

# frontier

Vol. 1: No. 19

AUGUST 17, 1968

PRICE 35 PAISE

## On Other Pages

COMMENTS ..	2
VIEW FROM DELHI	
THE STENCH OF CORRUPTION	
FROM A POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT ..	4
ASSAM AND OIL	
FROM A CORRESPONDENT ..	5
CALCUTTA DIARY	
CHARAN GUPTA ..	7
WRONG THINKING ON FRANCE	
ASHOK RUDRA ..	8
LETTER FROM AMERICA	
THE WHITE BACKLASH	
ROBI CHAKRAVORTI ..	14
THE PRESS	
THE BOARD THAT FAILED ..	15
BANGASRI'S BENJU	
RUDRAPRASAD SEN GUPTA ..	17
LETTERS ..	17

Editor : Samar Sen

PRINTED AT MODERN INDIA PRESS,  
7, RAJA SUBODH MULICK SQUARE,  
CALCUTTA-13 AND PUBLISHED WEEKLY  
BY SAMAR SEN FROM 61, MOTT LANE,  
CALCUTTA-13

## FIRST SIX MONTHS

IN another few days President's rule, which, in the present circumstances, is a constitutional illusion for Congress government, will be six months old in West Bengal. As there is no possibility of the mid-term poll being held before November, an extension of the present regime by another term can be taken for granted. Already the State Government has sent a report to the Centre about how immensely the situation has improved under the care of the Governor, implying that a few more extensions of President's rule may solve all problems of West Bengal. A separate report on the law and order situation has been submitted, presumably because the Centre's reluctant intervention in the State was compelled by a total breakdown of law and order. This report is remarkable in its originality, for it contends that incidence of crimes is not a reliable index of law and order. The novel theory has been put forth to sustain the claim that the law and order situation in West Bengal has improved, though statistics, even police statistics, reveal an increase in the number of crimes. The Governor himself appears to be a champion of this theory, for he recently said that what really mattered was the sense of security among the people; this time last year women were afraid to move about in Calcutta streets, but they are not so now. The shaft was obviously aimed at the UF regime, though in the last six months the biggest armed robbery in memory has been committed in Calcutta and there have been more murders than the average. The reports will no doubt be ritually circulated to members of Parliament so that they may vote for an extension of President's rule.

It is no use pretending that all those who had clamoured for President's rule in West Bengal sought it as an unavoidable prelude to a mid-term poll. There were some who, sick of the ways of politicians, had thought that a dose of permanent officials, unfettered by party considerations, might do the State some good. But they had not bargained for a non-government, for that is what West Bengal has at present. The Secretariat is in a state of somnolence, and for most of the officers President's rule has become a long, long holiday. The Governor, who had to visit New Delhi frequently last year to attend marriages in the family, is maintaining the routine; he seems determined to attend as many meetings in the capital as were used to be attended by an entire council of ministers. He is

also a great one for public relations. All these can only be at the cost of administration, especially when that person is responsible for everything without himself being responsible to none. The promises that he made at the beginning of President's rule remain unfulfilled; no serious attempt was made to carry them out. The relation between the Governor and a group of permanent officials is not ideal; whatever initiative some officials might have had in the past is lost, for they have realised that all that they will be called upon to do even in emergencies, like the flood in Midnapore or water-logging in Calcutta, is to pay ceremonial visits to the affected areas and leave the distressed to their fate. Already five aerial surveys of the flooded areas of Midnapore have been made, but not one officer from Calcutta has been sent to the district.

The inaction at the top has encouraged local satraps. The police have again become ubiquitous; truck-loads of them can be seen at places where they have no business to be, like the newspaper offices where the employees are on strike. In the rural areas they have become more aggressive and are working in liaison with the vested interests. Reports of large-scale eviction of licensees from vested lands by jotedars in collusion with the police and the local authorities have been received from many districts, and any attempt to resist such eviction is being dubbed "Naxalbari-type" agitation. Arrests of political workers under the Preventive Detention Act have started while the detenus held earlier continue to languish in jails. In the industrial field the employers, aided by the police and abetted by the Government, are on the warpath. More than a lakh of workers have been retrenched or laid off during the period. The Government contests this figure, but even on its own admission, there were strikes, lock-outs and closures in 100 industrial units in the State at the end of last month. A firm more than 100 years old has been closed down in Calcutta and the strike of about 10,000 workers in a well-known industrial under-

taking is about to enter its fifth month. Three of the major industries in the State, jute, cotton textile, and engineering, are in a state of ferment, but the employers are unbending. The seasonal unrest over bonus is almost upon us, and with the employers in a vengeful mood nobody knows what

the coming months have in store. President's rule has given a foretaste of what the shape of things will be if the Congress is returned to power; it has freed the forces of reaction so that all their support may be available to the Congress in the mid-term poll.

