

Freedom First

The Liberal Position



Anna Hazare leading the rally to the Ramlila Grounds.
17th August 2011.

❖ *Two Lokpal Bills*

Which is Better?

Depends on Who's Asking



JP addressing processionists at the Boat Club,
6th March 1975.

❖ *JP's India: (Still) Waiting for a Revolution*

❖ *Terror Returns*

❖ *On Rabindranath Tagore's 150th Birth Anniversary*

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Freedom First

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Contents

<i>Between Ourselves</i>	1
<i>R.I.P.: Sadanand Bhatkal</i> R. Srinivasan	2
<i>From Our Readers</i>	3
Two Lokpal Bills Which is Better? Depends on Who's Asking D. S. Ranga Rao	4
Active Citizenship, Democracy and Anna Hazare Sharad Bailur	6
Terror Returns Ashok Karnik	9
Today's India is Not One Country but Two L. N. Godbole	12
A Hindu Kingdom in India? Firoze Hirjikaka	14
<i>Point Counter Point</i> Ashok Karnik	15
Water as a Strategic Resource Rca Godbole	17
Fake Encounter Killings Kaisar Ansary	18
JP's India: (Still) Waiting for a Revolution T. J. S. George	20
<i>Freedom First</i> This month in September 1954	21
<i>Cornucopia</i> Firoze Hirjikaka	22
"Stream of Correspondence" with C. Rajagopalachari - 4 K. K. Pathak	23
<i>On Rabindranath Tagore's 150th Birth Anniversary</i> Introducing Oneself (<i>Atma-Parichaya</i>) Rabindranath Tagore	25
Efforts at Indigenization of Christianity in India Dan L. Driscoll	29
<i>Book Reviews</i>	33

Between Ourselves...

All but one page of this issue were ready for print since the last 24 hours but the one page that remained blank was this one. The question: As a Liberal journal do we support Anna Hazare's movement pressing for parliamentary approval of the Jan Lokpal Bill or the government's own, definitely weaker Lokpal Bill? We watched with trepidation a confrontation developing between parliament and what is being (rather loosely) described as "civil society." This would have been a disaster for the Indian democratic system.

Today Anna Hazare entered the 6th day of his fast. Newspapers are full of it. TV channels' anchors and their minions are screeching away. Not far behind, are the social networkers and twitterers chattering with glee. And somewhere in between is the common man the ordinary men the 'hand-cartwallah, the roadside hawker, the Chanawalla or the mocha (cobbler) eking out a living having to reckon with the policeman or a municipal employee who demands his 'hafta' (bribe) almost everyday. These ordinary men and women make up the huge crowds at Ramlila in Delhi or elsewhere and they have not even heard of 'facebook' or 'twitter' the playthings of the rich and famous and of a callous and selfish middle class. TV cameras may not 'pan' on them but these 'small' people make up the big numbers.

Why, because they have heard Anna Hazare speak or have seen his pictures and they are able to identify with him. He resonates their problems their miseries – he is one of them. They are not bothered about 2G or 3G or CWG. They *believe* he can do something for them.

The demand is for the Indian state (I deliberately don't use the word government, or political parties) to have a Lokpal who can swat the flies that keeping harassing the common people. Let's also be clear that the Jan Lokpal Bill has been drafted by the coterie surrounding Anna Hazare and not by Anna himself. Perhaps the Bill had already been drafted by the organisation 'India Against Corruption (IAC)' *before* Anna took over the movement, and, with no small help from the media, appropriated for itself the description 'civil society'.

Meanwhile my fellow-liberals say: "Fasting is not democratic. It is blackmail". Perhaps. But what else would have made this government or for that matter any other government listen. Then there are those like a former civil servant turned crusader who says: "The campaign leans to the right as the large number of its supporters have been mobilized by the right wing parties..." So?

As we go to press, today morning's newspaper headline reads: "Lots of Scope for Give and Take: says PM." And that's a great relief; for this means Anna will Live and a consensual Lokpal Act will emerge.

It was worth waiting to write this page!

Editor

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Sadanand Bhatkal



1922 - 2011

The “Popular” Bookseller & Publisher is No More

The Indian Committee for Cultural Freedom deeply mourns the passing away on July 26, 2011 of life member Sadanand Bhatkal.

Academics of a bygone generation will miss for a long time the once familiar figure of Sadanand Bhatkal and his band of

dedicated staff of the Popular Book Depot. It could be said that there were few college professors who had not spent evenings in the aisles of the Popular Book Depot thumbing through books and acquiring them for their college libraries and for themselves. The soft credit so generously provided by the Bhatkals enabled them to buy books, for college libraries had a shoestring budget. The staff always courteous and the place was homely and all this was due to the proprietors, the Bhatkal family and Sadanand Bhatkal in particular. Almost all Bombay colleges faculty members were comfortable in its premises crowded with books. This was in the late forties, fifties and sixties of the last century before the book trade was swamped by a new jostling, pushing group of entrepreneurs in “knowledge distribution.”

In a posting in his blog “Straying Out”, Abodh a Mumbaikar wrote about the Bhatkals and the Popular Book Depot: “I have had the good fortune of knowing Sadanand kaka (uncle) as I call him and remember going to the green painted Popular Book Depot on Lamington Road as a kid. The store had a long counter and perpendicular to it, at the back were rows of shelves full of thousands of books. I remember going past these rows to the back and climbing onto a steep ladder to go to Sadanand kaka’s office. Popular book depot was started by Sadanand Bhatkal’s father Shri Ganesh Bhatkal in 1924. Eminent jurist, the late Nani Palkhivala while delivering the G. R. Bhatkal Memorial Lecture in September 1995, says that Shri Ganesh Bhatkal helped him in three inestimable ways. He used to allow Mr. Palkhivala to treat Popular as a public library. During

his career as an arts student (1936-1942), he was allowed to sit and browse through books at the shop for hours together and also take home books ‘on approval basis’. He also remembers that he would at times continue reading even after the front door had been closed and later coming out by the back door.”

Popular Book Depot as publisher later metamorphosed as Popular Prakashan and generally was under the overall supervision of Sadanand Bhatkal. It remained the better known of Bombay’s publishers fostering social science literature. Professor G. S. Ghurye had almost all his books published by them and so did Professor A. R. Desai, One of the stellar authors of the house was D. D. Kosambi whose books were read and studied throughout the world and evoked discussion and disagreement. Among the publishers Sadanand was highly educated and retained interests in the life of the mind for he himself was a good student of economics and sociology. Apart from being a publisher he was also an author both in Marathi and English and was a gifted versifier in English.

For thirty five years he edited the monthly *Indian Publisher and Bookseller*, an imprint which was a veritable compendium of those days. With the eminent litterateur of those days Prabhakar Padhye (who was closely associated with ICCF, the publishers of *Freedom First*) he brought out a score of issues of the quarterly *Indian Writing Today*. He also participated in the Frankfurt Book Fair of 1955. Another feather in his cap was his being elected as representative of India in an International Round Table organized by Henry Kissinger. Promoting the publishers of India and their interests, he was active and responsible in involving himself in running the Federation of Booksellers and Publishers of India. His concise Marathi Literary Dictionary was a monument to his deep involvement in literary publishing and is an invaluable work of reference.

People would recall his amiable and pleasing disposition and his warmth. The later years compelled him to be in a wheelchair but it could not smother his enthusiasm in attending public lectures which he did with verve and élan.

R.Srinivasan

From Our Readers

CAG a “legal illiterate”?

A senior pensioner of the Accountant General's Office in Chennai recalls from her memory that she had come across a provision in the Canadian Constitution years ago, which enables the CAG of that country to sue their Government itself for defamation if the utterances of any of the functionaries of that Government are derogatory to that high office in any way. Recent statements of ministers like Kabil Sibal are no less derogatory than A.Raja's calling the CAG in the Delhi Court a 'legal illiterate'. Is it not time impartial, enlightened opinion makers in our country came out to put Kabil Sibal, A. Raja and their likes in their place!

K. Vedamurthy, Chennai. kved2001@yahoo.com

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Common Cause A path-breaking organisation

I strongly recommend reading “Integrity of Institutions” and other reports in <http://www.commoncause.in/current.php>

For readers who do not have access to computers we recommend subscribing to or becoming members of this unique organisation founded by the redoubtable late H. D. Shourie.

The membership fee for new individual members (with voting rights) is Rs.500/- for one year and Rs.2,500/- for life. New /associate members (without voting rights) will pay Rs.100/- for one year and Rs.500/- for life. For further details including application form for membership write to COMMON CAUSE, Common Cause House, 5, Institutional, Area, Nelson Mandela Road, Vasant Kunj, New Delhi 110070.

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*

M. F. Hussain

M. F. Hussain is not a Picasso. M. F. Hussain might have been a great painter but he will not be reckoned a great man nor was he even a gentleman. Ravi Varma of the Royal family of Tiruvananthapuram painted masterpieces, about characters and episodes many from the Bharatiya classics. Picasso could be compared to him and not the other way.

M. F. Hussain was mean in that not only did he paint Hindu goddesses and gods in an obscene way, he was unapologetic for hurting the sentiments of hundreds of millions of people. That he did not answer the question (FF 529, July 2011) as to why he did not paint Prophet Mohammad or Allah or Jesus Christ or Mary as he painted Hindu gods and goddesses, shows his arrogance and

unconcern for equal respect of the deep sentiments of people of different faiths. He was a coward as far as his religion was concerned. He could not use the freedom of the artist to paint the icons of his religion but felt no pain in painting Hindu gods and goddesses. It has become the established character of some seculars and liberals to assert that artists have freedom to say or write or paint whatever they want in regard to matters and persons Hindu, but cannot disparage Jesus Christ or Allah or Prophet Mohammed or their religions.

Dr T. H. Chowdary, Secunderabad.
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Former Prime Minister P. V. Narasimha Rao

Your First Page is memorable. (Between Ourselves...*Freedom First*, 530 August 2011)

Somebody giving credit to some one who rightly deserved it! Prime Minister Narasimha Rao was the true nationalist who changed the direction of National economic policy defined by Nehru. Attributing this credit to Dr. Manmohan Singh is like praising a driver for taking a good U turn at the end of the road. The courage was that of Rao.

The courage of Dr. Singh is getting splashed in headlines every day in newspapers. Our Prime Minister treats his job as that of an Executive and that too functioning through Committees of Ministers. He does not want to be held Accountable.

Leadership needs *courage*. Neither Sonia nor Rahul have that ! You have to bring it to the job. No Facebook or Twitter can foist it on you.

Dr. L. N. Godbole, Mumbai. tatami@tnl.net.in

Southern Economist

Freedom First congratulates Mrs. Susheela Subrahmanya and her team on the 50th year of publication of the fortnightly *Southern Economist*.

Southern Economist was founded by Mr. K. N. Subrahmanya, an eminent economist fired by his mission to provide “an independent economic fortnightly dedicated to the Economics profession. It speaks volumes for the courage and dedication of his wife Mrs. Susheela Subrahmanya that despite her husband's untimely demise in 1985 she ensured that the journal continued publication, making it available particularly to young teachers and students of economics.

The Southern Economist which is based in Bangalore has also published over 25 books by eminent writers highlighting various aspects of the Indian Economy.

Write for a copy of this scholarly fortnightly to: *Southern Economist*, No.9, 1st floor, 10 & 11, Palace Guttahalli, Bangalore 560 003. Phone: 080 -23342330.

Two Lokpal Bills

Which is Better? Depends on Who's asking?

D. S. Ranga Rao

Once again, yet another Lokpal Bill was introduced in the Parliament by the government on August 4, 2011. But this time, unlike the previous bills, this Bill made a big difference in the sense that it was introduced in the backdrop of a lot of din and noise generated out of acrimony and bitterness between Anna Hazare-led Jan Lokpal team and that of the government-led Lokpal team, both being the constituents of the Joint Drafting Committee of the Lokpal Bill.

The idea of constituting an Ombudsman type institution to look into the grievances of individuals against the administration was first mooted in 1963 during a debate in Parliament on Demands for Grants for the Law Ministry. It was not Anna Hazare, the 'so called unelected civil society representative', but the Administrative Reforms Commission which originally conceived and proposed for the first time in 1966 that two independent authorities at the central and state levels be established to enquire into complaints against public functionaries (including Members of Parliament) to remove the sense of injustice from the minds of adversely affected citizens and also to instill public confidence in the efficiency of government machinery.

Following this, for the first time, a Lokpal Bill was introduced in the Lok Sabha in 1968. And thereafter, it was introduced eight times in the Parliament between 1968 and 2008 but lapsed each time after the Lok Sabha was dissolved. Unlike its predecessors, the present Draft Lokpal Bill (DLB) has an envious rival in the Jan Lokpal Bill (JLB), but thanks to government's patronage, the former got precedence over its rival and got into Parliament now.

In fact, for all its good intentions in enacting the Right to Information Act and several other far reaching welfare schemes for people at large, the UPA government could have made the Lokpal Bill another feather in its cap but this was not to be. By altering and diluting its own earlier version of the Bill, by excluding the Prime Minister from the purview of the Lokpal, by not providing for any anti-corruption mechanism independent of the executive at state and district levels and *because* of apprehensions of certain corrupt vested interests the UPA government has forfeited the people's confidence.

This article is a modest attempt to compare both the DLB and the JLB for a better understanding of the issues involved.

● **JLB:** The Jan Lok Pal Bill envisaged a *suo moto* initiation of a case of corruption without the permission of the

government which has become the stumbling block in the present system.

● **DLB:** The government's Draft Lokpal Bill forbids even the registration of FIR without first giving a hearing to the accused which runs counter to the general criminal law wherein all cognizable offences are to be registered simply on the basis of information. Further, the DLB provides another hearing to the accused before filing a charge sheet in court thus making the process of investigation and prosecution heavily in favour of the accused.

*

● **JLB:** The JLB demanded a fool-proof protection to whistle-blowers, witnesses and victims of corruption.

● **DLB:** The DLB on the other hand, with undue safeguards to the accused by giving pre-trial hearings, premature disclosure of evidence, etc., weakens the case and increases the risk to the life of the complainant. In addition the DLB stipulates a two year jail term for a "false" or "frivolous" or "vexatious" complaint, while the guilty public servant, with free legal aid provided by the government, can get away with as little as a mere six-month term!

All anti-corruption laws in the modern democracies are patterned on the lines of the United Nations Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC) subject to ratification of the UNCAC in the respective countries. One of the lame excuses of the government for not setting up a Lokpal Institution so far was that it had not ratified the UNCAC. But now, even after recently ratifying this Convention, the preamble to the DLB has conspicuously omitted any reference to the UNCAC, ostensibly to prevent courts from widening the Lokpal's scope! After all, the DLB, with its various exemptions galore, falls short of the standards set by UNCAC which envisions a uniform anti-corruption regime for public servants of all categories (ministers, bureaucrats, judges and legislators). The government has blatantly ignored not only the suggestions of Anna Hazare-led 'India Against Corruption' but also of other civil society activists, viz.,

retired Supreme Court Judges, eminent jurists, journalists, retired civil servants, etc., for a uniform law throughout the country against corruption.

*

- **DLB:** The DLB exempts allegations of corruption against MPs for their conduct in Parliament and out of a total of 1.2 crore government servants, it covers 65,000 (0.5%), i.e., Group A Central government employees only.

- **JLB:** The JLB covers all government servants. The JLB wants the Lokpal to be vested with autonomous powers of investigation and prosecution and with powers of contempt to deal with defiant bureaucrats or public servants, the DLB divested the Lokpal of the same saying 'it was anyway not a court or tribunal to enjoy contempt powers'.

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- **JLB:** The JLB proposed the merger of the Central Vigilance Commission with the Lokpal attaching the anti-corruption wing of the CBI to it for effective and independent investigation of all cases of graft by it.

- **DLB:** The DLB has rejected the proposal.

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- **JLB:** The JLB proposed a broadbased selection committee with 2 politicians, 4 judges and 2 independent constitutional authorities and an independent search committee consisting of retired constitutional authorities to prepare the first list. It suggested a detailed transparent and participatory selection process so that the levers of control over the Lokpal will be in the hands of citizens in the form of search/selection committees.

- **DLB:** The DLB envisages that selection and removal of Lokpal members will be completely in the control of the government. Out of a 9 member selection committee, 5 will be from the ruling establishment, thus effectively leaving powers in the hands of the government to appoint persons of its choice, regardless of any merit, as Lokpal members.

*

- **JLB:** The JLB wanted powers to investigate allegations of corruption against the judiciary with special safeguards against frivolous and mischievous complaints.

- **DLB:** But the DLB has kept the judiciary *out of* the Lokpal's ambit. Government wants this to be included in the Judicial Accountability Bill. But it does not have any provision to check judicial corruption. It is only to check misbehaviour of the judges, that too by themselves!

