaty with the Soviet Union was signed in 1971, our country has come to occupy an unhappily isolated position in the councils of the world. Prof. Robert Scalapino in a recent publication, *Asia and the Major Powers*, finds no difficulty in saying that 'today India is allied and, in effect, serves as part of the Soviet Union's containment policies against the People's Republic of China.' Few students of the subject can disagree with this characterisation."

There is nothing, of course, to stop the Devil quoting Scripture, but of course one could hardly expect Peking to quote from *Freedom First* the Editor's repeated view that there is nothing to choose between Peking and Moscow and that the attitude of patriotic Indians to both these Powers should be a "plague on both your houses."

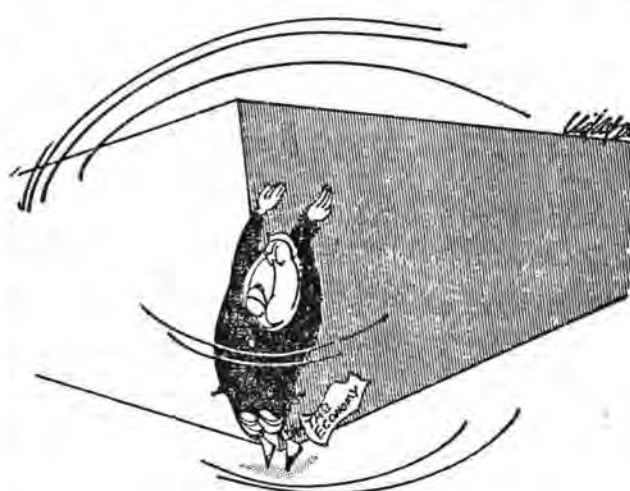
Socialism = Queues

THOSE of our compatriots who throughout the Nehru era had been sitting comfortably in India and reading without a shudder of the long queues the wretched people of Soviet Russia had been suffering from in that Socialist Utopia are at last getting a taste of Socialism, and they don't seem to be enjoying it, judging by the howls that came from their ranks. We sympathise with them, since we ourselves are subject to the same shortages but, in the case of those who voted for Mr. Nehru and Mrs. Gandhi as Prime Minister, our sympathies are diluted by the satisfaction that they might at last be learning the lesson that "Socialism means Queues."

It is true that the queues in Bombay are not yet as long as those known to Moscow. But let us not worry. They will grow constantly so long as the Marxist Government continues in New Delhi. Of that we may be sure.

In case any of our readers share the belief that price controls by Government can be effective, we are sorry to have to disturb such a fallacious belief. Prices are determined by the law of supply and demand. No authority on earth can stop a rise in the price of a commodity that is in short supply. The only result of such artificial constraints, contrary to the laws of economics, is to drive the commodity underground and let it come out in the black market to meet the unsatisfied demand. In the Soviet Union not even the shooting squad has stopped the prevalence of a massive black market.

Prices, like water, find their own level. Poor King Canute failed to turn back the waves. Neither did



"We turned the corner all right. But the damned corner keeps turning with us!"

Courtesy: *The Hindu*

Mrs. Partington's broom secure any better results. Mrs. Gandhi's broom cannot be any more effective, however hard she wields it. Recent events in Bombay and elsewhere have already proved this.

Undoubtedly, efforts will be made by those responsible for this inflation to divert the people's anger elsewhere. Hence, Mr. Shashi Bhushan, the Government's ardent follower, says that the black marketeers and hoarders should be hung on the lamp-posts by a "limited dictatorship."

A Populist President

IT is significant that President Giri, to the applause of Mr. Bhupesh Gupta and the *New Age* has joined in with the constructive proposal that black marketeers and hoarders should be put in chains. All these are efforts to find scapegoats for those who are responsible

for inflation due to deficit financing and wrong priorities in the Five Year Plans from the Second Plan onwards. But how long will these diversionary efforts succeed in fooling the people?

A "populist" was recently described by Mr. Roy Jenkins, the British Labour Party leader, in the *Guardian Weekly* in the following terms: "A populist is a man who seeks to appeal to the people, of course, but who does so by appealing to their superficial reactions, to the prejudices of the moment, to their worst rather than their better instincts, to sponsoring their grievances rather than synthesising their aspirations, of lowering rather than raising their sights. He may be successful or unsuccessful, according to his skill, his luck and the mood of the time. He will inspire no constructive achievement."

The only way in which prices can be brought down is to increase the supply and the only way to succeed in doing so is to encourage production by giving incentives through a reduction in taxation and the lifting of controls. This is the *only* way to hold prices down. Until the people of India learn this hard economic lesson and take the appropriate political steps, they will have to continue to suffer.

The task of a good liberal and of a sound economist is to enlighten the people and shorten their agony.

Good Wishes to ROC

INDIA-FREE China Friendship Week is to be celebrated in New Delhi and in other places from the 10th October, which traditionally the Chinese call 'Double Tenth.' Friends of the Republic of China will be happy to know that, breaking a long official silence, Taiwan has announced that President Chiang Kai Shek, who has been ailing from an attack of pneumonia, "is on his way to full recovery of his strength and has been leading a normal life for a long time." Photographs of his receiving visitors have been seen in the press.

Soon after Nixon's visit to Peking, the resulting euphoria was so intense that Mr. William Buckley was provoked to write in his column *On The Right*: "I do not believe, at this stage of the game, that it would shock American sensibilities if it were suggested that our diplomats and the Red Chinese have group sex together." It is to be hoped that this euphoria is beginning to subside. The Chinese people themselves never participated in it.

The latest news from Hong Kong says that Chinese youth try to evade the border guards and cross illegally into Hong Kong either by overland route or by boat or by swimming through shark-infested waters. Many are caught, but those using the third method are successful, though it takes a heavy toll.

For every person recorded as an "illegal immigrant" by the Hong Kong administration, two others go undetected. Last year 17,000 are believed to have reached

Hong Kong—the largest in ten years. The Chinese people are doing what Lenin described the Russian soldiers to be doing at the end of World War I—"voting with their feet". So much for the purblind stupidity of Peking's American and Indian admirers.

