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Editor : K. S. VENKATESWARAN

32nd Year of Publication

freedom first

SEPTEMBER 1984 Price Rs. 2

379

A JOURNAL OF LIBERAL IDEAS

"I AM A REPENTANT SOCIALIST"

—ACHYUT PATWARDHAN

(We are privileged to carry an exclusive interview with Achyut Patwardhan, the well-known freedom fighter, by Sumant Bankeshwar)

Achyut Patwardhan: I would like to say a few words before you ask me your questions. I retired from politics long ago. I do not make good copy. I cannot understand why Minoo has picked me up from the dustbin of history and asked you to interview me. I am a non-person now and my views do not carry weight. Minoo has a strong sense of loyalty towards his old friends. I stopped giving interviews to the press long ago. However, out of my high regard for Minoo, I have acceded to his request. Now carry on.

Sumant Bankeshwar: I am told that you were once a confirmed Marxist. Will you please enlighten me on your transition from Marxism to Gandhism?

AP: No, you are mistaken. I was never a Marxist. I was not a Gandhian either. I was a reluctant Socialist. I was also a reluctant politician. I would not like to be called even an ex-politician. I joined the freedom movement because I then believed that paradise would descend over our country once the British quit and our poverty would disappear. I was proved wrong. I then thought that only Socialism could solve all our problems and drive out our poverty. I was proved wrong here too. I have been thus cheated twice and would not like to be cheated again. I therefore would not like to worship at the shrine of another false God.

I reluctantly continued to be a member of the Congress Socialist Party at the annual session of the Indian National Congress at Lahore. My socialist friends asked me not to take Socialism seriously. They said that it was just an answer to our Communists to show that we were no less keen than they were about Socialism and that Socialism was not the monopoly of Marxists.

It is true that I believed in the socialisation of our

natural resources for the benefit of our people. I also held the view that the allocation of natural resources should be utilised in the larger interests of our masses. Subsequently, we discovered many things which went wrong in the Soviet Union.

I continue to believe that our natural resources should be utilised for the benefit of our masses, but this job should be entrusted to a Planning Commission of experts independent of the government. The Planning Commission should be retrieved from the octopus-hold of the government.

I had once preferred State Capitalism to Private Capitalism. I did not then realise that state ownership of all means of production had its own inherent dangers. The state is after all run by a political party. The interests of the state have now come to mean the interests of the ruling party. To be more precise, the interests of the ruling party just means the interests of the ruling clique. The gangsters who control the party create compelling situations for the government.

The mere change in the pattern of ownership of the means of production is not going to solve our problems. Similarly the mere replacement of the ruling party by another party is not going to solve our problems either. The miserable performance of all our state-run industries has completely disillusioned me and made me reconsider my earlier views about Socialism. It is in this context that I said the other day that I was a repentant socialist.

As a socialist, I had propagated a number of half-truths, although innocently, which did damage to our national interests. I therefore owe an apology to our people whom I had fooled by my innocent convictions. This does not mean that I have discovered new merits in private capitalism. I do not hold a devil's brief for the capitalist class in India or elsewhere.

SB: All the developed countries in the non-communist world have moved away from the disastrous path

of socialism and prospered. May I have your comments?

AP: Yes, you are partly right. But free enterprise is no longer free in these countries. It is regulated by the government which is playing an increasing role in taming capitalism.

In our time, we thought that ideology played an important role in changing the social structure of our society. We now find today that technology changes the social structure of our society faster than any ideology, and ideology is lagging behind in the race. Therefore, the factor that is forcing change is not ideology, but technology.

The millions of peasant-proprietors are the backbone of a country's economy. The state has to subserve its interests to their welfare. Our very freedom depends on them. Wherever the state has taken over agriculture from their hands, it has ended in disaster. The examples of Russia and China are before us. Facts are more important than opinions.

SB: May I have your comments on the nationalisation of banks?

