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THE MORAL IMPERATIVE

NISSIM EZEKIEL

The combination of bad government and non-government which we have in India today is easy to criticise. It is also easy to criticise the various opposition parties for their dissensions and failures. What is needed urgently is self-criticism and constructive action by the general body of citizens, in their own interest and in the interest of the masses who are the worst sufferers as the system deteriorates.

Let us accept the fact that there are no solutions in sight for our malaise, no leaders who will show us the way out of it. The responsibility then falls on every individual who has some awareness of the country's real difficulties and dilemmas. To take on that responsibility seriously, to find what he can do in his personal circumstances for the welfare of the public, to which he belongs (emphasising his sense of belonging), and to demonstrate initiative in small, day-to-day matters, is to make a specific contribution to the needs of our society.

This moral imperative brings better immediate results than merely swelling the voices of protest, though that too is necessary. I am not recommending the replacement of the present modes of political and social action by debates and discussions, even of fundamental issues. Nor am I suggesting introspection—heart-searching and self-scrutiny—as an escape from the noise of national and international events. It is the morale-raising example I have in mind, a way of functioning in public life, on however small a scale, which inspires emulation among those who hear of it.

Publicity and public relations, propaganda and organisational activity, partisan agitation and support to various causes, all these may be unavoidable in political participation. But the question of embodying values in one's way of life, and of projecting personal quality in rapport with the people, remains to be tackled. He who succeeds in doing that today will do more for the nation than the leader with followers and the guru with disciples.

If it were otherwise, the ablest editorial com-

mentators and the wisest seminar paper-readers would lead us to the promised land. But they can't; they are to be admired and respected for the critical function they perform. They know what they know, and they can teach us what to do, but they don't do it. They leave it to others to do it, who pass on the message to others, who agree or disagree. There the matter rests.

The kind of leader I have in mind would be more interested in encouraging the emergence of other leaders than in consolidating his own. He would not see talent and intelligence in the ranks of his followers as a threat to his dominant position. He would not surround himself with yes-men who expect to share the fruits of power—the main motive of collective effort. And he would not depend on his "charisma" to get away with dealings that would land a common man in jail or at the very least destroy his reputation.

It is possible for Everyman in varying degrees, to make and remake himself in his private as well as public life so that the norms I have briefly indicated become visible to others. As the contagion, so to speak, spreads, however slowly, life will improve for millions in human terms. This, in turn, is bound to affect the material conditions of existence, as people begin to give more of themselves to their work, no longer frustrated by the impersonal cruelties they patiently endure today. That kind of patience is never very productive.

What does it feel like to work in newspapers championing the democratic cause where not even the semblance of democratic consultation exists? What does it feel like to work in an educational institution where the leading lights shine for democracy everywhere except within their very own private property.

We all know what it feels like: it is the experience of millions who are not consulted and do not, in their turn, consult others where decisions are taken that are in reality the common concern of all. The consequence is that the democratic struggle in the true sense of the term is no more than every individual's personal effort towards upward mobility. At each stage of his climb, he does unto those below him as those above him did unto him when he was below them. This is as true of socialists as it is of others with a variety of ideological complexions.

A new spirit of co-operative thought and action is waiting to be born. ★

THE POLITICS OF NON-RENEWABLE RESOURCES

K. V. SUBRAHMANYAM

In a stimulating review of the second volume of a biography of Nehru by S. Gopal (*New Delhi*: 18-2-1980), Rajeshwar Dayal, IFS (Retd.), wrote:

"Gopal has slurred over the question of India's attitude towards the Hungarian uprising and the Soviet role in crushing it on the ground that the facts were not known at the time... Ignorance of the facts which were known widely the world over can surely offer no extenuation of the lapse when a moral issue of global proportions was involved. The key-note to the Indian response was struck by Krishna Menon when he off-handedly told a reporter that the events in Hungary were comparable to those in Ahmedabad which had recently suffered a riot."

Further comment would have been unnecessary but for the fact that Krishna Menon knew the crux of the issue was the bauxite of Hungary. The uraninite (Pitchblende) of Czechoslovakia brought the Soviet tanks rolling into Prague. When the USSR pushed its frontiers westwards into Germany before dividing the latter, it wanted to make sure that the zinc and the easily mineable coking coal deposits of Poland and Germany were within its control. This fact was later underlined when GDR's economy had to survive on the only lignite deposits it was left with as its sole energy source, the USSR agreed to supply natural gas from Siberia to the FRG, by-passing the GDR, in return for the supply of pipe-line equipment.

One of the first things the USSR did soon after the Bolsheviks came to power was to survey, on the highest priority, its mineral resources in both its European and Asiatic areas to assess what it had in plenty, what it was deficient in, and which of the latter were of critical importance to a corporate society whose economy was on a permanent war-footing. In a recent authoritative review by the U.S.A., it was found that the Soviet Union was gravely short of high-grade bauxite suitable for the production of aluminium, indispensable for the aerospace industries. It is an essential substitute for copper, the few deposits of which were located in Eastern Siberia. In regard to bauxite, the communist bloc had only 3.9 per cent and in regard to petroleum and natural gas, 9 per cent of the world resources. Most of the latter are in Siberia. It began, therefore, to cast its net far and wide to make good these deficiencies soon after Stalin came to power; and, his policy has been pursued with undiminished vigour to this day.

It was as part of this search that the Soviet Union appreciated at an early stage in its history that the global distribution of mineral resources do not, for obvious reasons, coincide with the political frontiers of today, whether national or imperial. The power that controls these resources does not auto-

matically benefit from them unless a number of pre-conditions are fulfilled.

These pre-conditions are geographical distribution, scarcity, and essentiality. The first is spatial, the second and the third spatio-temporal. For example, the iron ores exploited during the Industrial Revolution rarely exceeded 25-40 per cent. Today, nobody would even consider using such low-grade ore in the steel industry. The pitchblende of Shinkalobwe was mined for less than one per cent of its radium content until uranium became important for the production of the A-bomb in 1941. It was the iron ore and coal of Alsace-Lorraine that led to Moltke's defeat of Bazaine at Metz and enabled Bismarck to humble Napoleon III.

The intensification of international disputes over non-renewable resources depends on their political significance. Like their economic value, this is inversely related to their availability. At present rates of consumption, many of these resources may not last much beyond the century unless off-shore oil, gas, and the under-sea mining of "manganese" nodules come to the rescue.

Here, the old Laws of the Sea that defined territorial waters on the basis of the shore-based canon and the Watershed principle based on the experience of easily defensible Salamis and Khyber, must give way to internationally more acceptable ones. Resources, whose supply position might become tight in the next two decades are, thus, bound to gain political significance during the present decades. This is already happening with oil, natural gas and uranium whose distribution is also extremely skewed geographically.