## This And That

Despite extensive floods in West Bengal Mr Atulya Ghosh has made no further attempt to get the elections postponed. There is little solicitude now about water-logged villagers being deprived of the precious right to vote. In fact, the cynical think that the floods may prove a godsend to the Congress. It is the Congress which has units operating even in remote villages, thanks to our own structure of Basic Democracy. The money for flood relief will pass through the Block Development Officers to the Anchal parishads packed with Congressmen, and on the lists drawn up by the parishads will depend the immediate lot of thousands uprooted by the floods. The Congress, as a party, has also an organisation to arrange relief on a much bigger scale than the United Front can afford or is prepared to. Immediate relief on a generous scale is likely to blunt the past memory in villages of Congress misrule and sharpen the recent one of UF inefficiency. The impact of votes in cities might thus be swamped by the countryside—making our parliamentary Lin Piaos look more lean and hungry, but not dangerous. And if, belying election forecasts, the UF rides to power again, is there much that it will be able to do the administration being what it is? Of course, membership of some parties will register a rise and there will be talk again of the Sonarpur way to a unique transformation of the countryside, meaning, in practice, mobile courts to encourage the landless to press their claims, and police camps to curb them. As the situation gets worse, a sort of pious fraudulence becomes inseparable from both our saints and politicians.

Looking beyond our nose—August 15 is a day of stocktaking—it is a time of contradictions, with people resolved to be as far as possible from those who are near and those who should matter. A New Delhi news-item has to quote the Voice of America for something that happens in Kusthia, next door in East Pakistan. The conference on science and technology is agitated by rumours that the Chinese are coming, but the delegates turn out to be from Taiwan, an island we do not recognise. With over 37,000 engineers unemployed, Mrs Gandhi urges Indians to reduce by half our dependence on foreign assistance and know-how within the next five years. There is great relief—we share it too—that the Defence Minister escaped unhurt when his car dashed against a bullock cart, but what about the cart-driver? In a way the incident is symbolical—Kampala against bullock-cart, the VIP against the cart-driver. The China fever covers up some queer contradictions—persistent official reports of Chinese arms captured at the Naga camp in Kohima, while Mrs Gandhi admits in Parliament not knowing whether all these were Chinese or had been captured from the Indian army in previous encounters. Mrs Gandhi wants the American bombing of North Vietnam to stop, but doesn't she know that large quantities of Indian steel—sinews of war—are being shipped to Saigon via Thailand? The radical parties in Calcutta which now and then organise Vietnam rallies seem to be oblivious of what is going on at the Kidderpore docks. Perhaps because this just cannot be fitted into the scheme of the mid-term election.

The national holiday on August 15 is thus a holiday from the sense of purpose, direction and honour that makes a nation. Perhaps it cannot be

otherwise: the day is ghost-ridden, the ghosts of the massacred mocking at the hoax of a peaceful transfer of power.

## Science For The Poor

Anyone with the slightest acquaintance with international conferences can well imagine the scene in New Delhi where well-fed, well-dressed people from various parts of the world have been going through the motions of considering scientific solutions to the problems of the poor and the wretched of the earth. These are a wonderful invention of the age, these international jamborees. You travel to some foreign land at somebody else's expense, go through a round of receptions and sight-seeing tours, savour such other entertainment as might be available, do your duty by sitting through a few conference sessions distinguished only by elaborate procedure—or, if you are exceptionally earnest or have special ambitions, occasionally participate in some profoundly unreal discussion—get a little tired at the end, buy a few souvenirs and return home to wait for the next such opportunity. So a variety of so-called experts—ministers, planners, administrators, science bosses (perhaps also a few genuine scientists on holiday) and, above all, a number of overpaid international civil servants—sembled in New Delhi at the Conference on the Application of Science to the Development of Asia. The starving millions of this continent can now look forward to a magical end to their misery.

