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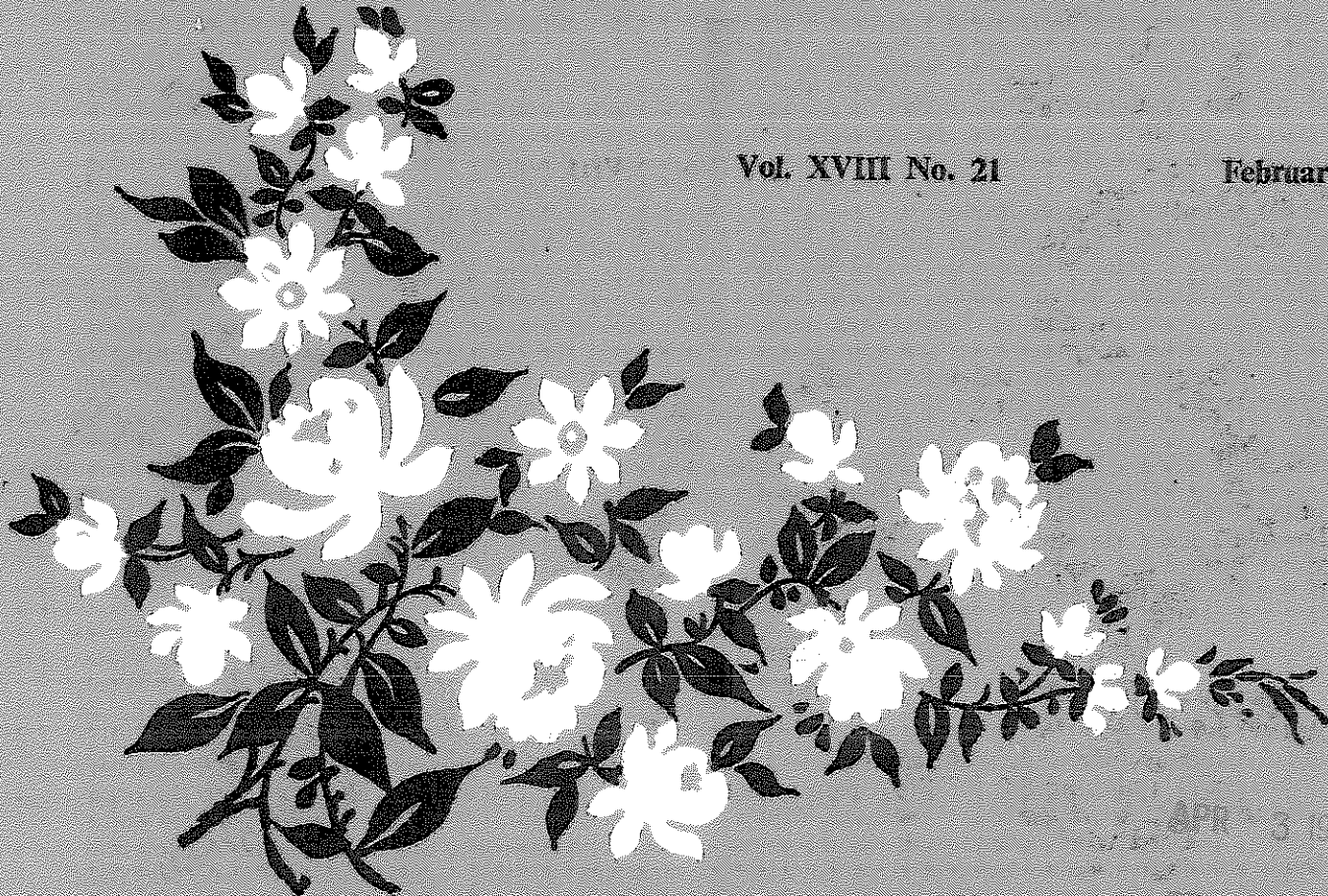
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EDITORIAL

PIE IN THE SKY AGAIN

India's economic planning fashioned after Soviet model right up from the Second Five-Year-Plan which had Socialist Pattern of Society as its final goal, has more than once, proved its inability to deliver the goods to the common man. Apart from spectacular showmanship in the development of nuclear science and technology enabling the Soviet to reach the Moon and develop military and naval strength, in which fields also democratic countries like the United States have shown much better results, the common man in Russia has gained so far very little in improving his actual standard of living except for the unholy glee and satisfaction he may derive from the fact that all layers of Soviet have been brought down uniformly to his own miserable level. Russia which was known to be a granary of food-grains before the Socialist revolution has been compelled under a Socialist dispensation, to go abegging for food grains, of capitalist countries like the United States. China has even fared worse and under compulsions of ugly economic realities, has had to befriend U.S. her bitterest enemy and seek the latter's economic aid. But our Indian Moscow patriots in the governmental circles who have to do any thing with the nation's economic planning, seem to have learnt and unlearned nothing from the results of Russian and Chinese planning methods. They are more obsessed with maintaining their own Socialist stand than being interested in revising and reorienting the five year plans in the light of the bitter experience of the last twenty years of such Socialist Planning.

The saddest aspect of the economic thinking on the part of our political leadership which is in the saddle of power at the present moment, is that in its thirst of power, it is in no mood to give a second thought to the revision of India's economic planning even after its manifest debacle and failure. The Prime Minister unfortunately appears to be caught in her own trap which she had laid for elderly and realistic congress leaders like Morarji Desai and others who were thinking of doing so. To her the late Mr. Nehru's name and prestige is more important than the country's welfare. The planning as such had been wisely given a holiday after the economic disaster that resulted from Nehru's planning methods of growthmanship rather than real growth and progress. The results of giving a holiday to Five-Year-Planning were quite happy. The national economy had been slowly reviving from the 'slough of the despond.' Though planning as such had been stopped, economic problems and questions came to be faced and tackled as they arose from day to day. That is how economy and industry have grown in all democratic countries of the West, though these countries have not been lacking in courage to adopt some aspects of welfarism that are inherent in Socialist planning. But this sort of welfarism has been assimilated and incorporated in the individual economies of these countries. India had been set on the road to economic welfarism by the pragmatic First-Five-Year Plan which visualised the building up of Indian economy on the strong foundations of the prosperous agricultural industry which absorbs about

70% of the nation's productive labour. But Nehruvian Socialists were out for showmanship and launched on bombastic Five-Year-Plans which have brought the country to the present miserable condition of famine, pestilence and destitution. And unfortunately we have at the head of affairs Nehru's daughter and others who have made Nehruvian economic cliches their articles of dogmatic faith.

AN UNKIND CUT

Mr. Dhar's reference to an 'unfortunate period' in the history of our economic development which obviously related to the period immediately following Nehru's death, in his speech at the recent meeting of the National Development Council called to consider the Approach Paper on the fifth Five-Year-Plan, is not only unfortunate from this point of view but it is also an unkind cut at all those elderly statesmen who were disposed to look at economic problems from a pragmatic angle. Power-mad politicians might be no respectors of such persons even when the latter be their once co-workers and colleagues. But they are supposed to have at least their own political interests to guard and promote. Mr. Dhar the pro-Soviet economic planning Minister and Mrs. Indira Gandhi, the Prime Minister should have thought twice before throwing stones at these elderly Congressmen when they themselves are now living in glass houses. Realities, be they ever so ugly, have a peculiar way of asserting themselves even in the thinking process of those who might like to purposefully ignore them. Perhaps in an unguarded moment, the Prime Minister herself let the cat out of her bag by castigating State Ministers for their failure in procurement and not paying their parts conscientiously in implementing the economic policies of the Government and by her warning the States against relying too much on the Central aid instead of mobilising their own resources for the purpose. The pragmatists in the Congress fold who had wisely given a holiday for three years, to Five-Year-Plans would now retort to the Prime Minister that she should look out for a beam in her own eyes instead of mote in others. She should have clarified the steps that she and her Central Government had taken to bring discipline among the Ministers of the States in this matter and how far she had succeeded in doing so and how just and fair her Government was in allocating aid to the different States and on what principles it was based, if not on actual performance and implementation of the economic programme. The Central Government could afford to indulge in Socialist airy nothings but State Ministers who are the men on the spot, know better the practicability and value of Socialist shibboleths in actual practice. Mobilising of agricultural resources in a Socialist way in a democratic society is not to say the least, a joke since the peasant-proprietors in a democratic state are not small in numbers, voting strength

and influence in the country side. Parliamentary elections are fought on a different level from that of the State elections. Economically speaking, central Government revenues are derived from resources which have little to do with rural India while States have the difficult task of collecting revenues from the local resources. Forcible Socialist mobilisation of economic resources would bring down at once production in the rural sector of our economy, as has been proved many times before. Only Stalin's methods of procurement of food grains and starving millions to death would succeed. And our Prime Minister, if not her pro-Soviet colleagues, is never tired of assuring the people that India will ever remain a Democracy and will never have a totalitarian State. It was therefore an unkind cut aimed at her former colleagues when she and Mr. Dhar mentioned 'an unfortunate period' which in fact, saved Indian economy from a total ruin.