AP: I was once in favour of nationalisation of banks. I thought that the credit resources of a country should not be used only from the criterion of their profitability, but in accordance with the priorities set by our Planning Commission. But our actual experience shows us that the party in power is using the govern-

ment's credit agencies to further its own interests at the cost of even healthy industrial concerns. I had not anticipated that the noble ideal of nationalisation of banks would be completely distorted by the party in power to its advantage. I also did not realise then that this kind of total distortion was implicit in the logic of state controlling the credit resources.

SB: May I have your comments on the *mass loan melas* held recently by the nationalised banks?

AP: I think it is a most unscrupulous misuse of the credit system.

Whether a state is democratic or totalitarian, a state agency is a diabolic and mischievous agency. The problem today is how to tame state power, political power and political parties controlled by gangsters.

SB: There is an increasing tendency among our political parties to select their leader by 'consensus'. Is not this 'consensus' a fraud and a sham as it just means the voice of a Big Brother and nothing else?

AP: You don't need me to certify your statement, as history has proved it amply. The manner in which the Janata parliamentary party leader was 'elected', rather selected, by the so-called consensus led to its disaster. I care for facts, and facts are more important than anybody's opinion. There is no doubt that 'consensus' is a device to sidestep or bypass an election.

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AS I SEE IT

MINOO MASANI

I AM delighted to learn from *The Sunday Observer* of July 22 that the Muslim women of Goa, led by a brave young woman, Miss Rashida Muzawar, President of the Goa Muslim Women's Association, are campaigning against an idiotic move to deny them the continuing benefit of a common civil code covering succession, marriage and divorce and to replace it with Muslim personal law such as we have in the rest of India.

Let me share the background to this interesting development about which I myself did not know till I saw the article by Linken Fernandes. It seems that the Portuguese—God bless them!—were more sensible than the British in enacting a common civil code for all their citizens in Goa, Daman and Diu. This happy state of affairs continued till Goa was “liberated” by the Indian Army, just like Sikkim and Nagaland.

In 1979, Chief Justice Y. V. Chandrachud, while inaugurating a conference on family law in Goa said he found it “heartening that the dream of a uniform civil code in the country finds its realisation in the Union Territory of Goa, Daman and Diu only . . . It would be a retrograde step if Goa too were to give up the uniformity in its personal laws which it now possesses.”

It is sad to learn that this retrograde step is now about to be taken. Two years after Justice Chandrachud made his wise statement, the Congress (I) Government in Goa appointed a committee to consider the extension of the country's various personal laws to Goa. For God's sake, why? Why should Goa step backwards in this respect because the rest of India lags behind? Are we a Union of States or a unitary government?

Anyway, it is good to know that the committee's appointment galvanised the Muslim Youth Welfare Association into activity and also resulted in the establishment of the Goa Muslim Women's Association, with Miss Rashida Muzawar as its President.

If the Cong. (I) in Goa has its way, says Shaikh Abdul Hamid, an executive committee member of the Muslim Youth Welfare Association, “*Talak* and polygamy as they are now used, rather misused, which are totally unfair to women,” will be reimposed on the unfortunate Muslim women of Goa.

Miss Muzawar, says the article, is a slim first-year law student. Her concern was aroused when, in the course of her social work, she met victims of the law from South India and elsewhere. She has launched a

door-to-door campaign to educate her co-religionists about the dangers of Muslim law.

Rashida also made an interesting discovery that, in neighbouring states, Muslims prefer to see their daughters married to Goan Muslims under the Goan law, because as she says the Portuguese code gives a woman security and status.

It appears that the All India Muslim Personal Law Board review committee is going to visit Goa shortly. At an earlier meeting in Madras, the Board has already passed a resolution “deploring that the Shariat Act had not been extended to Goa even though Goa was a part of India. It would request the government to exempt Muslims from compulsory registration of marriage as this did not suit the tenets of Islam. It would send Muslim leaders, including *ulemas*, to educate Goans in general and Muslims in particular, on the importance, implication and efficacy of the Shariat Act.”

We have been hearing a lot from Prime Minister Indira Gandhi on television about the importance of India being and remaining “secular”. This, I suppose, is one of the ways in which the Cong. (I), both in Delhi and Goa, is helping with that process. Don't make me laugh!