So far as friends of Asian freedom are concerned, they will wish the Republic of China well during the coming year that starts on 10th October.

Unique Party

THERE are far too many political parties in India but a new one from which *Freedom First* finds it difficult to withhold encouragement is "The Social Reform Party of India" whose manifesto we have received and read with appreciation. Free from all dogma, the programme put forward is one of pragmatic modernism. It is broadly liberal in nature. Indeed, reading it makes one wonder why it has not been adopted by various democratic parties much earlier.

The charming thing about this party is that it consists of only one man, Mr. Sankar Prasad Barua, who retired from the Indian Army with the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel because "he could not reconcile his views with the policies of the government and he felt that the efforts he was making in the Army would not in any way benefit the people of India". This situation, which guarantees unanimity within the party, so rare in this country, does not, however, seem to appeal to Mr. Barua. He makes an appeal to readers of his manifesto to take out membership. Those who are interested in getting a copy of this booklet may kindly write to Mr. Sankar Prasad Barua, at L-4A South Extension, Part II, New Delhi 110 049.

Advocate-General & the Commies

HE who sups with the devil needs a long spoon. One of those who might well remember this old adage is Mr. H. M. Seervai, Advocate-General of Maharashtra.

It appears that Mr. Seervai delivered a lecture in the first week of May, 1973, on the Directive Principles of State Policy. His critical views about the Golaknath judgement of the Supreme Court and the expendable nature of the citizens' Fundamental Rights are well-known. It was not, therefore, surprising that Mr. Seervai was asked by Mr. R. K. Garg, a communist lawyer of New Delhi, for permission to print the text of the lecture. Mr. Seervai, little knowing the character of such allies, says in a letter published in the press that he gave the permission asked for. Little did he guess that the permission so unwisely given would be misused.

Mr. R. K. Garg promptly published the talk by Seervai along with one by Comrade Mohan Kumar—

(Continued on page 4)

SHOULD INDIA JOIN COMECON?

PRAVDA—not the Soviet but Slovak Communist Party paper reported on June 6 that India and some other countries were considering Comecon membership. Quoting the Mexican Deputy Minister of Trade and Industry that his country was thinking of joining the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, the Czech paper said: “They have similar ideas in India, Iraq and other countries where they are considering seriously the question of closer co-operation with the Comecon.”

The very next day, however, the news was contradicted in India by sources described as “official” in a report in the *Hindustan Times*. The New Delhi daily said: “Official sources deny the possibility of India joining the Comecon to make up for the loss in exports arising from Britain’s entry into the Common Market.”

The report in the paper referred to the need to mitigate the “adverse effect of the stiff tariff barriers imposed by the EEC on Indian exports” and went on rather significantly to add: “Just as India desired enlargement of its trade relations with the Common Market countries, similarly it sought expansion of trade with the Comecon countries without joining either grouping.”

The Slovak party paper’s claim has, no doubt, aggravated the controversy concerning this country becoming a member of the East European counterpart of the European Economic Community. But the prompt ‘official’ denial suggests the issue is still an open question before our Government.

Should India join the Comecon?

To find an answer one must examine the actual experience of the Comecon’s existing members—the extent to which it has been advantageous to them, individually and collectively, to come together under one economic bloc. Also whether the grouping is based on any economic principles and how sound these principles are.

Although the Communist economic bloc includes

other countries as members, most recently Cuba and Syria, for basic analysis attention must be centred on the six East European countries—Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland and Rumania—plus the Soviet Union.

A detailed look at the bloc activities is not feasible because of the principal member countries’ usual practice of withholding information from the outside world, and attention must be confined to broad trends.

However, according to J. Soldaczuk, an East European economist, the share of the Comecon’s exports in total world exports, when compared with the share of its industrial production in total world industrial production, declined from 0.37 in 1950 to 0.35 in 1968 and further to 0.33 in 1970 for the Comecon as a whole, and from 0.81 to 0.72 and 0.71 in the same years for the Comecon, exclusive for the U.S.S.R.

Taking the global trade picture, in the period 1965-70, the Comecon’s share dropped from 10.6 per cent to 10.2 per cent in world exports and from 10 per cent to 9.5 per cent in world imports.

What is most significant, especially in terms of the Comecon’s presumed objective of increasing co-operation among its member countries, is the fact that, instead of growing, the share of intra-bloc trade in the member states’ total trade volume declined from 63.09 per cent in 1965 to 60.69 per cent in 1970.

This evidently shows an absolute lack of economic cohesion among member countries, a fact the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance itself could not help acknowledging on two different occasions, first in the early 1960’s when it adopted in the year 1962 “Basic Principles” and institutional measures designed to obtain greater co-operation, and second, during 1968-71 when a repeat debate on the future of the organisation culminated in the adoption of a “Comprehensive Programme” at the Council’s 25th session meeting in Bucharest in July 1971.

As recently as the 24th Congress of the CPSU, none

BETWEEN YOU & ME & THE LAMP POST—Continued from page 2

mangalam and another article of his own in a book, “Three Judgements, Three Amendments, Three Supersessions,” published by a communist front aptly named “The Society for Democracy”. Mr. Seervai is quite angry and says that his permission was misused by Mr. Garg and his name has been made improper use of by being put on the brochure. In a letter published on July 12, Mr. Seervai has dissociated himself from the co-authors of the booklet. Fair enough, even if a little late.

If Mr. Seervai thought this would stop his commu-

nist allies from continuing to offend against his fundamental freedoms, his assumption was wrong because *New Age*, the Communist Party weekly, has again carried an advertisement of the book on 22nd July, mentioning the Advocate-General as one of its co-authors.

An expert lawyer like Mr. Seervai must now be left to consider what legal action he can take. Perhaps an injunction? In any event, he must be more circumspect when approached by communists, whether lawyers or otherwise. ‘Once bit twice shy,’ Mr. Seervai?

other than boss Leonid Brezhnev lamented that co-operation within the Comecon was woefully lacking and stressed:

"The possibilities of the socialist location of economic activity and division of labour are not yet fully utilised... It is necessary to deepen specialisation and co-operation in production, to establish closer links among national economic plans, in short, to advance along the road of economic integration of the socialist states."