In fact even now planning is having a holiday which the country's economy very much needs. The Approach to the Fifth Plan, as expected, has received the approval of the N.D.C. which, significantly enough, has refused to lay down any guide-lines for the actual targets to be reached during the planning period and to formulate the policy-frame without which no five year plan would be complete. It appears that this most important but complicated task is left to be done by technical experts whose difficulties in discharging this task will surely arise from the unwillingness of political leadership to commit itself to any final policy-frame, lest they might be exposed to public indignation if they failed to fulfil such commitments. It is more likely that Congress leaders would content themselves with the political strategy of issuing flamboyant documents on academic planning, without coming to grips with the problems of the day.

A MAKE-BELIEVE

The quantitative parameters of the plan are 5.3 per cent rate of growth to be achieved with an outlay of Rs. 51,165 crores and an increase in export earnings at the rate of 7 per cent per annum. The balance of payment gap of Rs. 3,000 crores is proposed to be filled up by mobilising additional domestic resources and foreign aid. It is thus projected that foreign aid will be reduced to zero by the end of Fifth Five-Year-Plan and the living conditions of the 30 per cent of the population at the lowest level, will be improved so as to reach the minimum consumption norm of Rs. 20 per had per month in 1961-62 prices or Rs. 37 in 1971-72 prices.

But even though this approach to Fifth Plan with the above parameters has been approved, no serious effort has been made as yet to formulate a definite policy-frame that would commit the Government to mobilise the required re-

sources mentioned in the Approach. The Government know fully well that the assumptions and projections made by the Planning Commission regarding the availability of resources have lost touch with economic realities. It is significant that the Government Circles maintain a stony silence on the stagnation of per-capita income in 1971-72 at 2 per cent increase and there is the probability of the percapita income being further reduced to one per cent increase only. One fails to understand how this freeze in our economic growth coupled with inflation over the last two years will afford more avenues for employment and reduce inequality of incomes and eradicate poverty as promised. Except for cotton industry, growth sectors in industry like steel, heavy engineering, fertilisers have shown least signs of improvement. Added to all this, is the crisis in power-supply and the debacle on the agricultural front due to failure of monsoons, which nullifies the assumption of self-reliance on which the Approach Document of the Planning Commission is based.

It will therefore not be too much to say that the Approach Document has been approved by the N.D.T. under heavy pressure from the politicians, only as a matter of ritualistic routine. Such make-believes will not carry conviction to the people unless the Government planners are in a position to do something for the poverty-stricken people here and now, instead of pointing out to them the pie in the sky. The Government have failed in their duty to draw up a practical economic plan which will combine immediate relief with the objectives to be achieved in the distant future and present to the people a realistic picture of the gap between resources actually available and those required for the implementation of the plan and the discipline and labour and even hardships the people will be called up on to undergo for its fulfilment. Otherwise, all tall talk of planning to eradicate poverty would remain a futile academic exercise and all labours undertaken by Yojana Bhavan would be rendered futile and harmful to the peaceful and stable life of the people.

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PATIENCE WILL BEAR FRUIT

It undoubtedly requires great moral courage on the part of an individual to have patience with another person who like a quick-change-artist, goes on changing his opinions, making inconsistent statements and what is more, off and on, carries on a hate campaign against him. But India's philosophy of life is one of keeping a steady and balanced mind under all buffets and storms of life. This state of equanimity has been placed before us by the immortal song of Shri Krishna in the Bhagawad-gita, as the ideal to be achieved by every human being. In her relations with Pakistan, India has always been sinned against, more than sinning. Our rulers

have always kept themselves cool in face of the greatest insults hurled against them and Indians as such, by Mr. Bhutto and others through the press and platform and at the meetings of the U. N. when India was driven to the necessity of waging a war imposed on her by Pakistan, she has acquitted herself creditably without making any exhibition of any undue exhilaration and self-glory. She has ever treated this defeated enemy in war with utmost respect, courtesy and consideration.

But it is sad to think that Pakistani leaders have not reciprocated adequately this kindly feeling of India towards her. To avoid a bloody war the late Mr. Nehru voluntarily took the question of Kashmir to the U. N. about twenty years ago and even suggested a plebiscite, provided Pakistan withdrew from the occupied Kashmir Valley. India Government thereafter attempted to stabilise the International border in Kashmir, as the second best solution in its quest for peace. Both these attempts failed. On the other hand, Pakistan aggressed twice on India-held Kashmir and each time she was thrown back from Indian Kashmir, after a bloody war. The latest in this series was the war of December 1971 when suddenly, merely for sheltering Bangla-patriots fighting against Pakistan as refugees, and sympathising with the Bangla struggle for freedom, Pakistan inflicted on this country a cruel war which India won and Pakistan lost. In her hour of victory, India offered to stop war provided each side agreed to retain its line of actual control. Pakistan agreed and the war came to an end. Bangla also gained her freedom in this struggle.

There were two parties in the war, India and Bangla on one side and Pakistan on the other. As such, all outstanding issues between the parties such as releasing and repatriating the prisoners of war, recognition of Bangla by Pakistan restoring normal trade and communication channels and also political relations should have been settled between the Allies i.e. India and Bangla on the one part and Pakistan on the other. But the Pakistan President Mr. Bhutto has refused to have any thing to do with Bangla Desh, may be, for internal reasons of political rivalry and public sentiment. He has been badly wanting to carry on talks with India alone. India has conceded her demand for bilateral talks on the condition that they are confined to questions touching only India and Pakistan. The Simla Agreement between Mr. Bhutto and Mrs. Indira Gandhi was conceived in that spirit and it was understood that Bangla must be considered a necessary party to any settlement on the issue of prisoners of war.

This pre-condition is eminently reasonable as the prisoners were all captured in Bangla Desh, when the Pakistan Military had surrendered to both India and Bangla armies. But Mr. Bhutto blows both hot and cold on this issue.

On humanitarian grounds he wants India to release Pakistani prisoners without raising the question of Bangla Desh and its recognition. He even refuses to concede the demand of Bangla Government for a trial in a court of law of a few prisoners who had mainly perpetrated untold crimes against Bangla men, women and children and their property.

The Prime Minister of India who never lost her head even in the first flush of victory in war, at last agreed to hold talks with Mr. Bhutto at Simla. An agreement was signed on restoration of occupied territories in the West leaving issues like prisoner of War captured in Bangla to be settled at another such Summit meeting. It was understood that Mr. Bhutto would get his government to recognise Bangla as a free country. But this question has not been taken up seriously by Mr. Bhutto.

But he is very serious about getting the Pakistani prisoners released and wishes to pressurise India Government to do so, by carrying on a powerful propoganda against her in Arab and other foreign countries by misinterpreting the terms of the Simla Agreement.

Recently Swaran Singh our Minister for Foreign Affairs, and Mr. Dhar gave a direct lie to this vicious propoganda that India is linking up this question of release of prisoners with recognition of Bangla Desh by Pakistan. Mr. Swaran Singh told two Pakistan journalists the other day, that recognition of Bangla Desh was not a pre-condition to the release of prisoners. All that is required is the consent of Bangla Desh to the release. It means that Mr. Bhutto must agree to the trial of certain prisoners in an open court in Bangla Desh. Then only Bangla could be persuaded to give her consent to the release of the war prisoners other than these few war criminals.

Mr. Bhutto can easily have talks with Bangla Government on this issue of trial of prisoners. It is obvious that Bangla would not like to go a-begging for her recognition by Pakistan, since the former does not lay perhaps much store by such recognition. She would be content if major nations of the world recognised it. India on her own part, could also exert her influence in bringing about a settlement on this issue of war prisoners on the condition that certain war criminals could be tried by Bangla Desh Government before a proper tribunal.

Despite the clear statements of Mr. Dhar that India is willing to make certain arrangements to convince Mr. Bhutto that India has no evil designs on Pakistan and that of Swaran Singh that this question is not linked up into recognition of Bangla Desh, If Mr. Bhutto should still persist in his vicious campaign against India, it would mean only one thing and that is, for the present till his position as the Presi-

dent is made secure against his political opponents, in Pakistan itself, Mr. Bhutto does not wish a full agreement of peace to be concluded between India, Pakistan and Bangla Desh.

India is prepared to wait, watch and see patiently, always hoping for better sense to dawn on the rulers of Pakistan in the matter of bringing peace to this subcontinent.

RESTORED BALANCE IN INDIAN POLITICS

(A rebel to the last).

By K. Kumara

Whatever his contributions as a freedom fighter, and as a political administrator, the foremost thought in our minds on the death of Rajaji, would be that he "restored balance in Indian politics", when after the death of Gandhi, and under Nehru's leadership, it was leaning left and left, with its right side almost paralysed. This was a task that demanded extreme moral courage, for it meant swimming against the tide, and condemning much of popular belief. Yet, not fearing criticism he ran for it, despite his age.

His politics showed that he was "a rebel to the last"; if he rebelled against colonialism in his youth; in his age it was against redicalism, that with its cheap catechisms and simplified solutions, was out to monopolise all power, misleading the people.