I happen to be one of the pioneers since 1947 of the move for a common civil code throughout India. As a member of the Advisory Sub-Committee on Fundamental Rights of the Constituent Assembly of India, I was one of those who put up an unsuccessful fight for the view that we should legislate in favour of a common civil code applicable to our citizens. I am glad to say that I was supported by Rajkumari Amrit Kaur, Mrs. Hansa Mehta and Dr. Ambedkar.

We submitted a minute of dissent which said:

“One of the factors that has kept India back from advancing to nationhood has been the existence of personal laws based on religion which keep the nation divided into water-tight compartments in many aspects of life. We are of the view that a uniform civil code should be guaranteed to the Indian people within a period of five to ten years.”

Isn't it interesting that the majority that succeeded in defeating our liberal proposition was an all-Hindu majority comprising of Acharya Kripalani, Sir Alladi Krishnaswami Ayyar, Dr. K. M. Munshi, Professor K. T. Shah and Mr. Jairamdas Daulatram?

Once again in Goa, this pernicious move has come not from the Muslim minority in Goa but from the

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Hindu majority in Delhi and Goa. So let us go on talking about "secularism" on radio and television while destroying what little of it is left in the country. Jai Hind!

* * *

May I add my sixpenny worth of support to the many protests made in different sections of the Indian press against the disgraceful terms of an ordinance enacted by the President of the Republic, no doubt on the Union Government's advice, which seeks to shift the onus of proof of innocence or guilt in certain cases from the prosecution to the defence?

It is one of the fundamental principles of the rule of law which we have inherited from the British that a man is to be presumed to be innocent till he is proved guilty. But not any longer, if Prime Minister Indira Gandhi and her Cabinet are to have their way. In any part of the country which is certified by the Union Government to be "disturbed", a person accused of "terrorism" has to prove that he is innocent to avoid being convicted of the crime. Even a journalist or an innocent bystander could be the victim of such a lawless law. If he is so convicted he cannot appeal to the High Court but only to the Supreme Court. It is understood several organisations, including those of lawyers, are gearing up to challenge this provision of the Terrorist Affected Areas (Special

Courts) Ordinance 1984, in the Supreme Court in the hope that it will be struck down.

This ordinance is one of the ugly by-products of the recent events in the Punjab. The sad thing is that the disturbances will end but this ugly legacy will remain on the Statute Book for years and years to come.

There are two things wrong with this ordinance. One, it is undemocratic and a disgrace for any civilised country to adopt. The second is that preliminary debate and scrutiny have been evaded by the Union Government persuading the President to misuse his powers just before Parliament was about to convene. Prime Minister Indira Gandhi is of course adept at this procedure. Didn't she get the Banks Nationalisation Ordinance enacted on a Saturday afternoon when Parliament was due to meet on a Monday morning in July 1968? I was one of those who went to the Supreme Court to get this ordinance struck down and, thank God, the Supreme Court did so. But the habit persists. Will the Supreme Court once again strike down this misuse of the ordinance-making power and protect the right of every Indian to be considered innocent till he is proved guilty? Or shall we join the Soviet dictatorship in gradually reducing the people of India to serfdom?

(Courtesy: *The Statesman*)

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DANGEROUS PORTENTS

GOVIND TALWALKAR

AFTER ASSAM the army was used on a large scale in the Punjab which had a tragic aftermath. Some Sikh jawans and few officers in the army revolted and tried to make their way to Amritsar. At the time of the Partition the Indian army had to be divided on religious grounds but afterwards it remained one of our most secular organisations. This has now received a severe jolt and is a matter of concern that the bug of religious feeling has bitten the army. We are now forewarned.

But the moot question is about using the army to settle the political or civil problems. The Congress (I) has been saying one thing and doing quite another. On June 8, 1979, when it was out of power the party's Working Committee passed a resolution which referred to the deployment of the army to quell the police revolt in Gujrat which was then under the Janata rule.

