

MINOO' MASANI

90

A Tribute to
The Founder of

**Freedom
First**

A Quarterly of Liberal Ideas

November 20, 1995

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- Speech from the Chair to the General Council of the Swatantra Party, in Bombay on 17th April, 1971, for the chapter titled, Swatantra's Electoral Disaster.

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Between Ourselves ...

When Minoos Masani turned eighty in 1985, the Democratic Research Service published a book of essays in his honour and appropriately titled it "*Freedom and Dissent*". Now, 10 years later, when *Freedom First's* Founder is turning ninety, we wondered what would be the most appropriate way to honour him. It is almost 24 years since he stepped down from the Presidentship of the Swatantra Party and all but quit politics. Though he continued to be active in a number of public activities, he has been effectively out of the limelight, except for a brief period when he was Chairman of the Minorities Commission. To those who are in their 'twenties and 'thirties, the name Minoos Masani is quite unlikely to ring a bell. Why not, we thought, publish a volume containing extracts from his writings and speeches, which would be an introduction to the younger generation of a public figure, and a politician to boot, who set an example by personal behaviour, of a politician, who earned a reputation for probity in public life; who scorned office if it threatened to compromise his principles, and who looked up public life as an opportunity to serve the people, and not as an opportunity for personal aggrandizement - all qualities which the present generation would find hard to believe, so disgustingly corrupt and venal have our public life become.

We are aware how happy Mr. Masani is in the company of the young and the spirited. And so we begin and end this volume with extracts from the two books he wrote for India's youth - *Our India*, written in 1940 and *We Indians*, the last book he wrote in 1989. In between is a wealth of knowledge and wisdom, which one will rarely find in today's politicians. We do hope you will find something of value in these pages.

Minoos Masani, we are proud of you, and we promise you that *Freedom First* which you founded in June 1952, will as long as we are in publication, uphold the liberal traditions and values you cherish and which you have sought to so tirelessly promote among the Indian people.

S. V. Raju
Editor

November 20, 1995.

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1940

HINDOSTÁN HAMÁRÁ

Nice sort of castles to build in the air, I think I have overheard some of you say as you have been reading this book. Don't burn cow dung! Form co-operative farms! Don't import cloth! Turn more iron ore into steel! Electrify the country! Make all machines that are needed! Do this, do that - and India will be a paradise of plenty. Which is all very well but who is going to get all this done, you wonder. Yes, *who?* You certainly have caught the bull by the horns there.

My answer, in case you'd like to know is, 'YOU'. Yes, you, Young Sir, and you Little Lady, you alone can fit together the odd pieces of the puzzle with which this book started. You alone can make a lovely picture out of them. After all, this is *your* country - or it's going to be - and if *you* don't, who d'you think will?

'But how?' you ask. Well, how do people all over the world manage their affairs, run trains, carry letters, irrigate the land and control the flow of goods in and out of their countries? They do it through their governments. The State or Government is the machine or instrument which does - or at least, *should* do, because it does not always do so - what you and I and all those who live in a country want to be done.

Unfortunately, governments are almost always slow and lazy and do only as much work as the people force them to do. If the people are slack or indifferent, so is the government. As someone has said, 'every nation gets the government it deserves'. So you see how much depends on what sort of citizens you are going to become, what you know about your country and what you understand of its problems.

This little book has tried to get you started towards such an understanding. I wonder what you have learnt from it? I'll tell you something I've learnt from it - that we Indians are allowing what we possess to run to waste in a very foolish way. That is because we do not try to plan our country's life. We live higgledy-piggledy, from day to day and from hand to mouth, and you've seen into what a mess we've got ourselves.

When we have a government of our own, let us hope one of the first things it will do is to start on a Plan which will stop the waste we see today and get the most out of our country and our people for their own benefit.

Such a plan takes years to prepare, though, before we can get it going. That is why something is already being done to prepare such a plan. The National Planning Committee, with Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru as its president, has among its members, men and women who are politicians, college professors, scientists, engineers and industrialists.

One of the many difficulties those who make a plan have to face is that not all the things that need to be done can be done together. Each of the big changes that are necessary costs money and energy, and there isn't enough of either in India to make all of them possible at the same time. You can't do this *and* that *and* the other all in the same year. The question keeps on bobbing up - shall we first do this or that?

Then again, those who plan have to ask themselves what kind of life, what sort of society they want to see. Planning everyone agrees to. But planning for what? For an India of big cities or of small towns and villages? For an India of armies of workers in giant factories or of families of artisans in cottages? For an India of big co-operative farms or of small peasant holdings?

Very difficult questions to answer, aren't they? Anyway, see the picture on the next page, of certain aspects of life in India compared with those in some highly industrialized countries. Perhaps it will help you to give your own answer.

Most young people, admiring the wonderful machines produced by America and Germany and England, would like to see huge factories and workshops set up in India also. So would big business men who hope to make big profits by making workers toil at such machines. On the

other hand, there are people, and Mahatma Gandhi is one of them - who are horrified at such a prospect and want people to make what they want in their own homes.

'If you don't have a gigantic iron and steel industry, how will you have arms with which to fight a war?' asks the Friend of the Machines.

'But we don't want to fight any war. We should resist any invasion of our country non-violently,' replied the Back-to-the-Village Man, rather sensibly.

'If we have machines to help us, we do not have to work such long hours, add so we have more leisure to rest and enjoy the good things of life' the Modernist continues.

'Leisure is dangerous and results in immortality. Don't forget that. Satan finds some mischief still for idle hands to do', parries the other grimly.

'Then why not do away with the charkha and the plough also, so that we have to work with our bare hands twenty-four hours a day to keep alive?' laughs the Modernist.

'You see, men are not grown-up enough to handle big machines,' argues the Back-to-the-Village-Man, 'and they become slaves of machines and are in danger of themselves becoming robots, men without souls, living a sort of press-the-button life. Besides, machine production leads to a lot of unemployment and allows those rich men who own the machines to cheat those who work the machines'.

'On the contrary, it is man who has mastered the machine', replies the machine enthusiast. 'It saves him the need of doing dirty and unpleasant work with his own hands and gives him more money at the end of the day. It makes articles cheaper and makes it possible for the poor man to buy things he could not otherwise. As for unemployment and cheating, they are the result of allowing a few rich people to own machines

for their own profit.

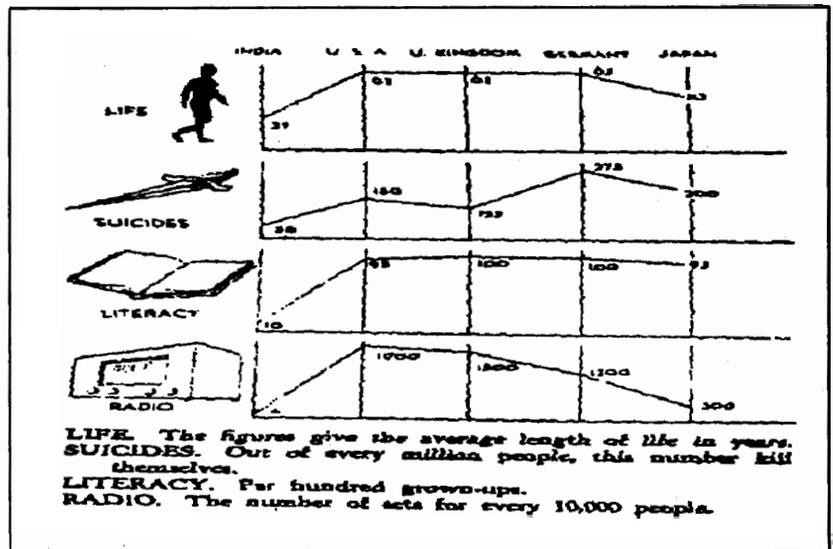
And so the argument goes on and on. There is so much to be said on both sides that a book could be written for each of them! And, as happens in most arguments, there is a lot of truth on both sides. Mahatma Gandhi himself once said: 'What I object to is the craze for machinery, not machinery as such ... The spinning wheel is itself an exquisite piece of machinery.'

What many people seem to forget is that a machine, like any other invention of science, is neither good nor wicked. It is neutral. An aeroplane can take lives by dropping bombs. It can also save lives by rushing a doctor or medicine to a distant spot where it is needed. Machines are what we make of them. So the remedy seems to be not to smash machines, but to teach men to use them more wisely and more kindly.

Besides, so far as India is concerned, I don't think we need get either very thrilled or very hot and bothered at the idea of this country becoming a land of factories and machines. Don't let's forget that 72 out of 100 Indians work on the land and about 90 live in villages. Less than two million work in factories. Even if we do go at breakneck speed in the direction of large-scale industry, our population is growing so fast that after ten years, even if our industries are able to absorb 20 million more men, there will still be 400 million left on the land!

So India is bound to remain, even with the fastest progress we can imagine, an agricultural country - a country of peasants and artisans in villages rather than of workers in cities.

We want a Plan for it that will employ usefully as much of its manpower as possible and make



it produce as much as possible. Maximum Employment + Maximum Production + Equitable Distribution should, I think, be the formula.

Does that mean that problems of industry need not worry us? On the contrary, it means that in order to reduce the terrible pressure of population on the land, we must hurry up with the job of industrializing India. But it also means that since not even six per cent of the people can be absorbed in large-scale industries in cities even after ten years, our small industries must be scattered all over the countryside and have their homes in villages and small towns. In this way, those whom the land cannot support, can turn their hands to other jobs without being removed from their natural surroundings. Peasants who have nothing to do in the slack season will have some handicraft to fill up their spare time, and those who are not needed on the land at all, can spend all their time at cottage industries of various kinds.

There is such a great variety of village industries available. The most popular handicrafts today are the spinning of yarn on the *charkha* and the weaving of cloth - cotton, silk and woollen - on the handloom. Lakhs of people are already at these jobs.

There are all sorts of other crafts which have been practised in India for centuries and which have managed to keep alive in spite of competition from machine-made goods. There is, for instance, work done on various metals. There is the village blacksmith, of course. There are wonderfully skilful craftsmen who make things of brass, copper, silver and gold - from kitchen utensils to the finest ornaments.

Others work on ivory and marble. Yet others make carpets. There is woodwork of all kinds, from boats and furniture to little toys for children. Baskets are made from cane. Clay gives the potter work to do. The hides of animals keep the tanner and the shoemaker busy.

Seeds are pressed into oil, and from oil is made soap. Sugar-cane juice is made into *gur*. Rice is pounded by hand - and is more nutritious than that which goes through the mill. Fruit can be preserved. Ink can be made by hand and so can paper. Paper made by hand in Nepal has been known to last a thousand years.

Cows and buffaloes, goats and hens are there for those who want to do dairy-farming. Bee-keeping too can be a profitable occupation.

If there are all these village industries, why don't our peasant turn to them in large numbers and why are the artisans in such a bad way now?

The answer is that they lack three things - capital, skill and a market. Most people in an Indian village are too poor to be able to buy raw materials or even simple hand tools. The level of their skill

is very low and their taste, though naturally good, is very out-of-date. And what they do make, they do not know how or where to sell.

If these small industries are to be made prosperous and popular, a lot of help will have to be given to them to set them properly on their feet. The Government will have, either directly or through co-operative societies, to give loans to the cottage industries or, better still, supply them with raw materials to get them out of the clutches of the money-lenders.

The next thing to do is to open technical institutes and schools where new instruments and tools, new labour-saving appliances and new designs can be invented and training given to selected craftsmen. These could then go round the villages teaching people how to use these tools and make better articles.

The marketing of these articles should be organised by a staff of marketing officers or by co-operative societies, so that the craftsmen may get a fair price for their wares.

It is in these ways that small industries have spread fast and become so popular in countries like Japan and Switzerland.

Even so, while in some cases things can be made very cheaply by hand, in others the prices will not be as low as that of the same things made in factories. So the Government would have to restrict or even stop the making of many small articles in big factories.

This page with compliments from:



At the same time, village industries will want the big plants in the cities to supply them with certain necessary things. They will need good tools and small machines from big engineering workshops, dyes and chemicals from big chemical works. They will also want cheap and plentiful electric current from giant hydro-electric plants to make their tools move much faster than their own hands can ever make them do. So we see how the village and the city are tied up together, and how one cannot live without the other.

Does that mean that a few Big Businessmen who own these big workshops and factories are to control the lives of our people and make big profits at their expense? How are we to make sure that the people who own big workshops do not use their key positions to send themselves higher up the mountain?

The answer is quite simple. These big factories and plants should have no owners. Then who will run them? We shall, all of us, through our own Government. After all, there is nothing very strange in that, you know. We don't give contracts to business men to carry our letters for us, do we? Our own Post Office does that for us very quickly and efficiently.

The water supply of our cities is organised by our Municipalities themselves on our behalf. The railways in India are now run by the Railway Board of the Government. Is there any reason then

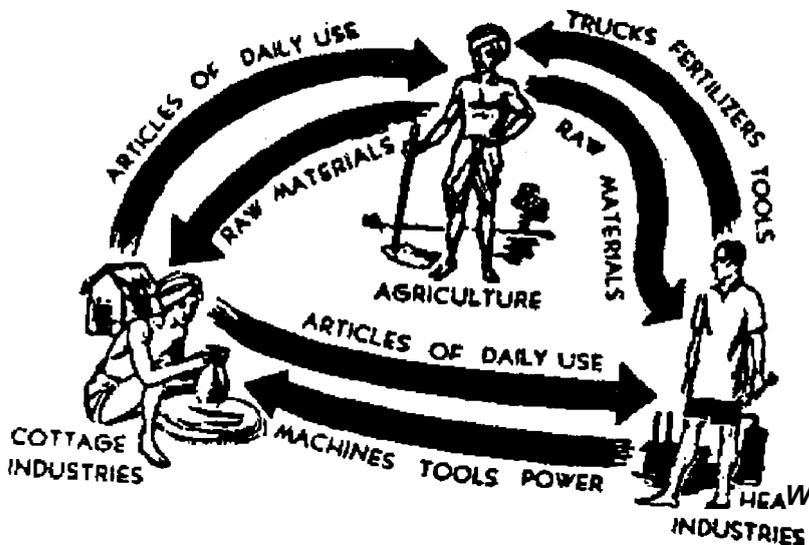
why the supply of electricity and the manufacture of iron and steel and machines and chemicals should be left to a few business men and not be undertaken by the State?

None whatsoever. Which is why many people think that Key Industries, that is those on which other industries and the life of the people depend, ought to be made the common property of the nation and to be run for its benefit.

So, in our picture of India Tomorrow, we see big industries owned by all the people of India put together, through the State, and small industries each owned by one man or by a group organised perhaps in a co-operative society. Alongside both, there is, of course, India's Biggest Industry - the cultivation of the land.

Here you see how each of these partners in the economic life of the country would help one another and be fed by one another.

What we shall have to do is to try and strike



a balance between a mainly agricultural country such as India is today - 'hewers of wood and drawers of water' for more advanced countries - and the sort of top-heavy industrial country that England

has become. We must have many more industries, but they must be spread out in cottages and in little workshops scattered all over the country. That way, we can avoid the horrors of machinery without throwing away its advantages.

Like people in other countries, we do want more of the good things to eat, to wear and to use. We want them, however, not because they **are** the finest things in life, but because they help men and women and children to get the best out of life and to give the best that is in them. Round about us is the great expanse of India and within each one of us too there is a little bit of Our India. We want to cultivate what is *round* us so that we can cultivate all that is in us. We are proud of our country and we want it to be just a little proud of us.

And so let's all sing together a song one of our great poets, Mohammad Iqbal, has given us:

*Sáre jahán sé achhá Hindostan hamárá,
Ham bulbulén hein iski, yih gulistán hamárá.
Parbat woh sab st uncha humsáya ásmán ka,
Woh santari hamara, woh pásbán hamárá.*

*Godi mtin khelti hain iski hazáron nadian
Gulshan hai jiskt dam st, rashké jahán hamárá.
Mazhab nahin sikhátá ápas mtin bair rakhná,
Hindi hain ham, watan hai Hindostán hamárá.*

In case you don't understand these lines (though you certainly should!), this is what they mean:

The finest country in the world is our India,
We are its nightingales, it is our rose-garden;
The highest mountain-range, the neighbour
of the sky,
Is our sentry and our protector;
In its lap play thousands of rivers
Which make of it a garden that is the envy
of the world;
Religion does not teach us to bear enmity
towards one another,
We are Indians and our country is India.

OUR INDIA

On November 11, 1939, I sadly cut myself off from the Party (the Congress Socialist Party) which I had helped to conceive in Nasik Prison in 1933.

In the beginning of 1940, I finally made up my mind and announced my retirement from political life. Throughout 1940, I devoted myself to writing my first real book, *OUR INDIA*.

I was tired of **eking** out a miserable existence on the meagre bounty of one or two friends who thought my being in public life worthwhile. I wanted the dignity and economic independence that come of earning one's own living. And I looked around for a job.

OUR INDIA (which) turned out to be a resounding success was a book for children - something like an economic geography of an elementary nature.

OUR INDIA appealed to the national pride of the Indian and gave expression to his discontent. It was easy to blame it all on British rule and say that once India was free, all the right things as laid down in the book, would be done. The book also popularized the concept of planning. I was later to regret some of the damage done by this particular aspect of it and particularly the passage boosting collective farming in Russia, the material for which was planted on me during my visit to the Soviet Union in 1935 and used in my other book *Soviet Sidelights*.

But the soaalist ideology was incidental. There was no doubt that the book did a wonderful job for me. A whole generation was brought up on *Our India*, some time later prescribed as a general reader in schools and colleges. Soon there was a demand for translations in the Indian languages and there was, before long, a translation in almost every one of them. By October 1944, sales in India had exceeded 200,000 copies in English alone. By June 1952, they were 632,000. Before long, we had topped the million mark.

MM

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एअर इंडिया
AIR-INDIA

1944

RECONSIDERING SOCIALISM

Oscar Wilde has defined experience as the name everyone gives to their mistakes." Any effort by a socialist to review Socialism in the light of, say, the past twenty-five years' experience must therefore to a certain extent involve self-criticism.

But why twenty-five years? Well, **twenty-five** years seems to me to be an appropriate period in the light of which to review one's approach to, and belief in, socialism, because it is twenty-five years since the end of the last war, when people everywhere swore "Never Again"; it is also **twenty-five** since the Russian Revolution.

Looking back across the last two decades, one recalls some fundamental assumptions on which one based one's faith in Socialism as the solvent of almost all the world's ills. Those assumptions were that Man was essentially good, but that the System (with a capital S) was bad, Capitalism, with its anarchy, its creed of "Each for himself, and the devil take the hindmost," its insistence on the profit motive, its free competition between the plutocrat on the one hand and helpless propertyless men, women and children on the other, appeared to be the enemy - the one obstacle between Man and a Happy Universe. It was Capitalism (with the accent on the second syllable) that kept the mass of toilers poor, it was Capitalism that kept women in a position of economic dependence and social inferiority, it was Capitalism that was responsible for prostitution and other social evils, it was Capitalism that kept children uneducated and ignorant, above all it was Capitalism that made repeated wars inevitable. You had but to abolish Capitalism and replace it with Socialism, and all the ills of the human race would evaporate.

All you had to do to overthrow the capitalist system and to extend democracy to the economic sphere was to abolish private property and to nationalise the instruments of production, distribution and exchange. The basis of the classless society was to be the slogan: "From each according to his capacity, to each according to his needs." Then the whole community would be like a single

family and live happily ever after! Lenin described a socialist society as a society of "the free and the equal," where a man's personality would have the fullest liberty to flower. These, let me stress, were the assumptions held by all schools of socialist thought. The Social Democrat insisted that in advanced, democratic countries like England and France, this transformation could be worked, not by bullets, but through the ballot box. The Communist argued that such a change could only be worked by an armed insurrection, as in Russia, by a coup *d'état* and a seizure of power by the revolutionary party (namely, his own) on behalf of the Proletariat. After a short period of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat, the classless society would be established, the State would wither away and you would find yourself in the Socialist Society. It was common ground to all schools of thought that the only thing that could replace Capitalism was Socialism. It was also common ground that Socialism was an international creed and would result in world union and universal brotherhood.

There is a refreshing contrast to this rather depressing record when one turns to the record of the Socialists in certain small countries - particularly the Scandinavian group consisting of Sweden, Norway, Denmark and Finland. There has in these countries been a steady extension of democracy to the economic and social spheres which has not secured the notice and appreciation it deserves. If I were asked which countries were the farthest along the road to a Socialist Society when the war broke out in 1939, I would point to these countries.

Nationalisation - A Sovereign Cure.

There are at least four major assumptions of Marxism, - there may be more - which, I believe, need to be reconsidered. The first of these is that the abolition of private property and its nationalisation will *automatically* bring in economic democracy and a classless society. It has not been shown in Russia that it need do nothing of the sort. What was not adequately appreciated by socialist thinkers of earlier times was that, while nationalised industry may belong to the State, the State itself may not belong to the people; that in the process of achieving collectivised economy, political democracy may get lost on the way.

It is now seen that it is possible with nationalised economy for a new class to arise which monopolises the control, and even a share in the ownership, of national property. Instead of owning individual factories and workshops and mines, as members of the capitalist class do, this class of bureaucrats and managers owns shares in all the factories and mines, as members of the capitalists class do, this class of bureaucrats and managers owns shares in all the factories and mines belonging to the State. The workers get their wages as before, but in place of private capitalists the dividends are now drawn in the form of interest on State bonds by the new privileged class. Production is socialised, but not distribution. Plutocracy is replaced, not by socialism, but by bureaucracy. The oppression of the masses is even more complete because, as Trotsky was to live to see, "in a country where the sole employer is the State, opposition means death by slow starvation. The

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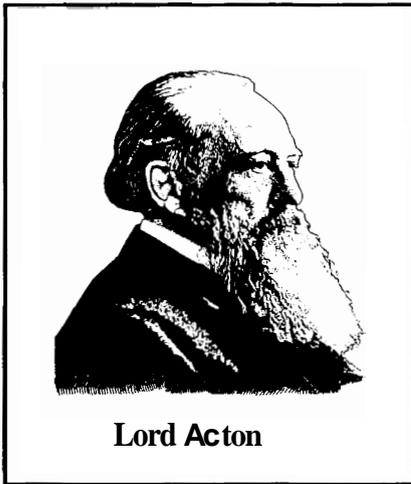
old principle : Who does not work shall not eat, has been replaced by a new one: who does not obey shall not eat."

Nationalisation of industry *unaccompanied* by *political democracy* leads therefore to a different form of exploitation. It is not more and more realised that what matters most is not so much legal ownership of property as political control over it. If this were not so, the existing State ownership and management of railways in India would have to be accepted as socialist!

Via Dictatorship?

The second Marxist assumption that needs reviewing is that the Dictatorship of the Proletariat (that is, of the Party on behalf of the Proletariat) is a possible and indeed a necessary transition state to Socialism. The theory was that having served its purpose the dictatorship would evaporate, and indeed, as Lenin following Engels put it: "The State will then wither away."

What was overlooked was the fact established through history that, in the words of Lord Acton: "Power tends to corrupt and absolute power corrupts absolutely." In Russia, where it is claimed by the Soviet Government that a classless society has already been achieved, that Government shows not the slightest tendency to relax its complete strangle-hold on individual liberty of every kind, much less to 'wither away'! Nor is there any indication that in the years to come any democratisation or liberalisation is likely to come.



Lord Acton

Marxists often refer to **socialist** thought before Marx as Utopian. One wonders whether anything can be more Utopian than the touching faith of communists that a dictatorship like that in Russia, which has not hesitated to 'liquidate' its political opponents in the Party ranks in **lakhs** for the past six or seven years in a bloody struggle for power, is going one fine day to awaken to the fact that it has served its historical purpose and must now liquidate the G.P.U. and all the coercive apparatus of the State which must then 'wither away'! This makes Max Eastman indulge in the quip: "Marx described as Utopian the conception that good men can bring about socialism. Stalinists actually believe that bad men can be relied upon to do so."

A third Marxist assumption that appears to be unable to stand a review of the past two decades is that socialism can be achieved by appealing to the collective selfishness of the working class and its collective hatred for the property-owning classes. The fact of the clash of interest between different classes in society is, of course obvious. But unfortunately the appeal to the collective selfishness of the workers leads quite as often to their becoming a party to exploitation and injustice. We have already seen how the British working class, being given a minor share in the profits of the Empire, becomes through the Labour Party a party to the perpetuation of imperialism, which is the very antithesis of a world socialist order.

Besides, can one ever get to a superior society based on co-operation and love by appealing to selfishness and hatred? The whole complex of ends and means is here involved. Trotsky, one of the outstanding Marxists of his times, called the class struggle "the law of all laws." But science tells us that there is no law of all laws.

The Only Alternative

Yet another belief - and one held till now by all socialists - is that socialism is the only alternative to capitalism. I must confess I held this

view myself till round about 1937 or 1938. You had somehow to destroy capitalism and then, as day follows night, socialism must dawn. But *must it?* That old type capitalism is played out is obvious. But will socialism inevitably follow or is there not a third 'something' that is likely to emerge? That is a question now being asked by a growing school of thinkers. It is best posed and answered in Burnham's *Managerial Revolution*. "Marxists," says he, "assert, in fact, the following syllogism: since capitalism is not going to last (which we have granted) and since socialism is the only alternative to capitalism, therefore socialism is going to come. The syllogism is perfectly valid but the conclusion is not necessarily true, unless the second premise is true and that is just the problem in dispute."

Is it not likely then that the breakdown of capitalism will be followed, not by socialism, but by what may be called - to quote Molotov, according to our 'taste' - Totalitarian or Fascism or Hitlerism or Stalinism? What makes this probable is that the mass of humanity is not yet equipped intellectually to control a highly organised industrial state machine. From this it does not follow that there is any truth in that old reactionary slogan: "You can't change human nature"! That is nonsense. Marx hits the nail on the head when he says that "all history is nothing but a progressive transformation of human nature. "Human nature has been and is changing all the time."

Is there no answer then to Professor Hayek's challenging thesis that the way of total planning is the *Road to Serfdom*? Must one abandon hope and compromise with reality either by accepting

one or other kind of totalitarianism or by reconciling oneself to a maintenance of the muddle and anarchy and waste of old type capitalism? Is that really the choice before each of us? To me it seems that to accept this choice would be for the human spirit to accept defeat. It would be to jettison a noble ideal because it transpires that it does appear to be just round the corner. It is to resort to the disastrous logic of a choice of "the lesser evil." It is not by an acceptance of such a choice that human beings have led their fellows throughout history to heights not till then achieved. To struggle for larger social aims, whether they are achievable in our own life time or not, is part of an evolved conception of living - of what the ancient Greeks called "the good life." As against the logic of those who would surrender liberty for the sake of planned economy, I would prefer that of the man who remarked: "The difficult I shall attempt immediately; the impossible a little later."

In the context of today, only he is a socialist who insists on having both liberty and planned economy. *For all such it has become necessary to reconsider the assumptions on which orthodox socialism has so far been based and redefine the means by which one may hope to achieve the end.*

The questioning of the four assumptions of Marxism that we have found necessary amounts perhaps to nothing more than a shifting of the emphasis which the socialist must lay in the remaining period of the twentieth century. Looked at in this light, the nationalisation or State ownership of property needs definitely to be put in its proper place. Now that it is seen that what

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matters is not ownership so much as control of property, nationalisation is no longer the kernel of the matter. Besides, it is coming whether we want it or not. Economic necessities are driving inexorably towards it. The thing is to be ready to face its implications in the political and social sphere, to make sure that collectivised economy will not entail a totalitarian polity.

Who Owns the State?