The wonder is that despite his so-called "reactionary" stand on many issues Rajaji commanded respect, in every political quarter, even among his staunch opponents, because of his sincerity of purpose and purity of motive. The debt that the entrepreneurial class owes to him is incalculable; and one wonders how they would be re-paying it in creating a befitting memorial to him. For, at a time, when owing to the leftist swing of the ruling party, the investing classes were being virtually persecuted, for their one sin-affluence Rajaji came to their succour with the idea, that not selfishness, as is usually thought of, was the motivating force of their life; but a certain singular economic philosophy, which ultimately worked for the good of the country. It is an indication of the fertility of his mind that he could chalk out an entirely new and distinctive way of thinking on political and economic matters, for the Swatantra party which he founded.

The fact that Rajaji had turned a strong rightist in the last phase of his life, courageously criticising socialism, even when it had come to the regarded as a sacrilege to disparage it, can-

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Chemistry In The Conquest Of Disease

by

A. Ranganathan

From the dawn of history, the art of alchemy was concerned with attempts to discover the Philosopher's Stone, which could transmute the base metals like lead, tin, copper, iron and mercury into silver and gold. The ancient Indian authors of the **Rasaratnakara** and the **Rasarnava** knew the use of various preparations of mercury, iron, copper and other metals in the cure of various diseases and had anticipated by centuries similar observations of Paracelsus, the European chemist.

But the new era of modern chemistry began when the alchemist applied his mind to the search of the Elixir Vitae: it marked the end of the alchemical period and the beginning of the new iatrochemical period. From the days of the iatrochemists onwards, the apothecary and the physician have sought the application of chemical products in the treatment of disease.

Paracelsus wrote that the aim of iatrochemistry (chemistry in the service of doctors) was "to consider only what virtue and power may lie in medicine." Although much of what Paracelsus taught at Basel was spurious, he was one of the earliest Europeans to use chemical substances for the treatment of disease—opium, mercury, sulphur, lead, iron, arsenic and copper sulphate.

Centuries later, Liebig said that "without a profound knowledge of chemistry, physiology and medicine will obtain no light to guide them in the solution of their important problems—those of the laws of life, the vital processes and the removal of abnormal states of the organism."

Modern chemotherapy, the application of chemistry in the treatment of disease, may be said to begin with the celebrated German bacteriologist Paul Ehrlich, who discovered salvarsan, popularly known as "the magic bullet". His great achievement lies in his having established the main principle of chemotherapy—the discovery of drugs which would kill the germs in a patient's body without harming the body tissues. This discovery ushered in the age of sulpha drugs and penicillin.

Ehrlich observed in 1887 that methylene blue introduced into the body of a rabbit appeared only in the nervous system. This observation revealed a new possibility—the use of dyestuffs to kill certain disease-causing organisms. Ehrlich's salvarsan or arsphenamine, derived from arsenical and coal-tar products, was used to kill the dreaded spirocheta pallida, which causes syphilis.

1935 saw another great landmark in the history of chemotherapy when Gerhard Domagk announced that the red dye prontosil could be used in the treatment of streptococcal infections in mice. In fact the French chemist Fournieu suggested that prontosil

was broken down chemically into the simpler substance sulphanilamide, which had been prepared by Gelmo as early as 1908. Sulphanilamide was the precursor of our three thousand sulpha drugs, which have been proved of great value in the treatment of pneumonia, meningitis, bacillary dysentery and the streptococci of blood poisoning.

In a celebrated paper on penicillin published in the **British Journal of Experimental Pathology** in 1929, Alexander Fleming gave a memorable account of his accidental discovery. Very soon Professors Chain, Florey and others at Oxford were able to obtain a speck of penicillin, which was tried on a dying patient at a local hospital. If only a little more of the drug had been available, the patient might have survived. It was a fundamental discovery, a major triumph of chemotherapy.

As always happens with such discoveries, it was no longer the problem of the scientist; it became the problem of the technologist to manufacture large quantities of the drug. Newer and newer methods of manufacturing penicillin were invented in America.

Some diseases conquered by penicillin are scarlet fever, tonsillitis, septic sore throat, tooth abscesses and middle ear infections. But certain diseases like septicaemia and syphilis have not been successfully cured with penicillin. Penicillin and other anti-biotics, streptomycin, aureomycin, chloromycetin and terramycin have greatly increased the number of diseases which can be attacked by chemical reagents.

Great improvements in the methods of extracting insulin have contributed to the more effective control of diabetes. Similarly drugs like atabrin, plasmoquine and paludrine are invaluable in the cure of malaria.

A remarkable advance took place in 1938 when Professors Dodds and Robinson produced a synthetic substance known as diethylstilboestrol. This was followed by the preparation of hexoestrol and dinoestrol, used in treating some of the diseases of the respiratory system and also in controlling carcinoma, a cancerous growth of the prostate gland of males.

Dr. A. L. Bacharach's discover of the property of medicinal helium has been a boon to many patients suffering from respiratory diseases—asthma and other diseases which obstruct the passage of air into the lungs. These patients have found it easier to breathe a mixture of helium and oxygen than ordinary air.

The production of cortisone by chemical means has opened an epoch-making chapter in the history of chemotherapy. This remarkable drug is used to treat diseases like lupus, rheumatoid arthritis and rheumatic fever. Unlike the antibiotics, cortisone generally lowers the sensitivity of the body and suppresses the symptoms of the disease without repair-

ing the damage caused by the disease. Actually a relapse takes place once the drug is withdrawn. But in spite of this limitation, it has been particularly useful in affording relief to those who suffer from rheumatoid arthritis.

Cancer still remains one of the fatal diseases of mankind, but some attempts have been made to control it with the aid of chemical substances. Experimental work has shown that nitrogen mustards have considerably arrested the growth of cancer in animals. But in most cases damage was caused throughout the body and not merely confined to the cancerous tissues. More encouraging results were obtained in cases of leukaemia and Hodgkin's disease.

Radio-active iodine is used in the treatment of various diseases of the thyroid gland, though care should be taken to prevent even a small portion of the dose being absorbed into the blood-stream, since it may cause unnecessary irradiation which is harmful to the body.

Today the nuclear scientist has become an ally of the doctor. Most pharmaceuticals are hardly affected by radiation sterilization, which is perhaps the best method available to the manufacturer for the sterilization of various drugs used in medicine.

One of the greatest problems of the atomic age is to secure adequate protection against the hazards of radiation. As early as 1949 Dr Harvey Platt and Professor Zenon Bacq discovered that the effects of radiation can be considerably reduced by injecting chemicals before the body is exposed to rays. The biological effects of radiation, such as loss of hair, diarrhoea and anaemia, have been designated as radiation sickness.

In the beginning the chemical substances cysteine was used as a protector. Some new derivatives of cysteine have been discovered by Professor Back in Belgium and Dr Hollander in the U.S.A. The idea is to repair the initial damage from radiation and also prevent the final injuries. More investigation has to be carried out, since radiation injuries involving the reproductive organs can give rise to abnormal children affecting future generations.

Some diseases are caused by insects, and the chemist has tried to discover insecticides which would destroy them. The most remarkable insecticide synthesized by the chemist is the famous DDT (di-chloro-diphenyl trichloroethane), used to destroy the lice which carry typhus, the mosquitoes which carry yellow fever, the house flies which carry dysentery and the rat-fleas which carry bubonic plague.

If over-population is looked upon as a disease, the aid of chemistry can be sought in preventing the activities of the sperms in the body! The problem is to provide cheap tablets which would kill sperms without causing any injury to the body. A great responsibility lies upon the chemist in this matter.

The discovery of the sulphur drugs, antibiotics and cortisones has taken us some way towards Ehrlich's, "therapia sterilans magna", the Cure of Cures, which could kill all bacteria in one therapeutic dose, though we cannot say that it is yet in sight.

The achievements of chemotherapy so far, however, have been spectacular. Quite a number of killers of the past have been attacked successfully.

There are also vistas of a bright future in the conquest of disease. Virus infections like the common cold and influenza (even the Asian brand) have hitherto defied the magic bullets. Poliomyelitis a serious virus infection, has been the subject of intensive research for the past few years, and soon a time may come when the heroic attempts will be crowded with success.

Problems like bactericidal resistance and radiation sickness have still to be pursued with greater vigour for a final solution. The chemist has in no small measure contributed towards the therapeutic armamentarium of the doctor, and in years to come greater conquests will be possible.

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not however be regarded as an "accident". One feels, that he was actually working out to its logical conclusion, the economic faith of his generation of politicians, who while they prized freedom and fought for it did not really approve any upset changes in economic values. His death therefore marks the end of an era in Indian politics.

The Indian right wing had now lost its Field Marshal, who valiently fought on its behalf, till the bitter end, looking for no reward, not even power, never compromising on principles, suffering even unpopularity, and vile criticism in the process.

To some, this may appear rather an unnecessary burden for a retired politician; but posterity alone can judge, how much the country benefited by his endeavours, which arrested dangerous propensities towards leftist extremism, which might have plunged the country in a bloody revolution. He declared himself the sworn enemy of Karl Marx, and though he did not write a treatise that could serve as a rejoinder to the latter's "Capital", in his weekly journalistic outpourings, he never missed a chance to take a shot at him. It may also be said, that in outliving Nehru, he had won for himself and his faith a tactical victory over his ideas. Though Nehru never took his propagations seriously, dubbing them as but the "mischief of senility", and "playfulness of age", it is significant that Rajaji never felt discouraged, but pursued them with all ardour.