The resolution said, "Within three months, the Gujrat government had to take the help of the army twice to discharge routine law-enforcing functions by manning the police stations in Ahmedabad. . . . The climax was reached when the armed forces and the police clashed. The CWC takes the view that the repeated dependence on the army for maintenance of law and order was a definite sign that the government was fast losing (its) democratic and political legitimacy."

This was in 1979. In 1980 the Congress (I) came into power at the centre as also in several states. It conveniently forgot its own resolution and as if struck by amnesia called the army in Assam in 1980. In May 1981 Bangalore witnessed communal trouble and the Chief Minister, Gundu Rao called the army. In Baroda similar trouble arose in 1982 and Mr. Madhavsingh Solanki emulated the example of Gundu Rao and only with the help of the army did peace return to Baroda. In the same year Bombay had the test of a police revolt, when also the administration had to fall back upon the army. Assam in 1983, was to go to the polls, but could not do so without the protection of the army. This year in Bhivandi and Bombay the police force was inadequate to face the communal flare-up. There was, therefore, no option but to call the army. And the north-east is for a long time witnessing army rule.

So what is sauce for the Congress (I) goose was not sauce for the Janata gander. In the Janata rule the army's help denoted the collapse of the political and democratic machinery while Mrs. Gandhi had no

compunction to congratulate the army officers for the excellent work done by them in Assam.

In the pre-Independence era the army was sometimes used to face political agitations but such occasions were rare. Unlike today, the state and central governments then did not have a large police force. On the other hand, the governments in the post-Independent era have used the army to settle political problems very often. This means that civil rule or the democratic process has failed to cope with the situation.

Failure of the police force is not a sudden happening, but is a long process traceable to numerous factors. Over-population is one of them. Bombay, Calcutta and many other cities have grown to vast proportions and have become difficult to manage. The police force has not grown proportionately nor has it kept up with the scientific and technological advances.

Also black money, smuggling and large slums have created problems of their own. Smugglers are being protected by politicians. So are the slum lords and gangsters. All the cities have a large lumpen population which is out to destroy anything and this is used by unscrupulous politicians without the slightest compunction. Trade came to a halt in the Bhendi Bazar area of Bombay recently to protest against the detention of Haji Mastan, a well-known smuggler. The city had never witnessed such a shameless spectacle.

Of course, Maharashtra (including Bombay) is comparatively better off than Bihar, U.P., M.P., etc. There the various areas are ruled by dacoits and anti-social elements enjoying full political patronage.

Political interference in the appointment, promotion and transfers of the police personnel has now become commonplace. This has demoralised the police force besides politicising it. The government does not receive objective intelligence reports any more. The Intelligence Branch tends to give reports that are palatable to the powers-that-be. This all-round degradation has made the police force incapable of handling any serious eruption of public disorder.

The moral degradation of political life was accelerated after the first Congress split, but with the assumption of power by the Congress (I) in 1980, the country has witnessed the ascendancy of the most unscrupulous elements. Never were ministerial posts

manned by ruffians who play havoc with the organised life of society as they have been in recent years. Frequent and erratic changes in the leadership of the states have inevitably resulted in the state leadership being constantly undermined and hamstrung. When a crisis arises it is beyond the competence of leaders to face it boldly. When Ministers and Chief Ministers are all the while uncertain of their future, how can they be expected to lay down a policy and undertake long-term programmes? The political machinery is in shambles and therefore unable to cope with the grave problems and situations.

No problem is tackled on time and satisfactorily. Everything is viewed in terms of electoral gains. The political leadership must have an iron will but at the same time it must be considerate. We now have a leadership which does not believe in the politics of consensus but is out for confrontation. Indeed it thrives on confrontation. This is why we have tensions all over the country.

The problem of illegal immigration in Assam was pushed under the carpet for far too long. A solution to the Punjab problem was unnecessarily delayed and to beat the moderate Akalis, extremist elements were pampered. These elements soon took over the situation and the army was the inevitable answer.