Briefly the basic factors impeding co-operation are two. One is the imposition by the USSR of the Soviet system of economic planning and management and the Soviet development strategy on each of the six East European members after the second War.

This system is characterised by two related principal features: (i) reliance on what is known in Communist economic parlance as "extensive pattern of development", and (ii) strong autarchic elements in the economies of the individual States.

The "extensive" strategy calls for channelling of investment into capital goods industries even at the risk of neglecting consumer goods industries resulting, as a wellknown Polish economist, K. Secomski, describes it, in "growth for its own sake" or "barren growth."

This explains why the rates of growth of national income in the Communist countries have been lower than the rates of investment, and also why post-war Poland witnessed food riots not once but twice.

The other feature of autarchy calls upon every East European country to pursue a strategy of "import substitution" all round, including in the field of industrial raw materials, and relegating international trade to a supplementary role of financing imports of goods and materials that cannot be obtained domestically at any price through exports of temporary surpluses achieved at the cost of domestic consumption.

As a result of this development policy, very similar structures came up in all the Comecon countries providing little basis for trade among them, while the disadvantages of the pattern of industrialisation slowed the growth rate down in the late 1950s and early 1960s throughout the East European bloc and diminished productivity of investment. Furthermore, the rate of growth of labour productivity proved lower in 1961-65 than in 1951-55 for virtually every country within the bloc.

There was a uniform decline in the ratio of increase in national income to gross productive investment: in Bulgaria, from 0.62 per cent in 1950-55 to 0.29 per cent in 1961-65; in Czechoslovakia, from 0.54 per cent to 0.10 per cent; in the G.D.R. from 0.78 per cent to 0.17 per cent; in Hungary, from 0.31 per cent to 0.22 per cent; in Poland, from 0.48 per cent to 0.29 per cent; and in the USSR, from 0.83 per cent to 0.41 per cent.

Another factor impeding co-operation is the Soviet

Union's assuming the position of *Primus Inter Pares* in Comecon.

To utilise their industrial potential, the Soviet Union's partners in the Comecon must adjust production to the needs of their largest customer, even when the profitability of this trade is not high.

To put it in the words of an East European, this means that "to a considerable extent, the structure of the Soviet Union's demands for machines and equipment determines the directions of specialisation of the CMEA countries."

The CMEA countries rely on sources within the bloc for between 54 and 72 per cent of total national imports of raw materials and fuels. Here again, the role of the Soviet Union is decisive. It supplied 41 per cent of total intra-bloc imports of this group of commodities in 1955, 56 per cent in 1965 and above 60 per cent in 1970; and it has agreed to increase considerably its annual exports of some basic fuels and raw materials to other CMEA countries during 1971-75: oil from 138 million tonnes in 1970 to 243 million tonnes in 1975, natural gas from 8 to 33 million cubic metres, electric power from 14 to 42 billion kwhs, and iron ore from 72 million to 94 million tonnes.

This analysis reveals Comecon's true character. Far from being a multi-national economic grouping based on sound principles, it is just another off-shoot of Soviet Russia's 'proletarian' imperialism seeking to tie the

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satellite countries hand and feet to serve the ruling nation's needs. The events of 1968 in Czechoslovakia, the breakaway attitude of Rumania and the relatively much quieter reformist trend in Hungary provide additional proof of how over two decades the Comecon has been used by the Soviet Union as a tool to subjugate the principal member states of East Europe.

The organisation is based neither on the principle of international division of labour nor aimed at complementing the member countries' mutual needs. It is cut out for the single purpose of serving the Soviet Union's requirements. No wonder, it is generally referred to as the "Moscow-run Comecon." Additionally, it has, as Secretary-General, a Russian, Mr. Nikolai Fadayev, who is known to be a low ranking bureaucrat commanding little independent authority.

"Compared with the EEC," says the *Economist*, London (Aug. 4-10), "Comecon is little more than a glorified intra-governmental organisation with hardly any supranational features."

It may not be common knowledge that even in the field of offering a tie-up or aid to a third country, Comecon's role can never mean more than a supplementing of Soviet endeavour. Just how this works is made plain in the Agreement on Economic and Technical Collaboration between the USSR and Egypt which the two countries signed on 29th January, 1958. The communique on this agreement says:

"The Agreement also provides that the Soviet Organisations may call on corresponding organisations of the People's Democracies, with their consent, for preliminary planning and the supply of equipment, machines and material."

A similar proviso is contained in the September 28, 1959, Indo-Soviet agreement on the construction of the Barauni Oil Refinery in Bihar. It reads:

"The Soviet partner is at liberty to co-operate with appropriate foreign organisations in the execution of assumed obligations concerning planning, equipment delivery and other types of technical collaboration. The Soviet organisations will obtain prior clearance from Indian authorities in the event specialists from third countries are to be sent to India."

While the Soviet Union can take "corresponding organisations of the People's Democracies" for granted, there is no known agreement whereby any *bloc* country may also subcontract to Soviet organisations.

It may not be widely known that just because they happened to be the signatories of the 1955 treaty guaranteeing its neutrality, the Russians used to protest Austria's efforts to get close to the EEC. They desisted against only early in July this year, which was after they themselves could not help making mammoth deals with the West.

Should India join the Comecon in the light of all this evidence?

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NEO-COLONIALISM AND THE 'NEW CLASS'

L. H. Gann

NEO-COLONIALISM has become a central concept in most forms of socialism. Western—and, above all, American—capitalism supposedly derives a major part of its wealth from investments in the underdeveloped countries of the world. In the backward regions, particularly the former European colonies and semi-colonies in Africa and Asia, land, labour, and raw materials, the argument goes, are cheaper than in the developed countries. Hence foreign investors can earn super-profits. The prosperity of Western Europe and, especially, of the United States is said to derive from the ill-gotten gains obtained in Africa and Asia. This surplus wealth is used in the US to buy off the white American worker, the world's new aristocracy of labour.