One regrets that his death-pangs should have been so prolonged: and his end not an easy one. Yet, it is probably as it should be, for it illustrated his characteristic trait, to give a fight to the last, without relenting in the middle. The tenacity with which he stuck to his views, inspite of the poor showing at the polls of the Swatantra party, also revealed this.

President Bhutto And His Style

by

M. N. Tholal

The Swatantra Party leaders appear to be smitten with suicidal mania, if one is to judge by their pronouncements, particularly regarding Pakistan. There was the great Rajaji but he had his international stature to maintain and think of countries other than India when speaking on international issues. Nevertheless his statements often went against the grain among his own countrymen, and that not without good reasons. But for his successors to imitate his style would appear to be an exercise in futility, if not indeed in something worse, having regard to the anti-Pakistani sentiments naturally prevailing in India.

We should not forget that it is no part of the business of the leaders of the Swatantra Party to make the party unpopular in the land. They should therefore shun statements which are likely to embarrass their followers, for the simple reason that they cannot justify the same in public. Pursuit of truth is one thing and pursuit of politics—which is pursuit of power politics—is quite another. Every party in the land aims at capturing power and if it does not it may be said to be existing without a purpose. If that is the main purpose of the existence of a party, it can hardly be justifiably ignored by its leaders.

And even for those who regard pursuit of truth as the main function of their lives, ignorance of realities is of no assistance in their objective. Any one who talks of Pakistan cannot afford to forget that it is an Islamic state or even the fact that kufr and hatred of kufr (unbelief) is of the essence of Islam. The great tragedy which has overtaken Pakistan in the loss of its eastern wing was itself mainly the result of the obsession with kufr of Muslims in Pakistan, which is much greater than that among Muslims in other countries because Muslims in Pakistan find themselves confronted with Kafirs who unfortunately happen to be stronger than Pakistanis. The Muslims of Eastern Pakistan not to say anything of the Hindus there—were ill-treated because they were said to be Kafirs who, instead of learning Urdu and reciting the poems of Iqbal, were actually reciting the poems of Rabindranath Tagore with gusto. How could such a people be treated on a par with the Muslims of Pakistan?

Among the Muslims of Pakistan also there were Kafirs, known as Qadianis, who did not believe in the saving of Prophet Mohammad that he was the last of the prophets. They were therefore set upon in 1953, their houses and shops were burnt and looted, their girls and women abducted and raped and there was no policeman in sight to rescue them. There was indeed no question of rescue. The Kafirs were being treated as they deserved to be treated. That is what their leader, Maulana Maududi, openly stated before the Court of Inquiry presided over by Justice Munir. The Maulana was sentenced to be

hanged but the Administration did not dare hang him and he was released after a few months in prison on representations from leaders that he was only interpreting the Holy Quaran in the only manner in which it should be interpreted. Martial law had to be declared to save the Qadianis from extinction.

Addressing a news conference in New Delhi Mr. Mody, the Swatantra Party President, asked the Government to release the prisoners of war in its custody forthwith and establish diplomatic relations with Pakistan to usher in an era of peace and friendship in the subcontinent. Mr. Mody should have remembered that the prisoners of war surrendered to a joint command of India and Bangla Desh and in this joint command the Indian general in charge of the operations was working under and taking orders from the Acting President of Bangla Desh. How then can the prisoners of war be released without recognition by Pakistan of Bangla Desh and without the latter's agreement to the course suggested?

Returning to India after an eleven-day visit to Pakistan Mr. Mody said there was "tremendous goodwill for India among the people of Pakistan" who wanted relations between the two countries to improve so that they could "live like brothers". It has to be assumed that those who want to live like brothers with India also desire to live like brothers with their Muslim brethren of Muslim Bengal. What is then preventing President Bhutto from recognising Bangla Desh and getting most of the prisoners of war released?

He also said there was need of a "constant dialogue" between the two countries at all levels. But what the world is witnessing is a constant dialogue between the leaders of Pakistan and China at all levels, and since China is known to be India's worst enemy, the significance of the constant dialogue with China cannot be overlooked by any realist. This despite the fact that it was China's treachery which proved to be Pakistan's undoing in the last Indo-Pak war. China had promised Pakistan help in case of war with India. What help did she render her?

Mrs Gandhi would be needlessly exposing herself to the trigger-happy Pakistanis if she were to accept the invitation of President Bhutto to visit Pakistan in any capacity in the hope that she will get a "tremendous welcome" there. It is true, as Mr. Mody said, that the concept of bilaterism envisaged in the Simla Accord will have no meaning if there was no dialogue between India and Pakistan, but it requires two to shake hands and Mr. Bhutto, whatever his reasons, is not yet free to proffer that hand honestly.

Mr. Mody contradicts himself when he says that Mr. Bhutto needs some time to deal with his own people before he could formally recognise Bangla

Desh is the creation of India and if there is "tremendous goodwill for India among the people of Pakistan" why should he need any time to deal with his own people before he can formally recognise Bangla Desh? The treatment of Bengalis in Pakistan — all fellow Muslims—is proof positive of the hatred and illwill they bear towards Bangla Desh as well as India, its creator. Their original hatred of India apart, Pakistanis can never forget the mortal blow India delivered Pakistan in 1971. In their hearts naturally there is desire for revenge tempered by the realisation of the folly of the enterprize that thoughts of revenge suggest.

Mr. Bhutto says they "have to recognise Bangla Desh since it is part of our flesh and blood". Why then are they illtreating their "flesh and blood"? Through sheer cussedness or insanity? The desire to lord it over others is a dishonest desire, irrespective of who these others are—Indians or Bengalis or Pathans or Baluchis or Sindhis. It is obviously still there in the hearts of Pakistanis, particularly the section led by Bhutto and his able lieutenant, Abdul Qayum Khan. If Bhutto has nothing to hide, why does he not accept the demand of the opposition leaders for an open trial of Yahya Khan? Mr. Bhutto assured him that he was quite prepared to let the Bengalis leave Pakistan without hurting them. Why then does he not do so? They are not prisoners of war.

Mr. Mody declared that nowhere (in Pakistan) had he found any hostility towards India: "the atmosphere there is unbelievable". Indians would prefer to believe their Field Marshal who declared only the other day that there was danger from Pakistan. If that is not so, whom is Pakistan arming itself against? China or Russia or even Afghanistan? The first question that confronted him was "when are we getting together?" They must have been speaking with their tongues in their cheeks.

If the question was repeated several times—as seems to have been the case—it had obviously been put into the mouths of the questioners by the authorities. When the Sikhs were agitating for their homeland under the leadership of Master Tara Singh, plenty of Sikhs were allowed to visit Pakistan to pay homage to their shrines there. And they were met by "old friends" whom they did not recognise met who burst nevertheless into tears of joy at seeing them and embraced them heartily as old friends do when they meet after ages. The action was repeated so many times that the visitors to Pakistan could not but conclude that it was a put-up affair.

Mr. Mody contradicts himself again when he says that Mr. Bhutto is in "complete control of the situation". Why then does he need time to deal with his own people before he can recognise Bangla Desh? With "tremendous goodwill towards India" and "complete control of the situation" he has difficulty in recognising Bangla Desh which is part of their "flesh and blood"! We Indians are also part of the same flesh and blood. But are the Pakistanis prepared to acknowledge that? They only realise

that it would be folly of the first magnitude for them to shout at the present juncture "Crush India" which has been their favourite slogan for a quarter of a century.

As Mr. Mody says, Mr. Bhutto has a style of his own and a manner of saying things, but that style and that manner need not be so self-contradictory. He really has no need to contradict himself twice or thrice a day. Mr. Mody perhaps knows what a court thinks of a witness who contradicts himself over and over again. If that is his style and that is his manner, all that need be said is that he is a habitual liar and there is no sense in saying that the present moment, when Bhutto is lord and Master in Pakistan, is propitious for arriving at a settlement with Pakistan. It is obvious that Mr. Bhutto's hospitality, extended to an old friend, now leader of a pro-Pakistan party has been of the lavish variety, but that should not cloud his wit and judgment which this writer has had occasion to applaud several times in these columns.

INDIA AND THE CIA.

During the Nehru regime, those in government used to summarily deny any CIA activities in India. So, we in India did not seriously view what it did in other countries, however serious the press reports be. But now, right from the PM downwards, those in government allege such subversive activities by a foreign power within this country. It would be a matter of shame, if free India is not able to effectively tackle subversion from abroad in such a manner. But we Indians do not know whether to believe in it, or trace it to Mrs. Gandhi's own fears of American intervention in some form or other, because of her anti-Nixon stance and communistic policies. Any way, those in government ought to come out with "specific allegations", rather than "vague accusations", which could only be denied by the United States, and only further impair relations between that country and ours.

The government for one thing, ought to realise that the CIA by itself can do little, unless there is an efficient and able "rightist fifth column" in the country, to make use of its money and services, and join hands with it, just as the "leftist fifth column" works in league with Soviet and Chinese intelligence agencies. Needless to say, such fifth columns are a serious matter, that can imperil our freedom, and which, the people cannot tolerate, and government's ineffectiveness in rooting them out will not be condoned.