That is the question of questions. William H. Chamberlin has, after a decade of personal examination of Soviet life, written:

"A question that far transcends in importance the precise point at which a line may be drawn between public and private enterprise in economic life is whether the people are to own the State or the State is to own the people." (*A False Utopia*).

Precisely because collectivised economy endangers individual liberty and political democracy, these have to be placed right in the centre of the picture of socialism in the years to come. These are the danger points of socialism. Respect for the human personality is likely to be the field on which the battles of the second half of the twentieth century will rage thickest, and no one has a right to be called a socialist who does not rally to the defence of the Rights of Man.

Ends and Means

If individual liberty and political democracy are as essential a part of socialism as economic quality, it is necessary that the methods of achieving socialism should fit the end. This calls for a repudiation of the Communist slogan that "the end justifies the means", which more specifically means that in practice everything - lying, deceit, murder - is justified so long as it helps the Communist Party. It also calls for a repudiation of the methods of ruthless class hatred and of the military coup d'etat, and even more of the methods

of the 'liquidation' of opposition and of the falsification of history resorted to by Stalin. Socialism can only be achieved by clean means and with clean hands. Justice has been well defined as "Truth in action". Without intellectual integrity and adherence to truth, we shall get lost in the woods.

Does this mean that we must fall back into the ranks of the Social Democrats and limit ourselves to legal and constitutional methods alone? If we were in a genuinely democratic country like the Scandinavian States, I would probably answer 'Yes.' In so doing, I would only be following Karl Marx, who conceded the possibility of democratic countries like England and America and perhaps Holland achieving a socialist society through purely constitutional changes. But the world by and large is not democratic, and we in this country have not even the glimmerings of democracy and little individual liberty.

New Weapons

The problem for peoples placed like us therefore appears to be one of devising a method of social change which is dynamic and which yet eschews the violence of a *coup d'etat* and of the dictatorship which must inevitably follow. It is here, I believe, that Mahatma Gandhi has made certain contributions to the development of political thought which every socialist, who wishes to enrich his armory and to devise ever more efficient weapons with which to bring about the social changes which he desires, must carefully study.

Gandhiji's teachings do not constitute a well-knit system of economic thought, nor need we accept them indiscriminately, but it is pertinent to note that Gandhiji has always stressed the importance of economic equality. "The whole of this (constructive) programme," he has said, "will be a structure on sand if it is not built on the solid foundation of economic equality."

There are certain points on which Gandhiji has, I believe, something significant to contribute

in so far as the means to achieve our end are concerned. The first of these contributions is the forging of the weapon of mass civil resistance. That form of mass action is limited, not by legalistic formulas or constitutional niceties but by insistence on clean and non-violent methods. The main virtue of this method is not so much that it does not involve a physical extermination of the opponents of change, though that too is in itself valuable, but that it makes it possible to maintain a democratic climate even when contending with undemocratic forces. It shows an understanding of the great truth that democracy is not only a system, but also a habit. Civil resistance is a method which, even when it fails on a particular occasion, avoids, as we know of our own experience, the degeneration and demoralisation that sets in when a violent insurrection is suppressed. If it is once agreed that the violent seizure of power is likely to lead to violence becoming a habit, with the result that the very object for which the revolution is made may get lost on the way, as in Russia, then it is difficult to resist the conclusion that the Gandhian way is on this point better suited to the needs of a country where the ballot box is not available and where bullets must be eschewed. The socialist has long argued that real democracy is impossible without socialism. Now Gandhiji points out that neither democracy nor socialism is possible in any but a non-violent society.

Decentralised Economy

There is another important point to which Gandhiji has called attention. That is the stress laid by him on the decentralisation of economy.

This part of his teaching has often been labelled "Back to the Villages," and has been subjected to a great deal of sharp criticism.

What attitude should Socialists adopt towards Gandhiji's attitude on this question? Should we regard him as an outmoded crank, fiercely opposed to all machinery and attempting to take us back to a dreary past? If this were really so, then how can we explain Gandhiji's support to the nationalisation of key industries? "What, I object to is the craze of machinery, not machinery as such," Gandhiji said. "The spinning wheel is itself an exquisite piece of machinery." So again, writing in the *Harijan* of 22nd June, 1935, he has said: "If we could have electricity in every village home, I shall not mind villagers plying their implements and tools with electricity."

"I consider it a sin and injustice to use machinery for the purpose of concentrating power and riches in the hands of the few. Today the machine is used in this way," Gandhiji wrote in *Nava Jivan* on 20th September, 1925. What socialist can disagree with a word of this?

It would therefore be more to the point to regard Gandhiji's lack of sympathy with large-scale mechanisation and industrialisation as partly a protest against the capitalist use of the machine and partly a corrective to a tendency which even Western sociologists are now coming to realise is anti-social and undemocratic in its results.

The Transition

How is the transition from the present po-

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sition to a socialist society to be achieved? The nature of the changes brought about by non-violent mass action aiming at the establishment of an economic system an appreciable part of which is made up of small-scale units of production must of necessity be different from those which are envisaged by orthodox socialist theory. One of these points of difference is in the attitude towards the ownership of property, which is the social relationship in that relationship. We have seen earlier that what matters most today is not ownership so much as control of the instruments of production and that one can have, as in Russia, a totally nationalised economy without achieving a classless society. The formula that Gandhiji has put before us, as against the expropriation of all private property, is what is known as the conception of 'trusteeship' of the owners of property in the interest of the community, to be brought about by moral persuasion plus State pressure. The maximum income permitted to such 'trustees' would not exceed twelve times the prevailing minimum.

A lot of scorn has been poured on this optimism which can envisage a change of heart on the part of the propertied class. I confess I have not been innocent in the past of adding my little share to it. After the awful mess that world capitalism has made, the idea of thinking of the capitalist as a 'trustee' does rather jar on one. Nor would there be any ground for hope if the capitalist were left a free agent under a system of *laissez faire*, with unfettered discretion and power to do as he pleased. But that is precisely what the capitalist 'trustee' of Gandhiji's would *not* be free to do.

That is not to say that there is any reason to discard the method of nationalisation and to plump for that of 'trusteeship'. All that follows from the new knowledge of the priorities as between control and ownership of property is that in the transition to a socialist society various forms of the relationship of men to things will have a part to play in different sectors of economic life - State ownership, municipal ownership, industrial and

agricultural producers' co-operatives or guilds or syndicates, and private ownership.

And the more checks and balances the better. We may usefully apply in the economic sphere the wisdom the Fathers of the American Constitution showed in devising a system of political checks and balances for the preservation of liberty. The value of the concept of 'trusteeship' is not in its finality but rather in its elasticity as a transition technique. It stresses the technical and social value of attempting to undo the wrong of the anti-social use of property before destroying or 'liquidating' the wrong-doer. If it does nothing else it atleast weakens resistance to social changes. It shows that new improvisations may not only be found necessary as we go along the path that leads to our goal but even desirable, and that dogmatism in respect of the institutional bases of society should give place to a willingness to experiment.

Karl Marx has made a great contribution to the development of political and economic thought.



All schools of socialist opinion have drunk deep at the rich fountain of his learning and it is only to be expected that he should leave a deep impression on history. But that is no reason for making of his contribution a

dogma, as a church does of the teaching of a religious prophet. That is the surest way to bury the spirit of a great man. "Technology has undergone a revolution undreamt of by Marx." To make of Marx's teaching a dogma is to set up a new religion as hide-bound as that Lenin denounced as "the opium of the people". That Marx himself was not unaware of the dangers of such dogmatism is

shown by the remark which he made towards the end of his life: "Thank God I am not a Marxist"!

Much less is it necessary or desirable for us today to be Marxists or, for that matter, Gandhians. Is it not enough that we are socialists, that our objective is still that of a free, democratic classless and international society, where the ruling principle will be: "From each according to his capacity, to each according to his needs"! If in the course of our striving to help in achieving that goal we find that Mahatma Gandhi or some other thinker

has something to contribute which is as pertinent today as what Marx gave us was a century back, we should gladly pay tribute to him by incorporating it in our conception of socialism and of the means to achieve it.

A wag has said that nowadays "all isms have become wasms." There is certainly a danger of this happening to socialism if those who are socialists do not constantly re-examine their assumptions and re-dedicate themselves to their ideal on the basis of newer and sounder foundations.

SOCIALISM RECONSIDERED

While World War II and the Quit India campaign were proceeding along their respective paths, I was engaged in intensive rethinking of my own position vis-a-vis the problems of socialism and a free society. Marxism and state socialism had lost all appeal for me. The question was what philosophy or way of life was to take their place.

The two major factors that had contributed to this change in my thinking were the failure of the Soviet Revolution to deliver the goods in any sense of the word and the influence of Mahatma Gandhi.

My thinking afresh had resulted in the publication on March 1, 1944, of a little book *Socialism Reconsidered*. In the preface, I described the purpose of the essay as primarily to encourage among socialists in India a re-examination of methods and a re-definition of objectives. That is why it puts more questions than it endeavours to answer, and leaves it to each reader to come to his or her own conclusions in the light of facts which must be faced.

In other words, my book was a plea for free and fresh thinking by socialists in the light of developments, and I ended by saying that if they did not do so, there was a danger that the dictum that "all isms have become wasms" might come to apply to socialism also.

The book seemed to serve a badly felt need on the part of those whose thoughts were moving away from orthodox socialism and capitalism alike.

Socialism Reconsidered was translated in several languages, including Hindi, Urdu, Marathi, Gujarati, Tamil and Telugu.

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1945

PLANNING

Who is to organise the increased production, and who is to see to it that the benefits are equitably shared?

The answer is - we ourselves, all of us. After all, this is our country, or rather it is going to be, and if we don't do all this, who else will? Our instrument for this purpose is the one which people throughout the world have created to manage their affairs. This is called the Government or the State.

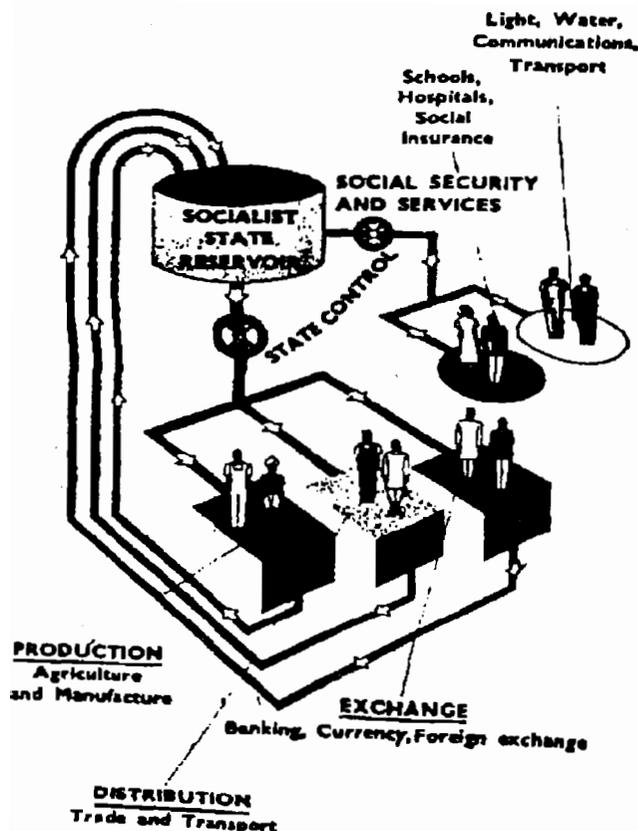
Now, what kind of Government or State shall we need in order to put such a Plan into effect? A British scientist recently declared that India's greatest need is the fuller application of science to her problems. A Plan like this is in fact nothing more than the application of various sciences to our economic problems. We have to make sure, however, that the people who give effect to the Plan will have only the interest of our people at heart. Just as an injection can cure or kill a man, so too a Plan can enrich or ruin a country. And because the patient must have confidence in his doctor, a Plan such as this can only be put into operation by a purely Indian government representative of the people.

That does **not** mean that any and every government made up of Indians will do. We shall have to see to it that it is not made up of selfish people who are out to feather their own nests. The only method human beings have so far devised of guarding against selfish cliques is what is called democracy - that is, **making** the government look for its authority to the people as a whole. Such a government is called a responsible government - that is, it is elected by the people, it is responsible for its actions to the people, and it can be removed by the people. Abraham Lincoln described it as government of the people, by the people and for the people. This is the only kind of government which can be trusted with a Plan of this kind.

For many years now, people have been arguing about the respective merits of various kinds of economic systems. Roughly, they have so far been labelled as either 'capitalist' or 'socialist'. To put it very simply, a capitalist society is one where

the ownership and control of things like land, mines, factories, ships, railways, banks and shops belong to individuals or groups of people organised in what we know as corporations or joint-stock companies. Those who own and control these enterprises supply the wants of the people, and, in the course of doing so, make profits and run the risk of losses. Another name by which the capitalist system is known is that of Free Enterprise. A socialist society by contrast is one where the instruments of production, distribution and exchange are owned and controlled by the State representing the community - all individuals being employees of one kind or another of the State. The State meets the wants of the people by planning production and distribution in such manner as it thinks best. The profits of production go to the State which can then use them for the good of the community as a whole. It is claimed that such a system of society would not only make for increased production but also for equitable distribution and would create a classless society based on the principle: From each according to his capacity, to each according to his need.

Actually, neither system in its pure form exists at present in any country in the world. On the one hand, in what are called the capitalist countries, the principle of free enterprise has in the course of this century been so largely modified by State intervention in various spheres of economic activity that 'in many of its characteristic aspects capitalism has been transformed almost beyond recognition.' On the other hand, Russia, which after the revolution of 1917 attempted to



THE SOCIALIST STATE

build a socialist society, has in recent years found it necessary to accept the capitalistic ideas of competition and differential monetary reward as incentives to efficient production. Also, the claim that Russia has been able to raise the standard of life of the people only because of collectivization is not borne out by the facts.

All this indicates the desirability of concern-

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ing ourselves with ways of life rather than with labels. Experiments in developing what has been called a middle way of life have so far been successfully carried out in small countries like the Scandinavian States of Sweden, Finland, Norway and Denmark, and in such regions as the one served by the Tennessee Valley Authority in America. Professor Julian Huxley has written that 'the initials TVA are beginning to be familiar as the symbol of a new possibility for the democratic countries - the possibility of obtaining the efficiency of a co-ordinated plan without totalitarian regimentation'

A more positive role to be played by the State in the economic sphere is the prerequisite of all planning. The control of the instruments of production, distribution and exchange is the method by which the State can perform this task. In India, the land is by far the greatest single unit of production. What part is the State going to play in relation to the land? Today, only about a third of our land belongs to those who actually cultivate it. The percentages of areas owned by cultivators in other countries before World War II were : France 60, Switzerland 80, Germany 88, and Czechoslovakia 90. As we have seen earlier, the State will have to examine the claims to ownership of those who do not work on the land. How then will the land be redistributed? Should the State create huge collective farms and set the people to cultivate them with the use of tractors and other machines? There are people who claim that collectivized and mechanized agriculture in Russia has worked wonders and transformed the face of the countryside. There are others, however, who take a different view and rule out such a course on the ground that it would tend to impoverish the soil, reduce the peasantry to serfdom, and create **unemployment** of staggering proportions.

It would seem that the choice for India lies between two systems. One would be that of peasant farming of inalienable and indivisible farms of an economic size, with the State helping and guiding

the peasant in various ways to put his land to the best use. The other would be co-operative farming of a larger unit, such as a village, where the ownership of the smaller plots which make up the unit would remain with the peasant but farming operations would be jointly performed. There is ample room in India for both these systems to play their part.

In so far as industries are concerned, we have seen that a great part of our industrial production will be in cottages and small workshops spread throughout the countryside. The ownership and management of such industries will be with those individuals or groups or co-operatives who run them. The State here can only play the part of 'big brother' in helping such industries along by making tools, raw materials, electric power and credit facilities available to them and helping with the marketing of their products.

Till recently, it was considered modern to describe rural and cottage industries as antediluvian, but in the last few years a different attitude is coming to be adopted by people all over the world. In our country, Mahatma Gandhi stressed the importance of village industries almost twenty years back and educated us slowly to stop thinking, in a lop-sided way, of industries consisting only of huge factories situated in big cities. In the West too, people have more recently started realizing that the latest developments of science no longer make it necessary for people to congregate in huge cities, work in giant factories, and live in foul slums.

We must remember, however, that neither agriculture nor rural industries can flourish without certain basic large-scale industries sometimes called key industries and public utilities. Such are mining and metallurgy, engineering, heavy chemicals, fertilizers, cement, electric power, railways, shipping, aviation, posts, telegraphs, telephones and radio. Here the State will have to be more assertive. For one thing, in the kind of society we are thinking of, there should be no place for a few

Big Businessmen who own these workshops and utilities to control the lives of the people and to make big profits at their expense. For another, planning implies a deliberate decision taken in advance regarding operations which cannot therefore be left to the sweet will or caprice of individuals, each concerned with his own profits.

Does that mean that all these industries should be owned and managed by the State? Not necessarily. The experience of Russia and Germany has shown that what matters most is neither legal ownership nor management but control. The case of elasticity and diversity, in controlling industries in general as well as particular units within each industry, has been put by the British socialist writer G.D.H. Cole as follows: 'There is no need to socialize at once all the forms of production, it may prove desirable to socialize some time; nor is there any reason why a form of production, socialized at first, should not be handed back, under proper safeguards, to private enterprise if socialization does not yield good results. Within a single branch of production, there may be some parts which it is desirable to socialize, and others which are best left under private ownership and control. The less rigidly the line is drawn, the more room will there be both for diverse experiment and for suiting different types of men and women with jobs in which they have a decent chance of being happy... the more gigantic the essential instruments of power become, the greater grows the danger that, in centralizing their administration, we may be drawn to create a political machine too vast and complicated to be amenable to any real democratic

control, and may thus become ourselves the victims of the very power-mania which we are organising ourselves to defeat. It is a clear lesson of recent history that democracy cannot be real unless it rests on small groups as its basic units - on groups small enough to be competently administered and led by men of normal stature and mental make-up. This should make even Socialists wary by now of tearing up by the roots any small man's refuge that is left in a world so ridden as ours by hugeness. It should make them regard the farmer, the shop-keeper, the small manufacturer, not as obstacles in the way of universal centralization, but as valuable checks upon a dangerous agglomerative tendency.'

This leads to the conclusion that our objective should be the 'mobilization of all the available means of production and their direction towards socially desirable ends'. This Object can in some cases be furthered best by State ownership and management, in other cases by State ownership without management or by State management without ownership, and in yet other cases by State control without either State ownership or management. What should be constant in all such cases is the control of the State. This will take the form of licensing, the nomination of some directors on the board of management, the prescribing of conditions of work and wages, the fixing of prices, and the limitation of dividends. Whether ownership or management should be added to these forms of control is a matter of convenience to be decided on in each case. It is possible, however, to state broadly the categories where such ownership or management may be called for. Where

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the State finances an enterprise, there is a strong presumption in favour of its also acquiring the ownership. In fact, in the case of some non-existent industries, that may be the only way in which under the present conditions they can be started at all. Other enterprises which it may be necessary for the State to own are monopolies, and such vital services and public utilities as post, telegraphs, telephones, radio and railways. State management should normally follow where an enterprise is owned by the State, but it need not do so in all cases. Even State owned enterprises may sometimes with advantage be left to the management of private parties, as in the case of many enterprises in the United States during World War II, or to ad hoc public corporations of the type of the London Passenger Transport Board, in which the State would be represented.

In addition to the control of key industries and public utilities, the State would also, during the period of the Plan, have to exercise a more general control over economic processes. Such a control would include that of prices, of priorities in the distribution of raw materials and manufactured goods, of the flow of investment of capital, and of foreign trade and exchange.

The part that the State will thus have to play will obviously call for a great increase in the administrative machinery. Till the outbreak of war in 1939, the administration in the country could fairly be described as most rudimentary - its main purpose being the collection of revenue and the maintenance of order. A State of the kind we have imagined would need, a far larger body of persons with special education, training and experience. Perhaps one of the best instruments for such a purpose would be a newly created Economic Civil Service.

The creation of a large army of officials of various kinds and the concentration of administrative and economic power in their hands bring us face to face with perhaps the basic problem of the rest of our century, which is that of whether

the people are to own the State or the State is to own the people. To put the matter differently, it is the problem of finding 'the most fruitful method of combining planning - the right kind and degree of planning - with freedom'. It has been argued by a learned professor that the path of total planning is the road to serfdom. Is this assumption true, that a planned economy can only function within the political framework of dictatorship? Such a fear is natural, 'since in the two countries which have witnessed the most impressive experiments in economic planning undertaken in recent years, namely Soviet Russia and Germany, the State has exerted over the activities of its citizens in every sphere of life a degree of authority which provides little scope for the exercise of individual freedom'. These States have been described as 'Managerial States', that is, State where the managers of industry and the bureaucrats of administration monopolize all power.

It has been said that 'in a country where the sole employer is the State, opposition means death by slow starvation. The old principle: who does not work shall not eat, has been replaced by a new one: who does not obey shall not eat'. It is therefore a natural fear that Lin Yu-Tang has put it, 'When democracy falls into the hands of the experts, democracy just falls'. But to agree to surrender liberty for the sake of planning, or vice versa, would be to accept defeat too easily. There is no reason why, learning the lessons which these experiments have to teach us, we should not devise safeguards which will make it possible for planning in India to take place democratically.

... in our planning we have to make a choice not so much between Socialism and Totalitarian Collectivism. 'Democracy rests on the belief that the freedom of the individual to give full expression to his personality is one of the supreme values of life and among its basic needs: the State cannot demand a surrender of that freedom except for well-defined ends and except with the assent of the community freely expressed through consti-

tutional channels and with opportunities for the free **functioning** of parties holding divergent views. If a planned economy involves, as it necessarily must, the restriction of individual freedom in varying degrees, such restriction under a democratic government will be of limited duration and confined to specific purposes. Whereas in a totalitarian society the individual is merged in the State and belongs to it, having no rights except those which the State chooses to confer, in a democracy the State belongs to the people and is but a means of securing the fulfilment of the Individual's rights and therefore any restriction which it imposes on his freedom must be justified by that test.'

On the economic side, planning for freedom calls for the widest possible decentralization of the process of production and the widest possible distribution of economic power. As far as possible, such decentralization of ownership should be combined with co-operative endeavour - through the encouragement of co-operative farming by peasant proprietors and industrial co-operative movement. The value of co-operation is that it gives scope for individual initiative and freedom

without the evils of individual selfishness and for the benefit of collective action without the evils of bureaucratic collectivism which reduces the common people to being 'small screws in the great machine of State'.

The best guarantee for the preservation of political liberty is that of free opposition to the government of the day. Indeed, an acid test of democracy is the existence of opposition parties functioning freely and with every hope of winning the support of the majority and thus becoming the government. No State which does not allow such freedom of opposition can claim to be democratic in any sense of the word. A mixed society, with several autonomous sections acting as checks and balances, provides the most likely soil in which such democracy can flourish.

Above all, what needs to be remembered is that planning is but a means to an end. It is an instrument by the use of which certain desired results may be achieved and, like all tools, it can be used for good or for ill. The question therefore arises: Planning, yes, but to what end?

Picture of a Plan

The next project undertaken by the Masani-Hawkins-Moorhouse team was in 1945. This was *Picture of a Plan*, which was a popular version of what was known at that time as the Fifteen Year Plan or the Bombay Plan, which had been prepared by a group of industrialists. With coloured pictures and charts by Moorhouse, this popular edition was designed to spread widely the message of the rather sedate document on which it was based. In a way, the Fifteen Year Plan became a model for the Five Year Plans to be put out by the National Planning Commission set up by the new Indian Government.

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1947

MIXED ECONOMY

We had all hoped that, with the end of the war, India would take giant strides forward towards industrialisation. Two years have passed since the end of World War II and, far from making any advance, these years have seen a constant fall in our production, both industrial and agricultural. The price level keeps on rising, and we are faced with the prospect of further inflation. This then is what a bird's-eye view on the economic scene reveals.

In the light of this situation, what is our most burning need? The answer obviously is increased production. I do not think that Mr. C. Rajagopalachariar pitched it at all too high when, as Minister for Industries and Supplies in the Interim Government, he asked us in April last to "make a religion of production." Unfortunately, very little has been done in response to that appeal and our plight gets every month a little worse.

I can sense through the minds of some younger idealists the thought passing: "Increased production, yes; but what about equitable distribution?" I am as sensible of this aspect of the matter as any. The gross inequalities which disfigure our economic and social life are patent to all and it would be intolerable if the benefits of increased production were to be monopolised by small sections who are already favourably placed. Not only would such a development be deplorable from the point of view of social justice, it would be equally retrograde from a purely economic point of view because increased production would lose much of its value if it was not accompanied by increased purchasing power in the hands of our toiling masses.

Having said this, it is necessary to emphasise the need for not getting mixed up in our priorities. Equitable distribution is important, and must follow close on the heels of production, but it has no meaning unless first there is increased production. We can have equitable, and even equal, distribution of our national income today. Let us see what that would mean. It would mean, in terms of the inflated rupee, a per capita income of about Rs.130 per annum or Rs.11 per month. For a family of

four, it would mean a monthly income of Rs. 44. That is hardly an objective to strive for, and most of our working people would rightly reject it with contempt. The question is: "Do we all want to swim together or sink together"? There can be only one answer - that the economics of production must take precedence over the economics of distribution. It follows that any thing that comes in the way of increased production today is not only anti-national but it is also anti-socialistic.

It is in this context that we have to consider the proposal mooted in certain quarters that all our industries should be nationalised. First of all its is important that we get our definitions right. "Nationalisation" is a word which is used by people of diverse economic creeds each in furtherance of their own arguments. It is important, therefore, to be clear about its meaning and to understand its extent and its limits. As defined by the Oxford Dictionary, "Nationalisation" is "the action of bringing land, property and industries under the control of the nation". To nationalise is "to vest the control, ownership, or the like under control of the nation. It is clear that national control, whether or not it is accompanied by national ownership, amounts to nationalisation in the correct sense of the word. Socialists and other adherents of the collectivist schools of thought use the word, however, in a narrower sense as implying State ownership and management. In order to avoid confusion, it is best as far as possible to avoid reference to the word and to use the terms State Control on the one hand and State Ownership and Management on the other.

I know of no sounder approach to the problem of the role of the State in industry than that underlying the words of Mr. Herbert Morrison, a member of the British Socialist Government:

"People have been known to go red in the face or blue or both red and blue, in discussing it either as pro-nationaliser or anti-nationalisers."

"There is however no real need for excessive excitement, for the question to be decided is whether, in the circumstances, the industry is likely to be better run by free competitive private enterprise, or controlled and supervised monopoly enterprise, or by public enterprise of one sort or another...."

"It is up to nationalisers to prove their case that there will be public advantage by nationalisation. It is no less upto the anti-nationalisers to prove their case that the public interest can best be served by private ownership."

Let us then in that pragmatic spirit put to ourselves the question: "Is State Ownership and Management of industries the answer to our needs?" The question has only to be put to be answered. It is surely obvious that by discouraging enterprise and frightening away the already timid Indian investor on the one hand and by addition to our already low efficiency the burdens of bureaucratic red tape and inertia on the other, a policy of transferring our industries to State ownership and management would give a deadly blow to any possibility that we may have of rapid industrialisation.