*

- **JLB:** The JLB proposed a Citizen's Charter and penalties to officials in case of failure of time-bound services.

- **DLB:** But the DLB has taken a lighter view proposing

no penalties leaving the erring officials unaccountable. The Lokpal, originally intended for checking corruption in all public servants, has omitted a major chunk of public servants from its purview but instead it is being extended to all associations of civil society except companies, businesses, political parties, media houses. A travesty of law and justice! According to the DLB, the selection and removal of Lokpal will be in governments control, thus making it virtually a puppet in government's hands, against whose seniormost functionaries it is supposed to investigate, thus causing a serious conflict of interest,

- **JLB:** On the other hand the JLB's proposal is for an independent set-up. The Government's proposal creates a Lokpal, which is accountable either to itself or to the government only. In the case of the JLB, the complaints against Lokpal staff will be heard by an independent authority, proposed by the JLB. But in the DLB, the Lokpal itself will investigate complaints against its own staff, thus creating serious conflicts of interest.

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- **JLB:** Then JLB provides for fast track courts to try cases of corruption.

- **DLB:** The DLB has not accepted the, nor powers for Lokpal to punish the guilty.

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- **JLB:** The JLB's 11-Member body will collectively decide their budget needs.

- **DLB:** The Finance Ministry will decide the budget for the DLB's Lokpal. This means no financial autonomy for the Lokpal.

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- **JLB:** The JLB proposed amendments to Cr.P.C regarding confiscation/attachment of ill-gotten wealth of the accused in a corruption case till the final disposal of the case. It also proposed for recovery of the pecuniary loss, if any, caused to the government by the accused.

- **DLB:** But the DLB is silent on this issue.

*

In sum, the DLB is a mockery of any worthwhile legislation to check graft and venality in public life. By excluding the Prime Minister and certain other sections of public servants selectively, the DLB is an utter violation of the 'Right to Equality'. By not providing for a uniform anti-corruption law throughout the country, the intentions of the government appear to be suspect. The UPA government will be squandering away a golden opportunity to come clean if it pushes ahead with the DLB in its present form *sans* transparency and accountability.

MR. D. S. RANGA RAO served as Assistant Director (since retired), Intelligence Bureau, Government of India. Email: dsrangarao@gmail.com

Active Citizenship, Democracy and Anna Hazare

Sharad Bailur

A few, notably western European democracies, have found the necessity of having a fourth supra-judicial authority called the Ombudsman. This fourth centre can be a means of keeping the other three in check. But it is still a question not fully satisfactorily answered whether it should exist, at all.

The three articles by Mr. M. D. Kini, Prof. P. M. Kamath and Mr. D. S. Ranga Rao and Mr. Pritish Nandy's blog, in the August issue of *Freedom First*, that came down, like a ton of bricks on me, were not entirely unexpected.

I will first deal with the less consequential issues before I get down to the nub. First, Mr. Pritish Nandy's blog. All I can say is that it was adequately answered by my suggestion (not magic wand solution as Mr Ranga Rao prefers to call it), that the emoluments and perks of all those employed by the Government must be accounted for by a concept of 'Cost to the Nation' on the lines of the 'Cost to the Company' principle used in the private sector. As for MPs becoming richer in office, the entire process of financing elections needs to be revamped and made completely transparent, to obviate, or at least reduce, corruption in office – another suggestion that I had mentioned in my article. Then the criminal part: Those who are accused of crimes above a certain level of seriousness (not parking ticket offences), and those convicted should not be allowed to stand for elections.

There is a Latin phrase that can be loosely translated as 'Shoot the messenger'. Mr. Ranga Rao's rejoinder comes in that category. Personal vituperation and invective are not a substitute for reasoned argument. I will therefore not go into detail to answer his personal charges against me. My article was, in no way an attempt to defend either the present establishment, or political parties in power, or corruption in general. It was an attempt to find out *constitutional means to solve the problem* – which, hopefully, is only corruption - without sub-textual implications, of which there appear to be quite a few.

Now let me deal with certain basic principles that we all take for granted, that are often lost sight of, in the heat of argumentative democracy. These basic principles are as valid for the other two articles as they are for Mr. Ranga Rao's rejoinder.

First: Democracy is based on a distrust of human motives.

Second: Power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely.

Third: Individual protest is a part of democratic functioning.

Fourth : Dissent is the hallmark of freedom. And freedom is the hallmark of democracy.

Fifth: Active citizenship is a part of dissent, even vociferous dissent, and therefore constitutes the essence of democracy.

Sixth: If the aim is to clean up the system of corruption and to ensure good governance, all power to those who want it done.

Seventh: If the aim is to topple the present UPA government by *unconstitutional* means, I am against it.

Eighth: Direct democracy of the sort that Switzerland practices, which is being made much of by Mr. Kejriwal, and its relevance to India.

I will take up each of these in the context of the articles of Mr. Kini and Mr. Kamath below. Before that I must commend a few of their observations:

1. The critical issue before the people is how to catch the big fish that escape the tax net and affect the welfare of the people (M. D. Kini). This is a very valid point. The application of our laws is the business of the Executive Branch. It is there to do its job. If it does not it should be dismissed from service for incompetence – precisely a point I had made. I don't believe the size of the fish should be an issue, which at present it appears to be. But for this, is a powerful Lokpal, not answerable to anyone, the remedy? There is no question that the nation has a headache – a major one. All it needs is aspirin. When a person has a headache one does not chop off his head.
2. To the above Mr. Kini himself has suggested an answer which I think is very good. Let there be a special bench of two or three judges of the Supreme Court to deal with corruption charges against the high and mighty. As for the 'high and mighty' this will need to be defined more clearly under the law but it is not impossible. Perhaps a financial lower limit to malfeasance may be one criterion. Any corruption

above Rs.1 crore for example? A lower limit to be re-adjusted periodically taking into account the rate of inflation, perhaps?

Now to the issue raised by Prof. Kamath: Are only those who are elected truly representative of the public with the right to express opinions on all issues of public interest? The answer is obviously NO. Our present Constitution has enshrined in its Fundamental Rights among which is the Right of Free Assembly and a Right of Dissent and Free Opinion. So let us not go overboard and accuse me of things I would never dream of suggesting.

As for including the Prime Minister, I am all for it, provided the agency that keeps him under control is itself under another authority that has no control over the Prime Minister by itself. Theoretically the Prime Minister can be unseated by the House. And the House can be unseated by the people in an election. We have found this binding to be not effective enough though Indira Gandhi's defeat at the hands of the Janata Party was a case in point, but it is inadequate. So, the hunt for a more effective means – but a means that will function under the Constitution and not above it.

Now to the points given above in the context of the various articles:

1. Distrust of human motives: Human nature is essentially bad. That is why we have a Constitution and laws to prevent it from doing its worst. If human nature was good we would not need either. Nor a Lokpal. Modern democracy is based on a distrust of human motives. This distrust is healthy and must be carefully nurtured.
2. The famous dictum: Power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely. We saw this during the Emergency, how quickly power went to the head of Indira Gandhi, the Congress Party and a number of its Commissars, especially that execrable son of hers. That is why we have effectively hobbled all our legislators with a bridle and bit of periodic elections and other similar devices. What has been happening is that those elected are horses that are kicking around and champing at the bit, instead of going down the straight and narrow like good horses should – and they need a whip – perhaps in the shape of an Ombudsman of sorts. The Ombudsman is unfortunately also only a whip and needs to be controlled by the driver – the people.
3. Individual protest is a part of democratic functioning. And whether it is Anna Hazare or the misguided

Ramdev or even the extremist elements of whichever community, they all have a right of protest. It is protected by the Constitution.

4. Dissent: To that extent Anna Hazare and company are doing the country a signal service. What Anna Hazare is doing is raising awareness. This is actually far more important than it first appears. To give my own example: When my driving licence finally expired recently I applied for a fresh one. Ordinarily a bribe would have got me one without any difficulty. And RTO's offices are notorious for corruption. More so in Karnataka with a Chief Minister like 'bad old Yeddy'. Not so. The medical doctor was careless enough to give a certificate to say that at my age I could get a licence. When I went for the driving test, I passed the test of course, but was asked to take a reading test. I failed the reading test because I could not read letters and numbers the size of number plates with one eye at a distance of 24 metres. I was failed and did not get the licence. I was unhappy. But not a paisa had changed hands. More importantly none was demanded and none was paid. A year ago the absence of awareness would surely have seen the RTO Mysore (West) as a den of corruption. Today under Mr. Ramesh Dube, (the Assistant RTO), it is clean as a whistle. I went and congratulated him.
5. Active citizenship is a part of dissent. Blackmail is not, especially when it involves a 'This, or else...' subtext. While this might have been a good tactic with Mahatma Gandhi, he would be the first to say that it is not a good tactic against our own lawfully elected government. What is more important the blackmail of fasting should not be raised on a pedestal to be worshipped unthinkingly.
6. Cleaning up the system: This is absolutely necessary and should be an on-going process. To ensure this there are a number of agencies. The CAG, the CVC and the Anti-Corruption Squad. If what they are doing is inadequate, they need to be whipped into place. To that extent an authority under the Constitution – even if we have to invent one, may be needed. But it cannot be an unbridled authority.
7. And now I must reluctantly come to the nub of the issue at hand. What is being actually demanded is not a Lokpal who will get rid of corruption. Go in at the deep end and it becomes clear that the attempt to bring in a Lokpal, ostensibly to root out corruption is little more than an attempt to unseat a lawfully elected government. The whole process, ostensibly 'pro-people', is actually anti-UPA. Nothing wrong with that. The people have a right to get rid of a government

they do not like even if they have elected it – it is a form of an attempt at Recall. But then let the false pretences be cleared away and let us call a spade a spade.

8. The Kejriwal solution: I am sorry to be a little impatient with it. It is the solution of a half educated undergrad in political science from a bad university. The Switzerland concept was tried in California and it promptly brought all governance to a standstill because of competing referenda. For an entire nation like India it is nothing but a prescription for complete and instant paralysis.

All modern democracies, India included, run on the basic principle of the troika: there are three centres from which power emanates – the Legislature that makes laws, the Executive that executes them and the Judiciary that adjudicates. Hence, the separation of powers and the checks and balances. This seems to have worked fine for all democracies. A few, notably western European democracies, have found the necessity of having a fourth

supra-judicial authority called the Ombudsman. This fourth centre can be a means of keeping the other three in check. But it is still a question not fully satisfactorily answered whether it should exist, at all, for one simple reason: If you can have a fourth leg to this triad, why not a fifth, and a sixth and a seventh? If three can do the job the additional centres can at best only duplicate their jobs. The Lokpal (or janlokal) comes in this category.

The due process of election is a credible, transparent attempt to ensure fair representation of the people, perhaps not completely ideal. All forms of democracy are messy – inevitably. As Churchill said, ‘Democracy is the worst form of government – except for all the others.’ Another process is yet to be found that can do it better. ‘Civil Society’, or any other self-generated attempt, while commendable, is no substitute for this established due process of democracy.

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JP and India's Second Freedom

India's Freedom, achieved on the midnight of 14/15th August 1947, ended on the midnight of 25/26th June 1975, when the then President of India signed a crisp four-line proclamation virtually on command from the then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi: “In exercise of the powers conferred by clause (1) of Article 352 of the Constitution, I, Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed; President of India, by this Proclamation declare that a grave emergency exists whereby the security of India is threatened by internal disturbances.”

This extinction of freedom in the country brought about an eyeball-to-eyeball confrontation between Indira Gandhi, the self-appointed dictator and Jayaprakash Narayan, popularly known as JP, the congenital democrat. While the former was the epitome of power and pelf, the later abjured all desire for power, but wielded immense moral authority. By the time the confrontation ended in March 1977, JP had won with India regaining its Freedom.

Acknowledging this, veteran journalist Kuldeep Nayar said in his 24th JP Memorial Lecture: “He wasn't built to be a hero: slight of figure, racked by illness, battle-worn. Yet, **he proved to be the outstanding hero who won us the second freedom in 1977, 30 years after the first one.**”

Hardly any one today seems to know about this ‘second freedom’ won with such suffering and sacrifice. So much so anyone launching an agitation calls it ‘second freedom struggle’. The latest to use this phrase is Anna Hazare while seeking enactment of the Jan Lokpal Bill. If this is the perception of a veteran crusader like Hazare, one can only imagine the public awareness about JP, his Movement, resultant Emergency and regaining of Freedom in 1977. Is it that decades after this ‘re-making’ of history

people do not really have a sense of freedom and liberty?

Perhaps so. It looks as if Indira Gandhi, who used the violent ‘Jhatka’ method to kill democracy in the mid-seventies, learnt her lesson and resorted to the less painful ‘Halal’ method after returning to power in 1980. The objective is to effectively drain the body of the victim's blood, resulting in slow, but steady decay and death. Successive regimes have followed this resulting in a benumbed state of democracy and freedom in the country today.

Even so, Freedom has been India's path ever since Independence, a path chosen by the founding-fathers of our Republic under extremely trying circumstances. Despite all trials and tribulations and its many imperfections, India today is being lauded as the largest democracy on earth practicing freedom, however imperfect it may be.

For JP, considered among the greatest revolutionaries of the last century, Freedom has always been a passion. This is what he said in 1975: “Freedom became one of the beacon lights of my life and it has remained so ever sinceAbove all it meant freedom of the human personality, freedom of the mind, freedom of the spirit. This freedom has become a passion of my life and I shall not see it compromised for bread, for security, for prosperity, for the glory of the state or for anything else”.

***Excerpted from the 31st JP Memorial Lecture delivered on 23rd March under the auspices of the PUCL by Mr. M. G. Devasahayam who was District Collector & Magistrate of Chandigarh and custodian of JP-in-Jail.**

COURTESY: Janata, July 24, 2011 and M. G. Devasahayam

Terror Returns

Ashok Karnik

An unusual formulation but something unusual is needed to break the logjam

Mumbai was hit again (July 13) after 31 months – German Bakery in Pune being a footnote. Twenty six dead and over 130 injured in three bomb blasts. There was no advance intelligence, and worse still, weeks after 13/7 there were no clues to identify the perpetrators, although a suspect stands out. Pakistan springs to mind without much cerebation. Unfair, it may sound, but that is the sad conclusion. Others in the realm of possibility are the saffron brigade and the naxalites but both are only theoretical apparitions. To be realistic, let us examine why Pakistan stands out. After 26/11, an attack was waiting to happen as the adversary had never changed its spots. The attack had to be postponed post 26/11 because Pakistan was caught in a terrible diplomatic tangle after being caught red handed in the attack on Mumbai, 31 months ago. Pakistan was worried about repercussions all over the world where it came to be dubbed as the epicenter of terror. The US exerted fierce pressure on it and ISI/LeT etc. came under close scrutiny of the US eye in the sky. Pakistan could not afford to be caught again. However, at the same time, it could not give up its mode of undeclared war altogether as its essential strategy is to bleed India through a thousand cuts. It had to develop an alternative mechanism to hide its tracks. India looked vulnerable too with the Government getting enmeshed in corruption and looking as if it was losing hold. The time to strike was right.

Why Pakistan?

Sticklers for propriety would question how, without firm evidence, can we hold Pakistan responsible for the 13/7 attack? Yes, there is no evidence yet for naming Pakistan. However, the needle of suspicion points to Pakistan. It is perhaps time India changed the rules of the game and hold the rogue state of Pakistan responsible till proven innocent. Preponderance of circumstantial evidence, logic and the long history of mischief lead to this unfortunate conclusion.

Check the boxes for a logical conclusion. Pakistan is running the ‘Karachi Project’ to train and prepare the underworld elements and the Indian Mujahideen for attacks on India. While the Pak Government talks sweet, Pak politicians continue to go vitriolic over India. Mohd Hafeez Saeed, JuD Chief, talks of marching into India

through J&K, Hina Rabbani, the new Foreign Minister, declared earlier that there is nothing to discuss with India except Kashmir and meets the Kashmiri separatists just a day before meeting the Indian Foreign Minister for bilateral talks. Her talks with our Foreign Minister (July 27) should not put us to sleep. It would be business as usual soon enough in Pakistan. The theme that both India and Pakistan are victims of terrorism sounds *prima facie* acceptable, but with the caveat that India is the victim of Pak organised terrorism while Pakistan is its own enemy. If it is proved that Pakistan was not involved in 13/7, we all should rejoice and hunt elsewhere.