In any event, there has been no dearth of pious expressions, cliché piled upon cliché oozing concern and sympathy for poor people and poor nations. The widening gulf between the rich and the poor nations, said Mrs Gandhi, was "one of the sharpest causes of tension in the world, causing situations which are explosive and exploitable". Not to be outdone in the choice of a quotable phrase, Dr Triguna Sen, the Education Minister, declared Asian poverty as "a menace to those who occupy seats of power".

But behind the verbiage can also be seen the characteristic attitude of people who hope to maintain their authority in poor and restive nations only with the help of prosperous protectors in other lands. The Prime Minister was evidently less concerned about the fact of poverty than about the disaffection that misery might breed, disaffection which might be "exploited" by what is usually described as "interested parties". In other words, unless the affluent nations of the West pour more into the begging bowls of supplicant Asian governments, the latter may find it difficult to keep their people free from the influence of subversive ideas. Dr Sen was more specific. These governments, so faithful to the West, would be in danger if something was not done to pacify the poor; so, wouldn't the Western masters help, please?

The ostensible appeal, of course, is for scientific and technological aid or, more euphemistically co-operation. As if scientific and technological growth is in itself a sufficient condition for the eradication of poverty and other socio-economic ills. Were it so, the Negroes in the United States—in fact, even sections of the white population—would not have lived in such pitiable conditions as they do even after the marvellous achievements of American science and technology. Mrs Gandhi talked about the widening gulf between the rich and the poor nations, but what about the widening gulf between the rich and the poor in a poor country like India? Standards of living—need we remind our progressive Prime Minister?—are not only a matter of production, but also of distribution. Even for higher and better production with the help of science and technology, the most effective guarantee is a purposeful national will, which the ruling classes in countries like India have failed to generate and ins-

pire. A striking measure of this failure is the sad performance of the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research, whose silver jubilee is now being celebrated with such fanfare. Self-reliance has remained an empty phrase and is unlikely to acquire meaning from the platitudes exchanged at international conferences or the self-congratulatory verbiage released on ceremonial occasions.



For FRONTIER readers in  
West India can contact  
S. D. CHANDAVARKAR  
10, Kanara House  
Mogal Lane, Mahim  
Bombay-16

For FRONTIER contact  
MAHADEB DAS  
12, Chandra Sekhar Mukherjee  
Road  
P.O. Khagra  
Dist. Murshidabad

## The Stench Of Corruption

FROM A POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

NO Congress leader has ever gone into political wilderness merely because he was guilty of some impropriety. Mr K. D. Malaviya, whom the late Mr Nehru jettisoned, was no more guilty than most of his Cabinet colleagues. Mr T. T. Krishnamachari had to go, not because any charge of corruption had been proved against him but the late Mr Shastri found that the Gujarat lobby's crash campaign against the Madras Minister could be put to good use. Before the 1967 elections, Mrs Indira Gandhi would rather let the country gain the impression that she was shielding an assortment of corrupt ministers than to demand the resignation of any one of them. Therefore the schoolboyish excitement in some New Delhi circles over the photostats of some documents proving the business connections of Mr Morarji Desai's son, Mr Kanti Desai, would appear pointless and puerile.

In Parliament, it is a very narrow issue remaining to be clinched if it comes up again at all: whether Mr Morarji Desai had committed a breach of privilege of the Lok Sabha when he denied that his son had any subsisting business connections after he became the father's private secretary. The photostat documents now being circulated appear to contradict Mr Morarji Desai's assertion.

This is not to question the bona fides of the MPs seeking to raise the issue in Parliament. What indeed is interesting is the role of certain political parties and certain sections of the Big Biz lobby outside Parliament.

Assuming it is established that Mr Morarji Desai had misled the House through his self-righteous statements, it would still have to be established that he was doing so deliberately. And again, even if it is true that Mr Kanti Desai has been the paid director of a company getting a percentage on sales as commission in addition to a fixed

salary even as he was his father's personal private secretary, it would still have to be proved that Mr Morarji Desai favoured this particular firm because of his son's connection with it. So what comes out of the entire effort?

The MPs who have been raising the issue and want to raise it again might be unaware of the various forces at work. Already, the Desai lobby seems to have sensed danger to the Great One's position as Number 2 in the Cabinet and has begun a massive campaign to defend him. The anti-Desai lobby in the Congress Parliamentary Party now extends to the CPI which should not be surprising in the least. One of the CPI's whispering insiders has been peddling the photostats and the CPI's official weekly is very much a part of the game. This is not to suggest that Moscow is directing the anti-Desai campaign but the CPI leadership seems convinced that it is pulling off nothing short of a mid-term revolution if they get Mr Morarji Desai out of the Cabinet.