There is, however, a conspicuous lack of awareness of this important fact in India's political circles, busy as they are with their tribal attitudes to economic realities. Otherwise, India would have long ago realised the ominous significance of the rupee-payment technique of trade by barter, according to which the Soviet Union decides what it would buy and the price to be paid as well as what it was willing to sell and the price to pay.

The effect of this rupee-payment venture was to reproduce, in the name of international communism, a new type of colonialism uninhibited by the protective influence of a pluralist and open society that headed the earlier empires like those of Britain and France. This has enabled the USSR to feed its new elite with prime beef to produce which it is able to buy wheat from Argentina and rice from India. The enormous petroleum feedstock with which the chemical fertilisers are produced to grow these cereals are supplied by it at the same price as prevails in the open market of today. It can secure the best tea, mica and consumer goods from India in return for obsolete equipment and conventional armaments to

keep fighting with its neighbours, the best tobacco, nickel and sugar from Cuba in return for providing Cuban mercenaries from that overpopulated island employment in snuffing out the freedom movements of Angola and Kampuchea.

As was the case with India, the USSR gave conjointly with Czechoslovakia, an equivalent of a Bhilai and an HEC to Iran in return for which it secured natural gas for sale to West European countries to earn hard currency and a handsome commission. It engaged Che Guevara to subvert the Bolivian government to get control of its tin and tungsten not long after it acquired control of Cuba through Fidel Castro.

Of all these, bauxite provides the classic example of the Soviet's mastery of the political chess game. Its early efforts to secure a grip on the bauxite of the Caribbean by using Cheddi Jagan through his "leftist" wife failed. It then shifted attention to Guinea. Here, however, Sekou Toure soon realised that under the payment-in-nonconvertible-currency scheme, it was receiving only a fraction of the price for its bauxite that the neighbouring Camerouns and Ghana were receiving, although it was generously provided with Soviet military advisors in large numbers, with quite a few Cubans thrown in to give it an anti-white stance.

About the time this Guinean adventure of the Soviet's failed, the discovery of large bauxite reserves on the Orissa-Andhra Pradesh region came to light. This was, in a sense, a god-send for the Soviets because, on the basis of the bauxite of Guinea, they had finalised a deal with Pechiney-Kuhlman for the erection and commissioning of a giant alumina facility on the Black Sea coast and its smelting for aluminium in Siberia. The Indian stuff could make good the loss from Guinea.

To begin with, the USSR got the Indian Government to let it promise to put up an alumina plant in Andhra Pradesh on a turn-key basis as part of its aid. It did not take long to get our Government to change this decision and remain content with one alumina unit in Orissa to be erected by Pechiney, so that it could import the bauxite of Andhra Pradesh direct to the Soviet Union, making up for what it had lost in Guinea.

In its global diplomacy, the USSR missed the bus in Chile and its copper, Bolivia and its tin-tungsten, Guiana and its bauxite. But it secured a powerful foothold in Cuba with its nickel, Angola with its oil, Vietnam with its tungsten and, now, Afghanistan with its so-far-discovered rich natural gas fields in the Katawaz fault-block north of the Hindukush, south of Keleft, Khwaja Gorgerdak, Sultan kot, Khwaja-Burhan and Yakin Dag in the north country.

Khwaja Gorgerdak in the Afghan side of the Oxus plains is one of the largest gas fields with reserves estimated at over 1.5 trillion cubic feet, with the total reserves of Afghanistan exceeding five trillion cubic feet. Even before Daud was bumped off, a pipe-line had been completed to transport the gas to Tashkent via Termez.

Soviet eyes are now set on the world's second largest tin province of South-East Asia—the former French Indo-China and Thailand. Here, it has

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the advantage of the political immaturity of India to avail of in abundant measure. In the name of aiding India in its search for oil and gas, it has already completed a detailed terrain-evaluation for military action in the Himalayas south of the Chinese frontier, from Kashmir to NEFA, covering the Macdonald-Macartney Line and the McMahon Line apart from the Indo-Nepalese and the Indo-Bhutanese border from its base in Dehradun. It has used the Nehru family's emotional attachment to Kashmir to prevent India from arriving at an equitable settlement with Pakistan by eliminating the traditional level-headedness of Liaquat Ali Khan in whose murder the Soviet hand is suspiciously visible and even that of the apolitical Ayub Khan so that it could pave the way for the emergence of a mediaeval theocracy there.

To India, as long ago as 1956, it gave unqualified assurance through Bulganin and Khrushchev that the whole of Jammu and Kashmir was an integral part of India. Similarly, it encouraged Vietnam to believe that if India was the rightful legatee of all that was the former British Indian Empire, Burma was not included in these claims probably because it was separated from India in 1937; but it should not be forgotten that when Arthur Moore of *The Statesman* asked Motilal Nehru what the status of Burma would be when India became Independent, in the Swaraj party days, his cryptic reply was: "Burma is, of course, an integral part of India."

South Vietnam was no less the rightful legatee of all that was the former French Empire including not only Vietnam, but also Kampuchea and Laos. The Soviets have always been expert at fanning the flames of chauvinism in politically immature countries if that served its ulterior objectives. The road has already been cleared for the local communist parties—the Fifth Column of the Soviet Union—to stir up trouble in Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia and the Philippines.

Of special interest to India is the case of enriched uranium for Tarapur. Before the establishment of URENCO/CENTEC, EURODIF and COREDIF, only the USA and the USSR had surplus capacity for uranium enrichment. So, nearly all enrichment facilities for commercial reactors were duopolised by the USA and the USSR. During this period, although the USA, the UK and France developed their own versions of commercial reactors independently, the USSR entered into several collaboration agreements with the capitalist countries the most interesting of which are with AEG-Telefunken, Siemens and KWU (originally owned by the first two but later acquired by Siemens); and the last was for the design of Light Water nuclear reactors!

With the advantage gained thus from the Federal Republic of Germany, the USSR, while enriching uranium on a custom basis for the West European countries, was building these reactors for the countries of the COMECON. As though not satisfied with this achievement, it recently entered into an agreement with HITACHI of Japan which has a collaboration agreement with GE of USA for building LWR's according to which the Japanese are to supply the equipment and the Soviets secure orders and execute them. The Soviet had enough clients in the developing

countries ready to accept aid on the basis of payment in non-convertible currency. One to receive such an offer to construct an LWR was India. But, it never extended an offer to enrich uranium on a custom basis when India found difficulty in securing it for Tarapur from the USA.

If now it is remembered that the China Seas are the off-shore equivalents of the on-shore Persian Gulf countries in regard to resources of oil and gas, it is not surprising if the ASEAN countries are apprehensive of India's ambivalent attitude towards the Soviet occupation.