Change of Rules

India has so far scrupulously avoided naming anybody for the terrorist attacks till it found sufficient evidence to point a finger at anybody. Very civilized and proper! Unfortunately, it has not helped and India is asked to provide more evidence endlessly. Even after providing dossiers after dossiers after 26/11, Pakistan has been treating the entire exercise as a load of rubbish. India should now give up this civilized procedure and hold Pakistan *prima facie* responsible for any terrorist attack in India. This may sound harsh but the idea is not to take punitive action without being sure of the guilt; it is only to suspend cooperation till the air is cleared. Let Pakistan prove that it is not responsible for a particular attack. The obvious question is what can India do even if Pakistan is responsible. So far, it is only a lot of verbiage thrown at Pakistan, which is thrown back with interest. It is feared that if India refuses to talk, it has to go to war. This deduction is wrong as India can devise several measures between talks and war. For example, it can stop the diplomatic dialogue; raise the protest to the next level by withdrawing the Confidence Building Measures (CBMs) and so on. Let the world know that India cannot be taken for granted. This is becoming necessary to reassure our people that they are not just sitting ducks and their Government can and will act. Otherwise, there is gradual erosion of faith in the Government and consequent desperation. The Government owes it to the people of this country. This attitude may be termed as hawkish but India’s action needs to be predetermined; the future will certainly bring forth more attacks and the Government would be found wanting again and again. There has to be a planned

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reaction from India – not mere wishful silence. The people’s famed resilience is at the breaking point already.

Pakistan’s Designs

Terrorism has a definite political goal; it is not just mindless violence as it appears. Pakistan has long decided its goal of using every low cost instrument of offence against India. It may appear premature to name Pakistan for the latest Mumbai attack but there should be no hesitation in working out how Pakistan might have done it. If the search turns out to be negative, there will be no damage done as no irrevocable steps would have been taken.

Pakistan has had to revise its strategy post 26/11 as stated above. Now it is concentrating on the use of local (Indian) militants to carry out the attacks. Ex-SIMI cadres are a handy tool for this dirty job; they have already formed the Indian Mujahideen and may appear under various labels in future. Pakistan would also have the alibi to point out that it cannot be blamed as the perpetrators would be Indian citizens. The Pak Interior Minister has already seized upon Chidambaram’s statement that home-grown terrorists are a threat to India. Both ignored the fact that the motivation and inspiration comes from across the border, which would be hard to prove. There is no doubt that scores of sleeper modules are in place in India. The then NSA had disclosed in 2009 that 800 such modules had been exposed in the previous 4 years. How many more have been created can only be guessed.

Why Mumbai?

The question is always posed why Mumbai is chosen as target so frequently. The answer is simple: A Mumbai attack gets instant international publicity; any attack in Mumbai provides a large number of victims too and, most importantly, Mumbai provides total anonymity. Anybody can enter Mumbai, stay undisturbed, attack and leave unquestioned. There is little risk of inquisitive neighbours probing one’s activities or even keeping an eye open for the suspicious. The flow of population to and through

Mumbai provides security to the plotters. Thousands of people enter the city every morning for work and leave in the evening which would enable any offender to escape unnoticed.

What Next?

The attacks may continue notwithstanding improved intelligence. There is no guarantee of stopping such attacks. The police may prevent a few but a few would get through – as Rahul Gandhi stated rightly but at the wrong time. Besides, he should not have been the person saying it as he is perceived to be a protector (?). A person in power should not sound pessimistic in a crisis. India should not look helpless if and when an attack takes place. Its responses must appear well calibrated and sure; there should be less of platitudes and false promises. A firm hand at the helm makes a lot of difference in a crisis. Formation of new centralised counter terrorism bodies, as Chidambaram is fond of announcing, are good for the books but do not bolster the people’s confidence.

Although it may sound odd, India must learn to play hardball like China. China is always willing to hold talks but remains firm on its position. It is non-hostile but not too cordial either. While holding endless negotiations with India, it goes about claiming Arunachal Pradesh, sides with Pakistan in all disputes, builds power centers around India and still pretends to be friendly. India could do the same to Pakistan. The Government must pay heed to the people’s perceptions and act as if it is in control. Weakening of the Central authority is the aim of the terrorists, which should be defeated at all cost. Holding talks with Pakistan immediately after an attack, as if nothing has happened, may appear mature and saintly but it offends the dignity of the people.

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We Have Overcome

In a huge conference hall in Washington DC, over a thousand participants listen with rapt attention to Muktabai Pol, a village health worker from Jamked, India. The listeners include officials from WHO and UNICEF, ministers of health, health professionals and representatives of universities from many parts of the world. Muktabai shares her experience of providing primary health care in a remote Indian village.

She concludes her speech by pointing to the glittering lights in the hall. ‘This is a beautiful hall and the shining chandeliers, beautiful and exquisite, but expensive and inaccessible.’ She then pulls out two wick lamps from her purse. She lights one. ‘This lamp is inexpensive and simple, but unlike the chandeliers, it can transfer its light to another lamp.’ She lights the other wick lamp with the first. Holding up both lamps in her outstretched hands she says, ‘I am like this lamp, lighting the lamp of better health. Workers like me can light another and another and thus encircle the whole earth. This is Health for All.’

The audience rises to its feet in a standing ovation.

Courtesy: “karmayog.org” info@karmayog.org. Posted by thiagarajan.arunachalam

Today's India is Not One Country but Two

L. N. Godbole

One India thinks in Hindi and another India thinks in English. In Hindi I include all regional languages. This divide creates a great dichotomy.

S harad Joshi, himself a product of English education was nearest to truth when he talked about India and Bharat. Real difference is between those who think in English and those who think in Hindi. Being a Marathi speaker he thinks in Hindi/Marathi and appeals to the people in Marathi.

This difference in language or idiom of thinking makes a dialogue amongst people, who are in the seat of Power and people whom they are supposed to govern, difficult. The common man talks and understands in Hindi and watches TV and serials like Ramayana and Mahabharata. **And likes them.** It is the Hindi of films that reach people all over India.

JNU professors, and Communists and their fellow travellers think in English. In Britain you take class divide as given. So, amongst Indians who think in English, class war is a given fact of life. However, if you think in Hindi, Caste is a given fact and not Class.

Arch Secularists like Lalu Prasad Yadav, Mulayam Singh Yadav, Chagan Bhujbal and Gopinath Munde ,all are in favour of Caste-based Reservations and therefore they want Women's Seat Reservation as well to be Caste based. They do not call India Bharat, but Hindustan. It is only in the official Constitution of India, that India is Bharat.

Difference in the language of thinking makes things difficult in politics. Caste census is something which is undertaken now. This was vehemently opposed by the Congress in 1941, and was abandoned after the Census of 1947.

The importance of the language of thinking as a material factor was brought out by Acharya Vinoba Bhave (he said that he always thinks in Marathi) in a very lucid manner. He never used the word Secular. He called it *Sarvadharmasambhava*. Secular was an alien concept based on the history of the conflict of Church and Science. Fortunately for India , Gandhi's and Vinoba's meaning is now sanctified even by the Supreme Court of India, though most of their High Eminences think in English.

Nehru always thought in English. When Universal Adult Franchise was voted in the Constituent Assembly, Vinoba accepted it and attributed to it as Nehru's expression of his belief in Advaita Vedanta. Every head got equal vote as their souls were equal. Even today many educated people believe, that it would have been better if some educational qualification was insisted upon as a prerequisite for the voting right. The reality today is that educated people do not vote but poor and uneducated people do.

Nehru called himself Secular. That was the flavour of the year in Britain then. Vinoba laughed at the concept of Secular to mean anti-religion (*Nidharmi*) as Nehru thought. That was the meaning Nehru had caught in Britain. Indira Gandhi as a Prime Minister visited all important temples as any genuine democrat would do in a democracy. She was not as staunch an anti-Hindu as Nehru. She ensured her filial duty by inserting the words *Secular and Socialist* in the preamble of the Indian Constitution in 1976. It was not there in 1950. In action, in democratic practice she was free to visit temples and her Congress party was free to ditch Socialism by calling it liberalisation after 1991.

Nehru did not know or bothered to know, that in India there was no organised religion. His secularism or socialism was copy-cat secularism and socialism as propagated by the *New Statesman*. What Indians had and have was *Dharma* and not religion. This difference between *Dharma* and Religion is a juxtaposition which English thinkers in English are still struggling to come to terms with.

Therefore today even a secularist like Digvijay Singh uses the word as *Coalition Dharma*, a term coined by A. B. Vajpayee.

English divides people in classes and easily adopts class struggle as a reality. Vinoba, being an Advaiti rejected the division of society into Haves and Have-nots. He insisted that everyone has to give something to Society. That is *Dharma*.

English thinking Indians encounter difficulty when

it comes to voting and vote politics. In the present scenario, Baba Ramdev and Anna Hazare think in Hindi/Marathi, while Kapil Sibal and Chidambaram think in English. They have to put on Hindi/Tamil garb when they contest the elections and get elected. They wish to forget and do forget their electorate and its thinking in its regional language.

Recently a rather funny incident was reported by Coomi Kapoor in her column in *The Sunday Express* of 19 June, 2011:

“The Cabinet Committee on Political Affairs (CCPA) was the key decision making body in the face off between the Government and Baba Ramdev. However when the CCPA was forwarded a letter written by Ramdev’s aide Acharya Balakrishnan at the Claridges Hotel promising that the yoga guru would not undertake his hunger fast, none of the members could read the letter. Dr Manmohan Singh, Pranab Mukherjee, P. Chidambaram, S. M. Krishna, A. K. Antony, Dayanidhi Maran and Farooq Abdullah could not follow the Hindi used by the Acharya and had to rely on Kapil Sibal and Subodh Kant Sahay to translate what

he had scribbled.”

It is only in India that those who govern and those who are governed do not speak in each other’s language. The senior Ministers in the country do not understand the official language or scripts of their own country. This incident clearly indicates the utter contempt in which the Rulers are holding those who are ruled. If they lacked competence in reading or speaking in the official language of their country they could have covered their ignorance and kept translators in tow. Any Elphinstone or Robert Clive would have shown that modicum of concern and common sense.

Anna Hazare has proved shrewder in insisting on the inclusion of Bhushans and Hegdes in his team to decipher the legalese of the Kapil Sibbals of the Government.

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Addressing Corruption Analysis Paralysis

Against the backdrop of pervasive and accelerating official corruption which prompted Anna Hazare, the reclusive 74-year-old Gandhian social reformer to emerge out of his self-imposed exile in the rural hinterland of Maharashtra and undertake a fast-unto-death, forcing the Congress-led UPA-II government to establish a joint committee of civil activists and government ministers to draft a new enabling Lok Pal Bill, the novel proposal of economist Dr. Kaushik Basu to amend the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988 to place bribe givers and bribe takers on unequal footing deserves careful consideration. In a working paper (www.finmin.nic.in/www.kaushikbasu.org) written earlier this year, Basu argued that complainant payers of “harassment bribes” should be granted immunity from prosecution while recipients thereof meted stringent punishment and made to return such bribes.

Yet this suggestion which would undoubtedly abate the incidence of official corruption inasmuch as it would instill the fear of discovery and prosecution in the growing community of harassment bribe takers, has provoked intemperate and hostile criticism in the media. In particular P. Sainath, a senior correspondent and edit page writer of the respected Chennai-based daily *The Hindu*, has ridiculed the proposal castigating it as “simple-minded”, “obscene” and “perverse”. “To ask a people burdened with it to accept bribe-giving as legal is to demand they accept both corruption and the existing structures of power and inequity it flows from. This is a perverse idea,” wrote Sainath in an unwarrantedly *ad hominem* op-ed essay in *The Hindu* (April 20). Not entirely convincingly, he argues that the votes-for-cash scandal in Parliament and the 2G spectrum allocation pay-offs could also be construed as harassment bribes.

Although leftists such as Sainath in the eternal search for perfect solutions will never agree, there’s considerable force in Basu’s argument. Indeed there is a strong case for individuals forced to pay bribes for routine official services being regarded as victims of extortion rather than accessories to a crime. In this context it’s pertinent to note that s.383 of the Indian Penal Code, 1860 defines an extortionist as: “Whoever intentionally puts any person in fear of any injury to that person... and thereby dishonestly induces the person so put in fear to deliver to any person any property or valuable security... commits extortion.”

By threatening to withhold entitlements or services unless they are paid “speed money” or “office expenses”, millions of petty bureaucrats are extorting money with menaces from hapless citizens every day. Therefore encouraging them to blow the whistle *ex post facto* by amending the Prevention of Corruption Act, which makes the payment of extorted bribes as much a criminal offence as accepting them, is an intelligent first step towards addressing the ballooning nightmare of petty and gigantic corruption which threatens to stoke revolution against the republic. Admittedly it isn’t the perfect solution and may have unforeseen and unintended consequences. But unknown and anticipated apprehensions shouldn’t justify analysis paralysis.

Dilip Thakore’s editorial in the *Education World* June 2011. Visit www.educationworldonline.net

A Hindu Kingdom in India?

Firoze Hirjikaka

People like Modi are constantly probing to test how much they can get away with.

Narendra Modi is a remarkable man, if for nothing else than the widely conflicting passions he arouses in disparate groups of society. The Hindus of his home state of Gujarat swear by him, lauding him for the development he has engineered in his state; and for the resultant prosperity. After all, if there is one commodity Indians have a predominant passion for, it's money; and Gujaratis worship it most of all. The Muslims of Gujarat have ambivalent feelings. They can never forget the atrocities of 2002, of course, but they seem to have become resigned to the reality that the majority community will keep voting Modi back to power and there is precious little they can do about it.

Outside Gujarat too, Modi has his supporters and detractors. Gujaratis residing in the Diaspora outside Gujarat and in foreign lands heartily endorse his policies. Even the enlightened ones are mildly disapproving of Godhra, but regard it as an unfortunate blip in history that is best forgotten. Then there are the crusaders like Teesta Setalvad who are determined to keep the memory of Godhra alive. They are receiving some support from the courts in this endeavour, but the honourable justices seem quite content to let the course of justice take its own interminable time.

There is one aspect of Modi's game plan, however, that seems to have escaped the notice of even his most vociferous critics. Something very frightening is going on in Narendra Modi's Gujarat. The Constitution of India is being systematically and insidiously chipped away. It is being made increasingly apparent that if you are not a Hindu, there is no place for you in that state. In the case of Muslims, conscious of national and international approbation, he no longer persecutes them. He simply ignores them, at the same time making it clear without stating so, that they are not going to get a slice of the prosperity pie being enjoyed by the majority community.

And it is not just the Muslims. Back in 2007, the Modi government declined to renew the contract of the Salesian Missionaries of Mary Immaculate (SMMI) to run the Narol leprosy hospital." As a news story this was fairly innocuous and, not surprisingly, buried in the middle pages. But it is one more example of the stealthy manner in which Modi's minions are achieving their chief's aspirations. Not for them rabble-rousing cries for a Hindu "jihad." Not for

them old-fashioned pogroms. That would be too blatant and possibly unpalatable to most Gujaratis who, although agreeing with the sentiment expressed by their government, would be embarrassed to participate in such fundamental activities.

In the case of the leprosy hospital, the state government stayed within the limits of the law. But no explanation was forthcoming as to why the SMMI, who have successfully run the hospital for the past 57 years were suddenly unfit for the task. No doubt some will raise the hoary bogey of the SMMI luring innocent and gullible Hindu patients to Christianity, even though there is absolutely no evidence of this. Have the Hindu zealots ever considered that the reason many Hindus are being "lured" to Christianity is that they are being treated with benign neglect by their government and their so-called 'champions'?

The discrimination against Muslims in Gujarat, subsequent to the communal riots in Godhra, has been too well documented to bear repetition. Here again, the strategy is one of benevolent deprivation. The government is not forcibly throwing out any Muslims. That would be too obvious and possibly inspire a backlash. No, it's much more effective to deny them jobs and make them feel unwelcome – not overtly, of course – so that they migrate to other states "of their own free will." Modi professes to be an admirer of Adolf Hitler, but I'm beginning to think the German dictator could have learnt a few lessons from the Chief Minister. Being a tyrant is easy; but doing so in the guise of a "saviour": that is brilliant.

It would be ludicrous, of course, to describe what is going on in Gujarat as ethnic cleansing. But one should not forget lessons from history, where great calamities have evolved from small inconveniences. People like Modi are constantly probing to test how much they can get away with. The Second World War did not start with the blitzkrieg on Poland; it started with concessions at Munich and Czechoslovakia. This is the time for secular Indians to stand up and be counted; before we discover that we have a Hindu kingdom in our midst.

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Point Counter Point

Ashok Karnik

Every issue has at least two sides. A wise man examines all sides before coming to a conclusion. This is an attempt to present various sides of an issue so that a considered opinion can be formed.