For all that one knows, Mr Desai would survive the crisis without much loss of face. By Congress standards, no Minister is called upon to resign merely because his son has been getting a fantastic salary from a firm for no work in particular. Many sons of Ministers must be getting such payments.

Mr Desai would go only if Mrs Indira Gandhi begins to feel it was time the old man left. The lobby campaign would come in handy for her. But Mrs Gandhi is just not in a position to lose Mr Morarji Desai who is her only foil against Mr Chavan.

Who took the Ahmedabad daily *Sandesh* known for its fierce loyalty to Mr Desai for a ride last week is still a mystery. The paper carried an eight-column story announcing his resignation and credited it to its corres-

pondent in New Delhi. The paper now claims it was the victim of a hoax on the telephone. But there is more than meets the eye to the "hoax". According to the political grapevine in Ahmedabad, the resignation story was contrived by someone to make some quick money on the stock market before the contradiction came.

But after the hoax, the telephone of every Gujarati correspondent in New Delhi is being tapped and the intelligence men are trying to locate the culprit. Does the Centre's intelligence wing swing into action every time a story of ministerial resignation proves wrong or is it because someone is keen on knowing who is running the campaign against Mr Desai? Only Mr Chavan could provide the answer.

### A Vacancy

New Delhi is one sprawling underworld of lobbies functioning surreptitiously. The post of the Attorney-General has always been a political one and the choice for the post has been the unquestioned privilege of the ruling party. But Mr C. K. Daphary's place is vacant and there are many claimants and many lobbies behind the claimants. The Swatantra lobby wanted Mr Palkhivala, a famous income-tax lawyer who lost India's case before the Kutch tribunal. Then the CPI rushed in, canvassing in favour of one of their former members, Mr Mohan Kumaramangalam, who as a member of its National Council had negotiated terms for his appointment as the Advocate-General of Madras.

The choice is now between Mr Kumaramangalam and Mr Niren De, who is the Solicitor-General, but the Swatantra and Jana Sangh MPs are out to raise hell if Mr Kumaramangalam were to be appointed. The stake the CPI leadership has acquired even in the routine decisions of Mrs Gandhi's Cabinet is intriguing. Its former members might have strayed from the Communist International into Air-India International (with scholarships for children in Moscow's Lumumba University to boot) but the party itself is a happy feudal family where the prodigals are more acceptable than old faithfuls.

What many wonder is if the stage has been reached when posts like that of the Attorney-General have to be filled in consultation with this party or that.

### India-China

Listen to them and you would be impressed. Everyone talks of making up with China and Pakistan these days and seems to assume that after all the years of drift in our policies, we still have the options, a whole series of them, on such matters. Even the Government seems to think so.

The Government has suddenly realised the need to "probe" the Chinese mind. Or else, the editor of a certain tabloid weekly (whose classic piece once appeared under the screaming heading: GIVE CHINA A BLOODY NOSE) would not have been allowed to meet the Chinese Charge d' Affaires in New Delhi at a private dinner. It had the obvious connivance of the Government. Later at a Chinese Embassy reception, of the seen Indian guests who attended one was the political correspondent of India's most conservative daily, again with the Government's connivance.

New Delhi is credited with a desire to exchange an ambassador with Peking. The relations have been at the Charge d' Affaires level after New Delhi's recall of Mr G. Parthasarathy for no particular reason. The Chinese were not informed of India's decision to reduce the status of our mission and after quite some time, the Chinese for reasons of sheer protocol were forced to recall their ambassador in New Delhi. But India had never formally told China that it was recalling her ambassador. Mr G. Parthasarathy came home and never returned to his post.

Any decision to send an ambassador to Peking would have to await Soviet clearance, it would seem. It is fairly certain that Soviet clearance would depend upon who is chosen for the assignment. Already there are reports that the said editor of the tabloid weekly will be India's ambassador to Peking. To give China a diplomatic "bloody nose"?