The political version of Soviet diplomacy has been analysed by Mr S. Rajaratnam, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Singapore, with exceptional forthrightness and clarity. (*Freedom First*, July 80) But politics is only the thin veneer that cloaks economic realities. When one analyses the economic basis of the neo-colonialism of the Soviet Empire, tries to find out the reasons why even when it was triumphant in war, it took no interest in absorbing Finland, Sweden, Norway or Denmark, or even Austria, but Poland, Hungary and Czechoslovakia in the West and Vietnam and Kampuchea in the East while stirring up trouble in Thailand, then one understands the motivation behind its international diplomacy. It is clear that India may soon find itself part of that "Fecund system of subjugation and obedience, vast multiplication of industrious and subservient men" made to play the same role vis-a-vis China that Cuba is against the U. S. A. and Vietnam in relation to the ASEAN countries. ★

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BOMBAY DYEING



INDIAN CHAMPION FOR WORLD PRESS

WILLIAM FRANKEL

Four years ago, with the state of emergency in full flow, Mr Cushrow Irani, managing director of *The Statesman*, India's distinguished English language daily, his passport impounded and with a suitcase permanently packed against the prospect of sudden imprisonment, was engaged in a stubborn defence against Mrs Indira Gandhi's assault on the press.

With Mrs Gandhi now back in power, it is ironic that the International Press Institute, defenders of press freedom, should have just elected Mr Irani as its chairman, the first Indian to hold this office.

In his evidence before the Shah Commission (whose report, fiercely critical of Mrs Gandhi, has been withdrawn from distribution) Mr Irani placed on record his emergency experiences.

He accused the government of attempting to force *The Statesman* to toe the line by trying to interfere with editorial appointments, attempting to pack the board of directors with its own nominees, threatening shareholders, withholding economically essential advertising and trying to close the Delhi edition of the paper by confiscating its printing presses. Personal harassment of Mr Irani was a part of the process.

During the 18 months of the emergency, when democracy in India was in abeyance and thousands of Mrs Gandhi's opponents were in jail without trial, it called for considerable courage to resist. The fact that Mr Irani did so was a consequence both of his own independent and pugnacious nature and of the kind of newspaper *The Statesman* is.

Directly descended from *The Friend of India*, founded in 1818 by a campaigning English missionary, *The Statesman* became a supporter of the underdog and one of the fathers of the Indian National Congress.

Its last English proprietors decided in 1964 that it would be inappropriate for them to continue owning a major organ of public opinion in India. But, anxious to preserve its integrity and independence, they decided to sell only to a consortium of leading Indian companies. Each held a small proportion of the shares so none could dominate the newspaper's affairs.

Four years after the sale of *The Statesman* to the consortium, Mr Irani, who was by then chairman of the Calcutta board of Alliance Insurance, was invited to become the newspaper's managing director. It was then in some difficulty adjusting to the new ownership, and his arrival coincided with a financially damaging strike.

He asked for, and was given, a free hand (which has continued since) and slowly pulled the paper round, but not without taking unpopular steps which made him some enemies.

No sooner were these problems weathered, than Mrs Gandhi began her feud with the press when some papers, including *The Statesman*, opposed her nationalization of 14 major banks. Two years later, in 1971, in an oblique assault, the government proposed "de-linking" newspapers from industrial interests whose shares would be transferred to the Public Trustee.

In this way *The Statesman* would have come under complete government control. A hue and cry followed the newspaper's disclosure of the scheme, and the government retracted.

At that time Mr Irani was chairman of the Indian Newspaper Society and the spokesman for the independent press. Mrs Gandhi's irritation with him increased, and her Minister of Information told *The Statesman* that it would have to choose between the paper and its managing director.

It chose the managing director, and a state of undeclared war between *The Statesman* and Mrs Gandhi's Government continued until 1975 when the emergency made the war an open one. *The Times*, London. ★

LAW IN THE SOVIET UNION

ANDREI SAKHAROV

Does Soviet legality correlate with human rights? Some very serious violations of human rights are inherent in the very laws of the Soviet state. The death penalty, which the Soviet Criminal Code prescribes even for certain crimes not connected with violence, is a violation of the right to life. Soviet laws limit the right of free exchange of information, and of freedom of movement; they punish people for their way of life (the so called anti-parasite law); they make it possible to persecute people for their religious beliefs or for doing socially useful work by applying the article on "illegal enterprises." Many instances in the Corrective Labor Code, which governs the Soviet penitentiary system, do not conform to generally accepted international standards and to humanitarian requirements. In other cases, there appears a discrepancy between words and reality which is typical for the Soviet system: a make believe well-being, elitism and a low level of ethical culture. After decades of Stalin's

arbitrary rule, after the Nuremberg trials which condemned the judges who gave unjust sentences, we have gained a particularly clear understanding of the terrible public danger of crimes committed in the name of the law. The condemning of innocent people on criminal, political, economic, moral or ethical charges should not be tolerated. The existing juridical level of criminal trial procedures is extremely low in our country. There are instances of beatings and torture of people who are under investigation. I receive dozens of letters from the victims of such abuse and from their relatives, and can do nothing. The deliberate forgery of criminal charges used as political reprisals is intolerable. (The most predominant accusations utilized in such cases are hooliganism and the resistance to authority.)

From a message to the International Sakharov Hearings: Third Session, U. S. A. ★

VOICES 1

TEACHING THE DEAF

A question I am frequently asked, as a teacher of the deaf, is whether I can read braille. I point out gently that the deaf generally use sign language. Such little effort has been made to publicise information about the deaf that their problems remain unknown and largely neglected.

It must be clearly established that the deaf are normal in every way apart from their hearing loss. Although deafness poses serious problems where learning language is concerned, the right kind of education can help to bring deaf people up to the same intellectual level as people with normal hearing.

Deaf people in the United States as well as in countries in Europe have distinguished themselves in a variety of professions. In India too, the rare deaf person who tops an examination or makes it to college, shows that given the opportunity, the deaf can consider professions other than carpentry or manual labour.

Unfortunately, existing facilities in India are so poor that a majority of even those who graduate from school are almost illiterate. This, in addition to the strong prejudices against people with handicaps, makes it almost impossible for the deaf to find employment. In turn, this affects the entire structure of their lives, for it means that very few deaf people can afford to get married and that many of those who do, have to be supported by their families.

According to a recent report in *The Hindu*, the population of those with hearing disorders in India is about 33 million. Considering that a sizeable proportion of this number is of school-going age, the educational facilities available are minimal. The total number of deaf people who are catered to is about 10,000. According to a government circular received recently by schools for the deaf, a proposal has been made to cut even existing grants.