Lokpal Bill

1. The Lokpal conundrum gets more complicated. The common man does not understand the implications of all the clauses of either the Government draft or Anna Hazare's prescription. The legalese is beyond the uninitiated. Anna has people's faith and the Government has no credibility. Everybody agrees that something drastic needs to be done to eradicate corruption. The Government's explanations why it cannot accept some of Anna's suggestions may be plausible but its track record makes one hesitate to make a value judgment in its favour. For example, its reluctance to bring the PM and the judiciary under the Lokpal has a certain logic. Similarly, its refusal to make the Lokpal a giant laundry to clean up the entire Government machinery has merit. However, doubt remains whether to trust the Government or heed Anna's warning that the Government is fooling the people. Can the Lokpal act as a magic wand or should we go step by step empowering it as found necessary? Will the magic wand get stuck in the morass of the judicial system?

Almost all Congress Bodies are Non-functioning

The Congress is fast becoming a one-woman party. All committees, norms and conventions are becoming redundant. The Parliamentary Board is history; all that the Congress Working Committee does is to pass condolence messages. The Party's highest policy making body has only met to mourn the deaths of Arjun Singh and Dorjee Khandu. The A. K. Anthony headed disciplinary committee has been laid off. The day Suresh Kalmadi was arrested the party announced that he has been suspended. When asked whether the disciplinary committee had met and proper procedure was followed. The answer was "this is a party decision and has been taken as per rules.

A report in The Sunday Guardian, 15 May 2011

1. Prudence warns that it is dangerous to make one organisation so powerful as to scrutinize all Government and public dealings. The men (9) selected carefully today may be driven by power, lose balance and start hacking away at various institutions that do not fit into their definition of honesty and integrity. The attempt to bring the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) and Central Vigilance Commission (CVC) under the Lokpal is fraught with danger. We have had a CVC and Chief Justices of the Supreme Court who came under a cloud. Even the PM who is acknowledged as a man of integrity has come under scrutiny for ignoring the evil under his nose. We don't know whom to trust now. Therefore, let us not put all our eggs in one basket of the Lokpal. Let us have more checks and balances. It would be fair to demand that the CBI should be made autonomous. Another impractical demand of the Anna group is to bring in lakhs and lakhs of government and public servants under the Lokpal. Would one organisation have the capacity to supervise the conduct of so many? To restrict the Lokpal scope only to Group A officers appears sensible enough. The States can be asked to appoint Lok Ayukta immediately, which should meet Anna's demand for scrutiny of public servants at the State level. Anna has reasons to distrust the government but the people should not be lured by the 'manna from heaven' hope when there is no single remedy available to resolve all our problems. In spite of all the finger pointing that the Jan Lokpal might do, it will be the judiciary that has to act in the final analysis. Would it be prudent to accept the Government's draft as one small step and later press for more?

To paraphrase George Bernard Shaw: "Civil Society are a group of people with their feet firmly planted in mid-air".

Government and Retired Officers

2. In an interesting comment on criticism of the Government, particularly on security matters by retired Police Officers, the State Home Minister observed that officers who did nothing in service became instant experts after retiring and started criticizing the Government. He was backed by the opposition and there was a demand that rules should be framed to control this tendency. The

2. The move to gag the retired officers is like killing the messenger for delivering bad news. The officers may have been inefficient when in service but it should be the Minister's responsibility to make them deliver; no point in blaming them later. The knowledge and expertise of the retired officers should be gainfully utilised by the Government. Every citizen has the right to express his

Government's anger could be understood because such criticism hits where it hurts most. The retired officers talk from experience and know where the problem lies. Occasionally, they may talk loosely because they are no longer responsible for implementing what they advocate; it is always difficult to implement what one can suggest blithely. They can, therefore, be guilty of oversimplification but their views matter. The State Government is perhaps irked by some retired officers fighting court cases against it but they do that as lawyers which is their post-retirement profession.

views. When in service the officers are bound by a code of conduct and cannot protest but after retirement, they can be useful sounding boards. Any attempt to gag them would be *ultra vires* of the Constitution. They are already covered under the Official Secrets Act and cannot divulge anything harmful to national security. To stop them expressing views that may be embarrassing to the Government is not only unreasonable but also counter-productive. There may be a lot to learn from their criticism and the government should welcome it. If the criticism is biased, it is better to ignore it as nonsense rather than contemplate a ban on it.

PM's Report Card

3. Our most venerated Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh is under a cloud of suspicion for the last year or so because of the people's distrust of the Government that he heads. There are a lot of clever people around him who keep on battling away with the media day in and day out. They are smart and legalistic in their responses but do not carry conviction. Their knee jerk reaction is to point out what the BJP/NDA did in the past, little realising that the common man does not care what somebody else did; he wants to know what this Government has done. A terrorist attack does not go away by pointing a finger at 'saffron' terror. Both are bad for the common man and he wants the Government to do something about it. The PM is unable to step in and bring the debate to an honest conclusion. There are however several plus points in favour of the PM. He is an outstanding economist of international repute; he is a man of integrity which can be said of very few politicians; he is not given to verbosity like most politicians; he is an amiable man, free from arrogance and he presents a picture of civility and decency in the present acrimonious atmosphere. He has held a motley group of ambitious and unscrupulous men together; he is not after personal aggrandizement or in quest for power.

3. Now to examine why the PM is under a cloud: He has ignored all the evil surrounding him either willingly or wincingly! He allowed the Commonwealth Games to run off the rails in spite of warnings for 6 years; he kept himself at 'arms length' or 'close to' the 2-G scam and either way ignored what his Minister was doing; his excuse of being under compulsion of coalition politics depicted a man without moral underpinning; he has allowed the CBI to go dysfunctional in important cases, ruining the reputation of the main corrective wing of the Government; he appointed a tainted officer to the post of Chief Vigilance Commissioner in spite of objections from the Leader of the Opposition; he has no stand or, at best, an evasive one on black money and is a party to underhand tactics to defeat those (Hazare group) clamouring to root out corruption. He allows his Ministers to defend the indefensible through verbal gymnastics, which damages his halo of integrity. He allows Pakistan to get away with murder when Pakistan shows no willingness to change; mealy-mouthed promises to prevent further attacks create no confidence; and the worst, he refuses to lead the country when the people are crying out for a leader. A good man, a good economist and a poor leader of men! Dr. Manmohan Singh, we don't want you to go out a failed man!

Readers are invited to send their points of view on serious issues of the day to ashokkarnik2001@yahoo.co.in

Short Cuts - The Ethical Dilemma

Who does not love a short cut? Using a quicker method helps save time and effort. The ethical dilemma attached with an illegal shortcut is something that many people have learned to turn a blind eye to. Take for example our athletes caught in the doping scam – where the lure of money and fame becomes tempting, many athletes turn to doping as a short cut to success. Several coaches and doctors within the Indian athletic system aid this racket. Sports administrators, if they are not directly hand in glove, often turn a blind eye to the happenings in the Athletic camps so long as success is ensured to increase their own influence. On the world stage the short cuts taken by the tabloid *News of the World* are dominating our daily news. To get information the paper hacked phones and breached the privacy of many individuals. In India too we have had lots of controversies regarding information gathered from phone taps and unauthorized phone recordings – mostly in the Niira Radia case. Information is the biggest asset of today and some people will go to any lengths to gain this for themselves

Excerpted from an editorial by Arjun L.A. Prabhu, Editor, *KCCI Journal* Mangalore, July 2011.

Water as a Strategic Resource

Rca Godbole

Oil often dominates headlines, but water is the most precious national resource in the Middle East.

Talking of water, we moan about its quality and some times its quantity, but never seriously think about its availability *per se*. Lake levels before, during and after monsoon here in Mumbai are newsworthy as statistics. Agriculturally available water is never ever timely or sufficient, and the overall outlook for the farmer is forever bleak according to the news reports. Water for us, is a constant and safe source for complaint, because we do not really expect much to change, it may cause draught or flood but eventually it'd get to us.

One is confronted by a fundamentally different mindset in Israel. More than 3000 years ago, the Old Testament highlights quarrels between Isaac and the Philistine shepherds about well rights in the area. Situated in the climatic zone at 31°47'N and 35°12'E, with average annual rainfall of 200 mm, a water crisis there is chronic and inevitable. Israel's water sources are limited by the country's climate, geography and hydrology. Central Water Carrier was constructed by Israel in the 1950s, and was operating by the beginning of the 1960s, with no less a personage than the prime minister of the time personally heading it. The major goal of this project was to carry water from the rainy region in the north, from the Lake of Galilee, to the arid areas in the south, and balance demand with supply. The major surface water reservoir, is the Lake Kinneret biblically known as the Sea of Galilee, which is shared by the Jordanians and also the Palestinian Authority to some extent. An additional worry there is a salinity increase from 200 to almost 300 milligrams of salt per litre, slowly rendering the water unpotable.

The population in Israel increased from 6.5 million to 7.3 million between 2002-2010, and water consumption demand from 1.5 to 1.7 million cubic metres. In 2000, the average total water potential was 2050 million cubic metres, out of which 1600 million cubic metres was fresh, and 450 million cubic metres brackish and treated. The problem here is that, with moderate or even extreme droughts, which are quite common in this region, or with an increase in regional conflict, the demand will be much higher than the potential supply.

Because of this situation, a plan has been drawn up and implemented in Israel for a significant increase in manufactured water, up to 40 per cent of the natural wa-

ter resources, improving desalination technology and reducing costs and replenishment of natural water resources by 2000 million cubic meters. The plan is for three more large scale plants that altogether would bring the desalination capacity in Israel to 80 percent of urban potable needs or some 60 percent of the overall needs in Israel. It is the desalinization facilities that Israel is building at perhaps the greatest speed in the world which would ensure that by 2020, each glass of water drunk by a city dweller in Israel shall consist of desalinated water, won from the Mediterranean Sea, at the cost of US\$ 0.55 per cubic metre according to current estimates.

Contributing to just around 2% to the GDP, and with a comparable percentage of the population employed in it, agriculture might be seen as an expensive hobby in Israel. They have to import almost all their foodgrains, though agriculture is a major aspect of the Israeli national identity: the country, after all, was founded out of agricultural communities scattered across the desert. The fruit and vegetables grown are seen to provide a modicum of food security, which may largely be a psychological, but important to the population. And agriculture requires water. In agriculture, the wide scale adoption of low volume irrigation systems (e.g. drip, micro-sprinklers) and automation has increased the average efficiency to 90% as compared to 64% for furrow irrigation. As a result, the average requirement of water per unit of land area has decreased from 8,700 cubic meter/ha in 1975 to the current application rate of 5,500 cubic meter/ha. At the same time agricultural output has increased twelve fold, while total water consumption by the sector has remained almost constant. Tertiary-treated effluents, from the cities and certain industries are cheaper than manufactured fresh water, and these treated high-quality effluents already are the main source (55%) for the agricultural requirement of water in the country today. Every drop that hits the Israeli catchment area is accounted for; every drop is monitored and planned for. The mission is to use every drop at least twice. Long before it started gaining international accolade for environmental concern, conservation of water has been a necessity in Israel.

Oil often dominates headlines, but water is the most precious national resource in the Middle East. Water was
(Cont'd. on p.19)

Fake Encounter Killings

A Landmark Judgement by the Supreme Court

Kaisar Ansary

When the rule of law collapses it is replaced by *matsyanyaya*, which means the law of the jungle. In Sanskrit the word “*matsya*” means fish, and *matsyanyaya* means a state of affairs where the big fish devours the smaller one. All our ancient thinkers have condemned “*matsyanyaya*”.

Extra judicial killings, often called, encounter killings, have been a bane of our system for quite sometime. There have been instances when senior police officers and even politicians used to issue discreet orders to eliminate unwanted elements, gangsters, and the like. Unfortunately, this practice was tacitly approved and justified by the media on the ground that it was a necessary evil to maintain the law and order.

With the passage of years, fake encounter killings acquired currency, involving many high profile police officers who had become cult figures. Gradually, encounter killings went on to acquire monstrous dimensions. Many police officers had made it a sort of money-making practice by taking *supari* from the rival groups. The introduction of big money in encounter killings had made some police officers defiant and apparently above the law. They would often justify their nefarious activities under the garb of combating the underworld and terrorism. Needless to say, the rule of law was the only casualty in this brutal practice.

Recently, the Supreme Court, while dealing with a case of fake encounter killing, came down very heavily on the police department in the case of *Prakash Kadam & Others Vs Ram Prasad Gupta & Another* reported in 2011 (6) Supreme Court Cases 189. The judgment of the Bench was delivered by Justice Markandeya Katju, who has suggested death sentence for the policemen involved in fake encounter killings. The facts of the case are that the deceased, who was a businessman of Vashi, New Bombay was gunned down by the accused police officers, pursuant to a contract / *supari* from a rival builder. The police officers concerned had been granted bail by the Sessions Court, which was challenged in the High Court of Bombay, which cancelled the bail of the accused persons. While confirming the Order of the High Court, the Supreme Court made some interesting observations, reproduced below:

“If the police officers and staff could kill a person at the behest of a third person, it cannot be ruled out that they may kill the important witnesses or their relatives or give threats to them at the time of trial of the case to save

themselves. This aspect has been completely ignored by the Sessions Judge while granting bail to the accused persons.

The High Court was perfectly justified in cancelling the bail of the appellant-accused. The appellant-accused are police personnel and it was their duty to uphold the law, but far from performing their duty, they appear to have operated as criminals. Thus, the protectors have become the predators. As the *Bible* says, ‘If the salt has lost its flavour, wherewith shall it be salted?’, or as the ancient Romans used to say, ‘Who will guard the Praetorian guards?’

“Held, where a fake encounter is proved against policemen in a trial, they must be given death sentence, treating it as the rarest of rare cases.

“Fake encounters are nothing but cold-blooded, brutal murders by persons who are supposed to uphold the law. If crimes are committed by ordinary people, ordinary punishment should be given, but if the offence is committed by policemen much harsher punishment should be given to them because they do an act totally contrary to their duties.

“The Supreme Court warns policemen that they will not be excused for committing murder in the name of ‘encounter’ on the pretext that they were carrying out the orders of their superior officers or politicians, however high. In the Nuremburg trials the Nazi war criminals took the plea that ‘orders are orders’, nevertheless they were hanged. If a policeman is given an illegal order by any superior to do a fake ‘encounter’, it is his duty to refuse to carry out such illegal order, otherwise he will be charged for murder, and if found guilty sentenced to death. The encounter philosophy is a criminal philosophy, and all policemen must know this. Trigger-happy policemen who think they can kill people in the name of encounter and get away with it should know that the gallows await them.

“Before parting with this case, it is imperative in our opinion to mention that our ancient thinkers were of

the view that the worst state of affairs possible in society is a state of lawlessness. When the rule of law collapses it is replaced by '*matsyanyaya*', which means the law of the jungle. In Sanskrit the word '*matsya*' means fish, and *matsyanyaya* means a state of affairs where the big fish devours the smaller one. All our ancient thinkers have condemned *matsyanyaya* vide *History of Dharmashastra* by P. V. Kane, Vol.III p.21. A glimpse of the situation which will prevail if *matsyanyaya* comes into existence is provided by Mark Antony's speech in *Shakespeare's Julius Caesar* quoted at the beginning of this judgment.

"This idea of *matsyanyaya* (the maxim of the larger fish devouring the smaller ones or the strong despoiling the weak) is frequently dwelt upon by Kautilya, the Mahabharata and other works. It can be traced back to the *Shatapatha Brahmana*, XI 1.6.24 where it is said 'whenever there is drought, then the stronger seizes upon the weaker, for the waters are the law', which means that when there is no rain the reign of law comes to an end and *matsyanyaya* begins to operate.

"Kautilya says, 'if *danda* (punishment) be not employed, it gives rise to the condition of *matsyanyaya*, since in the absence of a chastiser the strong devour the weak'. That in the absence of a king (*arajka*) or when there is no fear of punishment, the condition of *matsyanyaya* follows is declared by several works such

as the Ramayana II, CH. 67, *Shantiparva* of Mahabharata 15/30 and 67.16, *Kamandaka* II. 40, *Matsyapurana* 225.9, *Manasollasa* II. 20.1295, etc.

"Thus, the the *Shantiparva* of the Mahabharata, Vol.1 it is stated:

'*Raja chen-na bhavellokey prithivyaam dandadharakah*

Shuley matsyanivapakshyan durbalaan balvattaraah'

"This *shloka* means that when the King carrying the rod of punishment does not protect the Earth then the stronger persons destroy the weaker ones, just like in water the big fish eat the small fish. In the *Shantiparva* of the Mahabharata, Bhishma tells Yudhishtira that there is nothing worse in the world than lawlessness, for in a state of *matsyanyaya*, nobody, not even the evil-doers are safe, because even the evil-doers will sooner or later be swallowed up by other evil-doers.