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A Contrast

It is better to be guided by facts than by expectations, and the proof of the pudding is always in the eating. Why not, therefore, compare the **working** of Free Enterprise on the one hand and of Nationalised Economy on the other in those two Great Powers which are exemplars of these respective systems? We have, on the one hand, the United States of America. With six percent of the world's population, it manufactures a volume of industrial goods which is greater than that of **the rest of the world put together**. It produces today half as much food again as it did in the years before the war. It has achieved for its people the highest standard of living known in the world's history. In the last **35** years, under a regime of Free Enterprise, the average expectation of life of the U.S. citizen has gone up by **19** years from **46** to **65**. All this has been achieved with the fullest democracy and individual liberty. We in this country, as indeed do almost all countries in Europe and Asia, look today to the United States for the capital goods with which we hope to industrialise our own country. For the past few years, the United States have been the biggest contributor of the foodgrains, which we have imported to keep alive. If today there is dis-equilibrium in world trade, it is not because Free Enterprise in the United States fails to produce the goods for the world's markets, but because the rest of the world is so placed that it cannot produce anything to give to the U.S.A. in return.

Now let us turn to the other side of the medal, to scan the only example in the world of a completely nationalised economy. We read in our papers a little while back that our Ambassador in Moscow had to fly all the way to Stockholm to get furniture and furnishing material for our own Moscow Embassy! It is a small incident but it illuminates the scene better than any statistics can do. Economists, however, will be satisfied with nothing less than solid figures. Well, according to that eminent economist, Colin Clark, in his *Conditions of Eco-*

nomie Progress the national income of Russia, calculated on the basis of production per head of **working** population rose from **1913** to **1937** by **24** per cent. Not bad but not good either. During the same period, Japan showed an increase in her national income of **100** percent, Sweden of **69** per cent, Australia of **63** per cent, while even mature and already highly industrialised countries like the U.K. and U.S.A showed continuing rise of **32** per cent and **25** per cent respectively. In the light of these figures, the much advertised gains of nationalised production turn out to be elusive.

The trouble with ardent nationlisers is that they rarely argue their case and one has yet to see a single effort by an Indian publicist or writer showing precisely how State ownership and management of industries would increase production and help the country. Their advocacy consists mainly in the reiteration of a slogan. On the basis, however, of what little material is available, it would be fair to say that the case for nationalisation in India rests, apart from a negative satisfaction at the destruction of capitalism, on the following argument. First, nationalisation would eliminate the high profits that are at present being made, and the State could obtain cheaper capital than Free Enterprise. Secondly, nationalisation **would** give an incentive to the workers to work harder and produce more because the factories would no longer belong to the capitalists but to the State on behalf of the entire community. These two factors, it is argued, would make for greater efficiency, increased production and more rapid industrialisation. Let us try dispassionately to examine this argument and see to what extent it is valid.

Capital

First, let us take up the question of profits, which is only too often discussed these days in a somewhat emotional manner suggestive of the proposition that profits are some kind of theft. Economists know, however, that just as wages are

the price paid for labour, profits are the price paid for certain definite services. First, as rewards for enterprise and managerial capacity and as compensation for loss or risks of loss. Secondly, to be used for purposes of replacement and expansion of plant. Thirdly as reserves against a time when earnings might decline thus preserving jobs and workers' earnings during possible unfavourable periods. The fallacy that every rupee of profit is something abstracted from the workers' earnings is based on the conception of static fund from which wages, interest and profit have all to be drawn. As a matter of fact, however, it is general knowledge that when profits increase, labour, management and capital all generally share in the benefits, and conversely higher wages, can, though not necessarily, result in higher profits through stimulating the productivity of labour.

Enterprise is rather a nebulous term. It may perhaps be described as the exercise jointly of a number of qualities such as initiative, originality, ingenuity, faith, push, the ability to plan and the courage to take risks. Now, who can expect these qualities from Government officials or from Government departments? How many Civil Servants are known for giving quick decisions on any important subject? Whoever head of Government departments being prepared to take risks?

That is true of bureaucracies in all countries, and even truer of ours. Nationalisation means monopoly, and the inefficiency of the Indian State Railways and the shabby way they treat their Third Class passengers give a foretaste of what we may expect.

Judging by articles and pronouncements in the press, one feels that popular ideas about the quantum of profits are rather exaggerated. I have tried to secure figures of total or average profits made in this country over a period years but without success. One can, however, get some idea of popular misconception on this subject by looking at figures obtaining in the United States. Not long ago, a poll of public opinion was taken there in which a large cross section of clerical and manual employees were asked to make a guess at what per cent profit the average American manufacturers makes in peacetime. Of those answering the question, more than 60 per cent thought that profits exceeded 25 per cent. In response to another question, these same people said that they thought 10 per cent would be "a fair profit.". According to Mr. Henry Ford II, however, in the fifteen years from 1925 to 1940, all manufacturing corporations in the U.S.A combined earned only 3.3 per cent on their invested capital. In only one year did profits rise above 6 per cent, and that was in 1929 when they were 6.6 per cent on invested capital.

Even as things are, the prospects of our obtaining adequate industrial capital are not very bright. To start with, the Indian Union will have an unfavourable balance of international payments. As against our exports in the coming years and the releases we may secure for replacement alone and of Food grains which will be of higher value. During the year 1946-47 alone we had to utilise over Rs. 100 crore of our sterling balances for financing such imports. These must continue. "There will thus be no margin left whatsoever for

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the import into Indian Union of capital goods for "industrial expansion".

The conclusion to which we are therefore forced to come is that we shall have hardly any capital at all available in the next few years for industrial expansion. India's industrial advance, whether we like it or not, must consequently depend in the main on the pace of imports of capital goods which may be made available to us either through loans from foreign countries or by investment of foreign capital in industrial enterprises in the Indian Union. What chances we would have of securing such credits or "capital" if we were to indulge in doctrinaire experimentation and not be prepared first of all to put our house in order is worth considering.

Labour

The second factor on which advocates of nationalisation base their hopes is that of better co-operation and greater efficiency on the part of Labour in State owned and managed industries. It is surprising that, after all the experience that has become available recently, such a plea is still to be heard. In Britain, judging by these claims, one would have thought that the coal miner, after the nationalisation of the mines for which he had clamored for twenty years, would have got down it to increase his output. The figures, however, tell a disappointing tale. According to the *Financial Times* of September 2, 1947, while the average weekly output per mine worker in 1938 was 5.6 tons, in 1946 after nationalisation the weekly output had fallen to 5.0 tons.

The story goes that when recently Mr. Attlee the British Premier, addressed a meeting in his constituency, someone in the audience charged the Labour Government with not having lived up to its election promises. When Mr. Attlee asked the heckler to explain himself, the reply was: "Your Government promised us more pay and less work. Well, we delivered the less work - where is the more pay?"

In Czechoslovakia, another country where nationalisation has been imposed over a large field, a Communist deputy, Zapotocki addressing the Trade Union Council on July 8, 1947, complained, according to *East Europe* of July 17, 1947, that "while private enterprises are making full use of all available labour, labour discipline and morale had still not been properly established in nationalised enterprise. That was why production in nationalised enterprise had dropped."

Coming nearer home, we have not yet forgotten the last Postal Strike, nor how near we came to an All-India Railway strike, and in neither instance was the attitude of labour particularly conciliatory because it was the State and not a capitalist who was the employer. In fact it is obvious that Governments which are dependent for their tenure in office on votes at election time are peculiarly amenable to unreasonable pressure from the workers. State ownership and management, by making the State itself the only employer, eliminate the State as a valuable mediator or arbitrator between management and labour.

The conclusion is irresistible that not only are State ownership and management not the answer to our needs, but that that way lie destitution and dictatorship.

The Mixed Economy

The rejection of a policy of State ownership and management of industries as being disastrous to our economic development need not lead one to be content with the status quo or the present drift. I shall therefore endeavour to outline a picture of the kind of economy which in my view can be relied upon to take more quickly to the goal of a "free and equal society" than total State ownership and management. I put it forward not as a poor substitute, nor as a mere halfway house to, the real thing, but as a better, more scientific and more modern method of working for the same ends than the so-called "scientific socialism" of

the nineteenth century, at least so far as our own generation is concerned. If after than an advance towards complete socialisation can be democratically achieved, nobody will be as happy as I, posthumously, would be.

I do not see how, with the experience that we have already acquired, we can seriously take exception to the conclusion arrived at by Professor Hayek in his book *The Road to Serfdom* that total planning means total slavery. The right answer to Professor Hayek is that given by a British socialist, Barbara Wooton who says that the secret of success in planning lies in knowing where to stop. She gives an apt example by pointing out that because railway timetables have to be worked out for co-ordinating the running of trains, it does not follow that the reading matter and conversation of passengers need be either planned or controlled. Applying that sound principle, the Mixed Economy would know where to stop. It would stop short of creating a monopoly of any one form or technique of production. It would be mixed in the sense that it would keep alive and stimulate, at the same time, state enterprise and free enterprise, peasant proprietorship and co-operative farming.

There are certain things that need to be stressed in making an approach to the Mixed Economy. The first is that our approach must be free from dogma of any kind and that we must always remember to put first things first. The second thing to stress is that India is big enough for all forms of production to be tried out at the same time and that since we are still at the beginning of the our Industrial Revolution, the mere nationalisation of

existing enterprises would in any event touch only the fringe of the problem that faces us. The third factor is our approach is to make the fullest use of the great contribution that has been made to economic thought in our country by Mahatma Gandhi, namely, the emphasis on decentralisation of industry and of its control.

The fourth thing to do is to shift the emphasis from the State to increasing workers' control over industries and to foster the partnership of Labour both in the administration of the industry and its fruits. The ungrudging acceptance by industrialists of their workers as human beings and as partners, the use of latent talent by inviting Labour representatives to sit on the Boards of Directors of industrial corporations, and direct relations between Management and Labour across the conference table are among the urgent needs of Indian industry.

Fifth and last, the Mixed Economy will depend less on ownership and management and more on control to see that the interests of the community reign supreme. In a recent speech in Bombay, Dr. Henry F. Grady, the American Ambassador to India and himself a leading industrialist, gave a definition of enlightened capitalism which showed a welcome willingness to accept the kind of economy which I am outlining:

My conception of capitalism is a self-disciplined system of liberty with certain governmental controls necessary because the economies of today are so intricate, but controls that release energies and initiative, not stifle them. Properly conceived and executed, controls

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will not restrict endeavour. They are not inconsistent with vigorous private enterprise. But they can needlessly grow and encroach unless we are constantly on the alert and maintain the happy mean between 19th Century laissez-faire and communist totalitarianism".

Three Sectors

Based on these ideas, the structure of the Mixed Economy would be somewhat as follows: there would be three sectors. The first would be a very small sector of existing industries which may be nationalised. It needs to be made clear at this point that there is no need for the acceptance of any *a priori* nationalisation of basic and key industries. That is a dangerous fallacy, too easily conceded even by opponents of such measures. We have seen that State ownership and management are bound to impair efficiency and retard industrial progress. The fact that an industry is of a key or basic nature should be a special reason for protecting it from such a measure. If a basic industry tends to fall behind in the race for progress, it would undermine all industries and bring the country's decline. Nationalisation should therefore extend only to exceptional cases. In any such case it would be a wise safeguard to provide that no industry can be nationalised until a Royal Commission or whatever takes the place of a Royal Commission in a republic - has publicly investigated the condition of the industry and recommended its nationalisation.

The second sector would be a very much bigger one and that would be of fresh Public Enterprises. These would be mostly new industries, or new units in existing industries, established to the extent that Free Enterprise is found to be unable to meet the country's needs. The announcement made by Mr. C. Rajagopalachariar, when he was the Minister for Industries and Supplies in May 1947, on the Central Government's decision to establish two new steel plants as State enterprises will not suffer from the effects of nationalisation as they will be no monopoly and

it will be possible for the steel plants of the state as well as the existing ones founded by Free Enterprise to work side by side in healthy competition provided of course such an experiment is not vitiated by special privileges accorded to the State units. We shall thus be in a position to compare notes and learn the lessons that such experiments will have to teach and our finer attitude towards the State ownership and management can then be determined in the light of the experience gained.

In the case of both these sectors, the relations that are established between the Public Enterprise and the political authorities who control them on behalf of the community will have a decisive influence on both the efficiency of these enterprises and the welfare of the country. There is much to be said in favour of the largest measure of autonomy being given to such Corporations which should be run by small boards of able men conducting, their industry on business lines, and answerable only in the last analysis through the minister in charge to Parliament. There are examples of different kinds of such Corporations, particularly in Britain, such as the B.B.C., the Port of London Authority, the Central Electricity Board, the London Passenger Transport Board and, more recently, the Coal Board.

The third and the largest sector would be that of Free Enterprise. It should be realised as Louis Fischer has put it, that "private enterprise is today a public utility. It should be encouraged and provided with all the necessary incentives, and with minimum controls for the purpose of planning and co-ordinating. Such controls would obviously vary from, say 5 per cent in one instant to 25 per cent in another.

Such a programme of State *plus* Free Enterprise is in fact the only practicable programme that the Government in India can possibly adopt in the coming years. It will be done anyhow, and it is important that it is done, not sullenly for lack

of anything better, but with enthusiasm and drive. The only alternative to the acceptance of such a policy would be sterile class war and increasing misery for the people. Neither Free Enterprise nor the Society is capable by itself of doing the job.

The Mixed Society is the only one on the basis of which all classes of the Indian people can be rallied to a heroic effort to raise the country out of the morass of poverty, hunger, ignorance, disease and degradation.

A PLEA FOR THE MIXED ECONOMY

In 1947, I was able to spell out in somewhat more concrete terms the economic implications of my revisionism. I was invited by the Bombay University School of Economics and Sociology to give an address in their series of Silver Jubilee lectures. The address was later published in booklet form under the title A PLEA FOR A MIXED ECONOMY.

Rejecting bureaucratic State Capitalism, masquerading under the label of Socialism as much from the point of view of Labour as of the need for massive capital investment. I pleaded with my old socialist friends and other who thought on those lines to shed their obsession **against** money power, pointing out that if money power is dangerous, a combination of political and economic power, as in a nationalised economy where the state is the universal employer and the sole producer, will be doubly dangerous to liberty. As Keynes once said: "It is better to let people tyrannize over their bank balance than over their fellow-men".

This effort of mine reflected some fresh thinking and got me brickbats as well as bouquets. *Janata*, the Socialist Party's organ, reviewed the little pamphlet with an article entitled: "The Fallen Angel of Socialism". On the other hand, Rajaji, already moving from the role of an angry critic to that of an appreciative reader, wrote to me on October 28, 1947. "Your pretty little book is as full of truth as it is handsomely got up."

MM

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Will you be very startled if I tell you that this world of ours is not the same size as it was a hundred years ago? Even a well-informed person, if you mention this, will be surprised and say that he has never heard of such a thing! And yet it is true that the world has shrunk - that it is not as big as it used to be.

You see, the size of the globe is, after all, only a relative thing to be measured in terms of distance - and distance has shrunk. A hundred miles or ten thousand miles in 1950 are not anything like as long as they used to be in 1850. They have been telescoped. The mile has shrunk, because it no longer takes as long to travel a mile, either by land or sea, as it used to be; and by air you can travel it quicker still.

You will have got over your surprise by now. You will be smiling to yourself and thinking: I know that. Of course anyone can move quicker by train or car or steamship than by horse or sailing-boat, and quickest of all by airplane. What's new about that?

That, I am afraid, is where you'd be wrong. It is terribly, *terribly new*. It's so new that the people who are supposed to be so wise that they become kings and ministers and dictators have not yet begun to understand it.

You see, right from the time, some thousands of years ago, when man had tamed the horse and invented the rowboat and the sailboat, there had

THE SHRINKING WORLD



been a fixed maximum speed for travelling by land or sea. It took as long for a man to travel from Rome to London a hundred years ago as it did for Julius Caesar in 55 B.C. But today you can fly from Rome to London in six or seven hours. Similarly, when the English first landed in India some 300 years ago, it took them several months to do the voyage from England. Today a man can fly from London to India in less than a day.

There is also another way in which the world has shrunk. Not only can you and I travel quicker, but our very thoughts, our voices and our messages travel much faster than we can do ourselves. We have now a universal postal service, the telephone, wireless telegraphy and the radio linking the continents.

In the eighteenth century, when England and France went to war, the English and French settlers in India lived in blissful ignorance and peace for months and months, not knowing that their countries were at war! In 1939, when England declared war on Germany, everyone in India knew within a very few hours.

Oliver Goldsmith, the English writer who lived in the eighteenth century, once remarked that if every time one fired a gun in England a man died in China, nobody would mind in the least. The shooting would go on merrily. But today what happens in China does matter to the whole world. And the shots that are fired there have an effect on the lives of people far away. What a man does in London or Tokyo or Moscow can have an immediate effect on your life and mine.

In your geography lessons in school you learn how each part of the world has something it grows or makes and how we all depend on one another for exchanging these things so that all our wants are satisfied. But when your geography teacher goes and your history teacher comes, he brings with him a map which "blushes" with many colours and shows frontiers between States traced in human blood. These States, your history teacher tells you, are "independent" of one another. But can any country be really independent? When the oil for a Great Power's army or navy or air force comes from a small neighbouring country, can either be really independent of the other? The answer is that they can't, and that is why certain countries have such a habit of being occupied by the armies of States which require their oil. The same applies to countries which possess things like rubber and cotton and the rarer metals and minerals.

The important thing about the twentieth century is that mechanical inventions have led to mass production on such a gigantic scale that even the boundaries of the biggest empires have become too narrow and too small for economic progress. Thus France and Germany are separate States. But, except when they are war, the German coal-mining industry and the French iron and steel industry are so mixed up that it is very difficult to say where one ends and the other begins. Canada is said to be a part of the British Commonwealth. But there is more American than British capital sunk in Canadian industries and, economically, China is much closer to the United States than to England.

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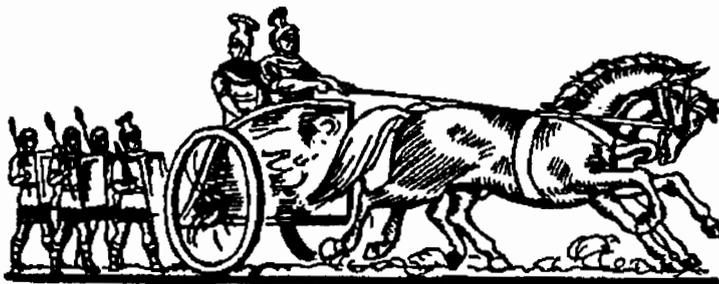
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The things we eat come from all over the world. An English writer once boasted how no great caliph, no old-time emperor in all his glory, could have drawn on such widely spread stores of produce as were to be found on his breakfast table. There were oranges from Brazil, dates from Africa, rice from India, tea from China and sugar from Demerara.

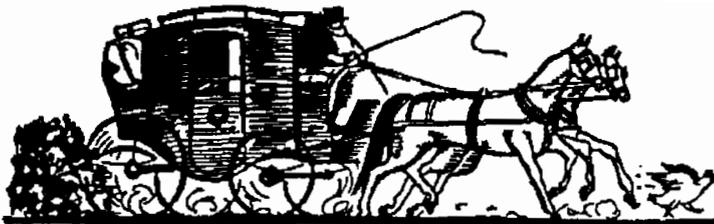
So too our sources of information and entertainment jump over national boundaries. We listen-in to news and talks and music broadcast from every country in the world. Talkies made in Hollywood are seen at the same time by people all round the globe.

The trouble is that the human mind has not yet caught up with the speed of its own inventions. We may move at a speed of 200 miles an hour but our minds think and crawl along at the good old trot of 20 miles an hour. Thus, thanks to the airplane, Berlin and Paris and London have become as much next-door neighbours as Washington and New York. But their inhabitants still insist, as in the old times, on their remaining capitals of so-called "independent" states, with Siegfried and Maginot Lines to separate them and with frontiers and customs-barriers at which passports are examined and duties levied, but at which the airplane has a hearty laugh! This has made somebody compare these nations to people fleeing from a rainstorm who

take refuge behind the walls of a ruin, forgetting that the roof itself has fallen in! The progress of science, you see, has abolished distance but not silly human prejudices and hatreds.



IT TOOK AS LONG TO MAKE A JOURNEY IN 55 B.C.



AS IT DID TO TRAVEL THE SAME DISTANCE IN A.D. 1850



IN 1950 MONTHS AND DAYS HAVE BEEN REDUCED TO HOURS AND MINUTES

"Transport," wrote Rudyard Kipling, "is civilization." True - but only part of the truth. Transport is civilization only if 'man's mind catches up with the movements of the wheels of his car or the propeller of his airplane. Otherwise man is like a squirrel in a revolving cage, "the wheel turns rapidly, but the squirrel remains within his cage." As someone has said, it would be the height of absurdity to say that because an engine-driver

can drive an engine and Plato or Socrates could not, the engine-driver is more advanced or civilized than Plato or Socrates. If today we are not really civilized, if today people all round the globe are still ready to cut each other's throats in stupid and futile wars, it is because they have refused to give up the tribal gods and flags and songs which belong to a world moving at foot-and-horse pace.

This is not to say that no attempts have been made to keep pace with this shrinking world. For some time now humanity has been groping, as a man gropes in the dark, for some form or other of international association. The fruits of these efforts have taken the shape of the International

Postal Union, the International Labour Office, the International Institute of Agriculture, the Bank of International Settlements and - even during war-time! - the International Red Cross. The biggest and the most hopeful of these efforts to reach forward to world union was the League of Nations, which was brought into existence at the end of the World War of 1914-18. The credit for this step forward must go to President Woodrow Wilson of the United States of America who voiced the resolve of common people throughout the world *never again* to let their governments drag them into another war.

The treaty by which the League was brought into existence was called the Covenant, which means a solemn agreement. By this Covenant, the States which signed it bound themselves "to promote international co-operation and to achieve international peace and security, by the acceptance of obligations not to resort to war ... by the prescription of open, just and honorable relations between nations". The Covenant proceeded to declare that any war was "a matter of concern to the whole League" and that any member resorting to war in defiance of its promise "shall *ipso facto* be deemed to have committed an act of war against all other members of the League".

States were thus to have a sense of "collective security". Germany had already been disarmed by the Treaty of Versailles, at the end of World War I, and Britain and France and the other victorious States promised to follow the example of Germany. It looked as if war had at last been outlawed and that the words of the Bible, "nation

shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more," had come true.

Unfortunately, these hopes were to be dashed cruelly and completely. The League, as someone aptly described it, behaved just like a group of merchants, each anxious to get as much trade for himself as he could and quite willing to stand by quietly and see one of his rivals robbed by another provided he himself was not the victim! All of them shouted loudly that robbery was disgraceful and must be stopped. But that was not much use, as none of them had taken the trouble to set up a common **police** force. They had guards to protect their own shops only.

This was precisely what happened when Japan attacked Manchuria and then China, when Italy attacked Abyssinia, and when Germany attacked **Czechoslovakia**. The League failed again and again to come to the rescue and, though the League did expel Soviet Russia from membership in 1939 for **attacking** its tiny neighbour Finland without just cause, it did nothing to help the victim. It never once prevented a single power from doing a single thing it wanted to do. The promise to disarm made by the victors at Versailles was not carried out. Soon when at last, in September 1939, the Second World War started, nobody even bothered to call a meeting of the League, which **died** "unwept, unhonoured and unsung".

Why, you will ask, did this noble effort fail so miserably? Different people have answered that question in different ways. But the one thing most of them are agreed on is that the League of Nations

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failed because the Great Powers - Britain, France, Germany, Italy, the United States, Russia and Japan - were not prepared to submit to the common will and the common interest of the peoples of the world. They were like the unruly lords and barons of old days who for a long time refused to submit to the authority of the law or to accept the verdicts of the law courts until at last their power was smashed by the bigger unit of the State. H. G. Wells put his finger on this weak spot when he wrote: "A League of Nations that is to be of any appreciable value to mankind must supersede imperialism. ... but few of the people at the Versailles Conference had the mental vigor even to assert this obvious consequence of the League proposal. They wanted to be at the same time bound and free, to ensure peace for ever but to keep their weapons in their hands".

This refusal to bow to the joint decision of the peoples of the world was in fact made quite clear at the start when the constitution of the League was drawn up. The members of the League were not to be nations but States. The Assembly of the League was to consist of not of representatives elected by each nation but of nominees of various governments. So you see that the very title of the League was a misnomer. It was really a League of Governments. For instance, India was made a member of the League but it was represented at Geneva not by men elected by the Indian people but by those nominated by the British Government. The same applied to all subject peoples. For them there was no right of self-determination.

Even this League of Governments was not given the power to overrule the wishes of a single State. This was made clear by the rule that the decisions of the Assembly and of the Council were to be unanimous. A single government could stop any action being taken. It was as if the opposition of a single member of a parliament or a legislative assembly or a municipal council could prevent a law or a resolution from being passed! There was thus no democracy, or rule of the majority, within the League.

Nor was there any machinery to provide for peaceful change. Now, change is the only unchanging thing in the world. It is a Law of Nature. The world cannot, as somebody once put it, marry any particular solution and live happily ever after. Within any particular country, political, economic and social changes are allowed to take place by means of laws made by parliament. But as all decisions in the League Assembly had to be unanimous, it was prevented from becoming a parliament for the whole world. So when the balance of forces shifted and adjustments as between nations became necessary, the League machine just broke down.

When World War II ended, a new effort was made to replace the League of Nations with something more adequate to the world's needs. On 26 June 1945, representatives of 51 countries with a total population of 1,700 million met in San Francisco and signed the Charter of the United Nations.

There are several organs through which the United Nations functions, but the two most important are the General Assembly and the Security Council, which is the executive or cabinet. In the General Assembly, each nation - big and small - has one vote. In the Security Council, however, while the members of the General Assembly elect six members every year, there are five members who are permanent and cannot be removed from membership. These are the so-called Great Powers - Britain, China, France, Russia and the United States of America. What is even more peculiar is that no decision can be taken by the Security Council unless each and every one of the Great Powers agrees to it. This means that even a single one of the Great Powers can stop the entire machinery of the United Nations from functioning if it chooses to do so. This is particularly dangerous because, while discussion of the matters of common interest can take place in the Assembly, the power to take binding decisions and action rests with the Security Council alone. So we find that, in spite of efforts to improve on the League of Nations, the

undemocratic power of veto has still be retained. This right to veto decisions and action has already been exercised by one of these Great Powers, Russia, on more than forty occasions. Attempts have been made by small countries to do away with the abuse of the veto power but, since such a step would also require unanimity, no progress has been found possible.

There are other organs of the United Nations, however, which have already done splendid work of a constructive nature. Such, among others, are the Economic and Social Council, the Food and Agriculture Organisation, the International Trade Organisation, the Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation, and the Human Rights Division. All this good work, however, does not guarantee the world against the return of war and gives no assurance of peaceful change.

The question, therefore, has arisen as to whether the United Nations should not be either reformed or supplemented by another organisation,

where the veto power is eliminated, where national sovereignty is limited, and where all countries, big and small, strong and weak, white and colored, can sit together democratically with an equal voice in running the world's affairs. It is possible that the countries in which dictatorship flourishes, and which have not yet shown their readiness for a world order, would keep away from such an organisation to start with; but that would be no reason for the rest of the world not getting together to lay the foundations of a World Government. Britain's socialist Government expressed its readiness, in January 1946, to participate in such a World Government. It is now for democratic countries to agree to take such a bold step also. What a great day it would be when the free nations of the world would come together in such an international organisation, where, let us say, a Brazilian would be the president., a Turk would be the head of the international police force, and a Dane have charge of its funds.

THE GROWING HUMAN FAMILY

The Growing *Human Family*, published in 1951, is a book of elementary sociology about the human race. It starts with a jingle.

Oh why do we gather in herds
Like a lot of excitable birds
And chatter and bawl
About **nothing** at all
In wholly inaudible words?

The Growing *Human Family* examines the question why man is a social animal and discuss the family, the tribe, the city-state, the national state and the world order dreamt of by Tennyson: "the Parliament of Man, the Federation of the World, which is still to be. Though this book did not have the same response or success as *Our India* because of its lack of appeal to national sentiment, I feel it is perhaps the better effort of the two.