August 11, 1967

## Oil And Assam

FROM A CORRESPONDENT

THINGS are looking as if they are again going to hot up in Assam. Last month, there was an 'All Assam Convention' which, in spite of some in-fighting that went on (about which, in a while), ultimately resolved to carry on an agitation demanding the setting up of another oil refinery in the public sector in the Assam region. August 23 is going to be observed as a 'Demand Day' and a general strike is scheduled. The convention was fairly representative of all shades of political opinion in Assam, and if the Congress was not a party to it, it was definitely not because it is indifferent to the demand. At a different level, the Assam Government is itself trying to put pressure on the Centre to decide in favour of Assam when it finally selects a site for the proposed refinery.

What are the issues involved? The first refinery in the public sector in India was set up in Assam following prolonged agitation by the people of the State. But the capacity of the refinery was only 75 million tonnes, and the major portion of the crude oil from the Assam fields was piped all the way to Barauni to be refined at the larger refinery set up there (2 million tonnes capacity.) It is difficult to see why the refinery was set up at Barauni, which of course is not a producing centre, nor, in any significant way, a major consuming centre. As is well known, historically, the trend in oil refining has been to shift the refineries from the producing centres to ports, and from ports to actual consuming centres. Oil would be struck in an under-developed country, the Western countries would help in its exploration, set up the first refineries close to the oil fields, but progressively shift major refining installations to ports in their own countries, and still later, closer to their major cities. Thus, the first refineries were in the oil-producing regions of Arabia and the Persian Gulf; later, the crude oil

from these regions was shipped to Western countries to be refined in refineries set up there. One major reason for this trend has been the fear of the Western countries of possible future nationalisation of extensive refining facilities by any progressive government in an underdeveloped country. The lessons of Persia in 1951-54 have not been forgotten by the Western Powers, and they are naturally anxious to avoid any future complications.

But it is difficult to see why such a pattern has to be followed in India as well, unless the Government has secret fears about possible developments in Assam culminating in loss of the refining installations to the GOI. In whose minds the links binding Assam to the rest of India are tenuous—the GOI's or the people of Assam? This has never been honestly faced. Nobody wants to discuss this question. So the question is still discussed, at least in print and public utterances, purely at the economic level. The argument put forward by the Ministry of Petroleum and Chemicals invariably follows the Western rationale: though plenty of crude oil is produced in Assam (and more in the offing, consequent upon the discovery of new oil deposits recently), it is not profitable to refine the oil in Assam; it would be more profitable to pipe it to a major consuming centre and refine it there. The consequence was the refinery at Barauni, which is fed entirely by crude mined in the Eastern region. But what is now demanded is a new refinery (and a petro-chemical complex arising out of it) which can absorb all the crude produced in this region. What is going to happen to the Barauni refinery is not given much thought to. As it is, there are two refineries in Assam, and these, with the Barauni refinery, not merely absorb all the crude produced in this region, but are capable of absorbing any future increase in

production which might come about as a result of expansion (or at least till the ONGC crude production reaches about six million tonnes). But the argument of the oil refinery Convention is that it is no good waiting for Assam to evolve into a consuming centre ; such a thing will not happen unless the region is first industrialized, and only oil can serve as the basis for a future industrialisation of this State. Another argument is that it is not always necessary to consume all the products of a refinery in the producing area. It is argued that it is far cheaper to pipe refined products than it is to pipe crude oil. (At this stage, the questions become technical, with conflicting figures regarding the thickness of pipe required to pipe finished products as against crude oil, the high viscosity of crude oil, the wearing down of the pipe over the years, maintenance costs &c). But a more legitimate complaint is that Assam loses quite a large amount of revenue as a result of Assam crude being refined outside the State. The sales tax on the refined product is levied at the delivery site, and this money now naturally accrues to the Bihar Government. But behind all

these complex economic factors is a visceral factor. Oil is an Assamese product, and the people of Assam should derive the major benefit from it. It might sound irrational, but is not the less real for being irrational.

Meanwhile, as usual, the Government of India has not made things any easier. Mr Mehta (who enjoyed a brief spell of popularity in the Brahmaputra Valley over his Assam reorganization proposals) is now decidedly unpopular, with his haughty rejection of the demand for a second refinery in the State. But of course, it would be too much to expect the Government of India to make up its mind and stick to it, particularly in a matter of policy affecting the whole country. When Mrs Gandhi was here last month, at great expense to the taxpayer, to make an aerial survey of the flood-affected areas (surely a very picturesque sight from up above the air, and incidentally quite an event in itself, as is evident from this piece of news in the *Assam Tribune*, dated July 9, 1968 : "In a scramble for seats in the 17-seater Air Force Avro aircraft which took the Prime Minister and party to Lila-bari, in North Lakhimpur, politicians got in and Sri Momin, the Chief Engineer for Flood Control, Assam, was dropped out"), she is reported to have promised both the Assam Cabinet and a students' delegation to reconsider the question of the site for the coming refinery. Followed the speech by Mr Mehta on the Government of India's oil policy, which again seemed to rule out the possibility of a second refinery in the public sector in Assam.