—K. S.

WHERE ACCUSED IS THE JUDGE

(From Our Correspondent)

The premature retirement of the Principal Private Secretary to the Prime Minister, Mr. P. N. Haksar, has caused quite a good deal of surprise among knowledgeable circles in the capital. If he was to retire as early as that it is being asked, where was the necessity of giving him a lift recently from private secretaryship to principal private secretaryship? That he was exceeding his brief admits of no doubt. It was assured that he was doing so with the tacit permission of the Prime Minister, if not indeed at her instance. Whereas private secretaries should be reticent, and keep their own counsel, he had been holding forth on the need of changing the administrative system itself. Here was a Daniel come to judgment before whom the founding fathers of the Indian constitution pale into insignificance.

It is however, regarded within the bounds of possibility that Mr. Haksar offered himself as a sacrifice to the Prime Minister, to enable her to see how far she could go in her pro-Soviet stance without provoking a rebellion in the anti-Communist section of the Congress Party. In any case, there is no doubt that with his departure the pro-Communist section in the Government would feel somewhat leaderless, with the Planning Minister, Mr. D. P. Dhar, still getting his eye in and unsure of his surroundings amidst the mysterious talk of commitment to no one yet knows what, despite the Constitution being there, to preserve for which even the President takes the oath when he assumes office. His retirement at a time when he was getting more and more powerful every day has therefore caused not a little surprise in the Capital and there are those who sum up the situation with the words that our Prime Minister is too clever even for those in whose hands she is supposed to be, to all intents and purposes.

Addressing a public meeting the other day to observe the fourth death anniversary of the Czech youth, Jan Palach, who immolated himself to protest against the Soviet military presence in his country, Mr. Morarji Desai called upon his countrymen to uphold democratic principles at all costs, declaring that he was determined to lay down his life to defend democracy and prevent its replacement by any sort of dictatorship.

Former Jana Sangh President Balraj Madhok might have gone too far when he declared that India had already become a satellite of the Soviet Union and relations between the two countries were little different from Russia's relations with some of the East European countries, but there

can be no denying the dangerous situation that is developing in the country so far as her independence is concerned, with the Planning Minister openly urging the introduction of Soviet-style socialism in the country. The greater the need therefore of observing throughout the country the death anniversary of Jan Palach and the reason for his self-immolation.

Otherwise, indeed, he would have died in vain to preserve a system which we do not deserve. Russia and China cannot possibly be allowed to stand comparison with the United States and the United Kingdom, the latter of whom, with all its imperialism, has set free hundreds of millions of people in Asia and Africa, whereas the former have started subjugating their neighbours while warning the whole world against the nefarious designs of the western powers. It is not a difference of degree that we are up against. It is a difference in kind.

The Punjab Akali Assembly Party has done a service to the country by summarising its grievance against the Union Government in the matter of the charge sheet against Chief Minister Bansilal of Haryana. It has charged the Central Government with adopting double standards in dealing with allegations of corruption and misuse of power against ministers — one for Congressmen and another for others. Briefing newsmen the leader of the party, Mr. P. S. Badal, said the recent decision on Mr. Bansilal had made it clear that no inquiry commission would ever be appointed by the Centre against Congress ministers. Severely criticising the Congress for rejecting the demand of 120 members of Parliament and a large number of legislators for referring the memorandum against Bansilal to a commission, the Party demanded that a commission headed by a sitting judge of the Supreme Court should be set up to examine the memorandum against Mr. Bansilal.

The Akali Party also said that, since Mrs. Indira Gandhi herself had been accused in some of the charges listed in the memorandum against Mr. Bansilal, the Union Government should not have referred the charge sheet for examination to four Central Ministers "who were mere rubber stamps of the Prime Minister". Pointing out that the Government of India had set out certain conventions and procedures for instituting an inquiry into allegations of corruption against men in high places, the Party said that the yardstick applied in the case of the late. Pratap Singh Kairon and Akali and Jana Sangh minis-

(Contd. on Page 15)

WORLD ATHEIST MEET - A REPORT

By G. Vijayam

"Atheism liberates humans from all kinds of bondage and restores the lost dignity to the individual to stand on his feet as a free and responsible person", declared Gora inaugurating the World Atheist Meet. He further said: "The essence of atheism is the freedom of the individual. Freedom releases the immense potentialities of human imagination, initiative and effort that lay suppressed under theistic faith. The mood of supplication and complaint, inherent in prayers to god and petitions to Government has no place in atheistic way of life".

The World Atheist Meet, first of its kind in history, was held at the Atheist Centre, Patamata, Vijayawada, India, for five days from Dec. 22 to 26, 1972. 120 delegates and observers from India and two from the U.S.A. attended the conference. Many delegates from India and abroad could not attend because of the tense political situation around Vijayawada for a separate statehood. Normal life was disturbed as communications were disrupted. Many Foreign delegates, including Mrs. Madalyn Murray O'Hair who was to preside over the Conference and Dr. Garry De Young from United States could not attend the Meet as visas were not granted in time. It is strange and deplorable that Rev. Billy Graham, the evangelist of U.S.A. was given facilities to tour even in Nagaland in India while Mrs. Madalyn M. O'Hair was not allowed to come to India to preside over the World Atheist Meet, despite a cablegram of request from the convener, Gora, to the Indian Embassy in Washington D.C.,

In this historic Conference many Atheists, rationalists, humanists, free thinkers and secularists belonging to different walks of life assembled together. Among those were well known social workers, doctors, civil servants, lawyers, university professors and veterans of the freedom struggle of India. They belong to different age groups and represent a cross section of the country.

Beautiful shade of green trees and the community life of Atheist Centre created congenial atmosphere for the Conference. All the delegates stayed in the thatched huts named as "Bradlaugh" 'Charvaka' 'Nasthik' and 'Atheist'. Young atheist volunteers, mostly teenage boys and girls — looked after the arrangements of the Conference.

The Conference had two sessions a day — 9 a.m. to 12 noon and 3 to 5 p.m., Rest of the time was left for informal discussions to share their experiences in atheist way of life. Delegates wore a badge, "I AM AN ATHEIST". The others were 'observers' without the right to

participate in deliberations. Discussions in the Conference reflected maturity of understanding and eagerness to take up positive programmes to propagandize atheism. Their mood reflected the conviction that each individual has to take up a programme depending upon his or her ability and opportunity, and these individuals contribute to the collective strength of the atheist movement.

MESSAGES :

In the inaugural session of the Conference, Mr. Lavanam welcomed the delegates and conveyed the fraternal greetings of the Atheist, Humanist and Rationalist Associations from different parts of the world.

Nigel Sinnought, editor of **The Free Thinker**, the oldest atheist weekly in the world, felt happy "to see that India has been chosen for the First World Atheist Conference" and wished for many more of such in different parts of the world.

Khorean Arisian of New York Society for Ethical Culture, in his greetings to Gora said: "My good wishes for straight talk, ethical concern and significant fellowship. Your vigorous spirit is a great inspiration for those that have come in contact with it".

Atheist Society of Australia, Haymarket, NSW, in a message said: "We believe it essential to adhere firmly to forth-right atheism, without compromise either with religion or with evasive secular philosophies that will not take a firm stand".

Mr. Abdul Hasant, Convener of the Humanist Association of Bangla Desh, said: "We congratulate all of you upon your intellectual courage in not hiding behind such covers as Secularism, Humanism, Rationalism or Free Thinking. In our opinion too, religions are pious fabrications of imaginary pudding and poison".

James Hervery Johnson, President, The American Association for the Advancement of Atheism, San Diego, California, USA, in fraternal greetings said: "Human happiness and progress can never move forward until we have abolished superstition of all kinds. It is the greatest work in the world. While men have flown to the moon, the great masses of mankind are chained to the superstitions of thousands of years ago, and all of us must suffer. Human progress will leap ahead 2000 or more years when we can abolish this slavery to the stone brains of ancient times".

Christopher Macy, Editor, **New Humanist**, London in a message said: "I send you my very

best wishes on behalf of the Rationalist Press Association for a successful Conference. I am confident that you will establish another landmark in the development of the battle against superstitious obscurantism, and its associated systems of institutionalised patronage and privilege”.

James O. Hanlon, Secretary, Rationalist Association of New Zealand, wished that the cause of atheism would be considerably advanced by the Meet. “Atheism is an honourable word and denote the philosophy of a vast concourse of thinkers whose words and actions have illumined the world. Rest assured that in New Zealand, so far removed from you geographically, the cause of Atheism will be vigorously advocated by our Association”.

Dr. Abraham T. Koor, President, Ceylon Rationalist Association, said: “Mr. and Mrs. Gora — the Charwaka and Charini of modern India — deserve the gratitude and thanks of all atheists for their enthusiasm in organising this meet in a country like which is supersaturated with religious superstitions and fanaticism. Like Charwaka and Charini, who lived in India some 4000 years ago, had to meet with stiff opposition from fellow Indians who held primitive ideas about gods and religions, Gora and family also have to meet with similar opposition even in this space age from some Indians who still cling on to outmoded religious beliefs. ...I sincerely hope that the deliberations at the Vijayawada Meet will serve as an eye-opener to many”.