MM

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1963

PREVENTIVE DETENTION

Let me say this that in so far as the maintenance of the climate of free discussion in this country is concerned, I would like to say that the Government and the Prime Minister who leads it have also played their part in maintaining this climate, in permitting freedom of discussion, which Governments in neighbouring countries have denied to their people. I would like to pay this tribute to the Prime Minister and the Government of India for having participated in this healthy democratic process. Why do I say so? This is very important. I think it is terribly important that whatever mistakes may be made, however frivolous and wrong Government policies may be, so long as there is freedom of discussion, so long as views can be expressed which are in complete defiance of the views of the Government, there is hope for the country, because it is only through exchange of ideas, clash of ideas, that the truth can be arrived at. This was said by a great revolutionary, Paine, many many years ago, when he said: "When opinions are free, either in matters of government or religion, truth will finally prevail."

There are exceptions; there are blots on this record. I could have mentioned the arrest of three young patriotic young men in Delhi. I could have mentioned the long detention of George Fernandes, which has come to an end, I am glad to say. I could refer to the arrest of Mr. Maurya only the other day. But these, taken in perspective, are small blots. By and large, I would say that the Rules under the Emergency have been fairly and reasonably implemented.

It is particularly because I am proud of this record that I object to this Act, because this is one of the things about which we in India cannot be proud.

Let us consider the origins of this Act. Those origins were on Saturday, 25th February, 1950. I remember the scene in this House, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, that great Deputy Prime Minister, whose absence all of us miss so much today, came and reported on that day that if this Bill was

not passed by the same evening, 350 of the most dangerous communist detenus would be released by the Calcutta High Court on Monday morning. In a way, it was an outrageous demand to make of the House. But he gave a reason and that reason was that there was a clear and present danger to the security of the country. It was this that persuaded the House and many of us to vote for that measure.

I was then a back-bench Congress member and I voiced my concern and disquiet. I called the Bill a "hasty improvisation" which should be replaced at the earliest possible moment by "a more principled, well-conceived and well-thought out measure, which does not shirk the issue, which goes to the root of the mischief and which frankly takes its stand for the defence of democracy against totalitarian aggression from within or without."

Sardar Patel's reply was apologetic. He said he had passed two sleepless nights. He said in reply to my criticism - I am quoting him from the record -

"As has been pointed out by my friend, Shri Masani, the Bill has been brought in to meet an emergency. It requires to be closely examined, whether a better substitute of a more or less permanent nature based on scientific principles can be brought in or not."

That pledge was given. We have been waiting for ten years for that promise to be carried out. Unfortunately, it has not been done, and this is becoming a permanent blot on our statute book.

Sir, as we have just learnt from the Home Minister, the Bill is not being used for the purpose for which it was originally passed. It is being used to deal with patriotic Indians who have nothing to do with the Communist Party. Let me mention a few of the names of those who have been detained under this Act, distinguished citizens of our country - Dr. Shyama Prasad Mookerjee, Master Tara Singh, Sheikh Mohammed Abdullah, Shri Nath Pai, Shri Trivedi, my neighbour who is not here at the moment, and Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia. So, from one specific purpose for which this Bill was introduced, we have gone on to arresting normal, patriotic Indians under this measure, and the result is that the individual liberties of every Indian are now endangered by this measure.

Even the much hated and vilified Rowlatt Act of 1919 made Preventive detention contingent upon a declaration of emergency on the part of the Government. Let me read the Act:

"If the Governor-General is satisfied that, in the whole or any part of British India, anarchial or revolutionary movements are being promoted, and that scheduled offences in connection with such movements are prevalent to such an extent that it is expedient in the interests of public safety, he may by notification in the Gazette of India, make a declaration to that effect ..."

Look at the conditions referred to in that Act and you find a measure of liberalism, as compared to the Preventive Detention Act which we are asked to extend.

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FORBES GROUP OF COMPANIES

Now, I will be asked by the Minister what I have to say to meet this problem. I would refer him back to the origins of this Bill and the reasons given by his honourable predecessor. This Bill was a Bill meant to meet and combat the subversion and disruption of the Communists. Either it should perform that function or it should not function at all. Let the Act lapse and let the Minister and the Government bring forward concrete proposals, if they so desire, to face or deal with the activities of the Communist Party of India, for which this Bill was originally intended. Now, as a liberal democrat, I believe that such a measure should be resorted to, the outlawing of a political party, or banning a political party, only when there is a clear and present danger; not otherwise. The reason for it is this, that while, on the one side, the enemies of democracy like the Fascists and Communists, should not be allowed to destroy democracy by utilising it with their tongues in their cheek, on the other hand, it should not be resorted to in a way which is arbitrary, which will result in the negation of democracy. We have to balance between the security of a free democracy from attacks from the Communists and Fascists on the one hand, and on the other, we have to see that this does not become a bad habit which can be extended to others. Therefore, I say that the test must be that of a clear and present danger, as laid down by the Supreme Court of the United States.

Other States and other democracies have resorted to this principled way for dealing with subversion. West Germany, one of the leading countries of the world, has by Article 220 of the Constitution laid down - I would like the Hon. Minister to study this:-

"Parties which, by reason of their aims or the behaviour of their adherents, seek to impair or destroy the free democratic basic order or to endanger the existence of the Federal Republic of Germany are unconstitutional. The Federal Constitutional Court shall decide on the question of unconstitutionality."

Under this Article of the Constitution, a Bill was passed in the German Parliament, by which the Communist Party of Germany was outlawed and the case went to the Supreme Court. The Communist Party was heard and, after hearing the Communist Party, the Supreme Court of West Germany held that the Communist Party was outlawed properly under the Constitution.

The fact remains that today this Preventive Detention Act suffers from three major defects - three major evils. The first is that it is devious and arbitrary. It is not a straight-forward measure to deal with a straight-forward threat. It endangers the liberty of every decent democratic Indian,



because a few people have to be dealt with. That is wrong. The Bill should be made to apply to categories of people described properly by their ideas or by their activities. It is devious. Therefore, it can be arbitrarily used.

Secondly, it is a bad precedent. When a man falls ill, he resorts to a drug. Many times, we know, the man does not have the capacity to throw off the drug, and the drug becomes a habit-forming tranquilliser or sedative. They become **habit-forming**. Ultimately, the man becomes so paralysed in his will that he feels he cannot go on without the drug. Now, this Preventive Detention Act has become a habit-forming drug to our present Government. I am sure they do not need it. I am sure they can maintain India on an even keel without this wretched Act. But they become like a man on crutches who does not dare to stand on his own legs at his command. So, like a cripple, they **hobble** along on this arbitrary measure contrary

to the spirit of the law. This is the second reason why I oppose this Bill and my Party opposes this Bill.

Thirdly, this unfortunate measure prevents democrats from **working** together on an issue like this and it drive them, as it does today, into the opposite camps. I am sure the Home Minister will not deny the fact that the Praja Socialist Party or my Party or the Jan Sangh are as democratic in their processes and mentality as his own Party and yet we find ourselves today, unfortunately, on opposite sides. It also gives an opportunity to those who do not believe in freedom to masquerade as enemies of this Act and to criticise it with impunity. This is the contribution that this Act has made to confusing the minds of the people and to confusing the debate. It could have been a straight debate between democrats on one side and the believers in totalitarianism, like the Communist Party, on the other.

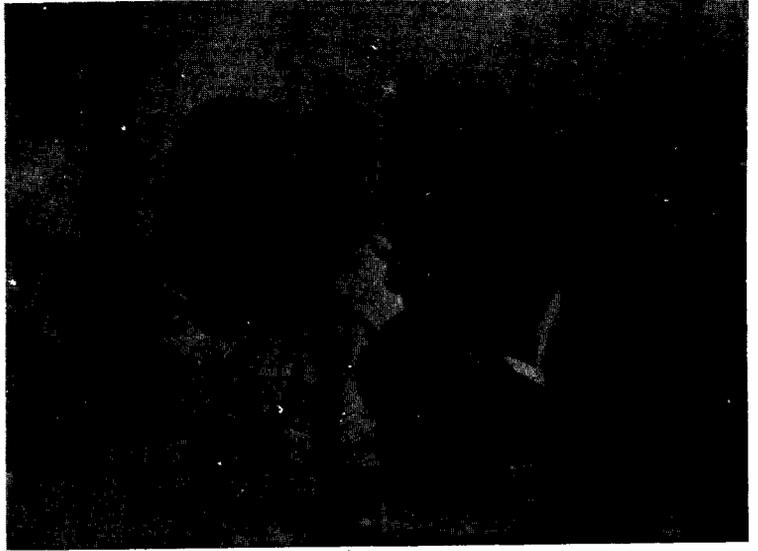
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Somaiya

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1959



THE SWATANTRA PARTY

For a decade now, Prime Minister Nehru, with his quaint blend of Soviet-style economic planning and British-model parliamentary democracy, has dominated the Indian intellectual scene. A faint challenge from an isolated pocket here and there is all he had to encounter. The fundamental thinking on which the Nehru government's economic measures have been based is that, in an under-developed country such as India, a departure from the normal functioning of economic laws becomes necessary if the high expectations of material improvement raised in the minds of newly independent people are not to turn sour. So, the argument goes, the building up of heavy industry must, contrary to the normal sequence, precede consumer goods industries. The government has to play a particularly active role, both in establishing capital goods industries, such as steel and huge river-valley projects, and in regulating the entire functioning of economic life, whether in industry or in agriculture. Like Russia and China, would not India, though not under political dictatorship, pull itself up by its bootstraps, performing in a short span of time what might otherwise take generations to accomplish? There can be no question that, during the first decade of independence, a large part of the Indian intelligentsia followed Mr. Nehru in this line of thought.

Under the surface, however, second thoughts have been developing and discontent with the "socialist pattern" has been building up during the last few years. The middle classes have found themselves being ground down slowly by the inevitable consequences of excessively high taxation and of inflation slowly creeping over them. The consumer was made to pay more for the necessities of life through successive impositions of heavy excise duties. The investor was being taxed out of his inevitable surplus. The entrepreneur was being harried by bureaucratic regulation and interference. A businessman responding to the government's call to undertake the manufacture of some scarce material for which there is an export market found that he had to trudge the dusty corridors of the New Delhi secretariat, moving from office to office in a never-ending attempt to obtain the various licences and permits. Those already in the field of manufacture have been known to spend several days every month, flying up to Delhi to answer queries or remove some road block in the way of obtaining the necessary facilities. New constraints on the people's enterprise were being systematically imposed, and justified by reference to the socialist doctrine. Fear, hesitancy and uncertainty as to what the **government** would do next have become a feature of economic life.

On the political plane, the evils of interference by political bosses in the administration of the country and the pressure brought to bear on officials have been causing demoralisation among civil servants and destroying public confidence in

the government of the day. Interference on ideological grounds has been elevated into a principle. The cult of personality has smothered free discussion even within the ruling party itself. The bulk of the members of the Congress Party, who think along liberal or Gandhian lines, have been intimidated into silence by a few confused Marxists at the head of the party. In the absence of an alternative government, discontent has been funneled increasing into Red channels, and the kind of polarisation that took place in China in the '40s between the **Kuomintang** and the Communist Party was becoming noticeable in the State of Kerala and was in danger of developing elsewhere. Even so, only the wildest optimist could have foreseen the emergence of a major political party which advocated rejecting the entire pattern of planning and economic development that has been followed during the past decade. Only a year ago, I myself tried unsuccessfully to weld together several of the local groups which have now come together under the umbrella of this new national party. How has this new party of freedom finally come about?

The "Nagpur Resolution" which the Congress Party adopted last January constitutes a **three-pronged** attack on the way of life in the Indian village. The first prong of the attack is the imposition of ceilings on land holdings, which in practice would deprive the farmer of all land that he might own in excess of what would bring in an income of around Rs.3,600 in the year. This measure would break the back of the middle classes in the villages and deprive them of the capacity to withstand the

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inroads of governmental authority.

The second prong is the proposal which is euphemistically called "joint co-operative farming", Barring its name, it has nothing in common with the principles of genuine co-operation as practised in Denmark, England and other countries. It is in reality an attempt at introducing collective farming of the Soviet-Chinese pattern through the pooling of land, the uprooting of boundaries and the establishment of big cooperative farms. Even if this plan were brought about without coercion it must, in present-day conditions in India, inevitably mean management by officials of the government and the reduction of the farmer to the status of a landless labourer. Heedless of the lessons of the failure of collective farming in the Iron Curtain countries and ignoring the magnificent achievements of small-scale peasant farming in Japan, Prime Minister Nehru insists that this change would result in increased food production. It is also supposed to constitute a "higher way of life" than the age-old method of a man and his family cultivating land which is their own.

The third prong is the attempt to establish a State monopoly in the wholesale trade' in foodgrains, thereby eliminating thousands of traders and leaving the farmer face to face with the monopoly, which can dictate to him the price at which he must sell his produce.

It was this ill-conceived Nagpur Resolution which acted as the spark-plug to the political revolt. The urban middle class and the business class, helpless against the hold of the Congress Party on rural areas, have found a new ally. The reaction of landed farmers, who with their families constitute at least 52 per cent of India's population, has been instinctive. In a country where most peasants live in mud huts, own little more than a plough, and if they are lucky, a pair of bullocks, the piece of land that they have is all they can call their own. When Prime Minister Nehru brushes aside the plea for peasant proprietorship by pointing out that most of the peasants own small, frag-



mented farms and should therefore not object to the pooling of their lands, it sounds to the peasant like asking a mother not to mind parting with her child because it is only a tiny infant. So it was not surprising that the All-India Agriculturists' Federation convened the initiating meeting at Madras on June 4, where the decision to launch the Swatantra Party was taken. Professor N. G. Ranga, a leading spokesman of the Indian peasantry, resigned his post as Secretary of the Congress Party in Parliament to become Chairman of the new party.

Perhaps, the best parallel to the character of the Swatantra Party in Western countries is that provided by such as the Smallholders' Party in Hungary. In the field of agriculture, the paramount need for increased food production is stressed, and it is felt that this is best attained through the self-employed peasant proprietor who is interested in obtaining the highest yields from his land. The peasant farmer should be given all psychological and material inducements for greater production without disturbing the harmony of rural life and without affecting ownership or management. Among such incentives would be a fair and stable price, the provision of credit and the supply of water, tools, seeds and fertilisers.

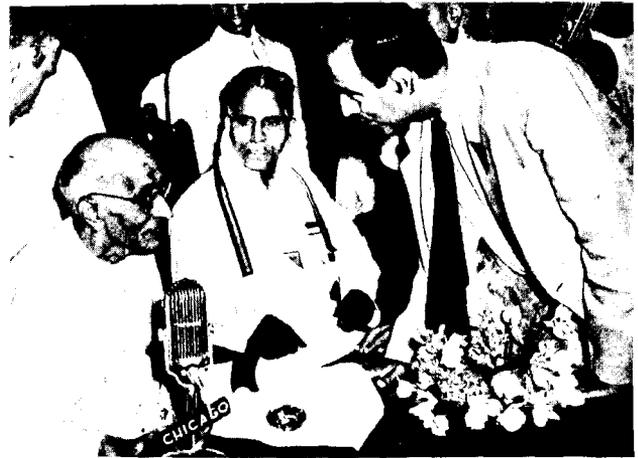
In the field of industry, the Swatantra Party believes in the incentives for higher production and expansion that are inherent in competitive

enterprise, with necessary safeguards against monopoly. The party would restrict State enterprise to the field of heavy industries, where essential, in order to supplement the notable achievements of such private enterprises as, for example, the giant Tata Iron & Steel Company in Jamshedpur, and such national services as the Railways. The party has declared itself to be in favour of a balanced development of capital goods industries, organised consumer goods industries and rural industries that afford supplementary employment to the large number of unemployed and underemployed people on the land. The party is opposed to the State entering the field of trade. It believes in free choice for the investor, the producer and the consumer.

Through such a positive policy, the Swatantra Party believes that agricultural production can be set on its feet in the way that has been so successfully achieved in Japan since World War II. Thus can be provided a sound foundation on which the industrial structure of the country can be reared. While deprecating the policy of asking the present generation to tighten its belt (which in India, it does not possess) for the sake of generations yet unborn, the Swatantra Party believes that the policies it suggests would liberate the productive forces from the restrictive effects of bureaucracy, so that a much quicker expansion of industry and a more rapid rise in the standard of life of the people can be brought about, just as was accomplished by the successful implementation of Dr. Erhard's policy of social enterprise in West Germany. Such a policy would be in consonance with the established Indian principle that those who possess wealth should not run the government, while those who control

the army and the police should not be in control of agriculture and industry. The party's policy would prevent the concentration of political and economic power in a few hands. The way is thus opened for the building up of a broad-based coalition of the peasantry in the villages and the middle classes in the cities

The whole world, including the peoples in the Iron Curtain countries, is moving away from the shibboleths of collectivism. The danger of India's being committed to outmoded dogmas which the rest of the world is discarding must be combated. By rallying India against Communism and by educating public opinion about the moral gulf between Communism and the free way of life, the new party will eliminate the danger of the current unconscious drift towards the precipice. The party's Statement of Principles allows no co-existence between it and the ideology of Communism, and the leading spokesman of the party have a long record of struggle against Communist totalitarianism.



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1965

FOREIGN POLICY

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I rise to support our (the Swatantra Party's) alternative motion which says:

"The House ... is of opinion that, in the face of the combined hostility of Communist China and Pakistan, the country needs a radical revision in its foreign policy, the discarding of dogma and the adoption of realistic diplomacy involving, *inter alia*,

- (a) measures for building a system of regional collective security for all countries between India, Japan and Australasia;
- (b) forthright support for the defence of South Vietnam and Malaysia against aggression;
- (c) steps towards the liberation of Tibet and the recognition of the Dalai Lama as the head of a Free Tibetan Government; and
- (d) the establishment of diplomatic relations with the Republic of China and Israel."

Sir, on an occasion like this, we in this House speak from a sense of heightened responsibility, both because what we say may have implications for our national interests which we must bear in mind, and at the same time, because we are anxious that the advantage that this country possesses over its opponents in Pakistan and China, of being a Democracy in a crisis, where free discussion, free criticism and free opposition prevail, that advantage this country should not lightly throw away.

As the Foreign Minister has said, this country has gone through a tremendous experience. We cannot do otherwise than to start with paying our tribute to the gallantry of our Armed Forces; we have had the unfortunate memories of 1962 thus wiped out, and the prestige and pride of our armed forces, which they had over centuries, have been re-established. Let us hope that there will be no tinkering or tampering with the morale of our forces, which has thus been re-established.

The Foreign Minister *was also* right in pay-

ing a tribute to our people for rallying to the defence of the country, for the unity of purpose that they showed and for the communal harmony that was maintained throughout.

Unwarranted Complacency

But I wish I could share the smug complacency with which he referred to the successes of our diplomacy and our foreign policy. These recent events have also some very hard lessons to teach us. The hardest of them was that, in the face of that crisis, India was isolated. I do not say that we did not have friends. But in our own **corner**, in our fight with Pakistan, except for Malaysia and Singapore, there was nobody. Let us not try to forget this fact of isolation; it is pretty bad.

In the General Assembly of the UN, at the end of the debate, the *Press Trust of India* made an analysis of the trends in regard to our dispute with Pakistan. I am quoting from the *Hindustan Times* of 23rd October: According to the PTI, the spokesmen of 63 nations were neutral and did not go beyond appealing for peace, 19 were hostile to India and, of these 19, 11 were members of the Arab League. 3 made passing references but did not say anything. 25 ignored the issue. Out of 110, not one spoke up for us. This is something that cannot be side-tracked by recording satisfaction at our success in the Security Council. This has left our people bewildered; it has left some of our people rather angry. It is no good flying into a rage when nobody else can see our point of view. It reminds me of the story of the fond

mother who went to see a military parade. At **the end** of the parade, her comment was, "Everybody was out of step except my Johnny". That was her son! We cannot afford to be Johnny. We are living in a world community, where we must be in step with decent, democratic nations, whose friendship we regard. We cannot resign from the Human Race and turn our back on humanity. In a way, let us console ourselves that, since imitation is the sincerest form of flattery, other nations have copied us and remained non-aligned in our dispute. We have so many times taken the stand that we will not judge what is right or wrong over the last 15 years. We should take sportingly the fact that other countries are now giving back to us a little of our own medicine!

The important thing is: why did this happen and how do we prevent a recurrence of this isolation? That, surely, should be the purpose of this debate. Let us look the facts in the face. Was it only bad public relations, as some of our colleagues allege? Was it the fault of our diplomats? Let me say, in all fairness to our diplomatic service and publicity, that it was not a failure of public relations or diplomacy. I have been a practitioner of public relations. You cannot sell a product if the product cannot be sold. The first thing in public relations is to have a good product which can be sold. Then only can you advertise it and sell it. It is no good blaming our diplomats and ambassadors. The fault lay deeper. It lay in our foreign policy. We did not give them a product they could successfully sell in the councils of the world.

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Naive, Narcissistic and Self-Righteous

What was wrong with our foreign policy? It had three basic weaknesses. First of all, it was naive. It abounded in innocence. Our Panch Sheel pact with Communist China was the most notorious example of our naivete and our innocence. The betrayal of Tibet, for which we are paying now, was the result of it. Our naivete in another direction was to believe that, if only we turned our backs on Israel, all the Arab States would back us against Pakistan. By that neglect of friendly relations with Israel, we thought we would pay a price for Arab support. I have mentioned just now that 11 of the Arab States spoke against us in the U.N. General Assembly. And, Sardar Swaran Singh has already referred to Jordan. What is more, at Algiers, President Nasser joined with the Chinese in having our move to have the conference defeated only a few weeks ago. These are facts.

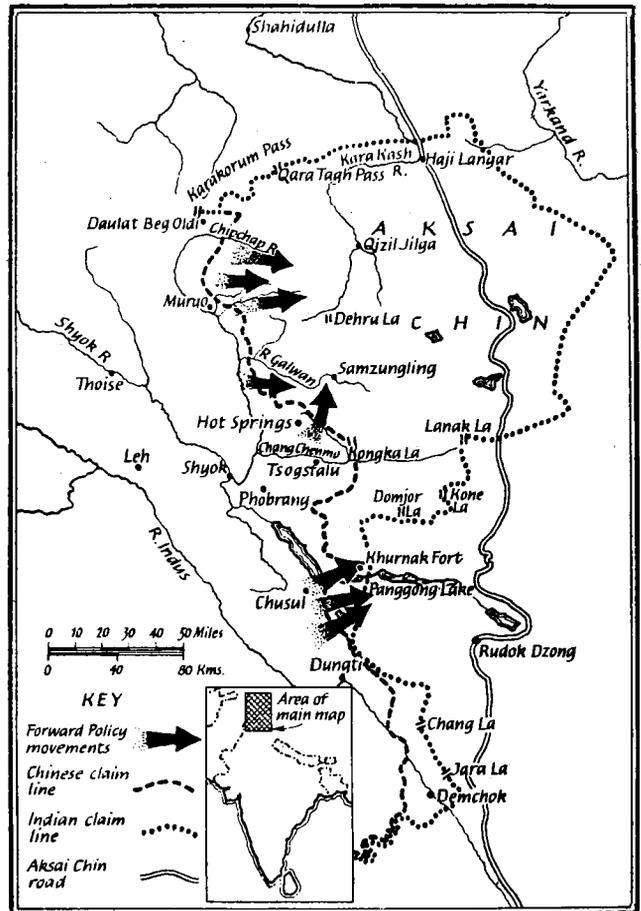
The second thing from which our foreign policy suffered was its narcissistic character - watching ourselves in the mirror and admiring ourselves, imagining that the rest of the world saw us as we saw ourselves. We have now learnt that that image was only in our imagination.

The third thing which was wrong was our self-righteousness, the air of moral superiority we adopted towards everybody else, teaching them lessons, talking down to them, refusing to judge between right and wrong, whether it was Berlin or Hungary or Tibet, talking of Peace when other people were fighting for Freedom and Justice. The latest example of that was, for the last 12 months, we needled those in Vietnam who were trying to defend that country against the aggression of Communist China and its satellite. We kept on telling them: "You must not cross the frontier; defence must be on your own territory". And then, history caught up with us, and we had to cross the frontier ourselves! These are the basic defects of our foreign policy for which we

are paying the price of being isolated. That foreign policy has ceased to have any relevance to our present needs. We have to come to terms with reality. As was said before, "too long have we lived in an artificial world of our own creation".

The Major Threat

What is that reality? That reality is that the biggest threat to our independence, our way of life and our survival is that which comes from Communist China.



Shri Nnth Pai (Rajapur): And her ally, Pakistan.
Shri M. R. Masani: I am coming to that. That is the major threat. The minor threat is the one which comes from its ally, Pakistan. I do not discount the malice of Pakistan. But I do doubt its capability to do us very much harm. Pakistan

by itself we have taken the measure of. We have shown that we can put it in its place. I for one do not believe that Pakistan by itself can do this country much harm. If it tries, I am sure it will fail a second time. But the challenge of Communist China is a more permanent and more fundamental challenge, not only to our survival, but to our democratic way of life. The only choice for us, along with the other countries of this region, is to stand up to Communist China or succumb and become satellites. Of all countries of the region, except for Jordan, ours is the only country that can take the initiative and lead in bringing about arrangements for the security of South and South-East Asia. India, along with Japan, is cast by geopolitics, by her maturity, to lead the countries of this region along with Japan. That is the role that is offered to us by history and geopolitics and the question before us is whether we are going to accept this role or become a miserable camp follower. I have no doubt that the people of India wish us and our government to take up the challenge and assume that role that history and geopolitics assign us.

If that is agreed, and I think hon. members will agree that on that there can be no option but to see that we take up this responsibility, then the question arises as to what should be our attitude and posture as one of the leaders of Free Asia. If we want to be a Power, we must behave like a Power. Just talking like one is not enough. Our obligation is to join with Japan in rallying the countries of South and South-East Asia which lie between us to defend the free way of life

which is menaced by the Chinese Communist imperialism and its allies. We have to provide that solidarity to them that we have failed to do in the last 15 years. We have turned our back on our neighbours. We dealt with China unilaterally; we never consulted Burma, or Pakistan when we signed the Panch Sheel treaty.

Other countries in Asia feel that the Himalayas are not only our frontier, but the frontier of all the South and South-Asian countries. They will join in its defence if we would give them that opportunity.

Luckily in this region, there has been a strengthening of the forces of freedom in the last few months. Last March or April, our neighbours in Ceylon escaped from the disaster of a communist-led government. More recently, Indonesia has drawn back from the brink and saved its national existence. The tide of war in Vietnam has luckily turned in favour of freedom and democracy, and so too in Malaysia. All that, Sir, has happened; but no thanks to us. We did not move a finger to help any of these healthy processes.

Regional Security

What is then required is a regional security arrangement with all countries within the triangle that would be made by India at one end, Japan at another and Australia at the third. In case any hon. Member asks me: "why Australia?" I would say that Australia and New Zealand are also part of this region. Today, Australian and

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New Zealand boys are dying in the jungles of Malaysia and Vietnam, dying so that Asian freedom can be maintained against our enemies. That is why we need Australia and New Zealand in this alliance.

Let us, Sir, give up this caste system of judging between non-aligned and aligned nations which we have followed to our disaster so far. We made friends with Indonesia because it was non-aligned. Look at how she has treated us! We turned back upon Japan and Malaysia because they were aligned. See what friendship and support they have given us.