"I have referred to this because behind the growing lawlessness in the country this Court can see the looming danger of *matsyanyaya*..."

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Water as a Strategic Resource (Cont'd. from p.17)

even part of the peace treaty between Israel and Jordan. Israel is building on this fact by providing desalinated water to Jordanians, to the Palestinian authority and in the Gaza strip. Any peace negotiation has this important unspoken element in it. Jerusalem, the capital of the Israeli State, is relatively safe from aerial attack since it holds monumental cultural significance for all the warring parties. Tel Aviv is the financial hub of Israel, which would be vulnerable to aerial attack even from its proximity to the Gaza strip, so Israel has chosen to locate *all* three of its water desalination plants in close proximity to Tel Aviv, despite the fact that this is the densest urban area in the country. Israel is planning for a future war situation while thinking of present water demand.

All the nations of this earth have their sets of challenges, nobody lives under optimal conditions, everybody has internal as well as external strife to contend with, but challenges can be opportunities in some notable cases, and people just manage to get on with it there.

DR. RCA GODBOLE, a plant biologist, was recently in Israel to participate in a course offered by the Hebrew University about Agriculture in the context of Climate Change. Email: rcagodbole@gmail.com

JUST LIKE THAT | AJIT NINAN



This sign protects walls from public bladders for fear of doping charges.

COURTESY: Mumbai Mirror, July 31, 2011.

JP's India: (Still) Waiting for the Revolution

T. J. S. George



"During the course of my search for some material in my library for my proposed article on 'The Universality of Acharya Shankara', I came across an excellent write-up by the well-known journalist and columnist Mr. T. J. S. George which appeared in The Indian Express of 27 Dec 1998, of which I have carefully preserved a cutting. I am enclosing a copy for your information, on the assumption that this article will certainly be interest to readers of Freedom First." – B. M. N. Murthy

You assumed right Mr. Murthy. Absolutely recommended reading! I have taken my editorial licence to add the word in brackets to the title of this remarkable article. – Ed.

In a Chinese restaurant in Paris in 1936, Andres Malraux told Jawaharlal Nehru "Europe is a cemetery of ideas. We cannot

go beyond good and evil. We can never go, as India can, beyond duality. India had Shankara.....When India is free, keep India free from duality. Let the great Shankara guide India"

Malraux, one of the great minds of his time, thinker and philosopher and writer, man of action, of outrage and courage, arrogantly intellectual, an inspiring innovator as de Gaulle's Culture Minister, was an ardent lover of India, even learnt Sanskrit in order to read the *Bhagavad Gita* in its pristine glory. And he meant what he said about Shankara.

India did become free and his friend Nehru did become the Prime Minister. At that time Malraux met another visitor from India - Jayaprakash Narayan.

The first question that Malraux asked JP was "What influence has Shankara on the Government of India today?" JP was startled and just smiled by way of reply.

Poor JP! Like Mohandas Gandhi, Jayaprakash was unhappy with the India that emerged from the bloody mess of independence. Like Rammanohar Lohia, JP had sufficient reasons to be disenchanted with Jawaharlal Nehru, once his hero, although he did not succumb to the strident Nehru-hatred that eventually consumed Lohia.

JP never came near achieving his potential. Like Subhash Chandra Bose, he had an electrifying appeal to

the mass imagination – and, like Bose, he was marginalized by the strategists around Gandhi.

His socialism was hijacked by Nehru and he was left to chase vague horizons like Bhoodan. None of his dream concepts ever went beyond the dream stage because he never wielded any official power to make them a reality.

Did JP fail? A clear way to understand the ramifications of that issue is to recall the words of writer Raja Rao in another context. Analyzing Mahatma Gandhi, Raja Rao wrote: "Was Gandhi defeated? The proper answer would be to ask back: Was Socrates defeated? For without Socrates, there would be no modern world. And without Gandhi, there can be no world of tomorrow "

We can say that without Nehru there would not be the flourishing democracy and its attendant freedom that we now take for granted. But without Jayaprakash Narayan – and Gandhi – there can be no India.

They were beyond the duality of good and bad and exemplified a kind of selflessness that gave, and still gives, India its soul.

The tenacity with which Nehru's successors chipped away that soul essence of India could have been unthinkable at the time of Gandhi and JP, or even of Nehru.

But chip away they did and it seemed like a historical dharma when JP's destiny reached its finale with the Total Revolution against the very un-Indian autocracy of Indira Gandhi.

His finest hour was when the land heeded his call and threw Indira Gandhi out with a decisiveness that stunned even the people who did it. JP's political failure

was his followers in turn who betrayed that trust so ignominiously.

Conferring the Bharat Ratna on JP, twenty paradigm-shattering years after his death, is no amends to the betrayal of the values that made this nation proud once upon a time.

Malraux was yearning to see that soul force rise again when he passionately enthroned Shankara above Aristotle.

“Aristotle made a mess of Europe – he created good

and evil” he told Nehru.

“Truth is beyond good and evil”. Shankara had recognized that. India had recognized it - until it lost its capacity to recognize things for what they are. As Raja Rao records the Malraux-Nehru conversation, the French thinker described the Gita as the ultimate text for the Real Revolution.

We have the text, the examples, the divine sanction, the urgency. But where is the Real Revolution?

Courtesy: *The Indian Express* (Bangalore Edition), 27 December 1998.

28

ORGAN OF THE INDIAN COMMITTEE FOR CULTURAL FREEDOM

SEPTEMBER 1954

freedom first

Editor : V. B. Karnik

This month in September 1954

The Art Of Non-Conforming

by Malcolm Muggeridge

(Editor of *Punch**)

Mr. Muggeridge is a member of the International Executive of the Congress for Cultural Freedom, and “Freedom First” is proud to have secured the exclusive rights for publication in India of this article, which was originally published in “Vogue” magazine in the U.S.

IF I were to write, as I have sometimes thought I might, the Confessions of a Non-Conforming Man, they would begin with an assertion that the mid-twentieth century, far from being a period of enlightenment, has been notable for credulity and servility to a quite exceptional degree. It would be necessary, I should go on, to go back at least to the Dark Ages to find a generation of men so given over to destruction, superstition, and every variety of obscurantism. Over large parts of the world the institution of slavery has been re-established in a particularly cruel and callous form. At the same time, huge areas, formerly dependencies of Britain and other West European countries, are rapidly and evidently falling into chaos and ruin. Two atrocious wars have laid waste and impoverished Western civilization, whose leaders have been constantly outwitted, and whose assets, moral as well as material, have been recklessly squandered. At the same time, amidst these horrors, and confronted at every turn with evidence of his ineptitude, Twentieth Century Man has continued to pin his hopes on the untenable and obsolete doctrine of progress, convinced, apparently, that in him the life process has attained its apogee. So ludicrous a spectacle has rarely, if ever, been seen on earth.

Non-conforming is the basis, the very fount of all humour. A totally conformist society never laughs – laughter itself being a kind of criticism, an expression of the immense disparity between human aspiration and human performance. As such, it is intolerable to all orthodoxy-enforcers, from Torquemada to Stalin.

NOTES

Titles Again

On Independence Day this year the Government of India resumed the old practice of publishing an Honours List. During the British regime an Honours List used to be published every year. The regime used to honour in that fashion its faithful followers and loyal servants. Precisely for that reason, the nationalist movement developed a particular antipathy towards the Honours List and used to regard with grave disfavour all those titled gentlemen whose names used to figure in it. In the first flush of enthusiasm after the attainment of independence the Constituent Assembly decided to abolish all titles and to place all citizens on the common level of Shri. It appears, however, that the new rulers could not carry on too long without an Honours List. The list has come back and we are even told, though unofficially, that a particular title conferred by the Government of India is equivalent to a particular title of the British regime. A number of people will be happy at this reappearance of titles.

There is, however, a danger that some disappointed aspirant or public spirited citizen wedded to social equality and opposed to castes of any kind may take it into his head to test the constitutional validity of this practice of conferring titles. Article 18 of the Constitution prohibits the State from conferring any titles except a military or academic distinction. Many of the present awards quite clearly have nothing whatsoever to do with military valour or learning and are a flagrant breach of the Constitution of the Republic. The Article, if invoked in court, may spoil the fun both for those who confer titles and those who receive them.

* Founded in 1841, *Punch*, the famous cartoon Magazine closed down in 2002, leaving a legacy of over 160 years of humour and wit unsurpassed in publishing history, according to an article on its history in Wikipedia. Malcolm Muggerridge was its editor between 1953 and 1957 – SVR



Cornucopia

Firoze Hirjikaka

Are Cell Phones Killing Common Civility?

The versatile gadget that comes in myriad shapes and sizes is becoming increasingly addictive with every new innovation.

There is no longer any argument that the universally ubiquitous cell phone has become as indispensable to our daily lives as clothes and pizza. Indeed, the cell has virtually acquired the dimensions of an extra limb, impossible to discard even if one wanted to. Isn't technology wonderful? Well, not entirely.

The versatile gadget that comes in myriad shapes and sizes is becoming increasingly addictive with every new innovation. No self respecting 21st Century denizen would do without one, or admit to using it just to make and receive phone calls. It is used to watch television, share banal videos and text messages and arranging clandestine trysts. Moreover, it allows you to be constantly available.

And therein lies the rub. Why would we want to be instantly reachable at all times? What happened to quality alone time? Have we suddenly become so important that if a friend or relative is unable to contact us for an hour or two, it will signal the beginning of the apocalypse?

According to a recent study by the Pew Internet and American Life Project, the frequency of texting among American teenagers is rising alarmingly; and a third of teenagers with cell phones send over 100 text messages *a day*. Just think of the implications of this modern phenomenon. And please don't mistake this for the technological version of passing notes in class. How many notes a day did we pass around; five maybe?

Apart from the obvious fact that it cuts significantly into the time spent on homework, social and extra-curricular activity, it is altering the very mindset and thought processes of our young people. One obvious casualty is quality; when one's mind is programmed to send out a message every few minutes, it is a given that the majority of the texts will be perfectly banal. Then there is the stealth factor. Unlike old-fashioned phone calls to "unsuitable" members of the opposite sex, clandestine conversations can be carried on right under the noses of parents. And there is a more sinister fallout to this. When it becomes a social compulsion to "say something" almost non-stop, indiscretions are almost inevitable. Family secrets, things told in strict confidence; tend to come tumbling out

because, hey, you have to text about *something*.

There is nothing parents and teachers can do about this, of course, but grumble. As they have learnt to their cost, banning or restricting something only leads to it being used surreptitiously or, sometimes, open defiance. After all, the ingenuity of kids, when they are determined to thwart authority, is legendary.

Some schools have ingeniously decided to adopt the old maxim, if you can't beat them, join them. At a school in Florida, a Spanish teacher at the school starts her class by asking the students to take out their cell phones – in Spanish, of course. She then proceeds to send them text messages in Spanish. These could be simple tasks, like go to the cafeteria, find something green, and take a picture. You can call it a sort of treasure hunt. The messages gradually become more complex questions requiring answers to be texted back to the teachers. This innovative method has made her classes so popular that students are making an active effort to learn the language.

Others schools are taking advantage of the rapid increase in cell phone technology. Schools with budgets not large enough to provide individual computers for all students are encouraging them to use the new generation phones as computers to research stuff on the internet. When you consider that over 70 percent of teenagers in the US today have cell phones, this gives them a tremendous reach.

But why blame the kids alone? Adults are equally addicted to the infernal machines. One of my pet hates is the self-important cretin who just *has* to answer his cell during a private dinner party; and then looks condescendingly on the rest of us inferior mortals without whom the universe *can* survive for a few hours.

To end on a lighter note, here is a statistic that is guaranteed to dampen the legendary male ego. A survey conducted a couple of years ago showed that – given a choice between giving up their cell phones and abstaining from cohabiting with men for a month – a quarter of the women asked plumped for the former. Face it guys. We've been demoted.

(Cont'd. on p.31)



“A Stream of Correspondence”

with C. Rajagopalachari - 4

K. K. Pathak

The author is an educationist (since retired) with the Rajasthan College in Agra. He enjoyed a unique relationship with the late C. Rajagopalachari, CR or Rajaji as he was more popularly known. This resulted in a “stream of correspondence” between the two that lasted for over 15 years. Mr. Pathak decided to publish these letters and chose the Rajaji Foundation to be the publisher. He agreed to our suggestion to serialise in FF excerpts from the proposed publication. We began serialising in June 2011 (No.528). In this the fourth part, we begin with excerpts from Chapter 2 “The Fruitful Exchanges” - Editor

C R’s love for me grew stronger and stronger and he had started entertaining high hopes of me. Those were the days when I was working as a teacher in colleges affiliated to the University of Agra. I was quite free to express my views and wrote a lot in newspapers and weeklies. CR used to take pains to condense my letters, using them in *Swarajya*. In 1964 I wrote many articles which were very prominently published in *Swarajya*. My article on education for citizenship was so much liked by him that he commented on it in his signed ‘Dear Reader’ column. Those were the days when Dr. Rammanohar Lohia and the erstwhile Jan Sangh unleashed fanaticism on the language issue and led protests for making Hindi an official language, replacing English. As a repercussion the non-Hindi speaking States also indulged in protests against imposition of Hindi. CR after the fashion of a true statesman stood firm and opposed all such protests, pleading to retain English as a link language in order to maintain national unity. In fact CR was misunderstood by both, the pro-Hindi and the anti-Hindi fanatics. Today we once again feel the need of restoring the lost important place of English as a second language after Hindi. His letters to me are proof enough of his faith that English would not “retire” from India. He has been proved correct after a lapse of almost four decades, lost in vain for reasons not at all justified.

Most of CR’s letters were brief and their contexts are no longer in my memory box. Some of them seem to me so obscure that I myself wonder what they were about and why he wrote them. I do not remember if at all I used a typewriter. Even my articles were handwritten and the resident Editor of *Swarajya*, Mr. M. P. Sarangpani would write to me that my writing could not be published because they were not typed. I never felt the loss as I always sent them to CR for his entertainment, not for publication in *Swarajya*. I quite remember he liked a letter so much that

he got it repeated in *Swarajya* within a few months. I had pleaded for a moral revolution in the country and said something about how to bring about a peaceful revolution of ideas to make our guided democracy a little more functional on the basis of a strong public opinion on important public issues.

Nehru’s foreign policy was not criticized till China’s invasion of India in 1962. Even his confused views on his brand of socialism were not subjects of any public criticism. He was taken for granted as the most capable man to steer India’s boat out of troubled seas without questioning his ability or the manner in which he steered the boat, taking it into more troubled waters instead of getting it out or away from them.

There was a complete lack of well informed public opinion. The only good thing was the high quality of journalism as such doyens of Journalism as Pothan Joseph, Frank Moraes, B. Shiva Rao, Khasa Subha Rao and S. Mulgaonkar were there to inform the thinking people in the country about the pitfalls into which Nehru was taking the country after the fashion of an autocrat who was not prepared to listen to these doyens of Indian Journalism for reasons I need not discuss for I am afraid I would be less charitable to the follies he made one after another. He was more an undisputed leader in the Congress Party, if not in the country, than a capable administrator of national affairs. I say this because citizenry was of a poor quality either on account of no civic orientation to our education right from the primary stage up to higher education or on account of a general lack of the public weal.

It was CR who raised the voice of sanity through his writings. Jaswant Singh and I have made a modest attempt to bring to the notice of present generation of young people the sanity CR breathed through his writings

day in and day out. CR had no personal ambitions, though he was no saint or seer, as Rajmohan said in CR's biography. He was a dedicated soul animated by selfless service to the country for values of Gandhi, much forgotten within a decade of his passing away. CR was a man of settled convictions which gave him strength which others could not at the age he did all that. These off-the-theme remarks are quite necessary, because a proper backdrop for better understanding of the reader is needed.

As I said earlier, upper India was badly affected by the Hindi fanatics who considered Hindi as the mother tongue of the entire country or they wanted Hindi to be made the mother tongue of every Indian! In fact, these fanatics had no plank to stand on to take on Nehru who was very keen to retain English as a link language in the best interest of national unity. Had Hindi been given time to evolve without any official imposition, it could have become a more popular language today than it is at present. Mahatma Gandhi stood for Hindustani, a mixture of Hindi and Urdu. During the British rule in India Urdu was the court language and had become quite popular in India. Even the British did not do away with Urdu, abolishing it as a court language as Urdu was the most popular vernacular after either Hindi or the mother tongue in different Provinces. We learnt English because the rulers knew very little Urdu and Hindi, much the less other languages spoken in other parts of India. Mahatma Gandhi wanted Hindustani to become more popular taking the place of a link language without abolishing English.