Ichiro Hara, Chairman, Sozosha Humanist Fellowship, Tokyo, Japan, in a message to Gora said: “It is my deep conviction that your atheist activities are most relevant, most necessary and most important ones in such a gods-ridden country as India. I always admire your aggressive and courageous attitudes and actions for the cause of atheism, and I hope that you will necessarily make remarkable success in your significant and noble activities”.

Dr. Van Praag, Chairman, International Humanist and Ethical Union, wished a fruitful meeting for promotion of enlightenment, freedom and responsibility.

Others who sent greetings and messages include Irish Humanist Association, Ireland; Harold H. Pearce, President, Rationalist Association of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia; Dr. Bronder, Chairman, Bund Freireligiöser Gemeinden Deutschlands, Hannover, West Germany; Gonzalo Quiogue, vice-President, Humanist Association of Philippines, Manila; B. T. Rocca, President, The United Secularists of America, San Francisco; Dr. Sarma Marla, Ziegelhaugen, West Germany; E. Galliford, Woodville, Australia; Maratha Yates, New York; L. F. Bullock, Dawpark, Australia; L. J. Collins, London; Dr. Avro Manhattan, Lontion; Gill Dammers, Sheffield, England; Society for Civi-

lisation, Bombay; Backward, Scheduled Castes and tribes Federation of India, Kanpur; Rationalist Forum, Thiruchengode; Rationalist Forum, Namakkai, Kanyakumari Rationalist Association and Stuart Marriot, London.

KEY-NOTE ADDRESS :

In his Key-note address to the Conference Gora said that atheism and theism were two ways of life. Atheism makes man independent and responsible whereas theism enables man to shift his responsibility on god. As theism is based on the falsehood of god, it breeds dishonesty and slavery in society. While more honest theists surrender themselves to god, lose initiative, achieve little and lie in want, the dishonest theists exploit others, ruthlessly for their personal gain and perpetuate inequalities in society.

The difference between theism and atheism consists in the difference of emphasis upon the two factors of free will and circumstances. Whereas theism considers the circumstances supreme, atheism holds that the freedom of individual as supreme. The assertion of the freedom of individual makes man master in every situation.

Referring to various efforts in history to establish the supremacy of man, Gora said: Infact every prophet was more atheistic than his contemporaries. The atheistic content in the teachings of prophets set more men more free. The release of freedom raised popular rebellions against dishonesty and inequality. But the prophets failed because they compromised with the theistic beliefs in vogue with a view to communicate effectively with their contemporaries. The Buddha fought superstitious ritual but allowed fatalism to remain. Jesus and Mohammad decried old gods, but instilled new gods again.

Their compromise with the existing system resulted in reaction. The remnants of theism in the teachings of prophets corrupted society again. Freedom of individual was again in jeopardy. So rebellion after rebellion had to rise to cleanse the body politic of the remnants of theism with blood and sweat. The progress of civilization followed the march of atheism.

Godless Theism:

Gora said that materialism was a radical departure from the theistic way of life. It demolished faith in god and turned the attention of the people from othr-world to this world. In spite of the long strides that materialism took towards atheism, it was not wholly atheistic. It subordinated human life to natural laws like the evolutionary process and casual relations. Instead of praying to god, materialists depended upon circumstances for the solution of the problems. The dependence on circumstances made materialists “godless theists” and gave

scope for the development of political dictatorship in the context of materialism. The dictatorship is realistic and it establishes social and economic equality among people. Nevertheless it curbs the freedom of individual.

Atheist form of government is necessarily a democracy, since atheists brook no dictatorship, spiritual or materialistic. Atheists are real democrats who control their representatives and work for economic and social equality through legislation.

Scientists and Superstitions :

As atheism is not adopted wholly even scientists are not free of superstitions. Astronauts who could land on the moon as a result of amazing advances in technology, prayed to god for the success of their project. Several savants are known to be eminently scientific laboratories but conventionally superstitious in their personal life. So dishonest theists and greedy politicians easily use their talents for prosecuting wars and establishing dictatorships. Science is essentially atheistic. But without the avowed adoption of atheism, scientific progress is liable to be misused.

Atheism is the Alternative:

Gora stressed that for all round development of personality of individual atheism is the only alternative.

Referring to various efforts in this direction, Gora said: In the climate of theistic superstition stalwarts like Charvaka and Charles Bradlaugh boldly took up the label of atheism. Of late humanist, rationalist secular, free thought, free thinker groups want to steer clear of capitalism on one side and dictatorship on the other and uphold the dignity of human being. The peace groups, War Resisters' International, Women's Liberation Movement and many other organizations are working vigorously in their own spheres to oppose the indignity of human beings. The International Humanist and Ethical Union with head quarters at Utrecht in Holland, has international contacts to promote rationalist humanist outlook. Yet above mentioned organizations do not choose to take up the label of atheism, principally on emotional grounds. Owing to long propaganda in the past ages, vested interests in inequality have slandered atheism. So the label of atheism is not very inviting to them. Yet, persons like Mrs. Madalyn Murray O'Hair, and Dr. Garry De Young in the USA find meaning in openly declaring themselves as atheists. In Australia some members of the Rationalist Association formed themselves into Atheist Association two years ago. In India Atheist Centre has been functioning since 1940. And similar organizations have been coming up particularly Atheist Association of India at Visakhapatnam.

Programme of action is essential:

The World Atheist Meet was convened with a view to co-ordinate the activities of individuals and associations in the promotion of the freedom of individual and equality in social, economic and political relations. Gora said, "While those of us, who assembled here feel that the label of atheism is useful for releasing humans from political economic and social oppression, have respect for other labels too with similar programmes".

Basis of Atheism — Morality:

Atheism aims at a new civilization in which man feels the master of his government, as the maker of his customs and the author of natural laws and feels free to rearrange his systems so as to achieve his desired end to live in happiness. The basis for atheism is morality. The freedom of individual in social relations is moral freedom. Truthfulness, integrity are social necessities. The sense of morality appreciates the need for equality. Atheists work for equality in all spheres of life cutting across all sectarian feelings and project the means to achieve full development of the personality of individual.

Atheist who feel free and moral take upon themselves the solution of their problems. Being free they have none to complain against. They have no understanding of the circumstances with an open mind every time and plan the method of achievement. Unlike theism which preached the botherhood of man through fatherhood of god, atheism champions the supremacy of man and his capacity to change all social, economic and political institutions. Theism was a stumbling block in awakening the common man as it stressed on the dependence of man on super-natural powers and preached the fate theory to distract the attention of the people from real problems in the world.

Gora said that theism was responsible for maintaining status quo in society and to keep man unequal and lathergetic. Theism is afraid of revolutions. Gora stressed that those days of arm chaired philosophy of atheism have gone. He declared, "Now atheism means militant revolution".

DISCUSSIONS IN THE CONFERENCE :

Sripada Bedekar, a retired Civil Servant from Poona, presented a paper "the need of establishing a scientifically rational 'religion'." He stressed the necessity to spell out in some detail the belief systems of atheism in a positive and precise manner. The negative language of 'we do not believe in this and that' is not conducive to a positive philosophy. He said that along with stating the philosophy of atheism a code of moral conduct should also be necessary.

M. S. Kirloskar from Dharwar, Mysore, read a paper on "A comparative study of terms

analogous to atheism". He analysed the terms of free thought, rationalism, separatism, secularism, humanism, agnosticism and materialism.

M. Prabha, Chairman Rationalist Association of Kerala and President Mixed Marriage Association, presented a paper on the Lokayatas, the first atheists in ancient India. He said that due to religious intolerance and fanaticism of Hindus, the Lokayata Literature was completely destroyed and one has to reconstruct the story of Lokayatas by looking at the intensity of criticism to which they were subjected to by the theistic writers in those days.

K. Vasudeva Rao, an young man from Vijayawada, read a paper on 'Ethics and Morality of Life'. He said that man should be given his due place in a society.

The speech of Dr. Garry De Young, Chancellor, Minnesota Institute of Philosophy, St. Paul, USA, was read by Edwin Lindén, another delegate from United States. Sending the fraternal greetings of the atheists of America to the community of world atheists, Dr. Young said: "As Atheists we must lead. Our lot is to be in the midst of the fray. We must nurture our education, our intelligence and our achievements".

R. Kasturi, an advocate from Tamil Nadu, explained the significance of Periar E. V. Ramaswami Naiker's crusade against god. E. V. Ramaswami Naiker, Now 94, still in good health, dedicated all his life for fighting religious fanaticism and caste discriminations. He has been the moving spirit behind the modern Subba Reddi, Kurnool, V. Nageswar, yderabad, S. Hazarat Ali, Nagarjuna Sagar, Lavanam and Vijayam of Atheist Centre.

Representatives of the Atheist and Rationalist Associations made brief presentations in the Conference about their activities.