One of the problems of teaching deaf children is that initially each child needs intensive instruction, which can be provided only in a special school. Whereas an ordinary classroom these days accommodates 25-40 children, a class for deaf children should ideally have not more than 7-10 children, so that each child can lip-read and comfortably absorb whatever is taught. In addition, the teacher must be conversant with sign language so as to make communication easier all round. Later, those children who are academically inclined may be integrated into regular schools while others might go in for technical training.

A great barrier to expanding and improving services for the deaf is the reluctance of people to work in this field. There is, first, the fear that teaching the deaf

is a terribly enervating task and also such an alien one that almost nobody is even tempted to give it a try. If they did, they might discover, as I did, that in fact it is a lot less dreary than attending a sales promotion conference or writing endless copy for shampoo that makes one's hair stand on end.

The major problem, of course, a problem common to all teachers, is that of salaries. The assumption is that a teacher of the deaf does not—in fact should not—be paid. She is too noble to be tainted by money matters! If teaching in India, on the whole, is a badly paid profession, teaching the deaf amounts almost to charity. Unfortunately, many of those who do teach in schools for the deaf accept their lot uncomplainingly along with the haloes accorded to them by people outside their profession.

We need people in this field who will not only enjoy their work but who will take pride in it, and be prepared to admit that the work they do is important and that it deserves to be recognised—in monetary terms. Only when special education loses its aura of martyrdom and becomes truly professionalised can the deaf, as well as those with other handicaps, look forward to any progress.

UMA RANGANATHAN

VOICES 2

WHO'S GENUINE?

I was recently at the Fine Arts Faculty of the M. S. University. A beautiful place, and an institution which has nurtured some of the finest artists of this country. As I was looking around, an attractive girl walked up, and said Hi, long time no see, etc., Subtly made up, dressed in imported corduroys, and looking very chic, she wore strings of coloured beads round her ankles, had her ears pierced in a number of places, and deliberately mismatched the garish pins in her hair. It was a superb blend of the snob-imported appeal with a dash of *desi masala*, layered with superficiality.

I am in Fine Arts now, she said. I had joined Sociology (the Arts Faculty, y'know) but I just didn't fit. I mean, look at the crowd there, and my friends said, Hey what you doing in Sociology, you belong to Fine Arts.

Act snobbish, look weird and talk rubbish—that's the only way you can justify your presence in the art world. Since you are not gifted, pretend you are. Tell, persuade, cajole your mind into accepting it and one day you'll wake up and believe it yourself. Be sure of yourself, and silly enough not to understand how the real artists live. Don't worry if Bhupen Khakhar doesn't paint his moped in psychedelic colours. Or if Jyoti Bhatt doesn't dress like a freak. Or K. G. (Mani)

Subrahmanyam doesn't talk rubbish. Don't bother at all.

For these men, it's their work which is important. For you, it's the most supremely unimportant aspect of your life. It's *you* who is important. This egoism ridicules man's intelligence and lures people into making fools of themselves. Consider how much time artistic people spend on themselves to present the "casual" look? The slightly torn pants, the hair deliberately messed up, and just the right quantity of wrinkles on the *kurta*? And, as usual, the moment they open their mouths, they give themselves away.

The aesthetic crowd comes in all shapes and sizes, and belongs to both sexes. And you'll meet them everywhere. The worst are those who are in influential positions. They are capable of harm and they exercise this potential to the greatest extent.

I remember the professor who droned on about Creativity in those tortuous Literary Society meetings, and then told his post-graduate students not to bother about the theme of evil in "Paradise Lost" since the question had already been asked in the previous year's paper! Or the boss who expansively talked of Liberal Management at the Press Conference and then reduced a departmental head to a mass of jelly when things were not done his way. These egoists never realize how much they are debasing themselves in the eyes of their subordinates. They will insist on putting on a face, until ultimately it becomes a way of life.

Once I was at a party, and a young married girl was sitting in a corner, her head demurely covered with

her saree pallav. I had been introduced to her earlier and had known her as a tomboyish adolescent. She was now settled in a small town with her doctor husband. I went across, talked a bit and asked her about this new pallav scene. Her chin up in the air, she replied: "Out there, everybody looks up to Suresh, and I have to appear dignified as his wife."

She had obviously never realized that a person may be completely nude and yet look the picture of dignity.

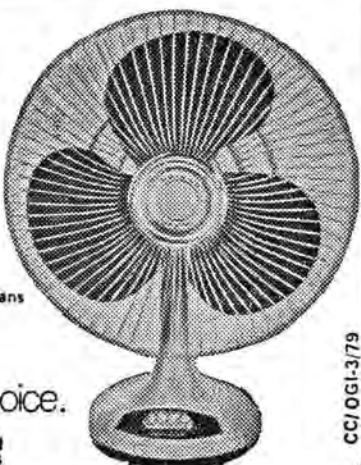
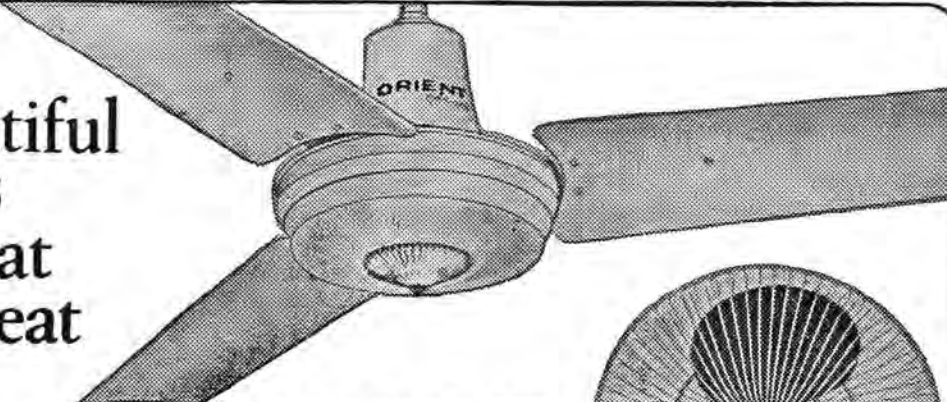
SANDHYA BORDEWEKAR

VOICES 3

SMALL-POX IN RURAL AREAS

Dr. Halfdan Mahler, Director-General of World Health Organisation (WHO) declared on October 26, last that according to the experts' verdict, small-pox had been finally eliminated "not only in the Horn of Africa and on the African continent, but throughout the world."

It is a heartening development, for small-pox had been a scourge for millions of people all over the world. It is an acute disease, caused by Variola Virus, and easily communicable. The disease is of three types,



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Variola major, intermedius and minor. Fifty per cent of major form and less than one per cent of minor form succumb to the disease. The disease is characterised by sudden onset of fever and severe prodromal symptoms; development of rashes, which progress through the stages of macule, papule vesicle, pustule and scab. The scab falls leaving permanent pock marks.