Deployment of the army to settle the civil problems is fraught with danger. The army is not meant to enforce law and order, but to preserve the security of the country. Unlike the police force who are local and know the people well, army jawans and

officers come from different parts of the country, and are not aware of local conditions. Therefore, they create problems which are not of their volition. Unnecessary tension is thus created between the army and the local populace.

Frequent use of army may give ideas to some ambitious elements in the armed forces which is not conducive to the healthy growth of democracy. Since we have politicians and not statesmen we are really facing a grave crisis, the outcome of which may make or mar democracy in this land.

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DELHI LETTER

THE People's Union of Civil Liberties (PUCL) organised a meeting on "Censorship—Overt and Covert" in the capital on April 27. It was probably held in the context of the difficulties a Delhi University lecturer of economics had to face with the Foreign Office over his book. The speakers were Rajendra Mathur, editor, *Navbharat Times*, Soli Sorabjee, the eminent lawyer, O. V. Vijayan, columnist and Arun Bose, the lecturer.

Rajendra Mathur spoke of telephone tapping and opening of private correspondence. He pointed out how unscrupulous elements could misuse these powers to blackmail people. He also mentioned the burning and destroying of publications by private parties when anything against their interests was published.

Soli Sorabjee pointed out that a certain measure of censorship was necessary especially in times of war, but the danger came when these powers were used in times of peace also. He also spoke of self-censorship exercised by the national press and praised *Freedom First* and *Himmat* for standing up to censorship during the Emergency.

O. V. Vijayan spoke mainly on self-censorship while Arun Bose recounted his experiences with the External Affairs Ministry.

Quite in keeping with the topic was what appeared to be an attempt to gag the meeting. The meeting was

held at the City Centre of the Jawaharlal Nehru University. At the last minute, the authorities reportedly said that no mike was available with the engineering section! A mike was hurriedly arranged and the meeting started 45 minutes late.

* * * *

In the first week of June, a new society was formed by some supporters and admirers of the Late Piloo Mody. The organisation, called *Nav Nirman*, aims to work for the betterment of the socially oppressed and economically backward people in the country. It also aims to educate people of the need to usher in a new society where "each person is conscious of his rights and is willing to assert them." The convenor of the organisation is one Bheem Singh Rathore of Udaipur who was reportedly close to Piloo Mody.

One wonders what will become of this organisation, whether it will last or go the way of the other organisations started by various admirers of Piloo Mody. A group of students in JNU had organised a Piloo Mody Memorial Lecture Series, the first of which was addressed by C. R. Irani. There has not been a second or a third lecture. Nothing is heard of the Piloo Mody Trust which was inaugurated with much fanfare, with luminaries like Pranab Mukherjee, Buta Singh and Ghulam Nabi Azad gracing the occasion.

—KOMALA SARATHY



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BOOK REVIEWS

THE IMPERIAL REPUBLIC by Raymond Aron; Prentice Hall of India Pvt. Ltd.; Pp. 339; Rs. 20.

THIS STUDY of American foreign policy is confined to the years between the end of the last war and 1973, crucial years, especially the first ten, during which it took a decided shape. Raymond Aron as a detached scholar, with his insights as a sociologist and a philosopher, is illuminating without being partisan, and sympathetic without being uncritical. If the United States and its foreign policy since the end of the war have needed defenders, it is men like Aron we should turn to for explication of a great many things which remain shrouded in controversy.

After the First World War, the United States was blamed, not altogether unjustifiably, for retiring behind its frontiers and leaving war-torn Europe to its own devices, except in the pursuit of recovering the immense sums it had lent to its allies in the common war effort. What difference it could have made to the inter-war years, to the reinforcing of the League of Nations concept, and to the prevention of the Second World War, by being ready to pull its full weight in world councils when such weight could have yielded fruit, now belongs to the imponderables of history. The fatal equivocations in politics which impede right action do not always result from hesitations about what action is right, but more often from the cumulative effect of pressures from divergent sources which render right action at a given moment seemingly inoperative in the teeth of seductive options. These options often satiate national egoism and offer short-term reprieve from immediate problems.