The doctrine of neo-colonialism has by now acquired a wide variety of political and social uses. It supplies an essential element of continuity between Lenin's thesis of imperialism as the highest stage of capitalism and the anti-capitalist ideologies which developed after World War II. The creed of anti-colonialism has become the principal bond between many divergent ideologies. Its anti-American dimension is welcome to European right-wingers who deplore the rise of American power; it is equally popular among European left-wingers who grieve over the lack of revolutionary success in their respective home countries. The real or assumed machinations of foreign capitalists supply a universal excuse for the political and economic failures of the Third World. In the U.S., critics of the mass culture, of suburbia, and of blue-collar workers derive new ammunition for their attacks on domestic reactionaries from the supposed iniquities of neo-colonialism. The notion feeds the sense of guilt experienced by many liberal intellectuals. Neo-colonialism putatively accounts for the conflict in Vietnam and other outbreaks of war in distant parts of the world. The concept has become inextricably interwoven with a great variety of Black American ideologies; neo-colonialism is now said to be practised on the American domestic as well as on the foreign scene. Few doctrines have ever been used in so extensive a fashion as neo-colonialism and its ideological predecessors.

Neo-Colonialism and American Investments

Despite numerous assertions to the contrary, the belief that American capitalism derives its prosperity from foreign investments, especially those in the Afro-Asian world, is completely unfounded—this interpretation indeed has an almost phantasmagoric quality. A few figures will help set the record straight. In 1970

the Gross National Product of the United States amounted to some \$974.1 billion. Total US investment abroad came to about \$78 billion, that is to say, less than one-twelfth of the GNP and only slightly more than the \$72.4 billion the Americans spent on 'clothing accessories and personal care' alone. But, in turn, only a small proportion of this foreign investment was placed in Asia or in Africa. US investments in the entire African continent amounted to just under \$3.5 million. The total value of American investment in Africa and Asia together stood at just over \$9 billion, or about 11 per cent of the nation's total foreign investment.

The total profits repatriated from abroad to the US in 1970 amounted to about \$6 billion, i.e. considerably less than 1 per cent of the total GNP. American profits repatriated from the entire African continent totalled no more than \$680 million—something like one-fourth of the wealth of one great American philanthropic body, the Ford Foundation (market value of holdings in 1970: \$2.83 billion).

The bulk of US capital exports in 1970 went to 'white', industrialized countries, not to backward regions. The United Kingdom, for instance, had by that year absorbed nearly as much American capital as all of Africa and Asia together.

The argument that 'neo-colonialist' enterprise restricts the development of manufacturing and only exploits raw materials has no validity either. In 1969, for instance, US private long-term investments in the 'less developed countries' came to about \$20 billion. Of this, just over \$2 billion was invested in mining and smelting, just under \$8 billion in petroleum industries, over \$5 billion in manufacturing and slightly more than \$4½ billion in other industries.

A Critique of 'Financial Conspiracy' Theories

What of the more fundamental implications of the various Leninist and post-Leninist interpretations of colonialism and neo-colonialism? As we have seen, they have one thing in common: they all strip capitalism of its 'progressive' function as an engine of economic development. Capitalism in its colonial or neo-colonial guise is, in fact, said to be responsible for the economic backwardness of the underdeveloped countries. As Nkrumah put it, with special reference to Zambia, 'It is not Africa that is poor. It is the Africans who are impoverished by centuries of exploitation and domination.' This interpretation is, of course, one that would have been strongly criticized by Marx, who imputed a progressive role to European capitalism in Asia. In the author's own opinion, Marx's generalizations

**With The Compliments
of
A Well Wisher**

concerning India in the early nineteenth century are as valid when applied to sub-Saharan Africa in the first half of the twentieth century. Whatever the failings of European colonizers may have been in a country such as Zambia, they were conquerors with a difference. Unlike earlier invaders in Zambian history, such as the warlike Ngoni or the Kololo, the British brought to Zambia an entirely new technology. The era of British rule in Zambia, from the end of the nineteenth century to 1964, was less than the lifespan of a grandmother. Within this brief period the peoples of Zambia were hurled from the Early Iron Age into the world of modern industry. Before the arrival of the British, Zambians had no source of power except human muscle, no means of transportation save the porter's pack and the canole, no agricultural implements except the axe and the hoe. After two generations or so, Zambia had become one of the world's great mineral producers. Life had become more secure than ever before. Goods and services had become available on a scale that would have been inconceivable, both quantitatively and qualitatively, to a Zambian villager of the pre-colonial era.

The 'robbery of resources' argument has been similarly refuted by economist Peter T. Bauer in reference to Nkrumah's native Ghana. Bauer stresses that today the bulk of exports are produced by Africans and practically all imports are for their use.

In 1880 there were no exports (or production) of cocoa; by the mid-1930s about 300,000 tons were exported annually and by now over 400,000 tons, all from farms established, owned and operated by Africans; there are no foreign-owned cocoa farms. In 1890 combined imports and exports were less than a million pounds sterling, by the 1930s they were in tens of millions, and by the mid-1950s in hundreds of millions. Over this period there has been a spectacular increase in imports of both consumer and capital goods. In 1890 there were no imports, or negligible imports, of flour, sugar, cement, petroleum products, or iron and steel. For decades now these have been on a massive scale. In the early 1890s there were about 3,000 children at school; by the mid-1950s over half a million. In the 1890s there were neither railways nor roads, but only a few jungle paths, and transport of goods was entirely by human portage and by canoe. By the 1930s there was a substantial railway mileage and a good road system; by then journeys by road required fewer hours than they had required days in 1890. Statistical information of this sort can be both multiplied and interpreted easily, but it is hard to convey the far-reaching and pervasive changes which have transformed life there, as elsewhere in West Africa.