It was in 1963 that on one of my visits to Allahabad I met Professor Raghupati Sahai 'Firaq', who was Under Secretary of the Indian National Congress when Nehru was a Secretary in 1919-20. He told me that Mahatma Gandhi had told "an important leader" that CR would do everything to popularize Hindustani without letting English "retire" from the country. On my way back home I wrote CR about what Firaq had told me on my visit to Allahabad.

The story captivated CR's attention and he asked me to write to Firaq, requesting him to let CR have the first-hand information on what Mahatma Gandhi said to "an important person" Firaq had not told me about, disclosing his identity as I myself did not ask him to disclose the identity of the person referred to by Firaq as "an important person". Quite naturally I wrote to Firaq requesting him to tell more about the story and write straight to CR. Firaq did not write CR the desired letter, furnishing the information sought by CR through me. On January 1964 CR wrote me a card:

"Thank you for your letter of January 19. I have not heard from Mr. Firaq. I am eager to have the story from him. I am sorry about your son's illness. You have to learn to bear with troubles by faith in the Supreme Power".

After receiving this letter from CR I again wrote to Firaq about the matter. Meanwhile I wrote about the story, quoting Firaq, in the *Hindustan Times* and in *Swarajya* as well. Firaq wrote back to me that due to his own illness he could not write to CR about the matter, and that he would soon write to CR furnishing him the desired information. Firaq did not keep his word and no letter was ever written by him to CR. I waited for many months and around February 1965 I wrote about the story Firaq told me in *Swarajya*. CR commented on my letter on March 13, 1965 in his *Dear Reader* column:

"The story in (Sri) Krishna Kumar Pathak's letter published in *Swarajya* of February 23 came as an interesting revelation to me. I was not aware of the talk referred to 'some 50 years ago an important person asked Gandhiji to comment on the language issue. Gandhiji's simple reply was that Rajaji would do all that was possible to promote the cause of Hindi, but he had doubts if Rajaji would agree that Hindi be made the official language. It shows how correctly and much better than other people Gandhiji knew my mind, perhaps much better than I myself knew it."

... To be continued

Who Will save India



Irrespective of the policies followed by the new Prime Minister and her party, I find the political outlook for India in the coming years bleak. With the kind of company she keeps, I do not think Mrs. Indira Gandhi can solve India's basic problems. They, like the other political parties, are committed to the status quo of the controlled economy, a wasteful public sector and the pursuit of equitable distribution at the cost of increased production. That would only mean sharing abject poverty. The way out is to increase the size of the cake and that could only be done by undertaking a "U" turn and following the pattern of Sri Lanka, Japan, Taiwan, South Korea, Singapore and Hongkong.

Since our politicians are by and large beyond repair, if India is to be saved, it will have to be saved by the small man, particularly the middle class of the cities and the landed farmers of the countryside who are the backbone of the nation. These classes have suffered cruelly under the so called "socialist pattern" that Nehru imposed on the country and which is still rampant, but their back is still not broken. It is to these that I would look to save the country.

Minoo Masani, *Against the Tide*, 1981

Introducing Oneself (*Atma-Parichaya*)

Rabindranath Tagore



Continued from the last issue, this is the second and concluding part.

To this I answer: if we imagine Hinduism to be a slab of stone which must retain for ever as it is today, then of course it can serve for burying the dead but not at all far intercourse with the living. However stagnant our society

may be at present, and whatever the reasons for its being so, it certainly has not arrived at its final stage of fulfilment, which is the same as to say that it is not dead. There isn't a grain of truth in the notice that one is entitled to call oneself a Hindu only if one can accept all the views and customs of the Hindu society of today. The changes that take place in a society are a result of the changes in the views and customs of the individuals that compose it. How then, can society change if we place ourselves outside the social orbit the moment we undergo some change?

Society, it is true, is large and is unable to take a step forward as soon as an individual does so. It takes time for society, to move, and it is good that it is so. Unhappy is the lot of the individual who finds himself at loggerheads with society, which in his impatience he may even feel like renouncing. But where the relation between one man and many others is based on truth, salvation for the one lies only in the salvation of the many. Being alone may be initially soothing, but the pull or the rejected many is bound to grow stronger with time, and for the precise reason that they were rejected. I can really save myself only by trying to save the other fellow who is incontestably mine. He, if I cast him away, will drag me down into those lower depths where I had let him fall. However

strong my denial may be, the bonds between him and me, numerous and age-old, can never cease to exist. So I have no choice but to suffer all the discomforts of remaining within my surroundings. There it is that I must introduce my new idea, persist in my efforts and consolidate my successes. Otherwise my efforts will remain fragmentary, and my idea lacking the varied nourishment it needs, will wither and lose vitality.

Therefore my duty is to act according to my beliefs but never to say that I must give up society in order to do so. I will rather assert that what I believe to be true should also be practised by society as a whole. I will assert it is I who am doing the duty enjoined on the Hindus.

What is the duty of the Hindus? To observe dharma² or, in other words, to do what is good for all. But how is one to know where this universal good lies? The only means is to exercise one's faculties of experimentation and judgement. For this purpose has intelligence been given to man. We would only succeed in ruining society if we obstinately refused to use our intelligence in determining our duty and the social good. Only if the thought of social good is ever wakeful in its, and our efforts in that direction are tireless, can our faculty of judgement grow strong and, effective. And only then can society find in itself the power and readiness to overcome those habits which gradually decay into dead matter and hinder progress by cluttering the path with rubbish. Risks of error and danger there certainly are, but to be scared by that thought is to let society remain for all times in a state of thoughtless and inactive childhood. And in that no good can lie.

Therefore the duty of each of us is to remain within society and keep alive the urge toward the good through personal example and endeavour. Never shall we give up society in order to do what we believe is right.

Let's take the caste-system, for example. If caste is wrong, it is certainly so for the whole of the Hindu society, and thus it is caste which is truly non-Hindu. Of no society can a wrong be ever a perennial feature. What is wrong is a lapse and an error and to hold on to that as something

* *Atma-Parichaya*, translated from the Bengali by Shri Buddhadeva Basu and first published in the Special issue of *Quest* in May 1961 on the occasion of Rabindranath Tagore's Birth Centenary.

² Here used in the Sanskrit sense, whose connotations are far more extensive than those of "religion". The ideas of virtue, morality, rights, and duty and one's way of life are all conveyed by Sanskrit "dharma". In modern Bengali, the word is frequently used as a sense of "religion", and where Tagore does so. In this may I have translated it as "creed" or "fiddi". - Tr.

final is indeed a kind of atheism. Wrong-doing cannot be the natural function of any society in the same way as burning is of fire. Hence I am unable to accept the position that I must do wrong in order to remain Hindu. Each society develops certain evils characteristic of a particular age thus thwarting the ideal of humanity. That the English nation are no longer living up to their fine ideals of liberalism and have grown deficient in their sense of justice and love of freedom and of man is a fact painfully felt by those noble souls who, in England today do not distinguish between one nation and another but want that justice be done to all and each nation be free to realise its full possibilities. Yes, they feel the difference, but by no means do they accept this evil as being true of England for all time. That is why they have not formed a separate and complacent nation but are asserting their liberal ideals right in the midst of derision and antagonism.

Likewise, if I know caste to be bad for the Hindu society, I must recognise caste as un-Hindu and struggle with it while remaining within the Hindu fold. I will not hesitate to give my children in marriage into another caste, nor will I call those unions other than Hindu, believing as I do that those are in accordance with the highest Hindu ideals. Only if caste were good for society as a whole but inconvenient or harmful for a few of us – only then, but not otherwise would I be entitled to break with society.

It is not true that inter-caste marriages were never practised amongst the Hindus, nor that they may not be practised again. To give up the present as beyond redemption, regardless of the whole of our past and future, is an action for which I can see no moral justification.

“Well then,” my opponents will argue, “let’s take the present. If I do not observe caste, with whom can I have intercourse in this society?” Of course they would be those with whom you are having intercourse now. Those who do not observe caste themselves.

But would not a separate society be built up in the process? No, I reply, not a separate society, but only another sect. I have said before that no sect can take the place of society. I was born into the Hindu society and have accepted the Brahmo sect; if I wish I can go over to another sect, but to another society I cannot belong. With the history of no other society would I have this sense of identification. We can transfer a fruit from one basket to another, but on a different branch we cannot make it grow.

Do I then claim that I remain a Hindu even if I become

³ Brahmanda, the Sanskrit word for ‘universe’, literally means “the egg of Brahma.”

a Christian? Certainly I do, and to me this is quite beyond dispute. No matter what the orthodox Hindus may say about it, Kali Charan Banerjee was a Hindu Christian, and so was Jnanendra Mohan Tagore before him, and Krishna Mohan Banerjee as well. These men were Hindu by nation and Christian in faith. Christianity was their complexion, but in substance they were nothing but Hindus. There are thousands of Bengali Muslims whom Hindus perpetually label as non-Hindus and who themselves keep crying that they are not Hindu at all, and yet the truth about them is that they are Hindu Muslims. It isn’t difficult to conceive of a Hindu family where, lovingly cherished by the same parents, live three brothers, of whom one is a Christian, another a Muslim and the third a Vaisnava. Rather it is this family which would represent what is true and beautiful in the Hindu idea. Opposed to the truth is the situation we see today; it is that I must dismiss as a nightmare.

The words “Hindu” and “Muslim” do not have a similar connotation. Islam is a particular religious creed, but Hinduism is not. “Hindu” is a term for the consummation of the Indian nation. From long ago has it come down to us, passing through centuries and the same sunlit horizons, carrying along with it the same rivers and forests and mountains, and saturated with that sequence of attacks and responses which constitutes the history of our mundane and spiritual lives. In that word is contained all that we are in our bodies and our souls. From this deep-flowing stream no one can cast aside simply by virtue of his having become Christian – neither a Kali Charan Banerjee nor a Jnanendra Mohan Tagore.

The nation is larger than the creed and goes much deeper too; changing one’s beliefs involves no change in one’s nationality. The nation to which I belonged when I believed in the mythological story of creation is still mine, although now I believe in the modern and scientific version of that story. And this is true despite the fact that my great-grandfather would no doubt have boxed my ears if he had learned that I no longer conceived the universe as an egg³ of an extraordinary kind.

It will be argued that a Muslim is a Muslim for all that, whether in China or Persia or Africa. Not that I know much about the Chinese Muslim, but I dare say that he is in many ways quite different from his Indian counterpart, although there is a certain agreement in religion. I will add that even in the matter of faith the Chinese and Indian will agree on but broad principles; in details they will be at variance. Yet this same Chinese Muslim will have numerous points in common with the Confucians and Buddhists of his nation. In Persia the total population was converted by conquerors to Islam and an older religion is all but

non-existent. Yet the characteristics of this ancient nation have modified Islam itself and that is a process which no one to this day has been able to resist. India can be no exception to this rule. Here, too, one's national character is far more pervasive than a particular creed. Of this there are numerous examples right within the Hindu society. Customs officially banned are openly adopted by many Hindus, and among those who insist on their strict observance in their writings and speeches there are not a few whose eating and drinking habits could not but have alarmed both Manu and Parasar, and displeased Raghunandan⁴ as well. Their Hinduism is based on neither their theories nor practice; its roots spread far deeper. That is why even those who flout the commandments of Bhatpara⁵ and lack the leisure ever to receive the family priest, are unquestionably counted among Hindus. The sole reason for this is not that the Hindu society is loosely organised; the real explanation lies elsewhere. For all its apparent rigour the Hindu society does feel in a half-conscious way that variations in custom are merely external and are unable to affect the essence of Hinduism. The fact of being a Hindu cannot be circumscribed in that fashion.

The worldly wise have no faith in this larger aspect of the truth which transcends the contemporary situation. They think that all this is a mere idea⁶. They are free: to think as they do, but it is this idea that now we need above all things. Here in India we had no lack of dead matter, nor of hardened habits devoid of judgement or motion; only that was missing which matters most – the spirit which changes and creates, takes us forward and harmonises all dissimilarities. Now this idea Hinduism has brought forth, and of this the Brahmo Samaj is a medium. By this idea will Hinduism be regenerated; it will produce thought, endeavour and adventure; it will work toward a truthful fusion of all diversity and connect our life-stream with that of the world. This idea, this creative and spiritual force, this mighty urge toward the truth – must we deny all this to Hinduism just because it is incarnated in the Brahmo Samaj? As though the Brahmo Samaj were its creator and proprietor! Is it possible that we would take away from the Hindu Society that which has come forth from its very being, its own vital and historical forces? How can we

utter this great lie that only what is dull and lifeless is part of Hinduism whereas its idea and ideal and its striving toward freedom are things which belong to the world but not to the Hindus? Thus to sunder Hinduism from its truth and substance: is this the aim of the Brahmo Samaj?

The reader who has followed me thus far will be sure to ask a final question: 'You say one does not cease to be a Hindu by not observing caste or even by becoming a Muslim or Christian. In what, then, does Hinduism consist? What are the marks by which a Hindu can be recognised?'

If I am obliged to answer this question, so is my interrogator. Let him offer any definition of a Hindu, and a contradiction is bound to be discovered in some section or other of our vast Hindu society. He will finally be forced to the position that any creed and custom held as Hindu by a certain sect for a certain length of time, is for that sect the mark of Hinduism and to deviate from the custom of one's sect is to deviate from Hinduism itself. Thus we see that what pollutes Hinduism for Bengalis is acceptable to the Hindus of Punjab, and the Hindus of Deccan may see nothing wrong in what is abhorrent to those of Kanyakubja⁷.

How confusing this picture is! But it is so only because we have viewed Hinduism from the outside. To judge from the outside is to misjudge, and I would not admit that Hinduism deserves this injustice even if it has perpetrated it on itself. It is common knowledge that what one knows oneself to be is not invariably true.

Intangible is the shape of human unity. It is a vital process and it defies all definition. There is in it a still centre, and a perpetual motion as well. A definition based on its static aspect will crumble before the fluidity of history, and its dynamic aspect will simply dissolve our efforts and permit no definition at all.

This is why the forces of life can never be arrested in a definition, and it is only with our own life that we can apprehend them. We should be quite at a loss if we were required to define an Englishman and enumerate his characteristics. Our attempts would break down before individuals and periods of history contradicting one another. All that we could say in this matter is that the English are a nation who, with all their personal and temporal variations, have lived through the same history in a particular part of the earth for a very great length of time. In that nation a Christian is an Englishman as much as a worshipper of Kali⁸; those who regard the exploitation of other nations as a patriotic act and those who are dismayed by the corruption that must befall their nation as a result

⁴ Manu, Parasar and Ragunandan are ancient Hindu law-makers.

⁵ Bhatpara: a village near Calcutta, the traditional seat of orthodox Bengali Brahmins.

⁶ Here and all through this passage the English word "idea" is used in the original.

⁷ Kanyakubja: ancient name for a part of modern Uttar Pradesh.

⁸ Kali (feminine of Kala, Time) the Dark Goddess of Destruction, consort and female counterpart of Siva - Tr.

of the systematic oppression of others; those who have burned their own people as heretics, and those who have perished on the stake for what others deemed 'heresy' but they believed to be the true faith; – all these varieties of people are Englishmen, the one group no less than the other. You may say that they are one nation just because they all regard themselves as English, but there is more to it than this. There is also a historical basis for their regarding themselves as English; their consciousness of being one is itself a network that holds them together. This net is composed of meshes too fine to be easy to discern, and yet it is more firm than any tangible bond.

We, too, are held together by a similar network. Of this we may or may not be aware, and the existence of the bond does not depend on our acknowledging or being aware of it. However, if we did acknowledge it and make it a part of our consciousness, both it and we would grow stronger. Through me my entire society is striving to fulfil its highest purpose and it is not in my power to divorce my society from the fruit of that travail. Without men a society is non-existent and the representative men are the best ones, by whom a society is to be judged. If the Brahmo Samaj is now leading in knowledge and rightness of conduct, then it is by this sect that posterity will judge contemporary Hinduism and to judge so would be right. Can I cease to be a Hindu just because most Hindus deny me that name and I too deny it to myself? That is impossible, for the repetition of a lie cannot change it to the truth and neither side has anything to gain by persisting in this attitude. The creed we have chosen is universal and yet it belongs to Hinduism, for our mind is Hindu and we could not have arrived at this universality but by thinking it out in our Hindu way. Not only the name and the concept of the Brahman but our worship itself has a very special character acquired from the specifically Hindu mood of meditation. Into them have entered the philosophies and devotional cults of the Hindus, their rituals, institutions and yogic disciplines, all steeped in

our millennial past. Thus it is that here and here alone can be found this particular manifestation of truth. To say that the Brahmo Samaj is new is to show mere blind conceit; the truth is – and this we can say with real pride – that in this springtime of a new era in our history our immortal tradition has bloomed anew and brought forth what in us is valid for ever.