1979 marked the culmination of a 12-year-long world-wide campaign for the eradication of small-pox. In 1979, by the time the final certification of world-wide eradication was given, some \$100 million in international assistance was utilised during the last 13 years, principal contributors being WHO \$35 million, the United States \$26 million, the USSR \$13 million and Sweden \$16 million. India contributed \$5,00,000 to the programme.

The number of known cases came down from 1,31,418 in 1967 to 19,268 in 1975. The last case in the sub-continent was reported from Bangladesh in October, 1975. The search for small-pox cases was then directed to African countries like Ethiopia, Somalia, Kenya and Djibouti.

The need for remaining watchful against a new outbreak of the disease or a similar disease cannot be over-emphasized, as it leaves a permanent mark of disfigurement and also involves blindness in some cases.

At the same time, careful surveillance can ensure adequate prevention, since there is no animal or other extra-human reservoir of infection as in the case of other diseases. The disease follows a set pattern of signs and symptoms. The rashes are characteristic, and the disease can be diagnosed by a non-medical person also. It has a seasonal variation and is a focal disease, occurring within a country, district, bloc or village. The infection is clinically overt and easy to read. And finally, a good vaccine for small-pox is available, which can provide immunity for a period of five or more years.

The surveillance-containment campaign also known as "search and containment" campaign has proved highly efficacious in eliminating this disease from the country. The idea was to find a case of small-pox and vaccinate all people within a several mile radius, so that this disease cannot spread further. The first priority for vaccination was given to house-hold members and other contacts, second priority was given to all persons in the surrounding 50 houses—and a cent per cent vaccination was ensured. The third priority was for the remaining population of the affected locality. Some 20,000 health workers were engaged to comb 70,000 villages in the state of Bihar to root out the last cases of small-pox.

It may be mentioned that in 1974 alone, in the impoverished State of Bihar, 1,25,000 people fell victim to small-pox and of these 20,000 died.

The task was a gigantic one for a country like India with a population of over 60 crores. It would have

been impossible to immunise everyone. But by isolating infected areas and locking in small-pox, the disease was eradicated.

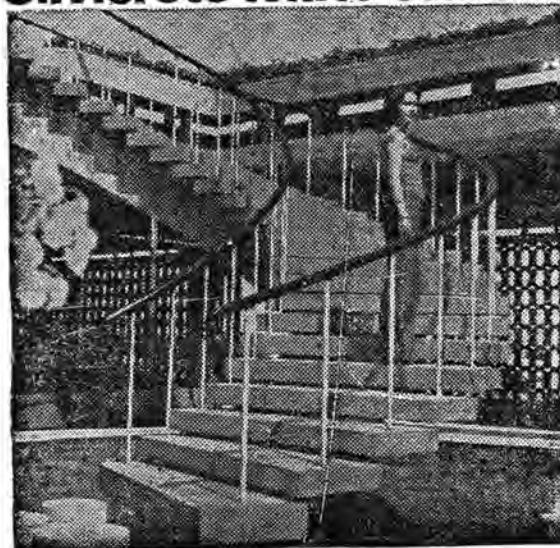
Now that this disease has been wiped out from our country it should be our constant endeavour to remain on our guard, so that small-pox cannot stage a come-back, as it is one of the worst known epidemics, which had ravaged 31 countries for many centuries. The need for a careful watch in rural areas is far more imperative, because by and large the villagers are less conscious about health-care, on account of illiteracy, backwardness, and poverty, as a result of which they have necessarily to pay priority attention to their jobs and livelihood.

Surveillance parties under a regular campaign organised by the Health Departments in different States should pay periodical, but regular visits to all villages under a planned schedule to keep a watch on all diseases. In case of emergence of any symptoms of small-pox or a similar disease, immediate steps should be taken to confine and localise the disease. Secondary surveillance should also be conducted through non-medical personnel like school-teachers, panchayat staff, etc. Rewards can also be instituted for notification of any cases or outbreaks.

The need for eternal vigilance cannot be over-emphasized, as small-pox is carried by breath, and anybody coming close to a victim can catch it. Apart from surveillance by Governmental and social organisations, it will be useful to conduct periodical campaigns so as to ensure that any body falling a victim to a similar disease is promptly isolated and treated.

HARISH KUMAR

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THE WORLD OF BOOKS

THE REBELLIOUS HOME-MAKERS by *Ināira Mahindra*, S. N. D. T. Women's University. Pp. 214. Rs 65

The author claims that the title of her book is "a startling combination of antonyms". It concerns those "women who live in a traditional setting, yet strain at the ropes to loosen the bond. Behind a conformist exterior they germinate and nurture a rebel." The argument favours the preservation of the Indian family system.

It begins with a rehash of the story of civilization with a feminist slant. "To regain self-respect women have to understand how man achieved a dominant position in the world." Male superiority is not attributed to his mental faculties, but to his physical and sexual prowess.

Ms Mahindra is at her best when she deals with "social history". She takes for special study the development of The Hindu System Of Marriage, "since it has had a continuous existence for roughly 5000 years." At this point the book is heavily documented and often repetitive. Chapter divisions are not clear cut. Points already dealt with in previous chapters have been restated. For example, the chapter entitled "The Silent Half" is largely a summary of the preceding chapters.

The systematic regression of the status of the Hindu women after the Aryan invasions and its further deterioration under the onslaught of Manu forms the substance of the middle portion of the book. But Manu's very lack of moderation implies that the Vedic woman was reasonably independent and could use her womanhood to her own advantage. Ms Mahindra gives us these details but at different points in the study. At no stage does she try to provide a coherent vision of a relatively enlightened age. This is left to the reader to infer.

The author repeatedly tell us that the Indian woman must follow her "tradition". She must not lose her modesty and blindly follow "Western Liberals". But she never tells us what this tradition is supposed to mean. And to say that one must follow a tradition which has been deadened by force of habit, by a rigid way of thinking and living, and by a welter of rules, taboos and superstitions is to be merely conventional.

The author's conception of the prototype marriage is: "When a wife makes a peaceful home, where a husband feels secure, and where the husband em-

braces the shoulders of an aspiring woman — you have an ideal combination." Besides the improbability of the scenario, it is a reversal of the entire feminist vision. Women in the 20th century are not fighting for better living conditions. They are fighting for independence, equality and dignity in private and public life. The man-woman relationship in the family is only one aspect of it.

Given the conditions of Indian society today, Ms Mahindra does not suggest a viable alternative for those women who cannot make a secure home due to an inherent incompatibility or a tyrannical husband. She has no place for divorce in her book.