The Ghanaian experience, of course, was in no sense unique. Capitalist-like subsequent socialist-develop-

ment was naturally extremely uneven in its impact and subject to severe fluctuations. The fact remains that the age of the 'New Imperialism', so scathingly referred to by Lenin and others as an era of crude exploitation and capitalist decadence, saw startling economic expansion in the colonies. In the tropics as a whole, food supplies kept pace with the population growth, exports rose at an average rate of 3.6 per cent per annum with purchasing power (relative prices) in terms of manufactures the same in 1908-12 as in 1879-83, while schooling, housing and other services generally improved. Thus 'the period 1880-1913 has to be regarded as one in which many tropical countries grew as rapidly as many of the industrial countries. Many, many more grew just as rapidly in their modern sectors...'

Leninist and post-Leninist assessments of imperialism and neo-colonialism also served another ideological function. They provided alibis for failed prophecies. Marx had still assumed that the socialist revolution would first come in the West, and that it would come within his lifetime. Marx never entered the promised Jerusalem, and Lenin's thesis provided an apparently convincing explanation of how the Western bourgeoisie had managed to default on history and had put off the inevitable day of reckoning. The 'New Imperialism' came upon the historical stage as a *deus*

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ex machina, and helped to postpone the revolution. Lenin in turn argued that already by 1917 world capitalism had become subject to 'stagnation and decay'; the destruction of the Western colonial empires was bound to inflict a crushing blow on world capitalism. But again the world bourgeoisie apparently managed to cheat on Lenin's predictions. Far from collapsing, the economies of the Western capitalist powers all expanded at a very considerable rate after World War II. Why? Because the bourgeoisie had discovered a fresh device, neo-colonialism, which provided yet another unforeseen means of delaying the capitalists' inevitable descent into historical oblivion.

'Financial Conspiracy' Theories and the 'New Class'

Leninist and post-Leninist theories of imperialism can be interpreted in different ways. They can be examined on their merit. But they can also be assessed in a Marxian sense, as ideological tools. In this capacity they are capable of serving new economic interest groups. In Africa and Asia alike, the colonial powers created educated indigenous elites specifically trained to administer and in turn to educate. The training of these elites provided a variety of new academic positions for European intellectuals who, naturally, tended to take up a favourable attitude towards their charges. The new elites in turn took over the governmental machinery created by the old imperial administrations.

But the colonial powers had managed to govern with relatively small administrative establishments, and in many cases there were not sufficient jobs for all the available candidates who applied for posts after independence. The situation shows no sign of improving. Education is now the largest, as well as the fastest-growing, industry in Africa. In Nigeria alone, the number of teachers exceeds the number of all workers employed by modern manufacturing and commerce. In Kenya, expenditure on education now accounts for something like 39 per cent of all public expenditure—a striking tribute to the mystique of scholastic education and the strength of the pedagogic lobby. Yet only some 23,000 youngsters out of a total of 150,000 who finish school every year will manage to find paid jobs.

In many cases, moreover, the training provided by the new universities in Africa, and quite often also by institutions of higher education abroad, has not adequately raised the productivity of those whom it certifies to be qualified. Post-colonial government have thus been under constant pressure to expand the number of available government and party posts so as to provide enough jobs for the diploma-bearing elite. The struggle for government jobs is liable to exacerbate tribal tensions, as ethnic affiliation has come to be used as a weapon in the scramble for bureaucratic advancement. In addition, there is resentment towards employers in the private sector:

It is only logical to expect the certified elites to

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despise and distrust anyone who pays so poorly for their services and appears to look upon them as largely irrelevant and an unnecessary drag on productive activity. Therefore, nationalization, or some form of administrative control, is necessary to restructure the private sector so that the certified elite are appreciated, employed, and rewarded according to their need rather than their productivity.

Material interests in turn may be reinforced by a moralistic folklore according to which profits derived from business appear somehow despicable, whereas the income derived from a salaried position in the public service seems just. Profits from business or industry spring from individual transactions. These can be both identified and censured individually on the grounds that they 'exploit' known persons. On the other hand, the income derived from taxation springs from an anonymous source, and hence bears no comparable stigma.

On the international level, the interests of the new administrative strata have been reinforced by revisionist notions which transfer the class struggle from the national to the international plane. According to these interpretations, the real world conflict is to be

found in the class between the rich nations of the West and the poor nations whom the former exploit. This assessment, of course, obscures the conflicts between the different states of the Third World itself; it ignores ethnic clashes between races as varied as Kurds and Arabs, Ibo and Hausa, Galla and Amhara. Above all, it may create the illusion of a perfect community of interests existing between the governors and the governed in the Third World, an image useful to the rulers, but inaccurate nevertheless. The notion that 'young and righteous' nations are engaged in a historic battle against ageing capitalist countries is, of course, neither new nor progressive. It echoes the German and Italian propaganda of World War I vintage which described Germany or Italy, as the case might be, as a proletarian nation engaged in a struggle for survival. These interpretations should, naturally, be relegated to where they belong—into the realm of political and academic fantasy. This is not, however, likely to happen. These assessments minister to too many psychological needs, they serve too many material interests to be easily discarded. Hence they are likely to remain frozen in a solid body of post-colonial orthodoxy which is apt to distort history for generations to come.



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Reviews

TOURIST'S-GUIDE TO NEHRU

Jawaharlal Nehru. By M. Chalapathi Rau. (Publications Division, Government of India, New Delhi. Price Rs. 15)

MR. CHALAPATHI RAU'S credentials for writing an official biography of Nehru have a *prima facie* credibility peculiarly calculated to earn him the deferential attentions of the Publications Division of the Government of India which commissioned him to write this book. He has been associated with the *National Herald* founded by Nehru from its inception for 27 years as its editor. He has written about Nehru in one form or another throughout much of his working life. He has to his credit, besides, two small publications, one a critical assessment of Nehru published by the Pergamon Press, Oxford, the other a symposium on Nehru under his editorship. In recent years, especially in a Sunday feature called "Off The Record" which he contributes to the *National Herald* under the sobriquet of "Magnus", he has made his personal and intellectual propinquity with Nehru a recurrent theme of his discourse.