I am aware there are Brahmos who feel that they owe no less to the Christians, and possibly even more than they do to the Hindus. To explain this feeling is easy enough. What we receive from the outside we receive consciously; the process involves endeavour on our part and we are sensible of whatever we imbibe. This gives us the impression of receiving more, in the same way as a small bonus is more pleasing than the regular salary. Deep within our beings has entered all we have received as Hindus; it is a part of our flesh and blood and woven into the pattern of our sensibilities; and that is why we are unable to recognise it as a distinctive gain and are more keenly aware of what we learn at our English schools, however meagre or superficial it might be. The weight of one's head one does not feel at all, but one is distinctly conscious of the turban that decorates it, yet it would scarcely be right to conclude that the turban, rather than the head, is existent. However much we might value the goods we have received from abroad, and ponder and disseminate them, the things which are eternally ours are flowing into our inner-most nature, all in a silent stream, and making us for ever theirs without our knowing it ourselves.

He who alienates his people cannot make the alien his own and he who disowns his home can never play host to the world. It is absurd to imagine that we can annex the world simply by renouncing our own foothold on this earth.

Concluded

As the country goes through what many agronomists call "its worst agrarian crisis", loss of either the cart or bullocks can deal a body blow to the already tenuous link between poor farmers and their livelihood as it is often not only a mode of transport but also the only way to carry farm produce and equipment back and forth from fields.

Away from Bharat, in an India that largely lives in its shiny new mall-multiplex megalopolises, the contrast with how easily funds are available to buy increasingly cheaper cars comes to mind. The excitement over the Rs.1 lakh car has further escalated, with Maruti Suzuki, Hyundai, Tata Motors and now even Mercedes trying to rev up sales of petrol models with loans at 6.99%.

"Why can't farmers also avail of loans", asks Kishor Tiwari, leader of the farmers' advocacy group Vidarbha Jan Andolan Samiti. "Its strange that a man who makes only Rs.25,000 or less and doesn't even have a home to his name can walk into a bank and get a loan up to a lakh easily. Yet a farmer who owns 10 acres will either be refused outright or be offered a piddly Rs.10,000 as upper limit for a loan."

Excerpted from an article "A Bullock Cart for Ramrao", DNA July 3, 2011

Efforts at Indigenization of Christianity in India

A Commentary

Dan L. Driscoll

For reasons hinted at below my association with Fr. D. S. Amalorpavadass (Swami Amalorananda), the prime mover in India's post Vatican II endeavour to realize a more comprehensive rapprochement between Christianity and traditional Indian religious culture, began in the early 'eighties', when I became a frequent flyer to India as the spouse of an 'Indian National' girl to whom I was married in the Canadian Autumn of 1972.

Germana, my wife, was one of those who, while enjoying the economic and social climate of my Canadian 'home and native land' never felt physically comfortable in the 'temperate zone' and continued to daydream of India. She maintained such presence of mind in this regard that she could not be persuaded to become 'a New Canadian'; she kept her Indian passport always ready at hand, and when discussion arose concerning holiday excursion jaunts she would do the arithmetic and proclaim that for that kind of financial outlay we could go to India! On a Sunday drive through the Canadian countryside an especially charming landscape would evoke the comment, "Oh, how beautiful; just like India". Putting two and two together I also began to 'do the maths', in the culture-consciousness context, and finally deduced that the day might come when we should make our retirement abode in her ancestral territory of Goa. It happened – in 1986 – Q.E.D.

In regard to religious culture I did have a pre-existing condition; after my liberal arts college graduation in eastern Canada I had joined a religious order, where I was exposed to the full gamut of Aquinas and RC Dogmatic Theology. After teaching for a decade in Canada's 'Separate School System' I began to suspect that I had done 'the right thing for the wrong reason', and in 1968 petitioned Rome (pontificate of Paul VI) 'please release me let me go'; it happened, but I have always kept a close eye on religious affairs, both doctrinal and political. Holy Mother Church, like all mothers, could not avoid getting stains on her apron, but still remains a Mother.

Now, after some forty years together, my dear Indian life-partner after a great 'life's innings, has gone to her 'samadhi', and perhaps unconsciously these lines are part of the obsequies for her. When I met her I was the traditional Irish-Canadian Catholic – 'outside the church there is no salvation' and all that. But she was tuned to another frequency.

Like many 'Goans' she had not been 'brought up' in Goa. Her parents, in the early Twenties had moved to 'Bombay' to 'better their prospects'; they were domiciled within walking distance of St. Xavier's College, so that all of their growing offspring ended up with University Degrees. My Goan girl was their eldest daughter, and in her childhood and teen years would be in Goa every time opportunity offered. But after college graduation she moved around mainland India perhaps more than her pious Papa might have liked; she spent a year or so in the academic environs of Benares (Varanasi); then to Jamshedpur and Darjeeling for teaching jobs, eventually to find 'a second home' in Calcutta. Though born and raised in the Goan Catholic tradition, she was one of those who opted for contemplation of the whole religious tapestry. It was from her that I learned about Buddhism, as she recounted to me her admiration for 'Ambedkar' (all news to me), to the point that she 'almost became a Buddhist'. She would talk a lot about how our 'ancestors are looking after us' and of how she was most likely 'a Hindu at heart'. In fact, in the last months before her passing she would insist upon me that she would not want to be 'put in a box'; "I want it done the way the Hindus do it". One of my happy reflections is that I made that happen too; she was cremated at an outdoor 'burning ghat' fronting the Arabian Sea, with the ritual of breaking the water pot resting on my shoulder and my lighting the funeral pyre. A good Jesuit friend of ours donned his violet stole to lead us in prayer.

But very many of her mealtime musings were about Calcutta and 'the Bengalis'. Her Bengali friends would tell her, "You are one of us", and I learned that the Bengali and Konkani languages shared linguistic echoes from some distant migratory past. She would wave me off to church on Sunday mornings with a little grumbling about my 'Churchianity', and then settle into a version of meditation which she described as 'going into oneself'.

Some of her girlhood Calcutta friends, who were

not exactly Bengalis but had lived and worked there, were domiciled in Bangalore, so we would be ‘paying guests’ with them from time to time. This circumstance prompted my discovery, during an evening stroll, of *The National Biblical, Catechetical and Liturgical Centre*, a layout resembling a small university campus just off the ‘Wheeler Road Extension’ in Bangalore’s Fraser Town sector. Upon making enquiry at the NBCLC reception desk a kindly nun made a notation on a slip of paper, saying, “You should go to Mysore. Find Anjali Ashram on Chamundi Hill Road, and ask for ‘Fr. Amalor”.

That started a ten-year association with Anjali Ashram and its Acharya Guru, Fr. D. S. Amalorpavadass, best known to his colleagues as ‘Father Amalor’ and later to adopt his Vedic ID as ‘Amalorananda’. His earthly life ended with a tragic road accident in 1990, but his Ashram and its mission live on. From listening to this man’s lively and learned ashram discourses I became aware of an undercurrent in the Indian mainstream – the intuition among some Indian Catholics that their Christian culture should be ‘more Indian than Roman’. In the little Ashram library I found books – A Pearl to India (Life of Roberto de Nobili); Dom Bede Griffiths; Jules Monchanin (Abshiktananda), Henri Le Sau. I read about Fr. Amalor’s mentors, French Missionaries that labored in southern India for generations and with whom he lodged in Paris while he qualified for a post graduate degree, with dissertation written in the French language. All of this in addition to the fact – very vaguely recognized by me – that the Apostle Thomas brought his message to India three centuries before Constantine, and the Council of Nicea’s heralded Christianity to be the ‘official religion of the Roman Empire. I had once taken the archeological tour of St. Peter’s in Rome, descending to a dimly lit burial grotto containing skull and bones, and with vertebrae encased in hermetically sealed, high-tech sachets custom-designed by NASA. Leafing through pages by a reputed Indian historian (I cannot quote chapter and verse now, but vaguely think of the name as ‘Subramaniam’) I noted a significant affirmation – that the historical evidence for the authenticity of the Tomb of St. Thomas in Madras (Chennai) is at least as credible as that for the remains of St. Peter in Rome. European Jesuits had served in the Mughal Courts, as astronomers, cartographers, and spiritual advisers.

So, I began to take seriously the claim by some well informed people in Asia, that ‘Roman Catholicism’ as the seal of good housekeeping label for Christianity, was something of a Eurocentric stance that could bear looking into.

Before long I became aware that there is quite

profound scholarship dealing with just such points of academic speculation. In a bibliographical list, the author-name of one Julius J. Lipner caught my eye. Lipner is a widely acclaimed research scholar in the field of Asian Cultural and Religious history; a Professor in Indian and Comparative Religion in the Faculty of Divinity, University of Cambridge, and author of such titled works as *The Face of Truth: a Study of Meaning and Metaphysics in the Vedantic Theology of Ramanuja*; *Hindus: Their Religious Beliefs and Practices*; ‘*The One-Centeredness of the Hindu Race*’: *Journal of Theological Reflection* (Delhi, October 1981), to cite only a few of his books and journal contributions. One of his books is entitled *Brahmabandhab Upadhyay, The Life and Thought of a Revolutionary*, published by Oxford University Press in 1989. In Lipner’s book I found that Brahmabandhab Upadhyay was one of Tagore’s intimate associates and collaborator with him in the project that ultimately emerged as ‘Shantiniketan’; the feisty temperaments of the Bengali ‘*bhadralok*’ (English speaking Bengali intellectuals) might have put a spoke in the wheel eventually, but Tagore regarded Upadhyay as ‘*a Roman Catholic ascetic yet a Vedantin – spirited, fearless, self-denying, learned and uncommonly influential*’. Upadhyay (converted by a Jesuit) became a fervent Catholic Christian but averred (adamantly) that he should and would be considered, by himself and others, as *both Catholic and Hindu* in full and equal measure. Unlike my dear wife, who decided quietly by herself to be whatever she wanted to be, this man had a public profile which demanded that his religious and cultural bonafides be sanctioned by hierarchical authorities – at least so far as his Catholic ID was concerned.

The Papal Legate to ‘the Indies’, then, was the Lithuanian Monsignor Ladislaus-Michael Zaleski, who was based in Kandy Ceylon – having jurisdiction throughout the whole Indies Region. He co-founded the ‘Pontifical Seminary’ in Kandy, which much later was transferred to Pune under the title ‘*Jnana Deepa Vidyapeeth*’. That (now much-updated) Institution is still trying to stitch up the rented garment cast off by Zileski, whose response to Upadhyay was as of one stamping on a cockroach. To quote Zileski, from Lipner’s book:

Christianity alone can bring civilization. Heathenism, whatever form it assumes, may sometimes take an exterior appearance of civilization, but it always leaves the soul of the people plunged in barbarity and superstition. There is no civilization outside Christianity. Christianity made Europe the leading continent of the world, and Christianity alone has in itself the power to civilize other countries. Therefore, I say, the progress of the Catholic Faith in India, is the progress of India’

[*Epistolae ad Missionarios, Pt. II; November 22, 1904*].

So that pretty well squashed ‘for the duration’ the endeavor of a millennium for ‘Inculturation’ (Christian Indigenization), despite the labours of Apostle Thomas, the genius of Nobili; the inflexible Upadhyay the gentle Dom Bede Griffiths, and his role-model cohorts Jules Monchanin & Henri Le Saux. Amalor’s carefully designed blueprint for indigenization of Christianity in India, which indeed was sanctioned from several quarters in the Roman Curia, has (in this writer’s opinion) not been seriously followed up by hierarchical authorities, either in the Vatican City or in India.

In ‘the fullness of time’ Msgr Zileski’s crooked line will be made straight. The Pune incarnation of Amitiya Pontifical Seminary, *Jnana Deepa Vidyapeeth* plays a lead role, academically, in trying to put humpty-dumpty together again; but in the minds of too many (including Indian Catholics and other Christian groups themselves), it is a

matter of either ‘why bother?’, or ‘sorry; too little too late’.

May God forgive the Eurocentric arrogance of Monsignor Ladislaus Michael Zileski, Papal Legate to India 1892-1916 – who may (hopefully) by now be ‘seeing the Light’. His real Master, not in Rome, articulated one of history’s most poignant sentences: “Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do”.

This commentary was triggered by the following two publications “AN INDIAN CHRISTIAN GURU: A Portrait of Swami Amalorananda”, Anjali Ashram Society, Chamundi Hill Road, Mysore – 570 011; email: <email@anjaliashram.org and “BRAHMABANDHAB UPADHYAY: The Life and Thought of a Revolutionary”| by Julius J. Lipner; Oxford University Press, 1999.

DANIEL L. DRISCOLL was Senior Secondary Teacher of English Literature & History, Ontario & Alberta (Canada); Liaison Officer (Distribution) National Film Board of Canada; Board Chairman, PEI Arts Council – Retired and currently residing in India since 1986.

Cornucopia (Cont’d. from p.22)

Children of the Same God

The Pathans are believed to be descendants of the Ephraim, one of the 10 Israelite tribes of the northern kingdom of Israel

As everyone knows, there is no love lost between Muslims and Jews. Islam’s Prophet Mohammed referred to Jews as *maghdhoob*, which translates as hated by God. Therefore, it may come as a shock to some members of both religions to learn that they have a common ancestor.

According to a report by Sachin Parashar of *The Times of India*, an Indian geneticist, Shahnaz Ali, has been commissioned by the Israeli government to study a probable genetic link between the Afridi Pathans based in the Lucknow region and certain tribes of Israel who left their native land to wander all over Asia a few thousand years ago. Ironically, Pathans are ethnically related to the Pashtuns, the tribe that provides the maximum recruits to the ultimate Jew-haters, the Taliban.

Shahnaz Ali, is based in Haifa where she is working in collaboration with the prestigious Technion - Israel Institute of Technology. She has been granted a scholarship by Israel’s foreign ministry to work on the project of genetically analyzing blood samples of the

Pathans, which she had collected earlier, to confirm their Israeli origin.

The Pathans are believed to be descendants of the Ephraim, one of the 10 Israelite tribes of the northern kingdom of Israel, who were exiled by Assyrian invaders in 721 BC. Some descendants of these lost tribes are said to have settled in India between AD 1202 and AD 1761. For the uninitiated, the Ten Lost Tribes refers to the ancient Israeli tribes that disappeared from the Biblical account after Assyrians overran the Kingdom of Israel in 722 BC and sent them into exile.

So why is the Israeli government interested in this? The Pashtuns of Afghanistan are generally accepted to be the descendants of Afridi Pathans. One theory is that if it could be established that the Taliban Pashtuns – who consider Jews as infidels it is their religious duty to slaughter – come from the same stock as their hated enemies, it could provide a powerful propaganda weapon for the Israelis.

“We need to slowly be moving towards a locally recruited District Panchayat Service, and keep the IAS purely for law and order. What is happening right now is decentralisation of power, rather than devolution of power. This is a recipe for decentralisation of corruption.”

Former Panchayati Raj minister Mani Shankar Aiyar, cited by Rukmini Shrinivasan in her article ‘The sarpanch and his cheque book’, *The Times of India*, June 25 2011



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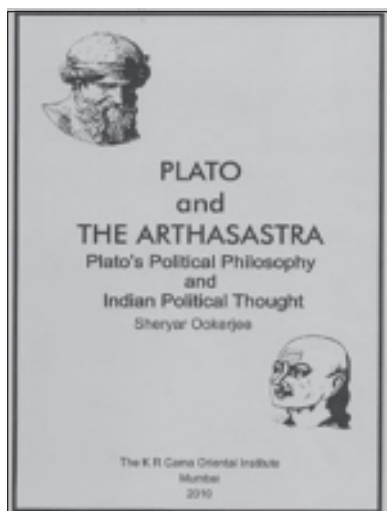
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BOOK REVIEWS



PLATO AND ARTHASHASTRA: PLATO'S POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY AND INDIAN POLITICAL THOUGHT by Professor Sheryar Ookerjee ● K. R. Cama Oriental Institute, 136, Bombay Samachar Marg, Fort, Mumbai 400001 ● 2010 ● pp.247 ● Rs.1,000/- ● www.krcamainstitute.org/publications

Reviewed by Professor Ashok Chousalkar, Professor and Head of the Department of Political Science (retd.), Shivaji University, Kolhapur. Currently editor of *Samaj Prabodhan Patrika*. samajpatrika@gmail.com.

of political analysis and discussed in detail the meaning and purpose of law, justice, punishment and the state. Though there may have been occasional borrowing from each other, in essence, they were independent with remarkable similarities as well as differences. Not surprisingly, many attempts have been made earlier to make a comparative study of political ideas of Plato and of Indian political thinkers and Professor Ookerjee's book on the subject is a welcome addition to the growing literature on Comparative Political Theory.