Ms Mahindra is rather extravagant in her use of adjectives and often faulty in her perceptions. In the preface she talks of a "powerful feminist movement" in the 1960's. If there has been a feminist movement it has not touched the Indian middle class. Ms Mahindra's observations are limited to the upper-class city-bred woman. She says that the history of the Indian woman "is the only one of its kind in the world to have had a 'colourful' continuity from ancient to Modern Times". "Colourful" is hardly accurate to describe a static condition.

One must challenge Ms Mahindra's assertion that the Indian woman is better off than her American counterpart because the latter has to contend with "male chauvinism". The Indian woman, she says, is saved from utter degradation by the "Ma-Bahen" syndrome; a "sentimental" and "pure" attachment towards mother and sister, preventing the Indian man from becoming "the most hardened male chauvinist in the world". *Rakshabandhan* is the ritualistic manifestation of this filial affection.

How is it, then, that wife-burning, wife-beating and rape are so frighteningly common? Indian women, it seems, do not have to contend with male chauvinism, only with male savagery.

Ms Mahindra has read a great deal, as is evident from the extensive bibliography, but has analysed little. She occasionally advises but has no coherent thesis. Fact and analysis are confused to present a somewhat muddled and diffuse viewpoint. Even so, it is a useful first book for anyone interested in the subject. It is easy to read, the style is not weighed down with technicalities, and there is much information in every chapter.

HAVOVI ANKLESARIA

SIEGE! by the *Sunday Times* Insight Team, Hamlyn, £ 1.10

It was a chilly overcast morning on Wednesday, April 30, when six gunmen led by a youth named Oan burst into the Iranian Embassy at 16, Princes Gate, London. With an arsenal of automatics, revolvers and hand-grenades, they took twenty-six prisoners, of which seventeen were embassy staff, eight were visitors, and one a luckless policeman responsible for the security of the building.

So began the siege which was to terrorise the hostages for the next six days. The gunmen belonged to the Democratic Revolutionary Front for the Liberation of Arabistan, situated at the southern end of the Persian Gulf. They demanded that the Tehran Government release ninety-one prisoners held in Arabistan jails; otherwise they threatened to blow up the embassy with the hostages inside it.

With the terrorists and their captives in a state of nerves, the atmosphere inside the embassy had a tangible if undefinable tension. Meanwhile, outside 16, Princes Gate, the police which had cordoned off the area, had other considerations on their minds. Within hours, they had to deal with "the media circus spreading across the embassy area like a carnival." Secondly, there were about 300-400 Iranians serenading everyone with their pro-Khomeini slogans; on the other "British yobbos responding in derision."

The police officers attempted to negotiate with the gunmen, while the Government secret crisis committee went into session to co-ordinate action between different ministries to tackle the emergency. The strategy of the Metropolitan Police had been to keep talking at all costs.

By the fifth day, the crisis was nowhere near solution. The British government even considered one of the gunmen's demands of using Arab ambassadors as mediators; but the latter only agreed to intervene if safe conduct was granted to the terrorists. This was unacceptable.

By day six, the terrorists were obviously beginning to lose patience, and tension mounted ominously when they noticed the plaster on the first floor landing bulging outwards. In order to plant bugging devices, the police had drilled through the embassy walls from adjoining houses. Oan announced his intention to kill a hostage every 45 minutes. Abbas Lavasani, the Iranian press attache, volunteered to be a martyr for Islam. His wish was granted.

The British government was running out of solutions other than the ultimate one of using force. When the last-minute moral exhortations of a senior Islamic cleric failed to placate the gunmen, the stage was set for the SAS (Special Air Service) regiment to storm the embassy before more lives were lost. The derring-do rescue and how it nearly went wrong, is described in the final cliff-hanging pages of the book.

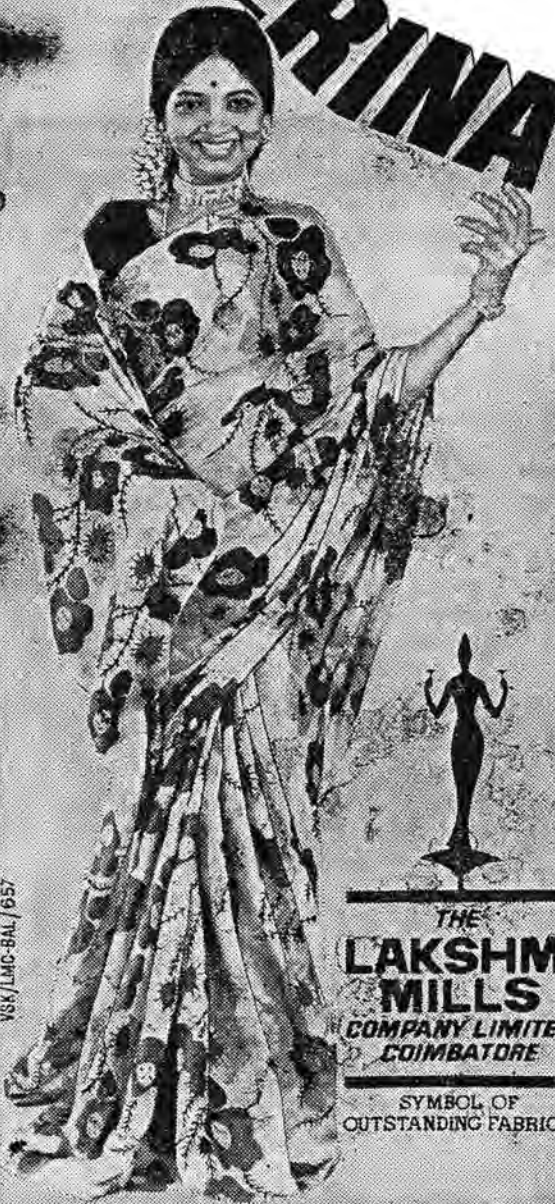
Considering the secrecy of the entire operation, the *Sunday Times* Insight Team of reporters has managed to unravel several hitherto unknown facts. *Siege!* tells a compelling narrative, weaving together the disparate strands of the story. Ingeniously well-crafted, it is an illustration of brilliant and diligent journalism.

RASHMI TANEJA

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END OF THE OLYMPICS

That the race has not been won by the swiftest, nor the battle by the strongest, is amply evident in the recent international arena of sport—the Moscow Olympics—and in the conflict raging in Afghanistan. For the countries and the gold-medal winners of the last Olympics that did not participate this time, the joy of taking part and even winning was not worth the misery being inflicted on their fellowmen in Afghanistan by the Soviet Union. To them, a threat to the freedom of any nation, is basically a threat to mankind.

The call for a boycott of the Olympics by the U. S. has been decried by lovers of sport all over the world, as well as those eager to make political capital at U. S. expense. While it is true that the boycott undeniably affected hundreds of athletes, and detracted from the interests of sport, it was even more disheartening to find that the vital issues at stake, which led to the boycott, are so completely misunderstood or ignored.