If this concept is to be accepted, then one of the things we must do is to stop following the suicidal path of supporting the admission of Communist China to the United Nations. Do we realise what we are doing? If that move succeeded, do we realise that Communist China then becomes a member of the Security Council? Do we realise that she will have a Veto against us on behalf of herself and **Pakistan** whenever it suits her? Is it not a suicidal thing for our government, with all the experience we have got, to say that we shall go and vote for Communist China's admission? Rather, Sir, let us realise that another China, a free China, a nationalist China was our friend and helped us during World War II. It was the only country that spoke up for Indian Independence and annoyed Churchill during the War. That China is pinning down Communist armies and the air force on its Eastern frontiers. That China can join with us and form a Second Front if we are attacked in a major war. With such a China, we should establish diplomatic relations and not with our enemies across the Himalayas.

Similarly, there are our friends in Tibet. My hon. friend over there mentioned it. We, Sir, have treated Tibet cruelly. We have not been fair to our friend. His Holiness the Dalai Lama. Let us change our attitude. Let us give up our cowardly attitude. Let us own up to the fact that we



should be glad to see Tibet liberated, that we are friends of Tibetan freedom and, as a token of our feeling, let us give diplomatic recognition to the government in exile of His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

Sir, two days ago, the Foreign Minister got applause in this

House, and quite rightly, for saying that if a Free Rhodesian Government was formed we would recognise it. Why do we have to go to Rhodesia to recognise a government in exile that fights for freedom when such a government is on our own territory and we could set an example to the rest of the world?

Relations with Pakistan

Now, I come to **Pakistan**. In so far as **Pakistan** is concerned, we shall have to have two policies: a short term and a long-term policy. In the short-term, our firm posture of resisting any aggression or infiltration must be maintained. This limited objective of the armed conflict with **Pakistan** in September, as defined by our President and the Prime Minister, has, I think, been fulfilled. The aggressor has been taught a lesson. He has been shown that this country is not prepared to be pushed around any more. I, for one, do not believe that **Pakistan** has the capability, by herself, placed as she is today, to launch any major attack on this country. If that happens, she will be defeated in the same way as she was in the last attempt.

Our long-term policy should be to keep the door open to normal friendly relations which are so demonstrably necessary in the interest of both the countries.

These must be established some day, even

if it takes months or years, if the two countries are not to take the wrong path and go down in mutual destruction. Geography has made us intimate neighbours. If I do not like my neighbour in a house or a flat, I can move to another, but a country does not enjoy that luxury of moving away from a neighbour. Sooner or later, therefore - let us hope, sooner rather than later, - the two countries have to learn to co-exist. For this to come about, however, there will have to be a change of heart first on the part of the present Government of **Pakistan**.

But, Sir, when that change of heart takes place, let the door be open, and as a stronger and bigger power, let us then hold our hand in response.

Relations with U.S. and U.S.S.R.

Now, Sir, I come to a very important point, and that is about our future relations with two great powers - the United States of America and the Soviet Union. If the Chinese and Pakistan combination is to be resisted successfully, I believe that the **help** of the great powers is essential. Any talk of going it alone in the face of this combination is unrealistic and would be disastrous to our national interest. Both these powers have in the last few months played a constructive role in bringing about a cease-fire. We need the friendship and we need the goodwill of both these powers. In the changed circumstances, it would be a mistake to think in terms of exclusive friendship, friendship with one as against the other. I am very glad that Mr. Chagla, the Education Minister, in his address at the Indian School of In-

ternational Studies, of which I happen to be a member of the Governing Body, made this very good point, that the old basis of non-alignment, of two quarrelling powers, has gone and you do not have to pose one against the other any more. I agree entirely with what he said on that point.

The fact has to be faced that both these powers function under certain limitations.

Shri D. C. Sharma (Gurdaspur): Does Rajaji support it?

Shri M. R. Masani: Yes, I think Rajaji supports the acceptance of help from both Russia and America.

As I said, both are **working** under some limitations. In the case of the United States, its limitation is that it cannot take sides in a dispute between two countries in the non-Communist world. This, Sir, has happened in many parts of the world. I give the example of Cyprus, the recent one that has taken place, where Turkey and Greece, both its allies, were at loggerheads. The United States did not take sides but tried to make friends between them. This is the role of the leading power in the non-Communist world. It has got to be accepted. It is no good quarrelling with that; it does not do any good to us. I will read the words of Shri Chagla in this context. He said:

"... the USA was on the horns of a dilemma in her relations with **Pakistan**. On the one hand there was growing disillusionment about the latter's role in South East Asia, especially China,

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and on the other the fear that any pressure on Pakistan now might only drive her closer to China".

Now we need **U.S. help**; let us not make any bones about it. We need the help and cooperation of the United States. We need it for three very specific reasons. The first is that today the United States is the only power which has the capability and willingness to deter Communist China from **attacking** India, if necessary, with force of arms. It is the only power with a nuclear shield against nuclear blackmail by China. That help was readily given in 1962 and it would have been available, if necessary, this year. There can be no system of regional security in South and South East Asia without the support of the United States.

The second reason why we want US cooperation is food. Thanks to our bad policies and neglect of agriculture, we are not and will not for a couple of years at least, even if good policies are followed, be in a position to avoid starvation, deaths and distress to our people. Now, which is the country **that** can give us food? The only country that can give us the amount of food that we require is the United States. The Soviet Union, unfortunately, has a food deficit and is selling gold very heavily in the world market to buy food for its own people. Therefore, the only country that could give us food on the scale that we require and without payment, is the United States. The House last Friday showed its awareness of this basic fact when it rejected a motion that was moved by a member of the Communist Party.

Thirdly, this country needs economic aid and foreign capital for the welfare and well-being of its people. Again, while we may accept economic aid from any country that we like, and rightly so, there is no country that could give us economic aid of the size that we require except the United States. Let me give some figures. Out of the Third Plan's external assistance, 59 per cent came from the United States and only 8.2 per cent from the Soviet Union. Therefore, in the

present state of the Soviet economy, which is in a bit of a mess, it is in no condition to help us. I was reading this morning an article from *Le Monde*, the well-known neutralist, anti-American, leading French newspaper of October 27. It says:

"The crisis of the Soviet Union is now undergoing in its gold and foreign-currency reserves, in its economy and in its relations with several Communist countries is profoundly changing the balance of forces in the world ... Another striking aspect of the crisis of the system is the increasing paralysis of the economy".

This is no time when Russia can afford, even if it wants, to help us economically in a big way.

Soviet Objectives

As I have said, the interests of the Soviet Union coincide with ours up to a point. I wish we should take full advantage of that identity of interest. The Soviet Union has played a constructive role as I said before, like the United States. Strongly opposed to Communism as I am, I for one would unreservedly welcome Mr. Kosygin's mediation in the quarrel between us and Pakistan. I would wish him well and I would hail him as a good friend of this country if he could make this quarrel end and restore friendship between the two countries.

Gone are the days of Lenin and Stalin when the Kremlin would have been delighted to see fighting between India and **Pakistan!** "Out of chaos comes Communism" is a slogan which, I am glad, the Soviet Union has rejected, even though the Chinese are yet to discard it.

Now, what are the Soviet objectives in this part of the world? I think the Soviet Union has three basic objectives in this part of the world. The first is to avoid an open clash with China. Though China does not want it, the Soviet Union has kept the door open to a detente. In other words, the schism between China and Russia is

not irreversible. The second thing is that Soviet Union wants to keep Communist China and the United States out of the entire region. The third thing is that the Soviet Union wants to stop Pakistan from falling completely into the arms of Communist China.

These are the limitations of the Soviet Union and we must appreciate them, just as we appreciate the limitations of the United States. I say this because it would be disastrous if we let ourselves build another illusion in place of that illusion of 'Hindi Chini Bhai Bhai', which brought us to such a disastrous pass. I say that because there are some signs that illusion may be replaced by another illusion or hypnosis of the same kind. There is the ridiculous talk by my friend, Shri Ashok Mehta, of devetailing our economy and planning into the Soviet system of planning which is itself in disarray. My good friend, the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs, went to Moscow recently. While he was speaking to the Russians in Moscow at one of these functions, he said:

"... I am not in the habit of speaking in the language of exaggeration. But I wish to tell you that today every corner, every class of India is full of love and affection and gratitude to the Soviet Union which was never seen before".

The language of hyperbole is all right at diplomatic functions, but we must not become victims to that language ... (interruptions) I will quote what he said before going to Russia also. Speaking in Delhi, as reported by the *Indian Express*

of 19th October, he said:

"The Soviet Union was a hundred per cent true friend of India".

Now let me say clearly what every student of international affairs knows that there are no hundred per cent true friends for any country. Not even the United States. I will agree very cheerfully, is, a hundred per cent true friend of India. Let me remind the House of what happened in 1962. In 1962 when we were attacked by Communist China, two countries came readily to our assistance, while Mr. Khrushchev was still sitting on the fence, and they were the United States and the United Kingdom. We may be forgiven if in our excitement at that time we had described them as hundred per cent true friends. But what happened in three years? See how the situation has changed. Therefore, if there is a hundred per cent friend, it is only for the moment, only for the occasion. Countries are not hundred per cent friends. They follow their own national interests and they change their friendships from time to time.

Now, the USSR is neutral and it has been neutral between India and Pakistan in the Kashmir dispute. There has been a shift in its policy, not to our advantage, over Kashmir. We know the Veto is gone, the Veto for which we paid a heavy price for several years. We have been equated with Pakistan as "two non-aligned countries". I can quote from article after article in *Pravda*, from statement after statement by Breznev and Kosygin equating us with Pakistan.

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1969

What are the causes of the decay in our public life? I think I would analyse it under three or four major heads. One is the reluctance to be in opposition. Everyone wants to be in power or office today or tomorrow. Normally, parliamentary democracy functions in countries where 40 percent of the country's politicians are prepared to be in opposition at any given time. About 60 percent are in office, about 40 percent in Opposition. This is the law of democratic politics. But not in India. In India, 90 percent of the politicians must be in office at any given time! This, I suppose, was the basic reason why the Congress Party rejected Gandhiji's advice on the achievement of Independence, when he suggested that the Congress retire from political life, become a constructive organisation and that two parties be formed - a radical one under Jawaharlal Nehru, a conservative one under Vallabhbhai Patel. Both sides rejected the advice because both wanted to be in office at the same time

CITIZENSHIP

A second basic factor is that the party, which is a means to an end, has become an end to itself. Not only "my country right or wrong", but "my party right or wrong". Politics is about power, but power is not an end in itself. Power is for the purpose of carrying out your principles and your policies. Now, it has become power for its own sake; office for its own sake. Nothing is more painful to me than to watch my friends in office today - old friends of the Congress Party to which I once belonged.

A third reason for the decay of our politics is the cult of personality - the preoccupation with men rather than with measures, with personalities rather than with principles. "Will Mr. Kamaraj Nadar get into the cabinet" is a question I am asked more often by my fellow intelligentsia than any other question concerning this country. But what does it matter whether Mr. Kamaraj Nadar is in the Cabinet or not? Do you think it will make two annas worth of difference to the life of the common man in India?

Lastly, there is the fact of an illiterate electorate - not that illiterate people are stupid, but

illiterate people are difficult to communicate with, since they can't read, your manifesto doesn't touch them, you can't write to them. You can meet only a few persons, you can attend a few public meetings. The radio is under government control, T.V. will be under government control. The channels of communication, the conveyor belt, is missing. This, of course, makes for the quality of the politician being what it is.

Now, we as a people have some very strong points. We have love of religion, love of the family, and the home, love of the land, patience, contentment, perhaps even resignation with our individual lot, a high degree of intelligence, strong individualism - these are very fine traits of the Indian character.

Learning to say 'No'

On the other hand, we have also several weaknesses that are reflected in our public life today. The first and foremost is lack of courage. I don't mean physical courage. Our Armed Forces have proved that they have physical courage. I am referring to intellectual and moral courage - the willingness to be in a small and hopeless minority, the readiness to be unpopular. There is an old English verse: "They are slaves who dare not be. In the right with two or three". There are very few people in India who are prepared to be "in the right with two or three" or even with twenty or thirty. Gandhiji had sensed this. That is why he used to say: "India has to learn to say 'no' ". In other words, he found an absence of what is called "the non-conformist conscience" - the man who says: "I am

right and I shall stand by it even if the whole world does not agree with me". Gandhiji would have said if he were alive today - India has still to learn to say 'no'. The result is that our Congress MPs say one thing on the floor of Parliament, another thing in the lobby, and a third thing in the Central Hall. 'Leave me out. Don't involve me', is the common slogan of businessmen, intellectuals, politicians, even Cabinet Ministers. Our successful politicians as a result are frightened, cowardly men, frightened of their own followers. frightened of public opinion or what they think is public opinion.

Lack of Discipline

Then there is lack of discipline as part of our national character. This is the failure of character-building in homes and schools. You know the old saying about the battle of Waterloo having been won on the playing fields of Eton. There are very few playing fields of Eton where our young men and women can be trained to win the battles of the future. So we have indiscipline, a lack of restraint which is endemic. Examples of this are irresponsible breeding - 1,300 babies born every hour in a country that is short of food; one in twenty of our railway passengers travelling without tickets; and nothing being done about it. The other day, the Railway Minister complained that 10 to 40 per cent of the railway revenues are stolen by people who travel without tickets. Then we have the *gherao*, the shirking of work, laziness and finally a lack of consideration for others - unpunctuality, undependability in honouring our various commitments.

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These are not handicaps that we can put right by passing laws or changing over from one form of government to another. These are very deep-rooted defects and call for much deeper remedies.

Politics Everywhere

We find that our public life today is politicised to an inordinate extent. I won't talk about economics because you know all about it - how controls and permit-licence raj have throttled initiative in every walk of economic life. But let us talk about other matters like education. Often the Opposition parties are blamed for going to the students and rousing them to indiscipline. That is true, I think of the Communists, it is true of the SSP, it is true of the Jan Sangh. But who started it? The Hindustan Times of 3rd November 1968 carried this report:

"The Allahabad University Teachers' Association yesterday opposed the nomination of Government officials and politicians to the executive councils of Uttar Pradesh universities. In a statement here, the Association said that such nominations 'impair the free and autonomous character of these bodies and are unlikely to help them in their deliberations which are essentially of an academic nature' ".

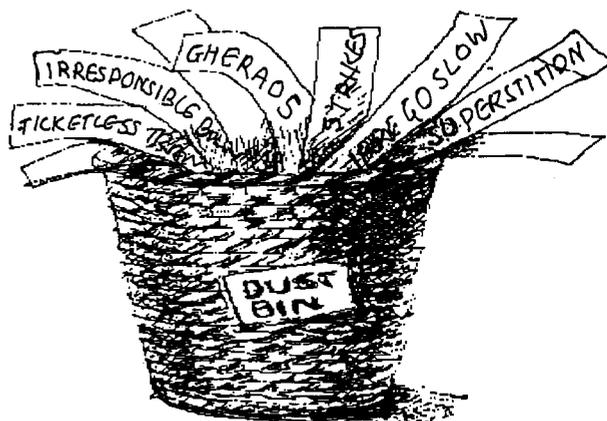
The same is the case with the question of language, the medium of education, a thing that should be left to parents and teachers and pupils. There again the Government tries to intervene and the politician tries to lay down the law. What business have Government or Parliament to interfere with the medium of instruction or other aspects of education? I am very glad to say that in November 1967, when a resolution was brought in Parliament by Mr. Triguna Sen trying to force a linguistic solution in regard to the medium of education, Mr. Dandekar and I, on behalf of our Party, tabled an amendment which we pressed which said that the Lok Sabha is of opinion that "(a) consistent with the Fundamental Rights of parents, it is desirable to leave to the parents both the choice of schools and colleges and also the

medium of instruction for the education of their children, and (b) consistent with the principles of academic autonomy and freedom, it is desirable that each University should be the judge concerning the medium or media of instruction, and therefore no further action be taken by the Government of India in so far as the medium of instruction in Universities is concerned". If this plea had been listened to, much of the later disharmony on this issue could have abated.

The same with sports. As you know, when the question of sending a team to Mexico came up, the Minister got up in Parliament and said they had advised the Indian Olympic Association not to send a team, with a threat that the Government would not give any money if the advice was not listened to.

In literature and the arts, there is widespread patronage. Artistes, writers and musicians are sought to be bought up by the Establishment. This is done through the so-called Akademies and the Council of Cultural Relations. Large numbers of artistes and writers are now becoming hacks writing on Government orders, losing their independence in the process for a mess of pottage.

A lot of our legislation impinges on the freedom of conscience. The old adage - "Render unto Caesar what is Caesar's and unto God what is God's" has been forgotten until the Chief Justice of India finds it necessary to object. On the 24th



of October, 1968, the Chief Justice of India, Mr. Hidayatullah, called for a little restraint in executive action and less meddling by legislatures in laws. He said:

"Too much of laws is a drudgery. Every year a number of Acts were passed and amendments adopted to existing legislation. We who administer justice feel unnerved that we do not keep pace with these new laws and amendments. With less laws, less executive orders and less litigation, society could be happier."

Meddlesome but Weak

Now the interesting thing is that while we have a Government that meddles in everything and politicians who poke their fingers into everyone else's pie, we do not have a strong but a miserably weak Government.

The Hindustan Standard, in its 1st January review of the past year, said: "On the whole, 1968 was a year of indecision for the Centre". The Indian Express editorially said six days later: "It is not unusual to see small men flinching from big decisions, but what one is witnessing in New Delhi is a multitude of small men flinching too often from even small decisions". And it went on to say: "Nero fiddled while Rome burned. Our Neros only sleep".

There are two painful examples of this refusal to decide in the economic sphere which are known to you. One was the refusal to accept a very fine offer made by the Tennaco Company of America for the drilling of offshore oil on the West Coast

of India. The other, which you know about and which is still a continuing sore, is the way in which a magnificent project which would have brought fertilizers to the peasants of India has been dealt with - the Tata Fertilizer project in Mithapur, I don't think I will be wrong in saying that the treatment of this project has been criminally irresponsible because it has lost the country already crores of rupees of foreign exchange and wealth. Mr. Tata has estimated that, during every hour that passes without a decision and one year and a quarter have already passed, during every one of those hours, including the hour during which I am speaking, the country loses one lakh of rupees in foreign exchange alone. By now, we have lost crores and crores of rupees. As a Japanese economist has pointed out, while in a country like Malaysia it takes two years to start a factory, in India it takes two years to get a permit.

Negation by Delay

Prof. Parkinson, about whom you know, is a very acute observer of the contemporary political scene not only in India but throughout the world and it is interesting that some time ago he wrote on his subject and invented a new law which he calls Parkinson's Law of Delay. He writes:

"It is many years now since the existence was proved of the abominable 'no man'. In every organisation it is now recognised there are men who say 'no' to every proposal partly to avoid taking responsibility, partly to save themselves from the work which a positive decision might involve to say 'yes'.

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There is nothing static, however, in our changing world and recently research has tended to show that the abominable 'no man' is being replaced by the Prohibitive Procrastinator. Instead of saying 'no', the Prohibitive Procrastinator says 'in due course', these words foreshadowing Negation by Delay. The theory of Negation by Delay depends upon establishing a rough idea of what amount of delay will equal negation. If we suppose that a drowning man calls for help, evoking the reply 'in due course', a judicious pause of five minutes may substitute, for all practical purposes, a negative response. Why? Because the delay is greater than the non-swimmer's expectation of life. Delays are thus deliberately designed forms of denial and are extended to cover the life expectation of the person whose proposal is being pigeon-holed. Delay is the deadliest form of Denial. This is Parkinson's Law of Delay."

A Paradox

So we have this paradox, that we have a meddlesome, busybody government stopping everyone from doing something. There is a jingle of A. P. Herbert's, the refrain of which runs: "Let's stop somebody from doing something; Everybody's doing too much! On the other hand, the jobs that they themselves have to do, they fail to perform. What are their jobs?"

- To defend the country, which they have failed to defend. Thousands of square miles of our territory are under enemy occupation.
- A second obligation is to maintain law and order, to protect the life and property of the citizens. This we find being violated from one corner of India to another.
- Thirdly, to give justice - and justice delayed is justice denied.
- Fourthly, the infrastructure - to provide the foundation on which people can build the economic structure - water, irrigation, power, roads, transportation, communications. These are the legitimate functions of government.

Walter Lipmann, in his book *The Public Philosophy* wrote many years ago something about the dilemma now facing us and the perils that are now ahead of our democracy. He said:

"If the people find that they must choose whether they will be represented in an assembly which is incompetent to govern or whether they will be governed without being represented there is no doubt at all as to how the issue will be decided. They will choose authority which promises to be paternal in preference to freedom which threatens to be fratricidal. For large communities cannot do without being governed. No ideal of freedom or democracy will long be allowed to stand in the way of their being governed...."

Now this is very true. Pakistan, Indonesia, Ghana, Greece - all these countries have practiced what Mr. Lipmann forecast when faced with the choice. They decided to forego freedom but to have government.

It seems to me that, in the years to come, our people are going increasingly to be faced with this unfortunate dilemma. As a democrat, I would deplore the scrapping of democracy but it is a real danger and does not depend on our wishes. It depends on the objective situation and whether we can, even now at this late stage, save our democracy.

'We' and 'They'

So far I have attacked the politicians, and all of you must be feeling relieved and happy. You must be feeling very virtuous and superior, saying: "Good; they are all rotters, but we are good people. We love our country." May I at this point, however, ask you to "turn the searchlight inwards", to consider your own responsibilities in this unfortunate set up? Are you sure that you are not just as guilty as we politicians? After all, who elected us to Parliament? Who has put the present Government in office over and over again over the last twenty years? All of us, including you. Too many people in our country grumble for five years and then they go and vote for the wrong people or the

wrong party. They seem to believe that democracy begins and ends with five yearly plebiscites to legitimise the government of the day.

'We' are all Guilty

This talk of "we" and "they" is very dangerous talk. To blame 'them', the politicians or the government, for everything is not fair because we all have to share the guilt and the responsibility. A **kind** of void is there among us. People waiting to be led, waiting for a sign. The younger generation is singularly uninterested in public affairs, contemptuous rightly of their elders who have made a mess of affairs. They do not feel any respect for us. Every time the Government's powers are enlarged, more things can be done by 'them' to "us". They make the things we buy, the news we hear, the radio we hear, the rules we observe, they run schools and colleges, they are usually faceless. What I am trying to suggest is that this 'we' and 'they' is all wrong. We are all 'they'. If 'they' are guilty, then each one of us is guilty, even if he is not a **politician**. The daily exercise of vigilance is the price of liberty.

In America they call it "grass roots" democracy voluntary action at the level of the village, the farm, the countryside, the town. We can call it "rice roots" action in **our** own country. Hundred of voluntary **organisations** are required to work for causes, to fight various **evils**, to expose them. Each one of us has the obligation to participate in one or the other of them. Passivity is the enemy of freedom. Of all classes, I think, the class of businessmen and the class of intelligentsia who are

privileged, who have the knowledge and the weapons have failed the country most. But there is also failure on the part of every one of us. Whatever our walk of life, even the humblest can contribute.

Along time ago Dean Swift wrote: "Whoever could make two ears of corn or two blades of grass to grow upon a spot of ground where only one grew before would deserve better of mankind, and do more essential service to his country than the whole race of politicians put together". But the common man has to assert himself and do something. And this brings me to my conclusion.

What Do We Do?

The question is: What do we do about this? It is not to depress you, but to warn you, to alarm you if you want, because there is cause for alarm, to awaken you and to ask you to assert yourselves if you do not want this country to be destroyed.

All that is necessary for bad men to triumph is for good men to do nothing. Some people turn to fashionable talk of military take-over. It is fashionable among young people many come to me and say: "Why don't we go in for a military take-over? It is an easy way of shedding our responsibilities and washing our hands of them. May be it is a short term form of relief. But, after a while, all evils recur along with additional evils, as our friends in **Pakistan** are well aware of.

The problem with military dictatorships above all is the **problem** of succession. In a democracy, with all its faults, the people have the right to change the government, to learn by their mistakes,

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and to do it peacefully, without violence, without disturbing the social fabric. Once you have an authoritarian regime, military or otherwise, there is no peaceful succession. Every success is bloody, difficult. That is why Winston Churchill, a very great democrat, who had tasted both the joys and the bitterness of democratic functioning, said when he was asked what he thought of democracy: "Of all the known forms of Government, democracy is undoubtedly the worst- except all the others!"

The Need for a Public Philosophy

What we need is a public philosophy, a way of life, something which holds our people together. As I mentioned, in Israel and Japan, there is such a public philosophy, a way of life.

Let me spell out very tentatively some aspects of public philosophy for your consideration.

I would say that the first and fundamental task in every walk of life in India today is to modernise without turning our back on our tradition but to modernise fast, because we are lagging behind sadly in the human race. The younger and more dynamic elements amongst us who appreciate the processes of technological change and of social advance should assert themselves and cut across party labels if they find that these come in the way.

The Real Divide

If I may say so, the real divide in our national life today is not between "left" and "right"; two utterly meaningless words from which all sense has been drained long ago, words that are mostly used for covering up totalitarian communist propaganda. There is no 'left' and no 'right' in our national life today. There is, however, a divide between liberal and modernistic forces on one side and obscurantist, communist and totalitarian elements on the other. That is why recent efforts such as those aiming at a merger of my own Party and the Jan Sangh are in my view unrealistic and misconceived and are bound to fail, because there

is little in common between the liberal and non-denominational way of life in which I and most of my colleagues in my Party believe and the tenets of the RSS which dominates the Jan Sangh.

Now modernisation does not mean trying to catch up with the West by attempting to ape and imitate the Industrial Revolution of the 19th Century which was based on iron and steel and coal, which belong to what is called "the age of fossil power" which the advanced countries have now left behind. Today, acute thinkers in the United States are describing the present American age as "the post-industrial society." One of them has described today's American society as entering what he calls the "technotronic age, the age of technology and electronics and space. Now, if we try to copy the Industrial Revolution of the 19th century, we shall always be a century behind, and the distance between us will continue to widen. The only way to catch up with those in the vanguard would be to bypass the old Industrial Revolution by applying the latest advances of technology to agriculture and the processing of raw materials, transport, communications and power on the one hand and to the problems of human organisation and management and population on the other. That is one part of the public philosophy I would like to place before you.

Strong but Limited Government

The other is to replace our present meddlesome, omnipresent and weak government by a strong government that keeps to its proper task. This involves a double process of cutting politics and government down to size and the creation of strong governments at the centre and in the states. You might say this is a self-contradictory process. Let me, however, try and explain that *strong* government and big government are two entirely different things. A big government can be a flabby and ineffective government trying to do everything and doing nothing, like our present government. A *strong* government, is a purposeful government handling defence, law and order, justice and in-

frastructure and doing these jobs well, which our present Government is not doing. So it is a double process of cutting the government down to size and making it more virile, just as men and women who are too obese go to naturopaths on the one hand to slim and on the other hand to become more vital and healthy. That is the process through which our governments ought to go to become thinner and more active and more purposive. Now, this would mean the government withdrawing by and large, from the economic field, a policy of decontrol and handing over to people's enterprises those State enterprises which are making phenomenal losses today.

This would mean that Government must concentrate on its own obligations - defence, law and order, justice, infrastructure, education. On this subject a Chinese philosopher, twenty six centuries back, named Kuan Tzu, said some pertinent things which I cannot resist reading out to you. He said: "If you plant for a year, plant a seed. If for two years, plant a tree. If for a hundred years, teach the people. If you plant a seed once, you will reap one harvest. If you plant a tree, you will reap ten harvests. If you teach the people, you will reap a hundred harvests... If you give a man fish, he will have a single meal. If you teach him how to fish, he will eat all his life."