In the five-day deliberations of the Conference many delegates expressed their views freely on diverse aspects of atheism. Time was allotted for all delegates to participate in the discussions. Some of the active participants include G. N. Jyoti Shanker, Secretary, Indian Rationalist Association, Prof. T. Venugopala Rao and Jayagopal, President and Secretary of the Atheist Society of India, E. P. Menon, Bangalore, P. H. Gupta, Visakhapatnam, P. L. Subramanyam, Ramachandrapuram, P. A. Kumar, Mysore, M. V. rationalist activities in Tamil Nadu.

ATHEISM "MY TASK":

Each individual delegate of the Conference expressed freely what he or she would do as the minimum programme for the propagation of atheism. Keeping in view their responsibilities and limitations in "My Task" delegates stated

their individual action programmes. Individual commitment enables to formulate general programmes on its basis and facilitates effective implementation of the same. Individual commitment and action would result in collective achievement to atheism. In "My Task" delegates stated diverse programmes which include eradication of superstitions, opposition to communal and religious fanaticism, working for secularism, removal of caste and religious symbols such as tilak, mangalasutra, bangles, rings by women; dropping of surnames which denote caste; promotion of inter-caste and inter-religious marriages and inter-dinning; exposing religious myths and miracles; struggle for partyless and popless democracy; fight for economic and political equality; working for integrated neighbourhoods of untouchables and so-called upper castes in India and of Negroes and Whites in the West; producing atheist literature and financial support for atheist activities. It was felt that no programme of action was small, if it was undertaken with devotion and sincerity. It provides necessary training and experience to move towards other programmes of action step by step.

EXHIBITION OF ATHEIST LITERATURE:

In connection with the Conference an exhibition of Atheist Literature from different corners of the globe was arranged. Books and periodicals, in European and Indian Languages were prominently displayed. Exhibits included press clippings and photos which narrated the story of Atheist movements in India and abroad.

While opening the exhibition, Mr. S. Bedekar said that such exhibitions of the recordings of the atheist activities would help people to remove the misunderstanding they entertain regarding atheism. He said the books, magazines and news paper clippings tell the history, and philosophy of atheism and ably depict the activities of atheists distributed all over the world.

'POSITIVE ATHEISM' RELEASED:

One of the important events of this historic Meet was the release of Gora's book, **Positive Atheism**. The book reflects Gora's practice of his principles, struggles and achievements in the march towards social change. Mr. R. Kasturi, a well known follower of Periar E. V. Ramaswami Naiker, releasing the book said, "Gora wields an indefatigable pen in the cause of Atheism. His writings and exemplary behaviour had established atheism as a new philosophy for the emerging new man".

COMMITTEE TO COORDINATE ATHEIST ACTIVITIES:

The conference authorised Gora to organise an International Co-ordinating Committee of Atheist Activities. The need to organise continental conference of Atheists' in Europe, America and Australia was felt to ensure greater participation of Atheists.

To Co-ordinate the Activities of Atheists in India, a Committee was organised. Lavanam of the Atheist Centre, Vijayawada is the convenor. Other members: Gora, S. K. Bedekar, M. Prabha R. Kasturi, Prof. T. Venugopala Rao, P. H. Gupta, G. N. Jyoti Shankar, P. L. Subrahmanyam, and Hazarat Ali.

A regional committee was also organised for Andhra Pradesh.

The Conference welcomed the emergence of Atheist Associations all over the world.

CONCLUDING SESSION :

In the concluding session the delegates expressed their confidence that spread of atheism is inevitable for the survival of human race as equals. Dawn of science and growth of education, spread of communications and the questioning spirit inherent in humans bound to change the course of civilization towards social, political and economic equalities. Theism which has perpetuated and justified inequalities in the name of god, fate and rebirth and made people slaves is bound to fade away. Unjust social systems which kept alive untouchability and apartheid would disintegrate when men and women feel that they are equals, and that they are the masters of their institutions. Atheism freed people from all fetters and inhibitions which have been nurtured in the name of god. Atheism restores the dignity and respect to all human beings as equal partners in life by making morality and ethics as basis for society. Atheism aims at a society of equals — none high, none low. Poverty, wars and ignorance which are hitherto justified in the name of divine sanction, will be tackled on realistic grounds and their causes will be eliminated. Reason and responsibility are the master-keys of atheistic revolution in the modern world.

At the end, proposing a vote of thanks, Mr. Lavanam, stressed the need to co-ordinate the activities of atheists all over the world. He said, "In spite of national differences, the basis for atheist activity is the same all over the world. Any compromise with traditional systems may facilitate the speedy spread of atheism in the beginning, but in the long run it will prove detrimental to the very cause. We can work together with any one on minimum programmes looking at the commonness in the programmes, but one should not compromise in fundamentals. We should remember that atheism does not mean mere negation of god, but it is positive and a way of life. Spread of rationalist outlook and scientific advancement quicken the pace towards an atheist way of life."

From times immemorial the word 'Atheism' was used to slander the opponents. The World Atheist Meet revealed to the world that atheism is not wickedness or cruelty or immorality, but

in reality atheism means equality, freedom and democracy and it is a positive alternative to the present corrupt social, political and economic system based on decaying theistic civilization.

Delegates left with hope and trust that it will not take too long for them to meet in the next World Atheist Meet.

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ters of Punjab should not have been changed. In their cases no subcommittee of central ministers was appointed to go into the allegations. In brief it said that what is sauce for the goose should be sauce for the gander and there should be no difference between Congressmen and non-Congressmen so far as the meting out of justice is concerned. But that would make the Congress Government very unpopular among Congressmen. For, what are they there for, if not for the loaves and fishes of office?

The disturbances in Andhra Desh over splitting the state have demolished the myth of Mrs. Gandhi's popularity in the country as well as of her sway over Congressmen. The manner in which her partymen have deserted her on an issue which should not have so inflamed the people has been a revelation to even the knowledgeable in the North. It seems there is none now in that state to do her reverence, besides those who stand to benefit, like the Chief Minister, from the acceptance of her Mulki formula.

Truly the Congress house there has fallen like a house of cards. The more the need of leaders of other parties behaving with circumspection and not playing into her hands by inter-party warfare. Balraj Madhok's "India First" platform provides a place for all anti-Communist parties which they should not ignore as of little significance. This is no time for mutual bickerings, with the Communists almost solidly behind her. Prestige should not stand in the way of leaders of other parties wishing all power to the elbow of Balraj Madhok who has ever been rising above the communal politics of the Jana Sangh. Answering a question the other day at Bhopal he declared that there was "no direct domination" of the RSS over the Jana Sangh, which is indeed true with all its implications.

ANATOMY OF PRICE SPIRAL

By I. Satya Sundaram

(Contd. from Previous Issue)

conditions in several states following failure of monsoons. In view of the deteriorating economic climate, it has been estimated that deficit financing in the current year would be Rs 900 crores, while it was Rs. 365 crores in 1970-71, and Rs. 380 crores in 1971-72. If money supply is stepped up like this without an appreciable increase in the production of essential goods, prices cannot but move upward.

Of late the country has witnessed good or at least satisfactory harvests. Still, the general price level has gone up by 3.7 per cent in 1969-70, by 5.5 per cent in 1970-71, and by 4 per cent in 1971-72. It is strange to note that the record production of foodgrains (108 million tons) in 1971-72 had made no impact on the inflationary spiral.

The economic climate not being congenial, actual investment in developmental programmes had consistently fallen short of the targets set in the budget . . . by Rs 236 crores in 1969-70 and Rs 160 crores in 1970-71. Inadequate public investment has left many capital goods industries short of orders. Industrial growth may turn to be only about 3 per cent in 1971-72. The industrial economy is in the grip of a vicious circle of low demand, low production, high costs and low investment. Any talk to hold the price line is a myth until and unless the Government steps up production in agricultural and industrial sectors.

Reports of drought in several parts of the country had their own effect in pushing up prices. Floods and droughts destroyed crops on a large scale every year in one part of the country or another. This led to shortage in output of foodgrains which in turn led to price rise. The solution to soaring prices partly lies in initiating measures to combat drought and floods effectively.

Though the Government is aware of the galloping growth in black money, very little has been done to arrest its proliferation. It is an open secret that people with black money often indulge in conspicuous consumption and wasteful expenditure, traditional and non-traditional, which inevitably lead to spiralling prices. The problem of price rise could not be tackled satisfactorily so long as the government allows black money to grow.

Ministers should not only advise consumers to consume less, but also do something about the "parallel economy" being run by the black-marketeers and hoarders. What is deplorable is complete lack of coordination between production and distribution. It looks as if the state

monopoly of wholesale trade in foodgrains, pulses, sugar, edible oils and cheap cloth is the only solution to the problem of inflation. One wonders why banks were allowed to make "fantastic advances" to foodgrain dealers who are indulging in speculation, taking advantage of the drought conditions. The Food Corporation of India has failed to perform its primary function of controlling prices of foodgrains.

Strangely enough, the slogan of a fair deal to the consumer is confined to only major towns, while most people in our country live in villages. The number of fair price shops should be increased, more especially in our rural areas. The Centre is seriously thinking of evolving a distribution system (in the public sector) which provides a link between the producers and consumers so that minimum supplies of essential articles can be ensured to weaker sections. Statutory controls over prices have failed to deliver the goods.