The angry cry, "Sports and Politics should not mix", has been heard everywhere. Indeed, Baron de Coubertin who revived the Olympics in 1896 must on the basis of this logic be turning in his grave, for he conceived of an Olympics for athletes from all over the world to come together to compete in amity. But this ideal was never followed. Individuals have always competed under the banner of their national flags. National anthems have been played with much fanfare, national costumes sported, and national patriotism fiercely displayed.

And nowhere so marked as in 1936, the year of the Berlin Olympic Games, when Hitler used them for a display of totalitarian strength, even while World War II was about to erupt. That year was all the more remarkable for black American Jesse Owen's incredible performance which destroyed the theory of Aryan supremacy, in the face of tremendous hostility. So, the theory that sports and politics should not mix, is just that—a theory which has not been practised, and cannot be practised inspite of the best intentions.

This is so primarily because it is impossible to separate sports from politics. One could say: "I am an athlete who enjoys running the 100 metres for the sheer joy of it all, but if by running at Moscow I indirectly further the suppression of individuals who cannot run for joy at the Olympics, because they are running for their very lives from the host country's guns—I am not being very sporting at all." Call it politics or call it sport, it is the same thing. All talk of keeping sporting traditions alive when one's fellowmen are reeling under the most unfair, unsporting and ruthless intimidation, is meaningless.

The very aims of the Olympics during Grecian times, which was the suspension of wars, to enable

athletes from all states to compete in an atmosphere free from hostility, has been negated. The spirit of the Olympics, of free competition in peace and goodwill amongst men has been denied by the Russian invasion of a non-aligned country. When India, the leader of the non-aligned countries, apart from making appeals for withdrawal of Soviet troops from non-aligned Afghanistan, obeys Moscow's invitation to the Games, the real freedom of non-aligned nations is questionable.

Statements from noted commentators like A.F.S. Talyarkhan that the Olympics have been dealt a death blow because of the boycott, and his question of what will happen to the 1984 Olympics if the USSR and others decide to boycott in retaliation, is totally at a tangent to the vital issue of freedom that is at stake. An individual's and a nation's right to live—play, work and worship—without any outside interference, is at stake. When the hospitality of the Soviet Union is accepted, acquiescence in its brutal methods of suppressing freedom is implied.

Lord Killanin in an almost desperate attempt to save the Games from being boycotted agreed to accept individual applications from athletes regardless of their nation's boycott. However, the signature of the respective Presidents of the National Olympics Committee, which in the first place was boycotting the Games, was necessary, which only underscored the futility of trying to delink sports from nationalism. When a sports journalist was debarred for his "political reporting", a Soviet spokesman passed it off by saying that it could not be helped, as politics affects everything, even sport!

Today, if we have accepted an invitation to Moscow, tomorrow we cannot protest if our host in turn decides to visit us! To take this one step further, every action, be it in international sports, trade, or culture is but one facet of a nation's total personality. And we are, in this ever-shrinking world of jet travel, multinational corporations, and nuclear missiles, political beings, accountable to each other for our actions.



(Cartoon: Behrendt/Dez Fagundes)

It is not difficult to imagine what the national reaction would have been had the Russians decided to "help" India instead of Afghanistan, made themselves at home with their superior military might, and then issued invitations to the rest of the "peace-loving" world to take part in the Olympics.

Already, our sportsmen have participated, and won a gold in hockey. But at what cost and to what purpose? To the glory of sport, when we did not face the hockey champions of the last Olympics?

Reports of the chilling "perfection" of the Moscow Games, amidst an atmosphere of strict security, constant surveillance and harsh disciplinary actions against sportsmen and umpires not kowtowing to the ruthless might of the "hospitable" host undermined the customary sportsmanship and camaraderie of Olympiads, even in the heat of competition. Obviously the *raison d'être* of sports—the development of body as well as mind, and the age-old philosophy behind taking part—in the importance of "not whether one won or lost, but how one played the game", was beyond this host country. The Soviets have won themselves a bagful of gold, but the golden rule is alien to them.

The 1980 (USSR) Handbook for Party militants blatantly states: "The decision to award the honour of holding the Olympic Games to the capital of the world's first socialist state is convincing testimony of the general recognition of the historic importance and correctness of the foreign policy course of our country, and of the enormous services of the Soviet Union in the struggle for peace." Especially perhaps in Afghanistan? Can it be that sports and politics do not mix?

PREETH I. BIDAPPA

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VIET-CONG GENERAL

By Thomas Hamm

PARIS, June 27 (IHT) Truong Nhu Tang, a founding member of the Communist-controlled National Liberation Front of South Vietnam and the justice minister of the Provisional Revolutionary Government, escaped from Vietnam last fall as a simple boat person, feeling betrayed by the North Vietnamese Communists and let down by his former comrades.

Mr. Tang, 57, is, along with Hoang Van Hoan, a former member of the Politburo who defected to China in 1979, the highest-ranking personality to escape from Vietnam since the Communist takeover.

Now, five years after the Communists won the war, "liberated" the South and reunified the country, Mr. Tang denounced them in an interview in Paris, where he has sought refuge from the "tyranny and the totalitarianism" of the current Vietnamese regime, which he labeled "a servant of the Soviet Union."

Mr. Tang's statements provide a striking example of the rift between South Vietnamese nationalists and the Communists, who at one time fought for the same cause.

Mr. Tang joined the National Liberation Front to "fight against the American intervention and the despotism of a corrupt government." He said the Communist-controlled National Liberation Front, which became the PRG in 1969, was a nationalist movement that intended to "build an independent, democratic, peaceful, neutral and prosperous South Vietnam" before unifying the country "step by step... on the basis of discussions and agreement between both zones, without coercion by either side."

But this policy, repeatedly emphasized in the programs of both the National Liberation Front and the PRG and acknowledged by the 1973 Paris peace agreements, was "flouted by the Communists," who used the rapid collapse of the Saigon regime in 1975 to "divert for its own profit a historic occasion for the Vietnamese people," Mr. Tang said.

"I was convinced that once we had regained independence, it would be possible to cooperate with the Communists in the construction of a genuinely democratic society," he said. "But they rushed the unification process. As time went by, I realized that the just cause of independence and liberty had been betrayed by the leaders of the Vietnamese Communist Party. Instead of a policy of reconciliation and national concord, they conducted a policy of vengeance and repression."

This perception has led nationalists like Mr. Tang to doubt the patriotism of Vietnamese Communists and their sincerity during the years they supported the National Liberation Front and its military arm, the Viet Cong.