Some may wonder why, after all this, he should have devoted a long and circumstantial preface in two parts to a laboured exegesis of the closeness of his relationship with Nehru with a propitiatory air of disarming scepticism, as though his own claims rather misgave him. My guess is that some inner incertitude is at work, largely, I should imagine, the result of the discrepant character of these very credentials when they are more closely examined.

Mr. Chalapathi Rau opens with a reference to Lokhart's biography of Sir Walter Scott, not as Mr. Randolph Churchill did in his unfinished biography of his father, Winston Churchill, because he was going to emulate a happy example, but in order to disclaim any such intention. Nehru's own words seldom occur in the book, yet a good deal of it, the first two chapters especially, is a mere paraphrasis in bad English of Nehru's autobiography. The rest of the book is, I suspect, a piecing together in chronological sequence of newspaper accounts of the period discussed.

The effect is matter-of-fact and a trifle flat. Nehru figures in it from time to time, but at many removes from the centre and the foreground, rather like a profile seen from a distance and fading off into a barely recognisable silhouette. The issues on which Gandhi and Nehru differed are mentioned, but not discussed, much less examined with any wish to clarify them, which surely would have been one way of giving depth and colour to anything he had to say about either. It is, of course, the news reporter's way of looking at things, and this in sober truth is how the book as a whole reads.

Nehru is perhaps one of the easiest subjects for the biographer. The fact that no biography or study of him, whether by a foreigner or an Indian, has so far succeeded in doing more than scratch the surface of a personality less complicated than most, takes little away from the vast potential that exists by way of documentation in accessible form, for anyone who combines scholarship with creative perception and critical powers of a high order.

Mr. Chalapathi Rau gives the lack of access to official archives as his reason for not attempting anything as ambitious as a definitive biography. But I cannot imagine official archives adding anything but bulk. For depth and dimension that truly creative biographical writing requires, it is the growing corpus of Nehruiana which has steadily been piling up in the many institutions bearing his name, the Nehru Museum in Delhi for instance, or, even more, the sort of symbiotic relationship with Nehru which Mr. Chalapathi Rau claims, that should yield depth and insight in any really ambitious attempt at portraying Nehru in the round.

The Nehru which Mr. Chalapathi Rau portrays is a strangely opaque figure, hieratic in design, and redolent of earnest piety in the author, but bereft of the power to reflect light. Nehru's ideas are best expressed in his own words. They need neither explanation nor interpretation. It is his personality, his actions, his unpremeditated reactions to events, the seeming ambivalence of much that went into the framework of his professed principles and policies and the theoretical structure of his beliefs, of which he himself could not always have been aware, that call for a measure of analytical insight in the biographer. The occasions on which his mettle was put to the test on one or other of these counts were by no means few. In the seventeen years of his prime ministership, they came indeed crowding on the heels of each other. Destitute of analytical gift, Mr. Chalapathi Rau skims breezily along, barely touching them, and, when he does, barely rising above the banal.

The truth appears to be that writing in English does not come easily to the author. The anguish of effort expended on mere self-expression exhausts his powers to co-ordinate thinking to any purpose. The tourist's-guide effect of the book as a whole is in startling contrast with the preface. The reason, to me at all events, is perfectly obvious. His stock of fine phrases is limited, and is easily worn by repetition. Yet for special and fleeting occasions, he has contrived with their aid a form of utterance, gnomic on the eye and the ear, but often devoid of meaning. The preface is full of purple patches. His reputation as a writer, partly the result of his own industrious and unremitting self-publicising, rests up to a point also on passing impressions of ephemera of this kind. Apart from the book under review, a major accomplishment for him, his

total output in English is extremely slender, sub-standard and jejune in detail, rather as if he had to brace himself to being armed with a dictionary and rules of grammar in negotiating any piece of composition in English. The gnomic and the jejune, often bordering on the ungrammatical, are often to be found side by side.

Here are two sentences from the preface, by the end of which he had apparently run out of his capacity for fine flourishes, which illustrate what I mean. Writing about Nehru's death, he adds: "The world was to pay him tributes, tearing him bit by bit, but he remained whole and seamless." (Preface, p. VIII) The following rather ungrammatical sentence is actually the result of overscrupulous respect for grammar: "Nehru will continue to be discussed and variously assessed as long as modern India, which is the main monument to him, will (sic) go forward and not backward." (Preface, p. VIII)

Let us turn now to the body of the book. Throughout, it is written in the journalese of the reporter in a hurry. An air of breathlessness hangs over the narrative, the anxiety to be first with the news, regardless of sequence, or chronology, or order, or punctuation, of which last his idea seems to be that you have to put a comma wherever, reading it aloud, you pause for breath. Writing about the Rowlatt Act of 1919, he says: "It was the beginning of a series of events, which made subsequent Indian history more heroic than it would have been, and more of a turmoil than the prospect of constitutional advancement. Satyagraha Day witnessed hartals; there was firing by the police and the military at Delhi and Amritsar, mob violence at Amritsar and Ahmedabad. The long horror and indignity of martial law in the Punjab, where the sturdy people were led by militant nationalists, was to shock and convulse the whole of India. Then there was the Jallianwala Bagh massacres, and the British Empire in India was doomed. Dyer, to become a controversial figure, defended and condemned with equal fury, the hero of diehards and the demon of nationalists, sounded the death-knell by opening fire indiscriminately and without provocation (there was provocation in the fact that the gathering had assembled in defiance of the martial law then in force) on an unarmed crowd cornered in an enclosed park with an only exit barred by Dyer's soldiers. He was to follow with other acts of Dyerism." (p. 37) The words in parentheses are mine.

With a small investment in genuine talent and an incredible flair for publicity, he has staked heavily on being a scholar-writer. But his scholarship, so widely bruited by dint of incessant drum-beating, is as synthetic as are his preposterous pretensions as a writer.