'Rice Roots' Activity

The next part of the proposed public philosophy is the need to develop better communications and greater participation and rice roots voluntary activities. This means an end to what I talked about earlier, the 'we' and 'they' complex; the shrug of

the shoulders, the helplessness of the private citizen. Today, grass roots activity is altogether lacking. There is the absence of an infrastructure of voluntary organizations to supplement parliamentary government at the top. This makes government too strong, because there are no alternative channels of influence. This also creates a gulf between the youth of this country and the political leadership. It is mostly in the hands of old people, handicapped by outdated views and old methods. There is need for modern, dynamic, sports-loving, joy-loving politicians. It is not easy to reconcile voluntary activity with strong government, but there is no inevitable conflict between the two. Indeed, a strong Government can co-exist with strong people's initiative and strong individual liberty.

Finally, since citizenship does not come naturally, there is the need for training. Today, it is interesting that only the totalitarians train their followers. They alone believe in having disciplined, trained cadres. In India, for instance, the only parties that trained their people are the Communist Parties and the R.S.S. No democratic party upto now has bothered to think of training its cadres to become better disciplined, more vocal, more convinced people. There is a crying need there.

Despite an awareness of the grim problems I have outlined, I am an optimist. The reason for my optimism is that we in India have kept the democratic dialogue going. This lecture today is only one little example. So long as free discussion can go on and the voice of the people is not throttled, there is hope.

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1971

SWATANTRA'S ELECTORAL DISASTER

There have been some peculiar reactions to the results of the elections (1971). One of these takes the form of defections. That has happened in many parties including, I am sorry to say, some of our Assembly members in Gujarat, in Mysore, may be elsewhere. They have defected and left the Party simply because we were very badly defeated. This I say is peculiar because in England, for instance, the Labour Party and the Conservative Party alternately get defeated just as badly as we have been defeated, but nobody resigns and becomes a socialist or a conservative because the majority had voted for socialism or conservatism! And secondly, there has been the peculiar reaction of the business community, not that they have ever been very brave or very courageous but it seems that, judging from the proceedings of the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry, whatever fight they had in them has been knocked out of them and they have promised to be good boys and stop criticising the government and try and see the beauties of whatever is happening.

Let us now consider the nature of our setback. We put up only fifty nine candidates for the parliamentary elections, out of whom only eight got elected, while as many as eighteen, I am sorry to say, forfeited their security deposits. The percentage of votes polled by our Party in 1967 was 8.68%. This dropped this time to 3.08% - less than half. Here I must say that this is due to the smaller number of candidates we put up, partly because of our membership of the Front, partly for other reasons. So the comparison is not altogether fair. Similarly, the number of seats that we carried dropped from 44 in 1967 to 8 this time. This again is not altogether fair because this comes of the British system of elections which in India particularly distorts very badly the will of the electorate. If there had been any system of Proportional Representation, we would have got 14 seats instead of 8, but even then, you will agree, to drop from 44 to 14 is no minor setback.

I have mentioned the distortion of the electoral will. Let me say one word by way of con-

solution - that the victory of our opponents is not as sweeping as is often made out. I have explained that in newspaper articles and speeches. The ruling Party only got **43%** of the votes polled, and the votes polled were only 54% of the electorate. Therefore, the ruling Party only got the support of 23.9% of the electorate or, to put it very simply, one out of four Indian men and women voted for the ruling Party, one voted for other parties and two did not vote at all. This is by no means the sweeping victory that is sought to be made out. Actually, it is a rather routine kind of performance.

Last July (1970) in Madras, I was authorised, as President, to try and bring into existence a consolidation or union of nationalist and democratic forces in the country. That was the mandate that was given to me and Rajaji quite rightly said that I would be judged by my success or failure in bringing about the desired results. I want you to recall his words when he said: "I shall judge Masani and commend or condemn him by whether or not he succeeds in the task we have allotted to him." I failed to carry out the task that was entrusted to me. In that report, we tried to carry it out - not only I but my valued colleagues like Mr. Dandekar, Dr. Cooper and other office-bearers who co-operated with me throughout in trying to do what we did. For six months, we were kept dangling by Mr. Nijalingappa and the Congress (O). This was due to the fact that Dr. Ram Subhag Singh, particularly, obstructed the coming into existence of a bloc in Parliament and he was ably supported by the Ministers of the Congress Party in Mysore and Gujarat. Between the three of them, they

successfully managed to sabotage something that was very important, that is, the initiative being taken by us to form an alternative to drive Mrs. Gandhi on the defensive and ultimately out of office.

By the end of November, my patience had come to an end. I began to foresee what was coming and on the 2nd of December, I wrote a letter to Mr. Nijalinappa which was in the nature of an ultimatum. I said very clearly in the last paragraph that if by the 31st of December you have not entered into an alliance with us, we shall break off all relations with you, we shall take it that you are not serious and we shall go our own way. This perhaps had some effect because after that there was a little more progress and by the end of the month, an agreement was reached (in fact 15 days after my letter, an agreement was reached) that, by the end of the month or in the next few days, we would announce the formation of a three party Electoral Front with a common programme based on the AICC Resolution of June 28 and this draft announcement was actually prepared on the 20th of December. I remember I sent a copy of it to Rajaji and he congratulated me.

Unfortunately, on the 3rd of January, some very amazing events took place - a kind of *coup d'etat* took place in Delhi, by which the SSP captured Mr. Nijalingappa and Mr. Vajpayee, got us thrown out of the Front, captured the Front, scrapped the programme and destroyed the work of six months. It was an amazing thing to watch happening from lunch time to dinner time but it happened, and

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as one of the Delhi newspapers put it: "In about four hours of work, the SSP leaders worked like a demolition squad and the grand castle of the Grand Alliance was in the dust".

When I found that this was happening, I sent for two senior colleagues who happened to be in Delhi that day - Mr. Dahyabhai Patel, our Vice-President, and Mr. H. P. Nanda, our Treasurer. This was about 5 or 6 o'clock in the evening and I told them that I was afraid something horrible was going to happen. These people were going to back out, force us either to sign an alliance without a programme or to stay out. What should we do? We all three agreed that there can be no succumbing to this kind of intimidation and we should refuse to join Mr. Nijalingappa in surrendering like this. We should stay out. I should ask for time to consult the National Executive of the Party and refuse to sign any such statement without an agreement on programme.

The Presidents of the other two Parties agreed to the demands made by the SSP and Ram Subhag Singh, the Front was scuttled and what was perhaps even more sinister than the taking away of the programme was the removal of the word "democratic". The SSP spokesman said in their eyes the word "democratic" was as objectionable as the word "communist". They wanted to be equi-distant from the two Fronts - the Communist Front and the Democratic Front!

Now, at that time my feeling was that if we went into this Front without a programme we would lose the elections - that in fact the elections had been lost by the Front by their action on the 3rd of January. At the same time, it was very difficult to keep out altogether and to go it alone for reasons that I shall discuss in a couple of minutes. And so Mr. Dandekar, Dr. Cooper and I put our heads together and drafted a resolution for the National Executive, which did three things - first, it expressed its deep disappointment at what had happened in Delhi; secondly, it approved of my

action in not going along with; and thirdly, it authorised me to negotiate with the Front for an adjustment of constituencies - that meant that we would have negotiated for the Party with the Front of the three Parties as a whole without joining the Front, tried to get the best terms we could and then either made a deal with them or stayed out altogether and gone it alone. We felt that this was the best middle path that we could follow in the peculiar circumstances with which we were faced.

Unfortunately, that third proposal was not accepted. Prof. Ranga moved an amendment removing this formula saying "we hereby join the Front unconditionally", and although Mr. Dandekar made a very valiant speech, which I remember, arguing against it. Rajaji and the big majority of the National Executive decided, no doubt with the best of motives, that at that particular stage, there was no alternative but to go back to the Front after making our protest. So we gave in and the resolution was amended and it was published that we were joining the Front.

Now what happened during the elections we also know. The Front did not function in all constituencies. In some constituencies, it did function. I think we owe the return of some of our eight members to loyal cooperation by one or other partner of the Front. On the other hand, we owe the defeat of many of our candidates also to the lack of loyalty and the sabotage by members of the Front. I am one of the victims, so I ought to know! We got the worst of both the worlds. We lost the Muslim vote but the Jan Sangh scuttled us. We lost the protest vote against the Ahmedabad Establishment, but the Congress scuttled us. So we lost both the ways.

The important question arises - did we make a mistake in joining the Front on the 8th of January and if so, why did we do it? I think we did it out of very good motives and reasons. We felt first of all that public opinion would blame us very strongly if, because of this so-called theoretical

insistence on a programme, we had kept out of the Front, gone it alone. Then we would have been blamed for the defeat that would have come on the ground that, if we had only joined the Front, everything would have been beautiful.

But I think there was a much deeper reason



also which we must be honest enough to face. We did not have the guts or the courage to go it alone. We did not feel that we had the organisational strength, the cadre of workers, the good candidates and the money to be able to say: "all right, we are on our own, we'll put up as many candidates as we like and we shall fight under our own banner"

It is very important to face this because that brings us to our major failure and that is not that we joined the Front or we made mistakes in strategy, but that we were not prepared. This I think goes back four years to 1967, but in particular the responsibility falls on those of us who were at the head of the Party in the twelve or fifteen months

prior to the elections. I became President of the Party on the 1st of January 1970. In November 1969, the General Council had passed an excellent document called the Mid-Term Report. We had analysed there our weaknesses for the past two and half years and we had laid down a concrete programme of action to revive the Party for the next two and a half years.

We said that certain re-orientation of our work was required and we would do certain things. These were listed as follows:

- the need for change, to educate the people that we were not a Party of the status quo.
- secondly, a concern for the underprivileged, the scheduled castes, the scheduled tribes, the poorer sections of society by actual concern in their problems, and not by just saying so, to carry conviction to them.
- thirdly, to bridge the generation gap by approaching youth to come close to us and carry them with us.
- fourthly, putting agriculture first.
- fifthly, putting the consumer in the picture - the forgotten factor as we called him.
- Lastly, to cultivate the Minorities.

So the real failure of the Party leadership, at the top of which I find myself, throughout the year 1970 was that we were not able to perform this task and for that the leadership and particularly the man at the top have to take full responsibility.

I can only share with you a few thoughts before I conclude. One thing is that the leadership of all the old parties including ours, though we

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are only eleven years old, have lost credibility. I do not think the people are going to accept the present leadership of the old Congress, the Jana Sangh, the Swatantra Party, the PSP and the SSP in any future election or in any future trial of strength. Let us put it this way. We have been found out. May be it is a fair or unfair verdict. We have been found out to be missing or lacking and I do not think that we should be at the top of a Party which is trying to regain lost ground.

We have lost the war. We are a beaten party, a beaten Front, if you like and our opponents are going to be on top for several years to come. Let us hope, it will not be more than five years.

Let me also say there is nothing wrong with our principles. I am not one of those who wants to lower our flag. Rajaji has sent you a message, where he deplores any idea of "me-tooism" which means that because Indira Gandhi has won the elections, we should start apeing her policies, mouthing her slogans, trying to compete with her as the Congress (O) tried to do last year unsuccessfully or the SSP has tried to do also unsuccessfully. I am glad that Rajaji has given that warning, because it is sometimes a difficult to resist to lower the flag and go along and lick the boots of the winner.

I do not think this is called for at all. Our principles are 100 per cent right. Everything we say has proved right and will prove right. We have only got to wait a little for the facts to be established. The wheels of God grind slow but they grind exceedingly small, and those who are talking tall today are going to be humbled in the dust. It may take two years or it may take ten years, but it is going to happen. Therefore, when I talk of a change of leadership, I am not talking of a change of principles or of policies. It is our performance that has to be changed. In other words, the personnel and the conduct have to change, not our principles.

For all these reasons, after considerable heart-

searching, I came to the conclusion that the Party must have a new leadership and that the first thing that has to be done to start that process and to symbolise it publicly is for me to step down from the Presidentship. Nothing very much is going to happen in the next few months. We have to recouperate, as a patient does after an illness. No early battles are going to be fought by us, let us be quite clear. Therefore, I would say that even those who have argued with me have really conceded the principle and argued from a human point of view because nobody likes a parting of this kind.

On the other hand, look at the reaction outside. The Akali Dal of the Pheruman Group - he was our colleague, Darshan Singh Pheruman, a member of our party and he was the head of a group in the Akali Dal. They met the other day and called upon Sant Fateh Singh to follow my example and put pressure on him by saying: "why can't you do what Masani is doing?" The *Hindustan Times* wrote an editorial in which it said: "In the highly permissive and self-regarding milieu that India has witnessed in the recent past, Mr. Masani's vicarious atonement for his Party's debacle will stand out as an exemplary gesture". I am glad to see yesterday's *Himnat* which came to me this morning, an editorial which says that: "At a time when holding on to office has become a major preoccupation with many, the reasons behind the resignation of Swatantra President Masani are refreshing."

We also discussed what should be done and we took some important decisions and that was that we should advance the elections of our Party machinery in order to bring a new Executive into existence earlier than would normally have been the case. We are trying at almost breakneck speed to complete the formalities and processes of elections from the bottom to the top by 18th September, so that by then you will have a new President, new office bearers and a new Executive altogether.

Looking forward two or three years, let me

say, the real crisis will come two or three years from now, not two or three months from now, and that is when the chickens come home to roost, when the promises made are not fulfilled, as they cannot be fulfilled by anyone, not even by us even if we tried honestly so long as we tried to carry out Mrs. Gandhi's programmes. If we carried out our own programme, we could fulfil the promises she has made. But since she will not accept our programme and will carry on with the *status quo* of State Capitalist policies for another five years, as she and her father have carried on for twenty years, I think failure is almost inevitable. Now, if that takes place and the chickens come home to roost, the real crisis will come at that time.

The other day, I met a gentleman in a plane who described to me the remarks made by Confucius about a ruler of his time. I thought I would take them down immediately, which I have done, because they seem to apply so appropriately to our own conditions today in India. Confucius described the problem of his time in the following words: "A weak character coupled with an honoured place, meagre knowledge with large plans, and limited resources with heavy responsibilities will seldom escape disaster".

I think that will overtake the Emperors or Empresses of our times in a few years from now, depending on their follies and our patience or the patience of the Indian people. It is for that time that we will have to prepare from now. You may say that is fine. As soon as people are disillusioned, they will all come to us and say: "Oh, how wise you gentlemen were. We didn't listen to you, now

we are going to vote for you". May I sound a word of warning? It is not at all proved that this is what the people of India will do. The people of India may do something quite different. The people of India may turn against Mrs. Gandhi and turn to the Naxalites and Mao Tse Tung. This is equally possible. If we do not do our task, that is more likely than the other thing we don't have to theorise about it.

We shall have to fight at many levels. We have a Parliamentary Opposition and we wish Mr. Dahyabhai Patel, Mr. P. K. Deo, Rajmata Gayatri Devi, all success in their efforts, more power to their elbows. But there has also got to be an extra-parliamentary opposition. Countries where parliamentary opposition weakens very much or fades out turn to extra-parliamentary opposition. That takes many forms. It takes the form of a vigilant and vocal press; it can take the form of agitation and street fighting. Now, we believe in democratic methods and our extra-constitutional opposition must be a process of educating the people. The British politician who said: "Educate our Masters" is the person we have to remember today. We failed to educate our masters, and they kicked us out.

This will require work at many levels - the party level, extra-party levels, educational levels, and so on. I think the people expect three things from us and other political parties:

1. A quick reappraisal, and
2. New tactics and strategy;
3. A rededication to our objectives.

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1975

THE INDIAN CONSTITUTION

On February 27, 1947, the Constituent Assembly of India set up various committees, and I was fortunate enough to be elected to two important committees, the Advisory Committee and the Sub-Committee on Fundamental Rights, whose other members included Acharya Kripalani, Professor K. T. Shah, Rajkumari Amrit Kaur, Mrs. Hansa Mehta, Sir Alladi Krishnaswami Ayyar, Dr. K. M. Munshi, Sardar Harnam Singh, the Honourable Maulana Abdul Kalam Azad, Dr. B. R. Ambedkar and Mr. Jairamdas Daulatram.

In the light of later controversies and attempts to amend the Constitution by the 24th and 25th Amendments, it is interesting to recall that Sir B. N. Rau, who played a big part in the framing of the draft Constitution of India had, in his Report to the Constituent Assembly, suggested the insertion of a clause which would have done exactly what the 25th Amendment now seeks to do. His draft clause (10) 2 ran as follows:

"No law which may be made by the State in the discharge of its duty under the first paragraph of this section and no law which may have been made by the State in pursuance of the principles of policy now set forth in Chapter III of this Part should be void merely on the ground that it contravenes the provisions of Section 9 or is inconsistent with the provisions of Chapter II of this Part."

Happily, Sir B. N. Rau's suggestion was not accepted and we thought we had placed the Fundamental Rights of the citizen beyond the scope of any mischief. Alas, we were to be proved wrong.

The Fundamental Rights Committee prepared its report which was presented to the Assembly on April 3, 1947. In a covering letter addressed to the Chairman of the Advisory Committee, the Committee explained what they had done on the subject of Fundamental Rights:

"We have attempted to divide Fundamental Rights into two classes:

- (1) Justiciable rights, that is to say, rights which can be normally enforced by legal action, and
- (2) Non-justiciable rights, that is to say, those which are not normally either capable of, or suitable for, enforcement by legal action.

Why Fundamental Rights?

The consideration that has moved my colleagues and myself in including in the Constitution a Chapter on Fundamental Rights and making the Supreme Court the guardian of these rights vis-a-vis the Executive and Parliament were many and varied. There was first the recognition of the fact that, while the majority may not always be wrong, as the cynic has suggested, there was no assurance that it would always be right. Some of the worst tyrannies in history were to be found and **are even** today to be found in countries where the legislature consists of the elected representatives of the people. The fact that an action is taken with the support of a temporary majority provides no guarantee that it is either fair or just or wise. Thus, Thomas Jefferson had opined that "the tyranny of the legislators is the most formidable dread at present and will be for many years." There are certain rights that the citizen possesses that cannot be subjected to the whims and fancies of the majority of the day and these are the rights that we listed and described as Fundamental Rights.

Among those who gave expression to this philosophy was none other than Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru who on 30th April 1967 told the Constit-

uent Assembly that "a Fundamental Right should be looked upon, not from the point of view of any particular difficulty of the moment, but as something that you want to make permanent in the Constitution."

This was not at all a matter for surprise considering that the demand for certain basic rights was reiterated throughout the struggle for national independence and dates back to the Swaraj Bill of 1895 inspired by Lokamanya Tilak, which sought to guarantee "freedom of expression, inviolability of one's house, **right** to property and equality before the law".



An Amendment a Year

From time to time attempts were made through the years to whittle down the Fundamental Rights of the citizen by enacting various constitutional amendments which sought to truncate one or the other Fundamental Right. The first Amendment was passed in June 1951, only a year after the coming into operation of the new Constitution. The 17th Amendment came into force on 20th June, 1964. In between, amendments were made to the Constitution at an average speed of an amendment per year. Despite all these attacks on the various rights of the citizen and in particular the right of the agriculturist to his land, by and large the edifice created by the Constitution survived.

Golaknath Case Judgement

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It was reinforced by the historic judgement of the Supreme Court in what is known as the Golaknath case in the beginning of 1967. The majority of the Supreme Court decided that any amendment to the Constitution which took away or abridged the Fundamental Rights of the citizen enumerated in Part III would be void. In doing so, the Court over-ruled some of its earlier decisions. Chief Justice Subba Rao delivering the majority decision said: "In giving themselves the Constitution, the people have reserved the fundamental freedoms to themselves. It is not what the Parliament regards at a given moment as conducive to the public benefit but what Part III declares protected which determines the ambit of the freedom. The incapacity of the Parliament, therefore, in exercise of its amending power to modify, restrict or impair fundamental freedoms in Part III arises from the scheme of the Constitution and the nature of the freedoms".

Riled by this judgement as also later ones arising out of the nationalisation of banks and the abolition of the privileges of the princes which followed the same lines of thought, those who sought to undermine the Fundamental Rights decided to make a frontal attack on the Constitution and the judgements of the Supreme Court.

24th and 25th Amendments

This major attack was embodied in the 24th and 25th Amendments to the Constitution. On July 28, 1971, the 24th Amendment Bill was introduced in the Lok Sabha and was in due course passed by a big majority. It came into force on 5th September 1971. The 25th Amendment came into force on 20th April 1972.

The 24th Amendment seeks to undo the judgement in the Golaknath case by providing that Article 13 (2) does not apply to Constitutional amendments but only to ordinary legislative bills. It is thus aimed at empowering Parliament to abrogate all or any of the Fundamental Rights of the citizen.

The 25th Amendment, which is even more far-reaching, took the matter several steps further down the slope. First, it amended Article 31(2) and destroyed the right to fair compensation and legalised expropriation by substituting the word "amount" in place of the word "compensation".

Secondly, the amendment sought to undo the effect of the judgement in the Banks Nationalisation case by enacting that Article 19(i)(f) would not be applicable to laws for acquiring or requisitioning property, notwithstanding that it may violate even the rules of natural justice.

Thirdly, and worst of all, Article 31C was sought to be inserted in the Constitution providing that "no law giving effect to the policy of the State towards securing the principles specified in clause (b) or clause (c) of Article 39 shall be deemed to be void on the ground that it is inconsistent with, or takes away or abridges any of the rights conferred by Article 14, Article 19 or Article 31; and that no law containing a declaration that it is for giving effect to such policy shall be called in question in any court on the ground that it does not give effect to such policy".

There are several vital features of the Constitution that this Article seeks to destroy. First of all, this article damages the supremacy of the Constitution and gives a blank cheque to Parliament and State Legislatures to violate the provisions regarding human rights. Secondly, the Article subordinates the Fundamental Rights to the Directive Principles of State Policy, thus making those platonic principles which were deemed to be harmless when they were enacted, subvert vital Fundamental Rights of the citizen. Thirdly, by removing the barrier to arbitrary amendment to the Constitution, Fundamental Rights are virtually abolished even though they still remain ostensibly on the Statute Book.

Then again, the Article destroys completely the right to acquire or hold property, the right not to be deprived of property except by authority of law, and the right to any compensation worth the

name. In short, Article 31C authorises outright confiscation of any property, large or small, belonging to any one, rich or poor.

It is not only property rights that are destroyed. This Article also snuffs out other **important** rights distinct from the right to **property** such as the right to equality before the law, freedom of speech and expression, freedom to assemble peacefully without arms, freedom to form associations or unions, freedom to move freely, reside or settle in any part of the country. All these can be jettisoned under the plea of furthering social justice.

Further, the citizen is not permitted to raise the question whether the proposed law would result in securing the Directive Principles laid down in Article 39(b) or (c). Thus a fraud on the Constitution is specifically protected. The right to move the Supreme Court for the enforcement of the other Fundamental Rights is destroyed by providing that the Fundamental Rights are unenforceable against a law purporting to give effect to the Directive Principles while precluding the Court from considering whether the law is such that it actually serves any directive principle.

Finally, in the guise of giving effect to the Directive Principles, the position of regional, linguistic and cultural minorities is gravely undermined.

Which Way of Life?

The real issue underlying the controversy about these constitutional amendments is not so much a legal as a philosophic one. In what kind

of way of life does one believe? Here there is a distinct clash between two ways of life - the liberal democratic way that is embodied in our Constitution and the totalitarian one followed by the Fascists and Communists. The Marxists have invented a thesis that what our Constitution has described as Fundamental Rights are merely "formal" freedoms such as the freedom of speech, the freedom of the press, habeas corpus, the right to travel and move, the right to choose and change your job, and the rule of law. According to them, there are freedoms which are superior to these which they consider to be "real" freedoms, which are bread, equality, the right to work and social justice. When these two kinds of freedoms clash, they claim that the "formal" freedoms must be subordinated and give way to the "real" freedoms. The Soviet dictatorship established by Lenin and **Trotsky** was built on this logic. The failure of the Soviet experiment to create a free and equal society by destroying the "formal" freedoms, should, however, give the Marxists reason to pause.

From the time of the ancient Egyptian Pyramids to Stalin's canals built by slave labour, the man who has lost his freedom is always starved. Why, when he is so helpless, should be given bread? So the Marxist dichotomy of "Bread or Freedom" is false. It is only in and through freedom that people get bread.

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1975

THE EMERGENCY

On 12 June 1975 Mr. Justice Jag Mohan Sinha of the Allahabad High Court passed a judgement on the petition filed by Mr. Raj Narain against Mrs. Indira Gandhi's election to the Lok Sabha from Rae Bareilly in the 1971 General Elections. In the course of the judgement, Mrs. Gandhi was found guilty not only of several corrupt practices but of not having told the truth when under Oath in the witness box.

There is no question but that, in Britain or any other Western country, the Prime Minister of the day would have promptly resigned and another would have been nominated, and the law would have taken its course with an appeal to the Supreme Court against the Allahabad High Court judgement. There is a certain amount of evidence that Mrs. Gandhi's first instinct was to take this honourable course, but it would appear that she was persuaded against her better judgement to cling to her position as Prime Minister and adopt a defiant attitude. It appeared to me even then that she was making a tragic mistake.

Jayaprakash was in Patna. He was persuaded by Raj Narain to move to Delhi in order to spearhead a mass rally in the capital which was to demand Mrs. Gandhi's resignation as Prime Minister and to give the signal for a campaign of satyagraha including a gherao of her residence to bring about the desired result. This rally took place on the evening of 25 June.

This was obviously a provocation for which the Prime Minister was waiting. Within hours, an exercise which obviously had been kept ready in every detail was put into operation and, on or around the midnight of the 25th, not only Jayaprakash, Morarji Desai and other national leaders of every political party, except the Congress, were taken into custody and detained under the Maintenance of Internal Security Act (MISA), but thousands of political functionaries including some Congressmen were also rounded up during the early hours of that morning.

Having thus made this constitutional *coup d'etat*, the Prime Minister found it fit to convene a meeting of the cabinet in the early hours of the 26th and to present it with a *fait accompli*.

The cabinet could, of course, have rejected Mrs. Gandhi's request for an endorsement of her move, but it did not. This is a sad reflection of the extent to which the Congress leadership had degenerated. Even before the approval of the cabinet, which she extorted in the face of a certain amount of disquiet expressed by certain members of her government, Mrs. Gandhi had been to Rashtrapati Bhavan and got the President to affix his rubberstamp to the Proclamation of Emergency. It did not occur to the President to ask for time, as it was entirely within his right to do, and then to decide whether or not he should sign the Proclamation. In my view, which I have consistently expressed since 1950, the Constitution that we members of the Constituent Assembly drafted gave the President the power to accept or reject the advice of the Cabinet of the day. But the pattern of 'rubber stamp' Presidents had already been set by the predecessors of President Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed, notably, Mr. V. V. Giri, and so the President went along and gave his approval.

I waited impatiently for the morning newspapers and noted that they were either ignorant of these developments or had been

prevented from reporting them. Later in the day we learnt that Delhi had been deprived of all newspapers. This went on for two days, after which the newspapers, duly emasculated, began to reappear. Listening to All India Radio that evening we learnt of the bogus "Emergency" proclaimed by the President.

Alarming Rumours

There were alarming stories during the next two or three days about JP and Morarji being on hunger strike and even a **rumour** that they were being forcibly fed. I was awakened more than once in the middle of the night by anxious callers who wanted to know if it was true that JP had passed away. I sent a telegram to the Prime Minister: "In order to avoid alarmist **rumours** about Jayaprakash's condition would urge that daily bulletins signed by doctors be put on the radio and through the press." Within 24 hours a bulletin signed by the doctors in the All-India Medical Sciences was in fact put out saying JP had left the hospital after treatment in a reasonably good condition.

We were later to learn that JP had been sent to the Post Graduate Institute of Medicine in Chandigarh, where he was to remain in solitary confinement till his release in November 1975.