Prof. Ookerjee's study is remarkable and there are four important characteristics of the book. First, generally when a scholar studies political ideas of Plato he concentrates on the *Republic* and ignores his other books. But the author has referred to all the important books of Plato on politics and admirably summarized the salient features of Plato's ideas. Secondly, when Ookerjee referred to *Arthashastra*, he referred to Kautilya's *Arthashastra* exclusively. His concept of *Arthashastra* includes Kautilya's *Arthashastra* as well as the *Mahabharata*, the *Ramayana* the *Manu Smriti* and other books as well. He has shown a remarkable grasp over ancient Indian Political thought. Thirdly, Prof. Ookerjee's study is different from similar studies because he does rely on Plato's *Republic* but looks into the *Laws* and the *Statesman* and then explores a comparison with Indian ideas. This study makes it clear that in the *Laws* and the *Statesman*, Plato was more pragmatic and as a result, there is considerable similarity of ideas between the two traditions. Fourthly, Prof. Ookerjee maintains complete impartiality and an academic detachment while analyzing the ideas. He does not glorify or condemn a particular tradition and treats objectively both.

Greek and Indian Political traditions were ancient and rich which sought to understand the nature and goal of political life. They developed an independent discipline

Prof. Ookerjee before retirement taught for decades in Mumbai, and this book is a result of his deep study of the subject.

He has divided his book into 10 chapters. In the first chapter, he discusses the rise of political philosophy in ancient Greece in the light of the conflict between the amoral philosophy of the Sophists and the philosophy of Socrates. Greek political life was influenced by the city state which had developed a high level of political consciousness. He points out that the Greek city state and its religion were closely linked and the basis of Common Law was the traditional belief in its divine origin. But after the great Persian and Peloponnesian war the Greek state suffered a decline. Both Plato and Socrates considered political issues in the context of the city-state. The author discusses the rise of the *arthashastra* or political thought in ancient India. He holds that there was considerable influence of religion on Indian thought. There were three different schools of thought such as 1) Dharmashastra school which supported the authority of the Vedas. 2) The *arthashastra* school which gave primacy to politics and 3) the Buddhist school which accorded importance to morality. Compared to the origin of Greek political thought, Prof. Ookerjee has discussed the origin of Indian thought briefly.

In chapter four, the author discusses the problem of the nature of political philosophy in both the traditions and holds that in India, political science branched off from philosophy and developed independently. But there was a close relation between religion and political science as it was held obligatory for the Prince to study the three Vedas. In the *Republic*, Plato was not influenced by religious considerations, but in the *Laws*, he turned to religion. Hence, the author holds that there was considerable similarity of ideas between Indian political thought and the *Laws* of Plato as both believed in pragmatic philosophy.

In Chapter 5 Prof. Ookerjee discusses the duties, qualifications and education of the ruler. In the *Republic* Plato wanted philosophers to be kings because only a

philosopher could perform his duties with great competence and in a spirit of selflessness. If politics was a craft it should be used efficiently by the ruler in the interests of citizens. In the *Arthashastra* the King was enjoined to study the four sciences to correctly understand the problems he would face while administering his state. His approach was practical, hence, there was no dramatic reform suggested to bring about basic change in the nature of state. Though Plato also supported monarchy his approach was different from that of the Indian thinkers as he wanted to establish an Ideal state to solve the problems of politics. Indian thinkers more or less confirmed and endorsed what was already prevalent earlier. According to Prof. Ookerjee Indian thinkers adopted piecemeal engineering and this was their distinguishing feature. However Plato worked out his scheme and program of education in great detail, particularly with regard to the philosophical study of the guardians, while the Indian thinkers treat the matter perfunctorily. But he is of the view that there was danger of indoctrination through education because Plato wanted to impose censorship. He believed that once the ideal State was established good laws would be made. But in the *Laws* he was much more accommodative and gave importance to collective experience of the people reflected in popular customs. The author thinks that there is a dichotomy between reason and passion in the '*Laws*'.

According to Ookerjee, Plato thinks that the King should know the vital concerns of mankind. His are functions similar to that of a shepherd. He has to look after his flock carefully. He holds that King as a shepherd of human herd should work for the good of the state and its citizens. The 'Kingly art' fashions out the web of state' and weaves the lives of different people into a true fellowship by mutual concord and ties of friendship. He maintains that the aim of the State should not be to make people big and rich but to make them good and happy. In ancient India, the King was a protector of the people and maker of the age. He should hold the rod of punishment in his hands and use it impartially and judiciously. He was enjoined to control his senses.

According to Plato the purpose of the State was not to 'please' the people but to govern them in such a manner that it would benefit all of them. Kautilya advised his king to employ every dirty trick to destroy and defeat enemies but Plato was no supporter of Machiavellian politics. Indians normally stood for the *status quo* and they did not want to effect basic changes in the Constitution. As against this, the Greeks always wanted to bring about changes in the constitution of the State because they thought that constitution reflected the spirit of the State.

Prof. Ookerjee elaborately discusses the problem of divinity of the king in ancient India and Greece and holds that in ancient India the king enjoyed the status of divinity. Though divinity was qualified Kautilya, without himself believing in it, invoked it as an expedient to legitimize royal authority. It was a convenient tool to protect the king, stabilize the regime and justify his use of force against the enemies. As against this, Plato did not believe in divinity of the king, though in the *Laws* he said that a good king attained the status of demigod after his death. But the divinity after death would not serve as justification of the ruler's authority while in power.

In India he was quasi divine. However, the Quasi-contractual theory of origin of the State rendered the relationship between king and his subject contractual. But Plato believed in the organic theory of the State as he was developing the integrated theory of the State; he held that the State was 'writ large' of the individual soul. But in the *Laws* Plato was closer to Indian theory when he narrated the origin of kingship during the days of Kronos. Prof Ookerjee points out that the idea of contract was- deeply rooted in Greek political thought. Plato held that it was the duty of every member of the state to obey the laws as he himself contracted to do so. He has made a comparative study of functions of Indian and Platonic state and holds that the Indian state functioned pretty much like the turbulent modern state. The king and the state were very good when they were not very bad!

Prof. Ookerjee's chapters on Law and Law making and punishment are interesting as he seeks to understand the bases of Law in the two traditions and comes to the conclusion that their ideas were identical as they held that bases of law were contractual. But in ancient India, equality of all citizen before the law was not accepted and the quantum of punishment differed community wise for committing the same crime. There was a conflict in Plato's political ideas and the rule of law as a philosopher king was above the law. In the chapter on punishment, he points out that in ancient India punishment had two goals: the need for maintenance of social order and self-purification. In Plato's thought it was considered as a necessary deterrent. It was Plato's opinion that punishment was both retributive and reformatory. By undergoing punishment the wrong doer was freed of badness of soul!

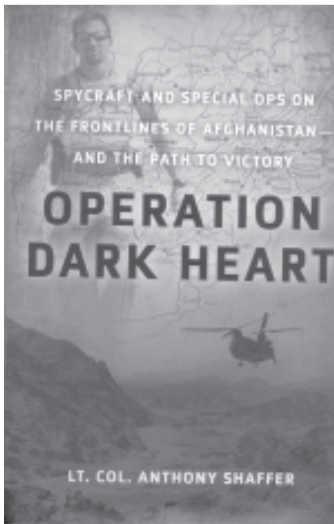
In the last chapter, Prof. Ookerjee deals with the problem of totalitarianism. Plato was termed as an opponent of open society by Karl Popper and the ancient Indian King was considered an oriental depot. It is true that the *Arthashastra* thinkers were supporters of monarchy and held that the king ought to rule for the benefit of the people and if he followed the policy of self-aggrandisement he

would face revolts. The king normally did not interfere in the affairs of the people. A bad king was condemned. Plato was an enemy of tyranny but Karl Popper termed his ideal state a totalitarian state because of its historicist content. Prof. Ookerjee has discussed Popper's views on this issue and points out a darker side of Plato's political ideas. According to Prof. Ookerjee the Indian state as described in the *Arthashastra* cannot be called totalitarian state because it did not penetrate deeply in the lives of the people.' With Plato the matter was more complex, In the *Laws*, Plato's dream state was magnified and it was open to the

charge of totalitarianism. It is Ookerjee's contention that Plato's position on this issue is complex.

Prof. Ookerjee's book is an excellent example of comparative study in political theory as he has thoroughly and impartially studied two great political traditions and their contemporary relevance cannot be overemphasized.

The publishers K. R. Cama Oriental Institute are to be commended for undertaking the publication of this book.



OPERATION DARK HEART - SPYCRAFT AND SPECIAL OPS ON THE FRONTLINE OF AFGHANISTAN - AND THE PATH TO VICTORY by Lt. Col. Anthony Shaffer ● St. Martin's Press, New York ● 2010 ● pp.314 ● USD.25.99.

Reviewed by Dr. P. M. Kamath formerly Professor of Politics, Mumbai University; currently Honorary Director VPM's Centre for International Studies, Mumbai and Adjunct Professor of Geopolitics and International Relations, Manipal University. pmkamath@vsnl.com

The book under review can be examined from two perspectives. First, its content; and second, its uniqueness, especially to the liberal community. *Operation Dark Heart*, as its subtitle indicates deals with various dirty tricks used by the most powerful democracy in the world - the United States (US) as part of spycraft and special operations on the frontlines of Afghanistan. Lt. Col. Shaffer, its author had more than twenty-five years of experience in organizing the "dark side of the force"—the shadowy elements of the U.S. government that function outside the normal system, as the blurb of the book claims. Various tricks used to collect hard intelligence are the main thrust of the book. Readers could understand the significance of such operations in the light of President Obama's successful special mission to eliminate Osama bin Laden! Several dirty tricks must have gone into finding the whereabouts of Osama, as the author says, to "gather the intelligence to kill the largest and most dangerous terrorist operation in the world" (p.167). This will naturally pave the way to Obama's victory in the November 2012 presidential elections!

A careful reading of this book will give to readers a taste of how much time, energy, planning, and resources is required by faceless bureaucrats not to mention bureaucratic infighting, to do the job. For instance, men in the field knew that Osama had escaped to the Federally

Administered Tribal Area in Pakistan in 2001 (p.140). The author was therefore proposing to search for Osama in Pakistan. But in 2004 within the Defence Department, some believed that "*al Qaeda* wasn't really a danger because the United States was such a lucrative fund-raising center for it through Muslim charities. Its leaders would never be so stupid as to attack us and risk cutting off that funding (p.172). Since there are different kinds of bureaucratic pulls and pressures, Col. Shaffer says he was asked to share his intelligence resources with Pakistan (p.188), which of course he declined!

However the important question is: Why should it resort to such tricks to collect intelligence? The US does, so it claims, to protect and promote their national interest within the territories of other nations. Whenever these succeed citizens nationally and friends internationally praise them while adversaries and foes criticise such covert operations as interference in their internal affairs – violation of a nation's sovereignty! Thus, President Barack Obama's mission to kill Osama on May 2, 2011 was hailed by the American public almost hysterically and nations around the world who are the victims of terrorism hailed it with the exception of Pakistan and its all-weather friend – People's Republic of China.

On the other hand President Jimmy Carter's covert military plan to free 63 US embassy personnel taken hostage in Teheran on November 4, 1979 failed. The failure of the military rescue mission was attributed to 23 misjudgments. The failure was publicly acknowledged by President Carter leading to Congressional hearings and

public outcry critical of the failed mission!

This book should be of particular interest to readers of *Freedom First* devoted to the promotion of liberalism. This book must be a rare specimen in the context of American liberal democracy. The book has in all 314 (xv+299) pages. But as a result of post publication censorship, editing and redactions of the book by the publishers at the insistence of the Defence Department and Defence Intelligence, only 155 pages are without blackened lines! Even the index has almost all pages with redactions. As a result sentences are incomplete; sometimes the reader finds it difficult to understand because of its incoherence in the presentation of facts and ideas. All this of course is in the name of national security in a country that prides itself as a liberal democracy!

Democracies because of the compulsions of being pluralist are expected to be tolerant of different viewpoints. After watching major democracies of the world, I can say without any fear of contradiction that intolerance towards differing points of view is a human trait but cultivation of tolerance is the hallmark of a liberal democracy.

Elections are an important part of democracy, but I would consider the tolerance of diverse opinions are more important...The Liberal viewpoint was well expressed by John Stuart Mill when he said in his famous work, *On Liberty*: "If all mankind minus one were of one opinion, and only one person were of contrary opinion, mankind would be no more justified in silencing that one person, than he, if he had the power, would be justified in silencing mankind."

Given this yardstick, India, I am afraid, does not as yet fit into the description as a liberal democracy. The Indian state, as of now, has several examples of intolerance of opinion at the federal as well as at the state level. Thus, for instance, the federal and states governments vie with one another to pretend to protect Mahatma Gandhi's reputation; so does every political party by silencing uncomfortable questions about Gandhi. Gujarat Chief Minister, Narendra Modi banned Joseph Lelyveld's

book on Gandhi – *Great Soul: Mahatma and His Struggle with India*. The federal government also said it was seriously considering its ban. The book is supposed to have said that Gandhi may have had a love affair with German architect Hermann Kallenbach. Interestingly, Gandhi's family members do not think Gandhi needs such protection to preserve his title of *Mahatma*!

Other icons like Sonia Gandhi do not have that kind of national appeal. But her political party, the Congress, does not want the book, *The Red Saree* written in Spanish by Javier Moro on Mrs. Sonia Gandhi and translated into English by Peter Hearn to be published in India. Equally sensitive is Shivaji as an icon in Maharashtra. Practically every political party tries to compete with each other in protecting his iconic stature! The Maharashtra government in 2004 banned James Laine's book, *Shivaji: Hindu King in Islamic India*.

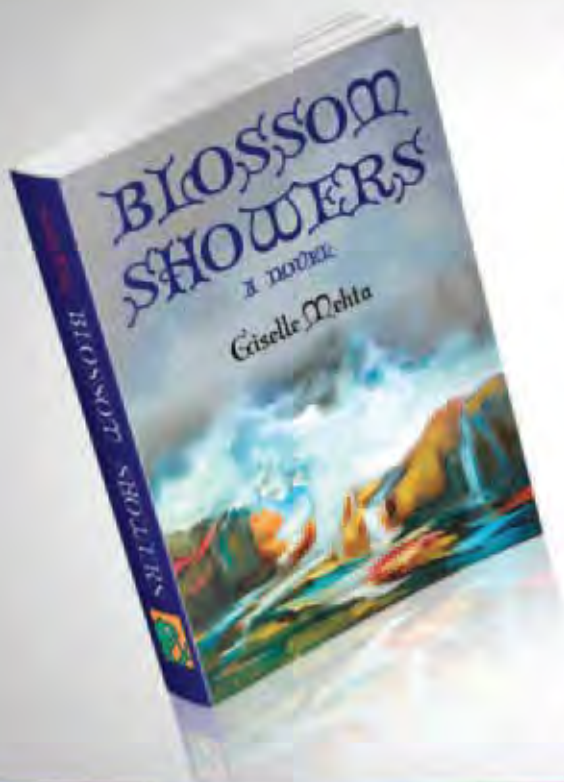
India is a developing democracy – though best in the Asian context along with Japan many of the liberal democratic traditions, conventions and principles have yet to take root. On the other hand even a developed democracy like the US with over two centuries experience in the practice of democracy has resorted to curbing freedom of expression by imposing pre-publication censorship of the worst kind!

The author of this book had worked closely with the Department of Army and had already made a number of changes so as not to endanger national security concerns. Only after "the Army's operational security review", was the book published. Yet post-publication, the Defence Department and, in particular, the Defence Intelligence Agency as the publisher's note states, "insisted that the Army's review was insufficient." Defence Department, Defence Intelligence Agency and other interested U.S. intelligence agencies therefore again reviewed "changes and redactions they demanded" be made. The book thus is a living example of how even a liberal democracy like the US easily limit freedom of expression in the name of national security.

Of India's 6, 00,000 villages, only 5% are bank-conscious. Setting up bank branches in the remaining 95% villages, the way we do, will take 100 years. So we have to find an alternative model for these areas. We should look at technology, like mobile money transfers, like it is happening in Africa. Also, we have a large number of people who work in urban India but their families live in the villages. For them it is a nightmare to transfer money to their folks.

We could use credit societies and cooperative milk societies wherever we can, since the cooperatives collect milk from farmers and package it. They have access to all the farmers. If we give them credit facilities, they can in turn, get accounts opened and lend them smaller amounts of credit for their needs.

Deepak Parekh, Chairman HDFC and member PM's panel on rural inclusion, DNA, July 3, 2011



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