Of his remarkable talent for publicity, the following is an instance. In 1968 he was awarded the Padma Bhushan. In 1969, by which time no one remembered

that this distinction was conferred on him, he was again in front page news for writing a letter to the President of India returning the award. The reason he gave was as factitious as the one which is alleged to have persuaded him to accept it in the first instance, namely, that he believed that working journalists should not accept such awards. Three years later, in an illustrated feature about him in the *Illustrated Weekly of India* by one of his closest cronies, his paper's own representative at Allahabad, but at the time a minister in the Kamalapati Tripathi Government, Mr. Chalapathi Rau is represented as having rejected the Padma Bhushan when offered. The suspicion that the feature was inspired by Mr. Chalapathi Rau himself is strengthened by the fact that he has taken no step to contradict so palpable a falsehood.

All this may seem a rather unjustifiable divagation into territory not germane to a review of this book. Its extreme relevance is made manifest by the inordinate space devoted, in the preface to the book, to an account of his relationship with Nehru and its genesis, and to his claims as a writer in terms of such audacious tartuffery that even the sceptical cannot help mingling a certain admiration with their doubts. Since Nehru's death, Mr. Chalapathi Rau has made free with his name, and has lavished an amazing industry on perfecting a kind of Nehru ambience of which, nevertheless, Mr. Chalapathi Rau himself is the central motif. The preface bears witness to only a part of his technique of company-promoting.

M. G. BAILUR

IN THE WONDERLAND OF MANAGEMENT

The trouble with being a professional clown is that nobody takes you seriously even if you are trying to be profound. Sharu Rangnekar, in an otherwise delightful little book, comes perilously close to this but mercifully escapes it. (*In the Wonderland of Indian Managers*, Associated Personnel Services — Rs. 30).

Under a veneer of racy style interspersed with lively anecdotes, he perceptively analyses the problems of management in Indian industry and in this effort is ably assisted by Laxman's delightful cartoons. His exposure of some of the practices bordering on feudalism and nepotism in industrial management in India are indeed delightful. His caricatures of the manager managing from crisis to crises, the stereotypes with their originality stamped out by modern "training" methods, are a perceptive appreciation of many real-life characters.

The book is definitely worth buying. The manager aspiring to the top should study it as a text book; the manager already at the top should read it for his amusement; those who are neither aspiring nor have made it, like the present writer, should only write reviews.

M. H. M.

Theatre

THE LEGEND IS REBORN

I AM dying, I am dying, I am dying," sings Jesus Christ plaintively: the lights dim, and there is commotion on the stage. At his feet, as he stands with his arms out-stretched, is the still figure of a woman. He sings, "I am dead," and all is quiet as he is removed from a non-existent cross, falling limply into the arms of those who stand by to receive him. The man dies and the legend is re-born.

'Godspell' is the archaic version of the word now evolved as gospel: the play is anything but archaic. Under Pearl Padansee's direction, Jesus Christ is a pleasant and unassuming young man, John the Baptist wears a striped tee-shirt and a head-band and—rank heresy—doubles as Judas at the end. The large supporting cast, referred to in the programme as clowns and dressed appropriately, oftentimes appear to satirize whole passages of scripture by singing them out in boisterous chorus. Plumb in the centre of the stage in full view of the audience the musical contingent can be observed fidgeting with their instruments and playing with the lights. The stage is practically bare and any equipment is moved around in a no-nonsense manner by any handy members of the cast. In short, it could have been the worst thing on the foot-boards of Bombay's theatrical scene. Only, it wasn't.

Through exquisite mime, occasionally off-key songs and frequent dance numbers, the play gets its message across. Rather than an account of Christ's life it is a collage of parables and episodes with the stray word or two of explanation from their sponsor, Jesus Christ. No one, not even Christ, is continuously held as the centre of attraction but each one has his or her turn in the lime-light. Quite obviously, from the play, for twenty centuries the comic potential of Jesus' stories have been left entirely unexploited. It is futile to try and reproduce on paper the more inspired moments in the action. Such as Lazarus' performance as he slobbers over a bone thrown his way by the rich man. Or the flower who repeatedly springs up with a cheery smile on her face, only to be strangled by weeds or to wither in poor soil due to the sower's negligence. Or the careless abandon with which the prodigal son's return is celebrated while the elder brother glowers in the wings. Or the sequence with the king and his debtor servant, where the king becomes hysterical in sympathy with his servant as he recounts his woes. At all times the players, mostly young people barely out of college, catch perfectly the atmosphere of spontaneity which is the key-note of the production. The action never seemed simulated or affected and the participants give every impression of enjoying themselves as much as the audience.

Let it never be said that Bombay lacks in amateur

talent. The liberal sprinkling of songs bear ample witness to its existence. Many of the songs were solo pieces and some, such as Mary Magdalene's number, were easily comparable with the recorded version. Perhaps the boys strayed somewhat further from the score than strictly but they managed to make it seem all part of the game. The musicians fully complemented the performers, never distracting one's attention from the stage yet not allowing themselves to be drowned out by the singers.

The play was not an unqualified success. The second half was considerably weakened by the addition of various scenes which were too disconnected to make a coherent image. Unlike the earlier part, which was completely light and frolicsome, the second had inevitably to give way to solemnity and thence to the tragedy of the final scenes. The earlier gaiety ought to have conspired to make the end doubly poignant but unfortunately that crucial passover never really gelled.



Any production based on the Good Book works at a disadvantage: everyone knows the plot. The trick lies in compelling the audience to look at an old and famous picture from a completely different angle, something like hanging the Mona Lisa upside down. The first of a series of Jesus-shows was Jesus-Christ Superstar, a play which by some accounts transcended the limits of an already super-human theme. Godspell, the only other play to receive near-equal acclaim was, in contrast, quiet. And perhaps, in the final analysis, it proved a more appropriate handling of the greatest story ever told.

MANJULA PADMANABHAN

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING—Continued from page 1

realized that good diplomacy is not generally conducted on roof tops.