Reversible

How to describe the situation in which we found ourselves? It was in the nature of a nightmare, and yet I would certainly not describe it as either a Communist or a Fascist dictatorship.

I saw it as a limited form of authoritarianism from which one could go down the slope to totalitarianism or revert to democratic procedures. One of the more cheering aspects of the situation was that it was still reversible.

The Role of Liberals

In such a setting, what was the proper role of a liberal democrat? It was, in my view, to eschew romanticism on the one hand and craven fear on the other. He should endeavour, to whatever extent might be possible within the limits of legality, to assert the rights of the citizen and to seek to expand the bounds of freedom; for in such a climate even normal calm and courage have a therapeutic value. The almost universal absence of courage which then prevailed is hard to imagine.

The Liberal, maintaining a sense of history, would also be aware that there were historical reasons for such developments, and that a resort to demonology explains little. Bearing this in mind, the Liberal would endeavour to find common ground between the warring parties and to heal the wounds of a divided nation.

As Editor of *Freedom First*, I found myself embroiled almost immediately with the censors. When they objected to certain material which was meant for publication, I suspended publication and wrote a letter to our readers explaining that since *Freedom First* could not possibly accept pre-censorship, we were going to court and hoped that the courts would sustain us in our right to write as

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we pleased within reasonable limits. During those days, terror stalked the land. It took me more than a week to *find* an attorney in Bombay who would file my petition.

Our lawsuit went on till April 1976. Finally, a decision of the Division Bench of the **Bombay** High Court sitting in appeal recorded a historic judgement and vindicated our stand, striking down most of the censor's objections as arbitrary and unwarranted. It asserted that the rule of law was still intact. Indeed, throughout those dark days, the judiciary proved to be the class that stood out for its courage and determination to stand by the values to which it had sworn allegiance.

All honour also to Soli Sorabjee, my counsel, and D. H. Nanavati, my attorney, who patiently saw the proceedings to victory at great financial sacrifice.

The Failure of the Press

By contrast, the press as a whole failed even to take advantage of the support given by the courts. Writing much later on 17 April, 1977, Khushwant Singh, editor of India's largest magazine, the *Illustrated Weekly*, and himself a supporter of Mrs. Gandhi's regime, was to write bitterly, but not unfairly, in the following vein:

"The vast majority of them knuckled under (Information Minister) **Shukla's** draconian laws and did his bidding - suppressing, distorting news, praising those he wished to praise, denigrating others he wished to denigrate. These very 'gentlemen' today pose as great champions of the freedom of the press and wax eloquent against others of their profession. All they do now is to indulge in heroics and pin medals on their own chests, after the battle had been won by others.

"While saying so, I must record the names of some honourable exceptions: Ram Nath Goenka, Shri Mulgaokar, V. K. Narsimhan, Ajit



Bhattacharjee, and Kuldip Nayar of the *Indian Express*, C.G.K. Reddy; Rajinder Puri; K. R. Sunder Rajan (*Times of India*) as well as others attached to journals like Malkani of the *Organiser*, which were suppressed as well as A. D. Gorwala (*Opinion*); Minoo Masani (*Freedom First*); and Romesh Thapar (*Seminar*), which closed down under protest. Of the total working force of some 50,000 journalists, the number of those who put up some resistance could not have added up to more than three dozen. This handful has every right to take credit; it does not behove the others to crow about themselves..."

Why the Nightmare

Some time in October 1975, I was invited to attend and address the All-India Civil Liberties Conference which was being organised in Ahmedabad on October 15.

I decided to confine my remarks to answering specific questions: Why this 'nightmare', I asked, as it had been so well described that morning? Why as the British press had quite rightly asked, had there been so little resistance to these assaults on the people's rights and why had the people of India surrendered their liberties so easily? I went on to question the thesis that Mr. Chagla had presented that morning. Mr. Chagla had said that the Emergency declared on June 26 was the original sin from which all our present evils emanated. In one way of course he was right, but

I questioned whether the world began on the 26th of June 1975? What happened on that day was the culmination of what had gone before for the last twenty-five years since Independence.

Were We Fit for Freedom?

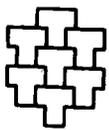
Why were we where we were today? I suggested two basic causes. The first was the character of our public life, the fragility of our democracy, and the absence of an infrastructure of grass roots vigilance and voluntary organisation without which the political parties floated on top with no roots below. Did we show our fitness to enjoy the freedom the Constitution gave us? Did our politicians - there were some of them **there**, some of them Members of Parliament - play the game? Did we put the country before party? Did we put the country before self? Did those in office show a readiness to give up office or did they cling to it like leeches? Did those in opposition get together to give the country a united opposition and an alternative government? The answer was "No". We in opposition certainly played the fool as much as those in Government. We were undisciplined, some of us often defied the Speaker, invited contempt on Parliament and, when efforts were made by some of us to get together they were sabotaged by some of my friends who were then detained in prison. I recalled sadly the 3rd of January 1971, when our efforts to bring something that Rajaji dreamt about, "a Grand Alliance" based on an agreed programme, were sabotaged by some of those who were in prison now. All those chickens had now come home to roost.

The people of India had not shown that passionate concern for democracy that they could have done, because we who were in power or in Parliament had behaved in a way that had forfeited their confidence. I had said all this to point out that what happened on the 26th of June was not an accident but a punishment for the way we had behaved after we got our Independence.

The Result of Statism

That, was the first cause of our plight today. The second cause had to do with the economic pattern which was embodied in our Five Year Plans since the Second Five Year Plan in the fifties. We had adopted an economic pattern which was not compatible with democracy. Statism, which we called "socialism" in India, could not for long co-exist with democracy. One or the other had to go. Many of us said in Parliament throughout the sixties that if we went on with this "permit licence raj", with the concentration of political and economic power in the same hands, Parliamentary democracy would shrivel up and die. *The ugly fruit of that Statism was reflected in the role of big business today. We had watched with pain the deputations in New Delhi between the 12 and 25 June. We had watched with nausea one business chamber or organisation after another waiting in deputation for a very unworthy purpose. It was now clear this kind of Statism was not compatible with democracy.* As and when we regained our freedom, we would have to see that political and economic power were distributed in the way Mahatma Gandhi wanted.

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1977

JAYAPRAKASH NARAYAN



Whatever the future might hold for him, J.P. has accomplished a great part of his mission in life. As Gandhi liberated India from foreign rule, JP was India's 'second liberator' from domestic despotism. He has by no means achieved the 'total revolution' to which he has aspired but he has certainly accomplished the first part of his mission, namely, to restore democratic processes and a free society in which the rest of the revolution could perhaps be peacefully accomplished.

JP's own understanding of the extent to which his mission has been accomplished found expression in the course of his reply to a question I put to him on 2 June 1977, in Bombay asking him to define what had already been achieved and what still remained to be done. Here is his answer:

The most important achievement for which I cannot take the entire credit is the unprecedented mass awakening, particularly the awakening among the youth. The task that remains to be done is to win the resurgent people's and youth power for changing constructively Indian society in its entirety. The scope of this change would cover several aspects of the people's life including their polity, economy, their social customs, the removal of the growing dichotomy between rural and urban, agricultural

and industrial, and the development of an **agro-industrial** pattern of economy and society. Further it would include a drastic revolution in our system of education as well as our system of administration. I have mentioned only a few important facets but the total revolution or transformation should cover much more of the people's life, leaving no aspect untouched.

I then went on to observe that JP had quite rightly been credited with the largest individual contribution towards the achievement of a change of Government as a result of the last Parliamentary Elections and to ask in what way it would be possible for him to influence those in office to behave in a manner that conformed to the standards he had led the people to expect of them.

In his reply, JP demurred to some extent regarding the credit I had given him. He said:

Whatever my contribution or the contributions of other individuals might have been to the change in Government, most of the credit goes to the people themselves. I do not think it is victory of any party or coalition of parties but a victory of the people who consciously voted for democracy against dictatorship and proved wrong all those learned persons who thought that the **poverty-stricken**, uneducated masses could have no appreciation of the values of individual liberty or democracy.



Proceeding to answer my question, JP observed:

As far as influencing Government's behaviour is concerned, I rely mostly on the power of the masses. By that I do not mean a rabble shouting slogans at Ministers' residences and Secretariats, but a peaceful, organised expression, in democratic ways, of the will and wish of the people.

The only way I can influence those in office to behave in a manner that conforms to the standards I have led the people to expect, is by writing and talking to personal friends in office or in a position to influence the course of events.

"Indian democracy in its present form", JP had said in one of his statements reported in the press in May 1977, 'will continue, about that there should be no doubt - now. While that continues, the real democracy, the people's democracy from

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below, can be built up'.

But can it? A nagging doubt persists. For instance, JP had expressed the hope to Mr. Chanchal Sarkar who wrote about it in an article in the *Hindustan Times* on April 30 that when the State Assembly elections came, he wanted to 'begin his movement for electoral reform by asking villages to elect representatives to an electoral college which would then nominate a candidate for the election'. What a sad contrast was to be presented when those elections actually materialised in the month of June 1977!

Can Jayaprakash keep those whom he has put in power on the straight and narrow path of virtue? Can he continue to influence those in office without getting tarred with their brush in the eyes of the people? Will he be able to hold those concerned to the pledge they took in his presence in New Delhi on 24 March to practise "austerity and honesty in personal and political life" and "to endeavour sincerely to fulfil the task that he (Gandhi) began"?

Then again, the question arises, how much time does JP have? Time is a gift for someone in his state of health.

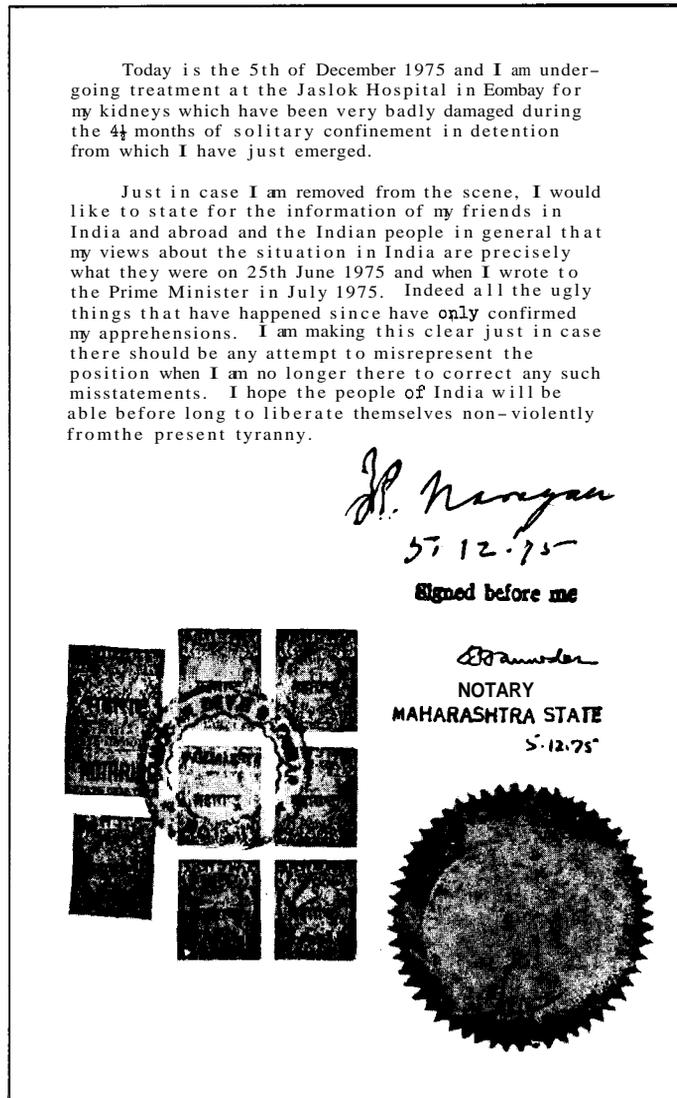
In this context, I asked JP, now that he had claimed at the end of his visit to the United States that he had been given a new lease of life, how he proposed to utilise this opportunity within the constraints which the state of his health would impose on him?

To this, JP's reply was:

I do not know if my health would be restored sufficiently to allow me to go around the country for that is one way in which I have tried to create public opinion, educate the masses, and organise to some extent the youth, particularly students. Without daring to draw any comparison, I think I will have to sit at one place like Gandhiji and by meeting people who come there to

consult me and by writing, I shall try to exert such influence as I may be capable of.

This much is true - that all through the vicissitudes and zigzags of JP's life, there has through-



out been an internal consistency. JP has tried to place Man in the centre of the picture. It is a part of the Indian tradition that he has sought to revive and whether or not he succeeds in this will depend on the people of India.

JP's faith in Man was in a way vindicated by the results of the Parliamentary elections of March 1977 which testified to the awareness and intelligence of the illiterate Indian voter about the values of human dignity and freedom. It is, of course, a negative achievement. What takes the place of the old regime will, in the course of time, turn out to be crucial. For JP, what has happened can only be a beginning.

Quite apart from what he has achieved in India, the impact of JP's achievement in the world at large has been profound. President Jimmy Carter was to recognise this achievement when, in the course of a message he was to send to JP in May 1977, when JP was in the United States for health reasons, he said: 'Your devotion to freedom and democracy has inspired us all'. JP's response to this act of solidarity was a message he sent back to President Carter in the course of which he said:

Over the past months, you have been very much in my thoughts for the cou-

rageous manner in which you have dedicated yourself to many questions involving international peace, human freedom and cooperation among nations. I send you my best wishes for your success in the noble tasks you have set before yourself.

It is not given to liberators, as it was not to Gandhi, to reach the end of the road. Unless and until man is perfect, no such achievement can be considered possible. However, many years JP may be spared to us, it is not likely that he will recognise in the realities of his day the kind of society of which he has dreamt.

Enough for him, perhaps, to recall the words of Robert Louis Stevenson in that beautiful essay 'El Dorado':

Oh toiling hands of mortals! Oh wearied feet, travelling ye know not whither. Soon, soon, it seems to you, you must come forth to some conspicuous hill top and a little way further, against the setting sun, descry the spires of El Dorado. Little do ye know your own blessedness for to travel hopefully is a better thing than to arrive and the true success is to labour.

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LEADERSHIP

In India, the word "leader" and its Hindi derivative 'lideri' have become dirty words. What a pity! Because, if India needs anything today, it is good leadership. This is true not only in political life, where it is so obvious, but also in the fields of education, management and various other walks of life.

Short Supply

There are perhaps special reasons to account for the fact that leadership in India is in short supply. Our tradition and culture contain elements which do not exactly encourage the qualities of courage, dissent and adventure, which are essential parts of the bundle of qualities that go to make a leader.

Thus, for example, there is often the somewhat exaggerated and hypocritical respect for the aged and for those in authority. Grown up men and women will smoke, but not in the presence of their parents, and we are all loyal to those who are at the head of our Government until they are removed and then turn our backs on them. On the one hand, there is the cult of personality and on the other the absence of what in England is called "the non-conformist conscience" which takes the form, when necessary of saying "I am damned if I can see it that way."

It is obvious that the number of those who are prepared to stick their necks out for an unpopular or unpalatable cause is limited even in Britain. Unfortunately, such men are even more scarce in India.

Then there is what the historians have described as the dialectical nature of the Indian mind which is unable to see things in terms of black and white but can only see grey all round. Pandit Nehru's speeches, when he was the Prime Minister, followed a well known pattern of saying: "At the same time, we must remember....; and then a little later "on the other hand, it is also true that". No wonder this trend of not coming down on one or other side of the fence led in due course to the

evolution of what is gradiloquently described as the policy of "non-alignment".

One of the biggest weaknesses of Indian Management at the top is a weakness in decision making. In politics, this takes the form of 'tailsim", to use Lenin's phrase, on the part of political leaders, which means not leading one's party but carrying out the behest of the dominant trend in the party, whether it is right or wrong. Gandhiji, of course, was an exception to this case. As it is well known, he resigned even his four-annas membership in the Congress rather than compromise his own principles.

Stipulating Terms

I personally happen to agree with the view of leadership that was practised by Winston Churchill and General De Gaulle, which was that they were only available to lead their parties so long as the parties were prepared to follow them. In other words, they were prepared to be leaders on their own terms. Compare that with the record of Mr. Morarji Desai and Mr. Charan Singh as Prime Ministers from April 1977 till now, and one sees the contrast between the two styles of leadership.

Many years ago, Walter Lippman in his book *The Public Philosophy* wrote :

"If the people find that they must choose whether they will be represented in an assembly which is incompetent to govern or where there is no doubt at all as to how the issue will be decided. They will choose authority which promises to be paternal in preference to freedom which

threatens to be fratricidal. For large communities cannot do without being governed. No ideal freedom or democracy will long be allowed to stand in the way of their being governed"

If Indian democracy today is in danger and the country faces the possibility of authoritarian government, it is because those who call themselves democrats cannot, or will not, lead.

No Short Cut

There is no short cut out of this predicament. What is needed is education - education in Indian citizenship, education in leadership. A small but modest effort on these lines has been made by the Leslie Sawhney Programme for Training in Democracy which came into existence in 1968 and has since trained some five or six thousand men and women in the importance and skills of grass-roots activity.

Those who seek to promote the qualities of leadership can do no better than remember some pertinent things which were said twenty-six centuries back by a Chinese Philosopher, Lao Tze who set down the criteria of judging a good leader:

"A leader is best
When people barely know that he exists
Nor so good when people obey and
acclaim him
Worst when they despise him.
'Fail to honour people
They fail to honour you',
But of a good leader, who talks little
When his work is done, his aim fulfilled
They will all say: "We did this ourselves".

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1982

THE RIGHT TO DIE WITH DIGNITY

Our Society was founded in May 1981. It was the first of its kind in India, and as soon as we were established, we applied for affiliation to the World Federation. We are happy to join this society of enlightened, decent people.

About six months before we formed the Society, a very fine social worker in Pune, which is near our city of Bombay, called **Gopal Mandalik** exceeded the age of eighty. He was not terminally ill, but he had done a great deal for society, was a highly esteemed citizen. He felt that while he was in good shape, it was time to go. It was not a case of terminal illness at all. It was just a wish of a man who thought his life's mission had come to an end. He was a law abiding citizen and, as I told you, under the law in India an attempt at suicide is a crime. So he wrote to two successive Prime Ministers, one of whom was Mr. **Morarji Desai** and the other was Mrs. Indira Gandhi, requesting them to change the law and remove this obnoxious provision from the Penal Code so he could kill himself in a legal way. He did not have the courtesy of a reply from either of our Prime Ministers who were too busy **politicking**. After two years he lost his patience and he did what he intended to do. He said "I've waited long enough" and he left a dying declaration which was published at that time. It was a very touching document. He said "I've served my country and my people for 80 years and more. I thought it was time to go. I wrote to two Prime Ministers. I thought the courtesy of a reply was due to me, but I got nothing. So, after two years, I have decided to act in accordance with my conscience and I am therefore going now to put an end to my life. My only regret is that my eyes and my **kidneys** that I had donated for constructive purposes will be poisoned and no longer be of any use." He left this rather touching document which was fairly widely published.

Our doctors by and large are friendly. I have been to several hospitals to speak to doctors and students, and by and large the medical professional would like us to make legal and respectable what is **humane** but illegal in **India** today, so that

they could act without fear and in an open manner.

There is a great deal of innate conservatism which is not religious opposition. The Catholic Church has already moved a little. I often quote in India the latest declaration of the Catholic Bishop's Conference which is quite reasonable and allows a doctor to withdraw treatment if he feels like, even if the patient dies. The Catholic opposition is not very important, it is a small Catholic community, and the Hindu tradition fortunately is not unfavourable. Contrary to general belief the Hindu tradition is in our favour because the classical Hindu tradition is that, when a man has served his purpose, performed his functions in life, brought up a family and has no direct obligations, it is time for him to retire. He need not die but he should retire from life. It is called *Sanyas* and it takes the form of going to a jungle, or going up the peaks of the Himalayas, getting lost and never being heard of again.

So there is no religious opposition in India but there is a great deal of conservatism, people talking of life being sacred in the abstract, talking about *Karma*. For instance, at a public meeting an old Indian gentleman got up and said, "I agree with what you are saying Mr. Masani but I believe in *Karma*, and if my soul does not suffer now it will suffer later. So I rather suffer now if you do not mind." I said: "I do not mind at all. We believe in Voluntary Euthanasia. You sir can go on suffering but do you mind if I do not believe in *Karma*?" So we both agreed. There is no attempt at uniformity or legislating. It is a voluntary thing, and those who like me have seen the play "**Whose Life**

is it Anyway?" remember that Ken says, "*If I choose to live, it would be appalling if society killed me. If I choose to die it is equally appalling if society keeps me alive*". This is the philosophy on which we act - the right to choose between life and death, certainly in limited conditions like terminal illness, but also in all conditions.

My parting thought would be that public opinion sometimes is misleading. It may look hostile but may be very volatile. As has been said, "Public opinion is a fickle jade." I have had very practical experience of this. I was on a Select Committee of Parliament to discuss the Medical Termination of Pregnancy Bill which was passed in India in 1970 after which abortion became legal. I was a supporter of the Bill and was very glad to see that not a single member of the Select Committee of Parliament objected in principle to legalising abortion. Now I mention this because five years earlier, at an airport, I had met a very venerable leader of our Birth Control movement, Lady Rama Rao, of whom some of you probably know, and I said: "Lady Rama Rao, would you like me to move a Private Member's Bill to legalise abortion?" She said, "My dear fellow, I am all for it but do not do it." I said. "Why?" she said, "No no, public opinion will be so hostile there will be a backlash and contraception will be hit. That is all you will succeed in doing, to get us attacked." I said. "All right if it is counter productive I won't do it" and I didn't. Five years later the Government of India brought in a Bill and nobody said no and I thought to myself, "We are sometimes unfair to public opinion because we do not really test it."

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Bombay House, 24, Homi Mody Street, Hutatma Chowk, Bombay 400 001.

1985



ON TURNING 80

I was asked this morning what it feels like to be Eighty. By way of answer, I told the story of what happened when the same question was put to the French singer and actor Maurice Chevalier whom many of us have seen in films like GIGI. His reply to the question how he felt at eighty was: "Not bad - considering the alternative"!

But first let me thank my young friends for having invited me to this function and for having organised it. *I was first approached by them some time back with three proposals. The first was to inform me that they were putting a volume entitled *Freedom and Dissent* to be published today. Since I was not asked to contribute to the volume nor consulted about it, the question of me giving my consent did not arise. I look forward to reading this lovely and elegant volume which has been presented to me by Mr. J.R.D. Tata on behalf of those who prepared it.

The second was an enquiry as to whether I would accept a purse to be donated to the various good causes with which I am associated: ~~This~~ suggestion I firmly declined to consider.

The third proposal was to invite me to attend this dinner function tonight. I hesitated for some time and there were two reasons for this. One was that I thought it was more an occasion for consolation than for congratulation! The second reason was that I had an uneasy suspicion that my young friends were, in a discreet manner, suggesting that the time had come for me to retire.

I finally agreed and I shall tell you why. Some

years back, **when** my esteemed friend A. D. Gorwala had reached the age of seventy-five, I was deputed by a group of friends to approach Mr. Gorwala and request him to join us for dinner on the evening of his birthday. All my persuasion failed to shake his negative reply. I remember the deep disappointment that was caused to my friends when I reported the result of my mission - a disappointment which I myself shared. We certainly admired **Gorwala's** motives but we felt the he could have been a little **kinder** and a little more flexible and not denied us the pleasure.

I am deeply moved and touched by the goodwill that has been expressed towards me. For whatever little I have been able to do, I own a debt to various people. At the risk of individual distinction, I think I should mention my parents, to whom I am indebted the most; the Principal of my school, Jalbhai Bharda, who was a great **headmaster**; **Mahatma Gandhi**, **Rajaji**, and my friend and old chief, J. R. D. Tata, who taught me the value of perfection which he himself was always trying to achieve. Last but not least, my gratitude to my younger friends who treat me as one of themselves and thus have helped me to escape becoming old and decrepit. Even so, I am conscious of my many failing and numerous mistakes, one of the failings I have failed to overcome is impatience which Mr. Tata once described as my 'inability to suffer fools gladly.'

Now about old age. I was delighted when President Ronald Reagan made the observation that these days middle age begins at seventy. But, all the same, growing older is a painful process

because of the wear and tear of the body. As Professor Gilbert Murray put it: 'I don't like doing things a little worse than I did an year before'.

I envy the young man in the youth or the prime of life and I would cheerfully give my right arm - I am left handed - to be fifty again. But I find there are consolations about old age. If I were asked which ten years of my life I have enjoyed the most, I would perhaps say the last ten, because one's perception and appreciation of what life means and of friendship, companionship and kindness is heightened at a later stage of life. When we are young, we are arrogant and take all the good things of life for granted. It is only when we are nearing the end that we realise how precious are these things and particularly our human relationships.

In case any of you expect any advice from me, I have none to give. I have come to learn that nobody learns from anyone else's mistakes. Some of us do not even learn from our own mistakes? In any event I am reminded of what happened when an elderly Prime Minister of Britain referred in the House of Commons to the younger Pitt as 'a young fool'. Pitt retorted: 'I may be young fool, but there is no fool like an old fool'.

I recall a beautiful essay of Robert Louis Stevenson entitled *Eldorado*. I remember the last few words which make very good sense to me and which I would like, if given the choice, to serve as my epitaph: "It is a far better thing to travel than to arrive and the true success is to labour".

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THE MINORITIES

I am a minorities man. By that I mean that I do not accept the right of the majority to trample on minorities' particularly multi-racial, multi-ethnic, multi-linguistic communities, like South Africa or India. I don't believe that Hindus have a right to dominate Muslims because they are in a majority nor that the Blacks have a right to dominate Whites in South Africa just because they are in a majority. In countries like these, the Swiss Constitution which allows for minority rights through proportionate representation and the fullest autonomy becomes a valuable model.

As a Member and Chairman of the U.N. Sub-commission for the Prevention of Discrimination and the Protection of Minorities I soon realised, while functioning in that body, that the two objectives clashed - that you cannot protect minorities without some discrimination. These are two conflicting principles, both valid - equality before the law on the one side and the protection of minorities on the other. This calls for a careful balance to be maintained between non-discrimination and the protection of minorities.

I was nominated Chairman of the Minorities Commission by the Union Government but resigned after six months. The Government at that time, the Janata Government, behaved in a partisan manner and refused to accept the fact that Aligarh is a Muslim Institution, though our Commission, after proper research and study, came to conclusion that the Aligarh Muslim University is a Muslim Institution. Since Mr. Morarji Desai's government, was not prepared to allow us to express our point of view, as a protest against their anti-Muslim attitude, I resigned.

In the Fundamental Rights Committee of the Constituent Assembly it was I who started the ball rolling by saying that there should be a uniform civil code for all Indians. I was supported by Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, Rajkumari Amrit Kaur and Mrs. Hansa Mehta. But this proposal was turned down by the other members of the Sub-Committee who were all Hindus. So the four of us, tabled a Minute of Dissent, which we put in the proceedings. This is what we said:

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

This was rejected.

Article 44 of the Directive Principles reads: "The State shall endeavour to secure for the citizen a uniform civil code throughout the territory of India." This happened in 1947. One would think that enough time has passed to enable us to take a step forward. But the Prime Minister said the other day that he believes in a common code but that the time has not yet come. When will the time come? If 30 years are not enough to take this step forward, when is he going to take that step?

It is my view that the minorities have a right of projection for their religion, to propagate their religion and to convert people to their religion, run their schools and colleges, like the Aligarh Muslim University. But they have no right to demand exemption from any part of the civil or criminal law of the land. That is taking freedom of religion beyond its proper limits. That is what the Muslim fundamentalists (in the Shah Bano's case) now demand.