After the Second World War, taking the bit between its teeth, the United States pursued an opposite course. It might at first sight seem that the result has not been significantly different. Certainly, the United States itself has not come out with outstanding credit in the eyes of the world, and continues to be the easy target of critics of diverse hues. And yet, the Marshall Plan put Western Europe on its feet with a sureness and smoothness by which its former enemies benefited most and earliest and far ahead even of its wartime allies.

This is one skein of post-war American history, but there are others and they all interweave into something rather more equivocal, partly because the administrations succeeding one another frequently changed colour and accent, and even between Presidents from the same party, e.g., Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson, differences in personality produced differ-

ences in achievement. In the Cuban crisis, Kennedy dared and won; in Vietnam, Johnson edged himself over and floundered in a succession of crises.

Aron is caustic about the American let-down of their allies at the time of the Suez crisis. But he concedes that American policy in Europe, and especially towards the Soviet Union, was hamstrung by the contradictory imperatives of the situation generated by Western Europe's need for American protection, and its fear that if this protection took an overtly earnest form, it would be the first victim in the event of Soviet reprisal. If American diplomacy in Europe, by and large, can be deemed a success, the same cannot be said of its fortunes in the East.

"The moderate judgment of American diplomacy expressed by the liberals of the eastern seaboard is based," says Aron, "on considerations which have become common currency, to the effect that American diplomacy relying on its success in Europe transferred to Asia the methods it had used on the Old Continent, that is, economic aid and defence of demarcation lines, however arbitrarily traced. Unfortunately, economic aid, so efficacious in reconstructing the economies of the developed countries, was less effective for modernising developing countries. Intervention, necessary in Korea because regular armies had crossed a demarcation line, was not effective against infiltration by guerilla fighters, and even less so against a rebellion, especially if supplied from outside."

Part II of the book is devoted to a wide-ranging discussion of the economic aspects of American diplomacy. Important though it is, it is in the main designed to sustain the political thesis, of which the real thrust is that the history of American diplomacy after the Second World War is a history of how it sought to fill the vacuum created by the collapse of Pax Britannica by something approaching a Pax Americana.

Aron is very fortunate in his translator, Frank Jelinek; the prose has a lucidity and smoothness not usually found in translations.

—M. G. Bailur

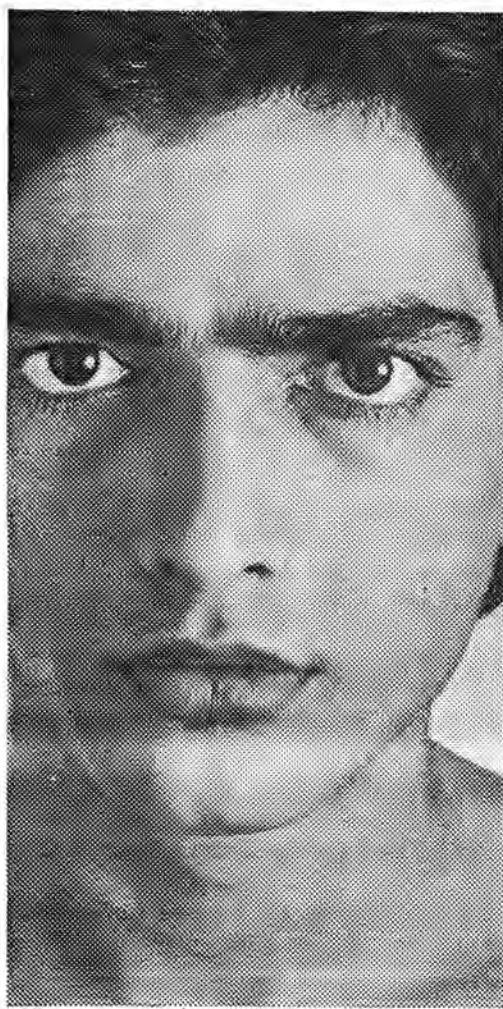
SPEAKING UP By Bernard Levin; 1983; Pan Books; Pp. 267; £ 2.50.

ENTHUSIASMS By Bernard Levin; 1983; Jonathan Cape; Pp. 264; £ 8.95.