Mental Block

It would appear that India suffers a mental block in regard to her relations with Iran, a mental block which makes us unable to direct our policy towards Iran except in the context of Iran's relations towards Pakistan. Every move that Iran might make towards Pakistan is interpreted as a move against India. While one should not ignore that as partners in various pressure groups such as the CENTO and RCD, as well as being members of the great Islamic family, Iran and Pakistan have every reason for working together, it would be worthwhile considering, what in effect, has been the extent of Iran's much publicized support to Pakistan. Even if we admit that Iran has supplied arms to Pakistan, it would appear that Iran's contribution has been more in words than in deeds. Iran is just one of the several countries who have supplied arms to Pakistan, and to indict her for this alone would be unreasonable, when we consider how much more she could have assisted Pakistan during the last confrontation. Iran will not tolerate the disintegration of Pakistan, the Shah has said, but the fact remains that while Pakistan was being disintegrated, Iran which could have played a vital role, remained embarrassingly aloof. Similarly it has made no secret of its opposition of the formation of Bangla Desh and the part played by India in it, but it has also been actively advising Pakistan to settle its differences as soon as possible. While it is not entirely unlikely that the Shah does not mean what he says about assisting Pakistan in the event of another skirmish, it would be unnecessary to dwell on it, since the likelihood of it happening in the near future is remote. Rather it would be in our interest to overlook Iran's apparent friendship with Pakistan and recognise that this does not automatically mean hostility towards India. The truth of the matter is that the average Iranian is so absorbed by the economic paradise opening out before him that he is hardly interested in getting involved in a fight between two other countries, as long as it does not directly affect him.

In 1969, the Shah and Shahbanou paid a visit to India, which, extending as it did for thirteen days, and enabling the Shah and his advisors to meet Indian leaders and discuss avenues of mutual co-operation, should have opened a new era in Indo-Iranian relations. The emphasis was on economic co-operation with each country trying to benefit from the other's technical expertise. Iran for instance was anxious to place at our disposal the advantages she had in the petrochemical industry and also try and develop a market in India for the off-take of ammonia and certain other

petroleum products from the huge Petro-chemical complex which she was developing in the South of Iran. In return Iran had indicated her willingness to purchase from India various types of equipment including steel rails, a large quantity of which she had already purchased, and other machinery.

Apparently the expected follow-up action petered out for some mysterious reason. The Joint Committees which were to have been set up do not seem to have functioned properly. The main snag is reported to have been the controversy over the supply of ammonia. It is said that the whole project was bogged down due to the lack of co-ordination between the different organizations in the Government of India. The Iranians were upset at the apathy shown in India over the off-take of ammonia.

An ugly controversy also raged over the price of crude oil supplied by Iran to the Manali Refinery at Madras. When there was a marginal decrease in the price of crude in the world market India demanded that the price as fixed in the Manali agreement should be reduced also. Iran felt that it could not agree to this request and was upset to find that the Indian press were inclined to play up this issue and put Iran in the dock as being unsympathetic to India's aspirations.

Inimical steps

Meanwhile, Iran's relations with Iraq, which had always been sensitive, deteriorated considerably over the disputes in regard to the Shatt-el-Arab and the control of certain islands in the Persian Gulf. While hostilities across the border ensued and the Iranian press was accusing Iraq of adopting Nazi tactics, India was busy forging closer ties with Iraq. Iran naturally looked upon these steps as inimical if not hostile to her own interests. This is but natural. The surprising thing is that rather than to allay Iran's fears, we have taken further steps to draw closer to Iraq whose political stability is far from assured. The only possible conclusion we can draw from this is that India is taking this line more to please Russia than to safeguard her own interests.

This is perhaps the crux of the problem. With the Bangla Desh adventure, which the Iranians are convinced was of Soviet inspiration, and the Indo-Soviet Treaty, Iran is dubious of India's neutrality. It is only too aware of long term Russian machinations in the region, and if it is building up the formidable military machine that has been causing so much concern in the Indian press, it is more likely to be for reasons of self-interest.

Tradition, reason and necessity demands that Iran and India should foster good relations between themselves. The question is whether we are still in a position to determine our own foreign policy.

WITH MANY VOICES

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

Strictly in terms of what it will cost the American taxpayer, Russia looks better as an enemy than as friend.

—Les Tusup in *Time*, July 23.

It isn't just that the dog (Breznev) failed to bark in the night; it is standing there waving its tail, Man's Best Friend written all over the face.

—The *Economist*, June 23.

The sort of change in the weather that is merely irritating in the West makes it necessary for the Soviet Union to import 26 million tons of grain in the season just ending, and perhaps 12 million tons in the coming one.

—The *Economist*, June 23.

In democracies people elect politicians who can form governments which behave as if wishes were facts.

—The *Economist*, June 23.

Nothing in the course Mr. Breznev is now following is a reason for believing that the struggle for primacy between marxism and liberal democracy that has dominated the past 28 years has come to an end.

—The *Economist*, June 23.

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Mrs. Gandhi, ever a creative interpreter of the law, has stretched it in new directions this week to facilitate a sweeping party purge. On Wednesday she invoked emergency powers to take over the administration of India's largest state, Uttar Pradesh. In fact, the emergency was of her own making.

—The *Economist*, June 16.

Nobody really believes that a fresh Russian pledge to respect self-determination, sovereignty, territorial integrity and basic freedoms, and to renounce the use of force against other states, will actually prevent Russia from, say, trampling on the Czechs again if they try another 1968.

—The *Economist*, June 30.

War is now a luxury which only the poor and the weak can afford.

—Zbigniew Brezinski in *Span*, July 1973.

It's simpler to know what to do with (Palestinian leader) Yasser Arafat than what to do with Moshe Dayan.

—Moshe Dayan in *Time*, July 30.

I feel happiest when I can light my American cigarette with a Russian match.

—Sardar Mohammed Doud Khan quoted in
Time, July 30.

For a long time, I've proceeded on the basis that all people put on their trousers one leg at a time.

—Senator Ervin quoted in *Time*, July 30.

Mrs. Gandhi has abolished the *garibi* of only one person—Sanjay Gandhi.

—Madhu Limaye in *March of the Nation*, July 7.

Become honest, Prime Minister.

—A. D. Gorwala in *Opinion*, July 31.