"The Vietnamese Communists are professional seducers, full of attentions when they are not in power," said Mr. Tang. "But once they held power, they turned into insensitive, ungrateful, cynical and brutal human beings."

"It should be up to the Vietnamese people to find their own form of society that corresponds politically, economically and socially to the soul of the country, to its state of development. Instead, the Communist Party wants to build a nation whose ambitions for power go beyond the material and moral resources of the country. . . (Vietnam) is the Asian Cuba of Soviet expansionism."

The Soviet Union pours military aid into Vietnam worth an estimated \$3 million a day. Political analysts believe that Vietnam is an excellent investment for the Soviet Union, giving the Russians the use of former U.S. military facilities as well as providing them with an important strategic base in an area where U.S. influence and military strength are at a low ebb.

But the consequences for Vietnam are seen as isolation from the rest of the world and hostility toward China.

"Vietnam no longer receives technical or financial help, or even moral support from anyone save the Soviet Union, and the Soviet Union alone cannot carry Vietnam on its back forever," continued Mr. Tang. "Moreover by opposing China, Vietnam has committed a geopolitical and historical mistake, because no country can live in a state of hostility toward China, with which Vietnam is condemned to eternally share its border."

He sees four basic contradictions facing the Vietnamese Communists:

Ideological. Vietnam is pursuing a "Marxist-Leninist brand of working-class Communism" in a predominantly peasant country.

Economic. "The party has boasted that it can pass directly from a feudal and colonial society to a Communist one without passing through a capitalist phase that would give them the necessary material and industrial bases." He estimated that Vietnam annually has a shortfall of between 2 and 3 million tons of staple foods.

Political. "The discrepancy between the ambitious objectives and the very limited means has led the leaders to commit serious strategic and tactical errors."

Social. The party-state is developing "a class of corrupt bureaucrats that enlarges the gap between the party and the people."

The picture that emerged from Mr. Tang's description is of a country facing deep economic and political problems whose only solution would be a change of course by the regime. This seems highly unlikely, according to Mr. Tang, but he said that the mood is one of "discontent" although the population manifests only "passive resistance to the regime."

However, Mr. Tang warned that an explosion could take place if "war and misery continue." He said the goal of his "temporary exile" was to organize resistance.

The New York Herald Tribune, 28th June 1980.

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INVESTIGATIONS

PATTERNS IN HIGHER EDUCATION 2

S. K. OOKERJEE

The college teacher is not a purveyor of ready-made information or an instructor in skills. He is an explorer of ideas, concepts, theories, examining those which are already in the field and, in however small a way, suggesting new ones. In this adventure he looks for assistance from his students, who, in their turn, are expected to learn the art of exploration by doing the job with him.

Every teacher is an individual, making a distinctive contribution and making it in a manner which he considers most appropriate. If he is to do his job well, he must be given the chance to do it as he wants.

But this freedom would be ill-used if the teacher lacks intellectual and moral maturity. He must of course know his subject but he must also be sincerely dedicated to his task, and keen to pass on to his students some measure of the excitement which he feels in his own work. Do we have many such teachers? From my admittedly limited experience, I am inclined to give a cynical answer.

Many of those already in the profession, being the products of the very system I am criticising, have never really themselves felt the thrill of the intellectual adventure. Those who had it have lost heart. The ill-paid profession does not attract the best talent. I know that money cannot make a good teacher, but neither can it make a good lawyer or doctor or banker. Nevertheless lawyers, doctors and bankers are paid rather well.

In these and other professions we do not think it unnecessary to give high salaries, guarantee security of service, provide attractive conditions and side benefits. Either we believe that education is not a socially valuable activity or we regard it as so noble that only heroes and saints can undertake it.

Before leaving the subject of teaching, let me make a further point. The teaching of the courses must be so planned and the college examinations and tests must be so contrived that the student would find it unavoidable to do a reasonable amount of reading, note-taking and material-gathering on his own. He must be weaned away from intellectual breast-feeding and learn—progressively through the first, second and third years—to seek his own nourishment and to eat by himself.

It is a sensible idea to provide, in the regular timetable, special library periods during which the student would sit in the library and read under the supervisory eye of the teacher. Such periods should of course be "admissible" in calculating the work-load of a teacher. You can guess how the Government would view this.

Unless and until our school teaching improves and the college-aspiring pupils are familiarised, before joining college, with the lecture-method and trained to make the best use of it, that method needs to be not only supplemented, but to a great extent substituted, by the tutorial method.

Our students have developed a remarkable ability to swallow large chunks of "knowledge", but they are not able to bite into them and, consequently, cannot digest them; the undigested substances are vomited out at the time of the finals. If, therefore, we intend to nourish the students and improve their mental health, we must break up the knowledge we want them to imbibe into chewable morsels. Such morsel feeding (not to be confused with spoon-feeding) demands small classes, through which alone a sufficiently close and individual contact between student and teacher can be established for the teacher to be able to attend to what the student is doing (or not doing), to pinpoint his troubles, to help him along, guiding, correcting, coaxing, encouraging.

An "educationist" recently declared that teachers are now "an affluent class" and should not complain about their condition!

The teacher must get to know each student's assimilative capacity, his interests and aspirations, his likes and dislikes. In recent years—strange irony—due to the laxity of the university and the colleges, such close contact was, up to a point, possible, because very few students came to class. But in the absence of the other necessary conditions, such contact by itself failed to achieve much.

Tutorials, however, still remain the *harijans* of our system. The Government favours large classes, where, naturally, only the lecture-method can be used. It has no sympathy with the view that it is better for society to have 50 well educated persons than 500 under-educated ones. It does not allow a subject-department to be opened unless 15 students enroll for it and it periodically threatens to disallow presently functioning departments which have only a few students. This means that it does not permit (leave alone encourage) the use of the tutorial method even where something like it already exists. And the university does not even raise a little finger of protest.

The three necessary requirements of a sound college education (which I have discussed above) raise problems regarding the university examinations at the end of the academic year. How could the university, in its examining function, cope with so much freedom and flexibility, such a wide range of

FREEDOM FIRST

alternative courses offered by different colleges? It couldn't. And it needn't. The giving of a substantial measure of "home rule" to each college is the obvious answer. I think the idea is feasible if carefully worked out, and it would not entail the grave dangers which are dreaded in some quarters. Why not give it a try, anyway? It could not be worse than the present mess.

I am not making these remarks for the first time. I have been going at it for some time now, whenever

I have had the opportunity. I am not so presumptuous as to think that my hammerings have produced any significant dent in the university's armour of timidity, complacency and conservatism. The recent awakening was probably due to the legal bludgeon. Nevertheless, however feeble one's blows might be, one has to go on striking them in the hope that a cumulative effect may be produced. The university has taken two steps forward. Will it march further?

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