Let us see the chronology. There was first the judgement of the Supreme Court. Then came the introduction of Mr. Banatwala's Bill in the Lok Sabha. At that stage, the Law Ministry prepared a note on the subject. The note signed by Mr. B.

S. Sekho, Secretary of the Law Ministry, was dated 31st May, 1985. It was endorsed by Mr. Bhardwaj, the Minister of State for Law, on 1st June, 1985. It was endorsed by Mr. Ashok Sen who forgot what he signed on 2nd June, 1985. All three notes supported by the Supreme Court judgement's stand and said Banatwala's Bill should be rejected. On the basis of these three notes, the Home Ministry prepared a comprehensive note on the 24th July, 1985, advising the government to oppose Banatwala's Bill and stand by the Supreme Court Judgement. This is all part of record. We should thank the Secretary of the PUCL, Mr. Arun Shourie for an excellent piece of investigative journalism which appeared in *The Times of India* on 3rd and 4th March where he has given the entire background.

Mr. Arif Mohammed Khan, member of the Union Government, was commissioned by the Congress Party and the Prime Minister to get up in Parliament and oppose Banatwala's Bill. This he did. At the end of his speech it was reported that the whole House gathered around to congratulate him including members of the Congress Party.

Then, just when everything seemed to go smooth, something happened. There was a complete *volte face*. It was the Muslim vote bank which Mr. Rajiv Gandhi was after. He was told that the result of a bye-election and of the Assam elections showed that if the Congress were not to lose the Muslim vote, it must give in to the fundamentalists. Mr. Rajiv Gandhi is reported to have accepted this advice. Behind the back his party, behind the back of his cabinet, behind the back of Mr. Arif

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Mohammed Khan, the Prime Minister negotiated secretly with the Muslim fundamentalists. Neither the members of his cabinet were consulted nor was Mr. Arif Mohammed Khan informed that he had been ditched and double-crossed by the Prime Minister. This result of the double-crossing was that a Bill was sought to be introduced in the Lok Sabha on 21st April, 1986.

I have always said that Mrs. Gandhi excelled in post-midnight parties. Her son seems to have inherited her penchant. It was at 3 o'clock in the morning on that day that he sent letters to the Opposition leaders, who were all fast asleep, asking them whether they would waive the rules of the Lok Sabha to enable the government to have the Bill introduced without due notice. But thank God, the Opposition leaders who were woken up to receive this wonderful letter, did not quite see how the security of India demanded the scrapping of Parliamentary procedures. They said: No, the rules have to be obeyed. So the Prime Minister's move to jump the gun on a sleeping nation and Parliament was defeated. On 25th February, 1986, the Bill was introduced in the Lok Sabha by none other than Mr. Ashok Sen, the so-called Law Minister who had forgotten what he had written and signed earlier.

At this stage, Mr. Arif Mohammed Khan, who found the he had been taken for a ride tendered his resignation from the government. Writing in the *Times of India*, Mr. Daniel Latifi observed:

"The Bill is based on faulty summary of the Supreme Court Judgement in the Statement of objects and reasons. The Bill as it stands is obnoxious to Islamic principles, derogatory to human rights, violative of the rights of women and children, and also of the rights of minority community to establish and administer charitable and educational institutions of their choice. It may, if persisted in, involve the political leadership and the country



as a whole, in increasing difficulties and may founder on the bedrock of our Constitution. The earlier it is withdrawn, the better for all concerned. The Bill as drafted is an insult to the traditions of Islamic civilisation."

Here's a Muslim lawyer expressing in very strong language what he thinks of this wretched Bill.

Now, some conclusions appear to emerge from all this. The first conclusion is that many of those objecting to the Bill are very hypocritical. They are really male chauvinists. Mr. Madhu Mehta of the Hindustani Andolan put a few questions to Muslims a few days ago but has had no answers. These are the questions that were asked:

Are they (the fundamentalists) prepared to demand that the Criminal Procedure Code should be so amended that every Muslim can be awarded the punishment for any crime committed by him, or her as laid down by Shariat? For example, any of them found stealing should be prepared to let his hands be cut and anyone who commits adultery should be prepared to be stoned to death?

Are these leaders prepared to tell their fellow Muslims that they should stop stealing, smuggling, distributing and consuming liquor or drugs as it is against Shariat and all those who flout this edict should be prepared to be flogged publicly? Are they prepared to tell their fellow Muslims not to deposit their

money in any bank as a change charges interest from borrowers which is against Shariat?"

The second conclusion that I come to is there is no proof that the majority of the Muslims are against the Supreme Court Judgement. 50% of the Muslim community are women and we may assume that most of these women would demand and stand for the rights of their sex. Among the Muslim men also, all Muslims that I know of, for instances are the Supreme Court Judgement.

Now let me say that it is very unfortunate that some Hindu communalists have joined the controversy. I neither understand nor accept their bona fides. There is nothing to choose between Muslim obscurantists and Hindu obscurantists. Their intervention is going to be counter-productive and weaken the position of liberal Muslims. I would say to Hindu communal organisations, please keep out of this. Let decent citizens argue this out. Do not try to make it a Hindu-Muslim affair.

Finally, the Prime Minister showed great disrespect for the supreme judiciary. Mr. Ansari, one of his Ministers, said in the Lok Sabha. "This was nothing short of judicial dishonesty and amounted to degrading the Supreme Court. The Chief Justice of the Supreme Court was too small a man to interpret Islamic law. He is incompetent to enter this field." (*Indian Express*, Dec. 21, 1985). When there was a roar of protest by Members of Parliament and others Mr. Rajiv Gandhi rushed to Mr. Ansari's rescue and said, "I do not think that the statements were intended to denigrate the judiciary". It is sad for the Prime Minister of India to defend a man who lampoons the Chief Justice

of the Supreme Court. This makes it very clear that Mr. Rajiv Gandhi has no use for the tradition of an independent judiciary in this country.

The only thing that can now be done to save the situation is for the Prime Minister to undo his mistake and to withdraw the Bill. If he doesn't do that, I would say it shows that he does not have the greatness required of the Prime Minister of this country.

Now supposing that he does not withdraw the Bill? It is open to the Congress (I) members of Parliament to demand a free vote. In the British House of Commons, matters of this nature are never subject to whips of parties and freedom of conscience is given to the members of the parties. I am not very optimistic that this will be so in India because members of the Congress (I) have shown a great capacity for sychopancy. Mr. Arun Nehru, Mr. Arun Singh and Mr. Ashok Sen, private told Mr. Arif Mohammed Khan they agreed with him. But they all went on to support the Prime Minister.

If the Prime Minister and the Congress Party let the country down, there is the Supreme Court. Let there be a petition to the Supreme Court to strikedown the Bill. It is good to know that members of the legal profession have once again shown some courage. Under the auspices of the Indian Law Institute, there was a discussion recently in Delhi, in which Mr. Soli Sorabjee, Mr. Upendra Bakshi, Mr. Amrik Singh and Justice Krishna Iyer participated. It is reported that they have decided that if the Bill is ever passed by the Parliament, they will move the Supreme Court and get it struck down. All honour to them.

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It is very difficult for the rich man not to offer an incentive to the poor man and even more difficult for the poor man to refuse to accept the bribe offered. There is a whole class of politicians and officials in Delhi who pocket the profits of a corrupt socialist system.

Corruption in social life has many causes. A certain amount of corruption is unfortunately part of human nature and has existed through the ages. A human being is a mixture of good and bad instincts. As a poet has said :

"There is so much good in the worst of us
And So much bad in the best of us
That it ill-behoves any of us to look down
upon the rest of us".

The level of corruption in a country at any given stage varies, however, from case to case. Many factors influence the existence or the absence of corruption.

CORRUPTION

Force of Example

The force of example of course is very important. If one's father is honest and honourable, if the head of a country's government is honest and honourable, it is likely that this will influence others, particularly the younger people.

An instance of the force of example came to my notice as far back as 1949, when a very senior and respected member of the Indian Civil Service, who was one of the Secretaries of the Government of India, said to me (I was then a Member of Parliament): "Mr. Masani, you Members of Parliament expect us officials to be honest, but how can we be honest and honourable when the Prime Minister of India (who was then Pandit Jawaharlal Nchru) sets such a bad example? He then proceeded to give me details of an incident which certainly did not show up Pandit Nehru in a good light. Later on of course, the example set by the Prime Ministers of India further deteriorated with the rare example of Mr. Lal Bahadur Shastri. By the time Rajiv Gandhi was defeated in the elections last year, he was generally well known for lying

repeatedly to Parliament and his financial integrity was certainly not above **suspicion**. His failure to resign or to sue his detractors for libel was not an example to commend. It is, therefore, possible to argue that it is difficult to expect the ordinary citizen of India to obey the law and eschew corruption when such a bad example is set by the people at the top.

Home education too is very weak in this country. Parents do not always set a good example of courtesy, consideration and good manners. Most **Indian** parents shout at each other at home. Is it any wonder then that their children shout at any provocation? Any attempt to teach the golden rule "Do unto others as you would that they should do unto you" is of course out of question because the golden rule is not even known to most people in this country, much less practised. What is badly needed therefore is training in moral principles and good citizenship.

Social Corruption

Leaving aside venal forms of corruption like bribing the policemen on traffic duty or the railway booking clerk, the position is further aggravated by government's economic policies. If these policies make for hard **work**, enterprise, the **taking** of risk and fair **dealing**, a society is likely to be relatively free from corruption. If government policies are such **that** they encourage too much security, laziness, **sloth** and unpunctuality and do not encourage or reward enterprise, that society is likely to be more corrupt. Countries of Eastern Europe, which have groaned silently under so-

cialist corruption for the last 45 years have, with a sigh of relief, elected conservative and anti-socialist governments in recent elections.

The Yugoslav communist leader **Milovan Djilas** had written about the selfishness and corruption of the communist bosses in Moscow many years ago in his excellent little book *The New Class*.

We in this country have now learnt to say "corruption is a way of life in India". Unfortunately, this is true but we are by no means the worst in the world. When Andropov became the boss in the Kremlin, Prof. Edward Crankshaw, a British expert on Soviet affairs observed that the Soviet Union had the biggest black market in the world. A friend of mine who exports garments to the Soviet Union said, before Gorbachev came to power: "Minoo, you talk about corruption in India, but this is peanuts. You come with me to Moscow and I shall show you the real thing. At every single step an official has to be bribed before you can move a step forward" To this my comment was "I am sure you are right because the Soviet Union is even more socialist than India"

How exactly do socialist policies encourage corruption? First of all, there is the silly talk of equality. People are born equals. So, although there should be equality of opportunity before the law, there can be no absolute economic equality without disastrous consequences. To reward a stupid man equally with an intelligent man, or a lazy man with a hard working man is unfair and unjust. When it is practised, there is every incentive for

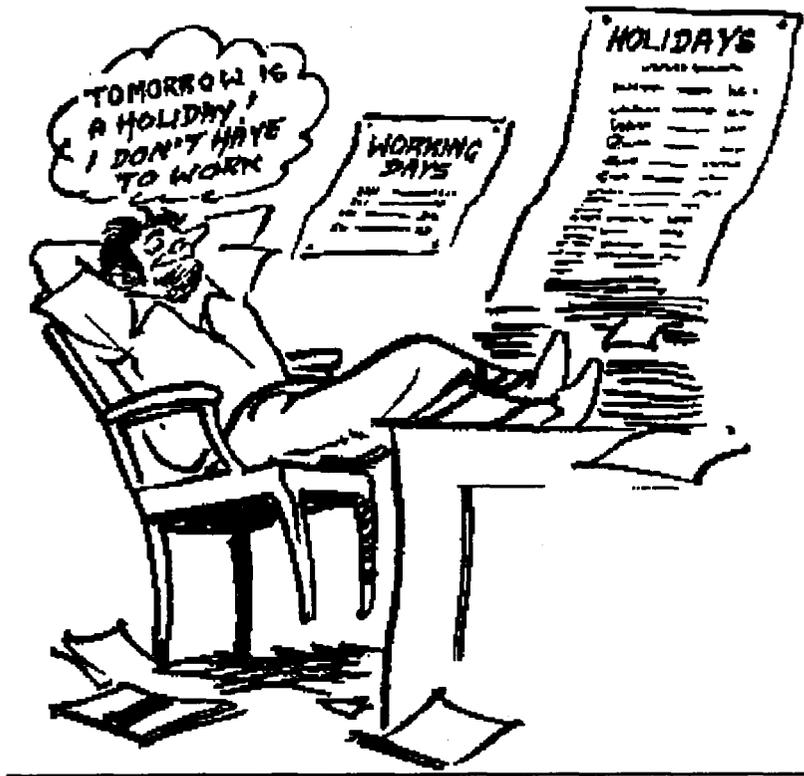
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the intelligent or hard working man to become lazy and stupid because he is not rewarded for showing the right qualities. In India there is too much security for government servants, they do

25% of a man's income, the average man is likely to spend more time on evading taxation than on producing more. In India the level of taxation has of course gone well beyond 25% and that is why many rich people in India never pay any tax at all, while the middle class with fixed incomes is grossly over-taxed.



A direct cause of corruption is of course controls of all kinds. Under the present so-called socialist system, people in business have to approach government for a permit or licence or some sanction or other to start a company, raise capital and soon. Now it is well known that government servants are not too well paid. On the other hand, business people enjoy a higher standard of life. So a rich man has to go to a poor man to get his rubber stamp. The farmer goes to a *mamlatdar* for a sanction and the Bombay or Calcutta industrialist has to fly upto Delhi for a government's official sanction. In both cases, the situation is readymade for corruption. It is very difficult for the rich

not do any honest day's work. Some of them say, "Our salaries are for attending office; for doing anything more we need further incentive", by which they mean a bribe! Among the worst of these are the clerks of nationalised banks who report for work as late as 11.00 a.m. and often refuse to work for another half hour because Their Majesties are having tea or coffee on working time.

Some Other Causes

Similarly, excessive taxation makes for tax evasion. Even the honest citizen is driven to consider whether he should pay the full tax. Prof. Northcote Parkinson, the well-known writer, has said in his book "The Law and Profits" that where a government imposes income tax of more than

man not to offer an incentive to the poor man and even more difficult for a poor man to refuse to accept the bribe offered. That is why corruption has become endemic in India. There is a whole class of politicians and officials in Delhi who pocket the profits of the corrupt socialist system. This is the New Class described by Djilas in his book. Is it any surprise that the politicians and officials in Delhi should resist any change-over to the system of competitive free enterprise on which the countries of Eastern Europe have already embarked? No mere change of government will suffice. What India needs is a social revolution.

The causes of corruption are not hard to ascertain. It is a pity that absence of moral education and training at home and in school alongside of

government policies since 1955 have been definitely contributing to corruption in our society.

Getting Rid of Corruption

We need not, however, despair. Other countries also have a similar record of corruption. Britain is a country which is today relatively free from corruption. But only two centuries back, in the days when Walpole was Prime Minister, things were different. Many seats in the British Parliament, which were described as "pocket boroughs" could actually be bought. A poem of that time had a jingle:

"Every man and woman has a price,
Nobody's virtue is over nice".

If we want to undo the situation, we shall

not only have to improve the level of moral education at home and in schools in our country, but scrap all laws of the Stalinist pattern of socialism which our first Prime Minister was ill-advised enough to impose on this country. No tinkering will suffice.

Rajaji summed this up very well when he wrote:

"Unless we minimise official intervention and ministerial power, making or marring the fortunes of businessmen and industrialists, unless we reduce controls up to the level called for by international trade and exchange pressures and bravely decide to knock out the rest and try out the consequences, we are bound to suffer this newly introduced and widespread malady of corruption at the ministerial and secretariat levels"

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1990

KASHMIR

A lady asked me the other day why Mr. Gorbachov would not agree to the Lithuanian demand for independence from the Soviet Union. I countered with the question: "Do you believe that Kashmir belongs to India?" "Yes, of course" she said. "That is why. I said. "There are too many Russians who wrongly believe that Lithuania belongs to the Soviet Union, just as you believe that Kashmir belong to India; so poor Mr. Gorbachov does not feel free to accede openly to the Lithuanian demand." Unfortunately, the good lady's answer could have been by nine out of ten Indians. Let me make it clear at the outset that while my sympathies are with those who want the Valley to be independent, I condemn the methods of violence and terror to which some of them are resorting.

I am delighted to read two recent articles in the Press, one by Ajit Bhattacharjea, entitled "The last chance in Kashmir" which appeared in *The Statesman* on 7th January and the other by Pran Chopra, which appeared in *The Independent* of 15th January under the title "We have failed Kashmir". From what these experienced and prominent members of the press whose patriotism cannot be doubted have said, the responsibility for the current situation lies not with the people of Kashmir but with the Government of India in Delhi. Even more encouraging have been the statesmanlike words of Mr. Simranjit Singh Mann on 26th January asking the Governor of Kashmir to lift the seige by the Indian Army. He went to say: "The Indian Government is bound by Article 51 of the Constitution to its international commitments. Under the United Nations charter the state of Jammu and Kashmir is disputed territory". He further observed: "The people of Kashmir have their rights and I support every democratic action. Plebiscite is not a bad word. The right of vote must prevail over the right of the bullet." Having been a student of this matter since Independence, I heartily concur with these gentleman even though it is not fashionable to say so.

Conditional Accession

The state of Jammu & Kashmir was never part of India. Let me repeat that at the time of the transfer of power by the British, Kashmir was not part of India. Lord Mountbatten gave the Maharajah of Kashmir the option, if he so desired, to join either India or Pakistan. The Maharajah, better known as Mr. A, dithered but, led by Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, the Muslims of Kashmir persuaded the Maharajah to accede to India on the strength of a solemn promise given by Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, that the accession would be subject to a plebiscite which would enable the people of Kashmir to decide their destiny. India later forgot all about the plebiscite and to this day the people of the Kashmir valley have been denied the right of self determination.

Nehru's Regret

The later story is a sad one. Nehru joined in a conspiracy to make a *coup d'etat* against the Kashmir Prime Minister Sheikh Abdullah, arrested him and put the corrupt Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed as a puppet in his place. Abdullah then remained under trial on false charges for about twelve years because the case against him could not be proved. In January 1963 my friend, Lal Bahadur Shastri, who was then minister without portfolio in Nehru's Government told me that Jawaharlal Nehru wanted Abdullah to be released. "*Maine Sheikh saheb ko bade anyay kiya hai*" (I have done great wrong to Sheikh Abdullah). So the Sheikh was duly released and sent by Nehru to Pakistan to negotiate a settlement of the Kashmir problem with President

Ayub Khan. He was to bring Ayub Khan to Delhi to sign an agreement if he agreed to do so. Sheikh Saheb telephoned Nehru from Pakistan to say that Ayub was willing for an settlement and so the day of his visit to Delhi was fixed for June 20. Tragically, Nehru died in May and so Kashmir remains a problem to plague both countries.

JP's Mission to Pakistan

When Lal Bahadur Shastri was Prime Minister, he sent my friend Jayaprakash to Pakistan to find if a settlement of the Kashmir dispute was possible. When Jayaprakash returned to Delhi, he saw me before Lal Bahadur and he told me what Ayub had suggested. Jayaprakash told me that Ayub suggested that Ladakh and Jammu should join India but that the Kashmir Valley should be independent and, as in the Austrians Treaty between the Soviet Union and the USA, India and Pakistan should guarantee the independence and integrity of the Valley. When Jayaprakash returned from Lal Bahadur Shastri later that evening, he was depressed because the Indian Prime Minister had failed to respond. "*Yeh chees bndi acchi hai, lekin Parliament aur meri party nahin manegi*" (This is very good but it will not be acceptable to parliament and my party.) How sad. I commented to Jayaprakash that perhaps he and I were the only Indians who could see our own country's imperialism along with that of other countries.

Rajaji, always the statesman and a realist, wrote in *Swarajya* as far back as September 25, 1965: "... it would be as foolish as any foolish thing a nation can do, if we proceed on the assumption

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that we can hold any people down by sheer force and without **making** it absolutely manifest to the nations of the world that we have the consent of the people concerned by imposing any administration on them. Like injustice, the political decision concerning Kashmir, or any part of it, should ... be on the basis of self determination...."

It is all very well to send Mr. Jagmohan as Governor and start shooting. The first result of this repression is a revolt of the Kashmir police who have **alleged** atrocities committed by the Indian armed forces on the people of Kashmir. So, now we have only an army of occupation to rely on. It is possible by brutal terrorism to suppress a national urge for freedom, but for how long? Don't recent events in Eastern Europe have a lesson for our government?

Neutralising the Valley

Many of my friends tell me that if a plebiscite was held, the people of Kashmir would vote to join **Pakistan**. I do not agree. They would vote for independence. But why not try this out by asking Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto whether she would join India by neutralizing the Valley on the lines suggested by President Ayub Khan? If she declines, the blame will be on Pakistan. If she agrees, let us go ahead and do the right thing.

This advice may not be palatable to many, but sooner or later, it will have to be carried out, so why waste time? Why not turn to the path of conciliation right now? For one thing, we can stop spending the large amounts of money that we rather stupidly spend on Kashmir without getting any gratitude.

Some Alternate Solutions

We are treating the valley of Kashmir as a colony. **As** in an occupied country our soldiers want to shoot without the magistrate authorising it. They are behaving in a barbarous manner and a real reign of terror is being let loose on the people

of Kashmir, who want freedom. We seem to admire Yasser Arafat in his terrorism. We seem to admire the African National Congress and their terrorism but when it comes to people demanding their freedom from us, we call them terrorists. We refuse to realise any of their logic also. I am entirely on the side of the people of Kashmir. I think India is an imperialist country and has no right to be there. However, having said that and got the satisfaction of saying it, I can consider three alternatives.

First is the present one. I am ashamed that my country is behaving in this manner. Jayaprakash once asked me some twenty years ago "why don't people realise that we are imperialists in Kashmir". I said "because the Indian can only see some one else's imperialism and not his own". We have not even treated Kashmir as a part of India. This idiotic phrase 'integral part of India' does not exist. It is just a slogan to justify something that is wrong. Kashmir is not an integral part of India and is not treated like one.

If the BJP have their way by abolishing Article **370**, it will allow black-marketeers from Calcutta and Bombay to buy up the land of the Kashmir peasants and commit genocide, which is the ultimate in colonialism. I hope it will not happen.

The present alternative is not acceptable. It will not solve any problem. Shooting has never solved the problem of a demand for liberty.

France and Germany **went** to war twice, once in **1872** and once in **1914** over two bits of territory called Alsace and Lorraine because both sides said they must have Alsace and Lorraine. Ultimately they made friends. Today nobody cares a damn as to who owns Alsace and to whom Lorraine belongs because they have ceased to be of any importance. The day will come when people will laugh and say why did you fight over Kashmir, what was there to fight over?

There are two other alternatives to the present

one and I am going to accept the arguments of my friend Jaswant Singh. One solution is of course, what I say, leave the people of Kashmir to their self determination. That does not mean going to **Pakistan**. It does not and need not.

If I were involved, I would go to the authorities in Kashmir and say "are you prepared to repeat what President Ayub Khan offered that Kashmir may belong to neither India nor Pakistan, are you prepared for genuine freedom?" I believe they will say yes because the people of Kashmir do not want to go to **Pakistan**, they are not pro-Pakistan. We have driven them into the arms of **Pakistan**. If they say 'no' you have done your bit. But why do we not make the offer to **Pakistan**, why do we keep saying they will say no? This is because we do not want to part with Kashmir. But Jaswant Singh my friend, has a very ingenuous answer. He said to me, "Minoo, the people of Kashmir want Azadi". Azadi is one of two things. Sovereign independence or Home Rule. Why don't we offer them Home Rule?

Way back in 1950 I wrote in a book for children called "Our Growing Human Family", that national sovereignty is a myth. Today it is one world. There is no national sovereignty any more. That was way back in 1950.

Today we are in 1990 and Gorbachev recently said to the Lithuanian republic, why must you leave the Soviet Union. All Republics of the

Soviet Union will be sovereign. That means there is nothing like national sovereignty. Gorbachev has pricked the balloon.

Supposing we apply this formula, which Jaswant Singh advocates to Kashmir. Kashmir should be sovereign but it can be part of the Indian Union, provided you are prepared to leave the entire government of Kashmir to the people of Kashmir, keeping only defense, foreign policy and currency. I am afraid the imperialists in Delhi do not want that. Delhi must agree not to rule **Punjab** or Kashmir from Delhi. In other words, India must be a real federation.

Gandhiji once asked what is independence? He said "the substance of independence, not the form. If I get independence it does not matter". That to me is the answer that Kashmir should be given the substance of independence and then invited to stay as equal partners in the Indian Union and I think they will. I think the Sikhs in the **Punjab** would also do that. What they do not accept is the fact that Delhi has disrupted the autonomy of the **Punjab** and Kashmir. What they want is the substance of independence.

Therefore we should, as soon as possible, discard the present policy of terror and stationing an army of occupation and think of a civilised solution on the lines of what Gorbachev has suggested to Lithuania. If it is good enough for Lithuania, it is good enough for Kashmir.

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S. A. A. PINTO

1989

THE FUTURE

The intention of this book (*We Indians*) has not been to preach. We of my generation have made such a mess of our country's affairs that, in my opinion, we have no right to preach to young folk. But, as I have explained earlier, unless you look at yourself in the mirror, you cannot really tell whether or not you have brushed your hair, or in the case of those who are in their adolescence, you have shaved or forgotten to do so. But that can happen.

There is an interesting story about what happened in Rashtrapati Bhavan when Mr. C. Rajagopalachari, popularly known as Rajaji, was the last Governor-General after the British handed over power. One of his ADCs forgot to



shave that morning and joined Rajaji at breakfast. Rajaji, who had a dry sense of humour, decided to teach the young man a lesson in a rather amusing way. 'I am sorry you are not well this morning', he said to the young ADC, 'you look very sick. You must see a doctor immediately. I suggest you skip breakfast today'. Thus dismissed, the young man went to his room and stood in front of a mirror to find out what was **w**rong with him. He then realised he had not shaved that morning. At lunch-time, when he reappeared after a shave, Rajaji said: 'I am glad to see you looking so much better. The doctor's medicine has already started working'.

We must, therefore, look at our failings which of course we have in common with the rest of humanity. We shall then be in a much better position to consider how to shed these deficiencies and move ahead. That is a task you children and younger people in India have to face. I am sure, you will be able to do so successfully when the time comes.

We Indians are more talented than most people, We are blessed with' good brains and a

capacity to do big things. This is what our doctors, engineers and teachers do when they settle abroad in more advanced countries and have the benefit of two things which we are deprived of in our own land. The first of these is encouragement and opportunity. Neither our government nor we encourage those who do something new or something big. On the contrary, we are apt to pull them down because we have glorified envy, which is a vice. The other thing we do not have in India is discipline. As soon, therefore, as an Indian is provided with discipline and encouragement or opportunity, he goes places. Why don't we start doing this in our own country? We can do so by paying heed to some very wise words that fell from the lips of a great American, President Abraham Lincoln:



- You cannot bring about prosperity
by discouraging thrift.
- You cannot strengthen the weak
by weakening the strong.
- You cannot help the poor
by destroying the rich.
- You cannot establish sound security
on borrowed money.
- You cannot keep out of trouble
by spending more than your earn.
- You cannot build character and
courage by taking away man's
initiative and independence.
- You cannot help men permanently
by doing for them
what they could do for themselves.

Once you young people are provided with discipline and encouragement, the sky is the limit. Do not wait for your parents or teachers to take the lead. The poor dears are too old and set in their ways and may find it difficult to change. That is why this book is written for young people. The future of India is in their hands. They can make it. Will they? What do you say?

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