There is a plea for wage stabilisation alongside price stabilisation. While wages were high in some sectors, they are totally unrelated to rising cost of living in other sectors. Everything possible must be done to hold in check wages and incomes and stop the chain reaction between inflation and costs.

The Government should divert investment from the production of non-essential goods to essential goods and streamline the administration of agencies that distribute consumer goods to the public. There is a suggestion that industries producing essential consumer goods should be completely taken out of the private sector, and distribution of essential consumer goods should be taken up by the Government.

Any pragmatic policy to arrest the inflationary trends in the economy should aim (a) to maximise production, especially that of consumer goods, (b) to encourage savings and investment; (c) to curb conspicuous consumption; (d) to reduce unproductive public expenditure; (e) to unearth and arrest proliferation of black money and (f) to link productivity and wages. This no doubt requires political courage and economic statesmanship. But, these are not wanting in our Prime Minister. The Government should carefully study the root cause of the problem of soaring prices and take practical steps to put the economy on a sound footing. Unless the problem of chronic inflation is tackled on a war-footing, it is not possible to keep the economy as well as the common man out of the woods.

THE POPULATION QUESTION

By James A. Weber

We, the people, founded the United States of America on the principle of limited government.

Now, the government is proposing to operate on the basis of a new principle: limited people.

The need for this complete inversion in the relationship between the American people and their government has been heralded by a seemingly endless outpouring of population-control propaganda and other "popullution" pap. Yet, the case for population control remains unmade. Consider these facts:

1) Population growth in the United States is not a problem. The more hysterical proponents of population control like to draw "run-away" population growth curves that go practically straight up. However, in the real world, population growth follows an "S" rather than a "J" curve.

We are nearing the end of this "S" curve which represents the demographic transition. Consequently, our population growth is now slowing down and in the future will begin to level out, causing a number of noted demographers to bail out of their exponentially rising projections.

The most prominent example to date is Donald J. Bogue, director of the Community and Family Study Center at the University of Chicago. In 1963, Dr. Bogue was among those shouting from the rooftops about the perils of overpopulation. At the time, estimates of U.S. population at the end of the century varied from 300 to 400 million.

Today, Dr. Bogue is predicting a U.S. population in 2001 of about 250 million people — only 42 million or 20 per cent more than in 1970. Bogue further predicts that there will be no more babies born annually in 2001 than there are today.

The President's National Goals Research Staff recognized the lack of any population "explosion" in the U.S. when it stated in July, 1971, in a report entitled "Toward Balanced Growth: Quantity with Quality": "One decision which appears not to be urgent is that of overall size of the population — even after the effects of a considerable immigration are taken into account."

2) Population growth in the United States is not a major cause of problems. Population growth has proved to be a boon to those in search of simple solution to complex problems.

Pollution, crime, overcrowding, resource depletion, lower living standards, reduced governmental services, you name it, population growth causes it, according to these simplistic

souls. But the accusations are not supported by the facts.

Take, for example, pollution. According to Barry Commoner, the increase in population since 1946 accounts for only about 12 to 20 per cent of the various increases in total U.S. pollutant output. From 40 to 95 per cent of these nologies which resulted in increased output of increases were caused by new production tech-per cent in order to prevent the rise in pollutant per unit of production.

Commoner points out that it would have been necessary to reduce 1946 population by 86 per cent which has occurred during the past 25 years. In other words, we would have to have a current U.S. population of 20 to 25 million people to maintain 1946 pollution levels at today's level of technology. By contrast, a 30-per cent reduction in the environmental impact of technology would have accomplished the same result. The conclusion is that U.S. population growth has only a minor effect on the intensification of pollution. Conversely, immense reductions in population size would be required to materially affect pollution levels.

There is at the same time another side to the pollution coin, namely, that although people account for only 12 to 20 per cent of pollution, they form 100 per cent of the productive source of funds which must be used in the future to reduce many types of pollution. Lake Erie, for instance, will continue to be a problem regardless of future population trends. But it will be a problem that can be more easily resolved from a financial point of view by a growing population.

Crowding and Crime

Another favourite "problem" of populationists is crime. A classic example of this was a full-page advertisement in the *New York Times* sponsored by a group called the Campaign to Check the Population Explosion. Under the headline "Have you ever been mugged? Well, you may be" was a picture of a man grappling with a mugger. "Is there an answer [to crime in the cities]?" the ad copy asked. "Yes," it responded, "birth control is one."

Major central cities such as New York do, in fact, have the highest crime rates. But these cities are losing, not gaining, population. Shall we therefore conclude that crime increases as population decreases?

Of course, juvenile delinquency goes up disproportionately during a period of population growth because there are more young people around in relation to the rest of the population. The ad also calls attention to this fact with the statement: "City slums — jam-packed with

...thousands of them idle-breed discon-
g addiction and chaos."

...side-in-cheekwise, population control is
...of, yes, an "answer" to the so-called "youth
problem." But an answer which involves solv-
ing problems simply by eliminating people who
have or cause the problems hardly merits seri-
ous consideration as a legitimate solution.

Population Density

What about overcrowding? At 55 persons
per square mile, the United States is one of the
least densely populated countries in the world.
Holland, for example, has 975 persons per
square mile; England, 588; Switzerland, 382.

Overcrowding in the U.S. is a function of
population distribution, not population size. And
people congregate, i.e., overcrowd, in metropoli-
tan areas for their mutual advantage. This is
what metropolitan areas are all about.

But even in these areas population density
is decreasing with the continuing exodus of
people from central cities to suburbs. This de-
centralization was initially made possible by
improvements in transportation. It is now be-
ing further hastened by revolutionary improve-
ments in electronic communications which are
rapidly minimizing the need for centralized
paper-shuffling and face-o-face contacts.

Nobody anticipates that the United States
will run out of resources in the next 50 years
due to population growth. Beyond that, it is
difficult to speculate or, to put it another way,
it is only possible to speculate because we are
not sure of the full extent of existing resources
or what new resources may be developed. Fur-
thermore, many resources now being consumed
and discarded will increasingly be reused in the
future should prices rise due to growing scar-
cities and the addition of pollution charges to
processing costs.

Meanwhile, those who weep because Ame-
ricans constitute only 6 per cent of the world's
population but consume 40 per cent of the
world's annual resource output should dry their
eyes. Economies of underdeveloped countries
around the world are dependent for their survi-
val on the income derived from this consump-
tion. Reduce or eliminate it and we will really
find out what problems are like.

It is a rote assertion of populationists that
per capita income will not keep pace, i.e., we
will be forced to accept lower living standards,
as population increases. There is, of course no-
thing in our previous economic history to indi-
cate that increases in per capita income cannot
proceed side-by-side with population growth;
the exact opposite is the case. Nor is there any-
thing in our present circumstances to support
this supposition or its converse that per capita
income will increase as population growth
decreases, e.g., West Virginia whose population
is declining is not noted for booming per capita

income.

Per capita income is a function of produc-
tivity as well as population. A growing popula-
tion makes possible improvements in produc-
tivity which are more than a match for popu-
lation growth, thus resulting in increasing per
capita income.

"Public Sector" Problems

It is also said by population control promo-
ters that growing population will outstrip the
capabilities of Federal, state and local govern-
ments to provide services to the people. But, if
this is really the case, it can be more readily
taken as a mandate for more efficient govern-
mental operation and greater concentration on
the provision of essential governmental services
rather than a rationale for population reduction.
The idea of eliminating people to make things
easier for government is a rather grotesque
perversion of the American political promise.

The lack of any major cause-and-effect
relationship between population growth and
the problems it supposedly causes prompted
Conrad Taeuber, associate director of the U.S.
Census, to observe: "Our population problem is
one of tackling the agenda for improvement of
our total environment. A lowered rate of popu-
lation growth may facilitate the tackling of
those tasks — but it would be only one small
element in the programs which need to be deve-
loped."

3) **Population control in the United States
will not solve any problems.** The purpose of
population control is to reduce population
growth. But population growth is not a major
cause of any problems. Therefore, reducing
population growth through population control
will not solve any problems.

This is another way of saying that it is
simplistic nonsense to suggest, as the report of
The Commission on Population Growth and the
American Future does, that increases in the
"quality of life" — the Commission's favourite
"buzz" phrase — can be achieved through de-
creases in the quantity of people. There is no
automatic, inverse relationship between people
quality and people quantity.

It is true, of course, that wherever there
are people there are problems. But this is a
description of the human condition, not a pre-
scription for population control.

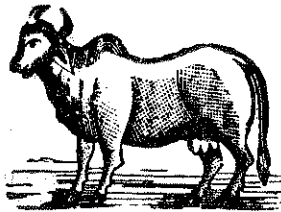
In a creative, free and rightly ordered so-
ciety, people solve more problems than they
make. This is the source of increasing life
quality.

It is unlimited government of the type re-
quired to achieve the stated goals of population
control that makes more problems than it solves.

—Freeman

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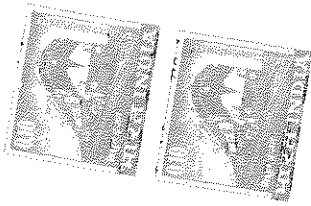
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