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lenging and warning millions of fellowmen all over the English-speaking world, and seems none the wearier for it.

In 1979 when Levin published his first selection of journalism—*Taking Sides*—he promised to follow it up with another soon thereafter. *Speaking Up* is the result of that commitment. Like its predecessor, it is a delectable treat for the Levin-addict. The articles included range from politics to sport, sociology to music, human rights to food, and so on.

To readers of this journal, of course, Levin's ceaseless exertions in defence of freedom will be of particular interest. "One of the most extraordinary phenomena of our confused time," laments Levin, "is what I may term the seesaw of freedom. In the Soviet Union and the captive nations of her Empire, the struggle for liberty at all levels is pursued by growing numbers of astoundingly brave men and women . . . (A)t the other end of the seesaw the lands of freedom contain growing numbers who yearn no less eagerly to have done with the pain of choice, of self-mastery, of moral and political independence, and resign themselves to a future in which men and women are at one with the brutes."

The same passionate moralism is evident in, say, his essay on Anthony Blunt, the renowned art historian, whose belated exposure as a Soviet spy provoked some misguided persons to argue that his treachery

was "a minor and ultimately irrelevant aspect of his life". In a stinging rejoinder in *The Times*, Levin asks: "How did we reach a time and place in which educated, gifted and distinguished men and women, not themselves traitors or potential ones, do not seem to mind a bit when another educated gifted and distinguished man turned out to be thus tainted? What is there in the sulphurous air of our time that—for this is what it amounts to—erases for so many the distinction between right and wrong?"

For one who writes so passionately and so prolifically, Levin has always been markedly reticent about his personal life. Curious readers have had to content themselves with whatever little vignettes they have been able to glean about Levin, the man, from his journalistic writings. But not any more. In *Enthusiasms*, Levin is as loquacious about himself, or at any rate about his likes and dislikes on a wide range of subjects, as he can possibly bring himself to be.

"We live in a world," he says, "which not only fears and distrusts joy but which goes far towards denying its existence." His own attitude is precisely the opposite. "The more I thought about a lifetime of enjoying my enthusiasms, the more enthusiastic I felt about writing of them. To start with, I was surprised to discover how many subjects, let alone individual examples of them, rouse enthusiasm in me and provide me with pleasure. And very few of these

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are in any way odd or eccentric choices: I am not, after all, the first man to take pleasure in opera, Shakespeare, painting and *haute cuisine*, or even in walking, reading and cities."

Each of these enthusiasms is described with the usual lucidity and feeling that is so characteristic of Levin. Whether he marvels at the spiritual exaltation that a performance of *Fidelio* provides, or wallows in the irrepressible delight that a glimpse of the Taj Mahal by moonlight provides, the effect on the reader is compelling.

Perhaps the only unfortunate thing about *Enthusiasms* is its rather prohibitive price; but that, hopefully, will be taken care of by the publication of a paperback edition soon.

—K. S. Venkateswaran

A HISTORY OF RUSSIA by Basil Dmytryshyn; 1981; Prentice-Hall of India Ltd.; Pp. 645; Rs. 39.

THE STUDY of authoritarian and closed societies always pose challenges to scholars. To begin with, there is very little authentic information available.

Since closed societies thrive on suppressing the truth, one has to read between the lines of various official documents and try to arrive at some generalised conclusions. This is a very painstaking process and requires tremendous research ability. Moreover, with the change in regimes, history is often rewritten and there is no continuity. Thus in the history of Russia the role of Stalin has been redefined so many times. Similarly, the question whether Mao was a liberator or a dictator is still being debated. Given these limitations, a lot of responsibility rests with the scholars attempting to study these systems.

The book under review is rich in facts about the Soviet Union. Unfortunately, that is its only merit. There is no interpretation of those facts in an objective manner. Nor is there any issue-oriented discussion of some of the themes that storm the academic world today like dissent within the Party, technological compulsions and party ideology, and so on.

All in all, it is a good textbook providing a wealth of facts in a fairly comprehensive manner and may, for that reason, attract the average reader, but it definitely disappoints the specialist.

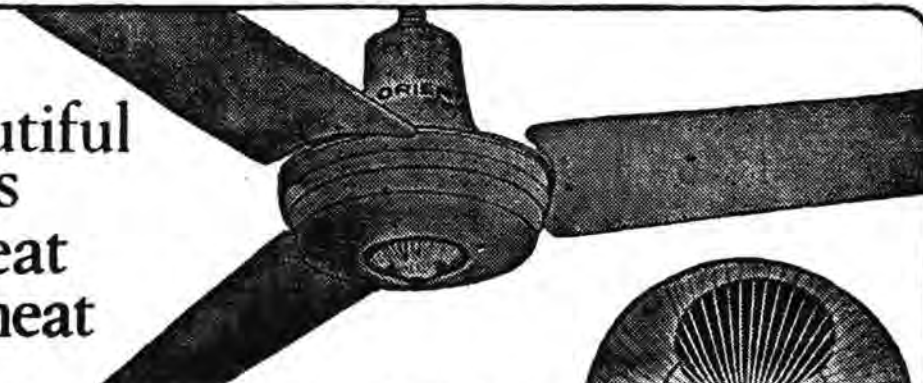
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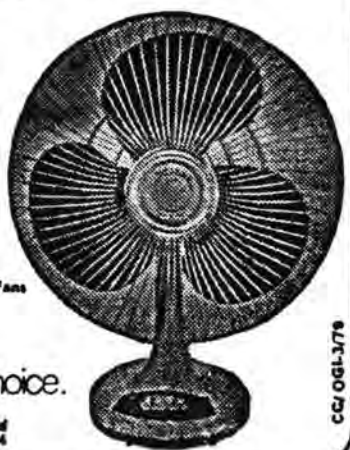
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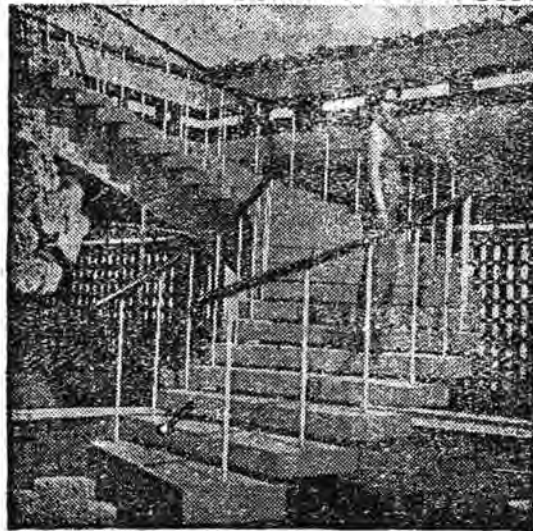
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WITH MANY VOICES

A Woman's place is in the White House —

—Geraldine Ferraro quoted in the *International Herald Tribune*, July 26, 1984.

I don't like it when people try to ban books in the name of feminism. I consider myself a feminist, and to use feminism to justify an outrageous attack on freedom of thought and expression really makes me angry.

—Attorney Sheila Kennedy quoted in the *International Herald Tribune*, July 26, 1984.

There's no self-respect left in talking to Indira Gandhi.

—Khushwant Singh in *Debonair*, August 1984.

It has long been fundamental doctrine on the left that life is political.

—Anne Sofer in *The Times*, July 2.

Holidays were once holy days, in which people attended to matters more serious than work.

—Roger Scruton in *The Times*, July 24.

The only way to get any sort of fairness is to assume that whenever there is power, there must always be a check and appeals mechanism.

—Katharine Whitehorn in *The Observer*, July 1.

It is part of the philosophy to label those who attack politicisation of any particular area of life as mere defenders of the status quo.

—Anne Sofer in *The Times*, July 2.

William Shakespeare wrote for the masses. If he were alive today he'd probably be the chief scriptwriter on 'All In the Family' or 'Dallas'.

—Rupert Murdoch quoted in *The Observer*, July 1.