Meanwhile, things are smouldering here. Since early this month, the students of Gauhati University have been on strike against the increase of fees by the University. It is hoped that things will settle down in a while, that some understanding would be arrived at between the striking students and the university authorities. But if the strike goes on for a long time, and if the refinery movement gathers momentum, it is quite likely that soon we shall have a major agitation on our hands. An agitation by itself is neutral. It is what one agi-

tates against, and the manner of the agitation that invests it with some meaning, some measure of legitimacy and justice. On the face of it, both the agitation for a second refinery and the agitation against the increase of fees seem perfectly legitimate. The demand for a second refinery is even supported by perfectly credible economic data, and right now, both the Assam Government and the Refinery Convention are busy preparing elaborate briefs supported by authoritative facts, figures etc, to press their demand. But there is at least the possibility of the agitation getting out of control. And this brings us to the internal wrangles at the Refinery Convention itself. At the opening of the convention, there was some trouble between a group of young men and the majority of delegates over the propriety of an organization called 'Assam Merchants' Association' assigning to itself the role of the 'sponsor' of the convention in newspaper advertisements which appeared on the opening day of the convention. What the Assam Merchants' Association had actually done was to make a substantial financial contribution ; but this by itself would not make it the 'sponsor' of a convention which was sponsored by all the political parties of the State (barring the Congress), several semi-political and cultural organizations &c. When this writer talked to various people associated with the convention, there was an almost universal anxiety to minimise the significance of the objections raised, and a desire to characterise the young men as mischief makers, chauvinists etc. Maybe. Maybe, people are anxious to avoid any repetition of January 26. But one could not help noticing an excess of defensiveness in these protestations of broad-based, all-embracing solidarity. Assamese and non-Assamese, Marwaris and Muslims, all are together in this truly 'integrated' movement. But the Assam Merchants' Association is not exactly a philanthropic set-up, and it would do nobody any good, in the long run, to avoid looking at facts. The motivations are even more important than gestures.

---

### *Forces of Disintegration*

*Deserve A Rebuff !*

## MELJOL

THE NEW HINDI FORTNIGHTLY

HITS HARD AT THE HATED

COMMUNALISTS

Per Copy: 10 p. Yearly: Rs. 3

1, Grand Trunk Road, Lukerganj,

ALLAHABAD

---

# Calcutta Diary

CHARAN GUPTA

IT was such a charming letter to the Editor: short, making the point with a forthrightness so rare in these loquacious days: enough of politics is enough, my sense of irritation spilloth over my feeling of affection for the journal, will you please switch over to more non-political themes, or else... death and damnation for you.

Emotionally, most of us are with the letter-writer. Most of us would like to get away from it all—from the dreary flow of polemics every week, from the theorisations and argumentations, from this business of running down easy-on-the-eye ladies and apparently gentle men, from the cacophony of invectives, naming names and revolution-mongering in the abstract. We shall pledge allegorical kingdom for a little more of 'culture' in this journal. We could, for instance, discuss Rilke's or somebody else's poetry, the mating habits of sub-tropical birds, the absurdity of the Theatre of the Absurd; we could even enquire, "Tennis, any one?" Unfortunately, when the *alap* ends and *raga* begins, we discover that there is no getting away from the underlying determinism. There is too much of hunger and squalor around; lack of sewerage, lack of power supply, lack of transport and housing. Meanwhile, a few ragamuffins are stamping it away: they are also the ones—the only ones—who can afford to buy luxury editions and LP records. It is difficult to pass over the indecency in all this. Apart from everything else, one's sense of aesthetics is offended by the asymmetry: the sales of airconditioners in the country quadrupling in the last three years while teachers are being doled out starvation wages, clerks are being thrown out of jobs, and hospitals refusing to admit patients for lack of space and equipment. So this journal is stuck with its politics—and with its relative lack of culture. Maybe there is little of culture in our politics, but, as one looks around, one is appalled to find that, even in the world of so-called 'pure' culture, poli-

tics is not an altogether unknown category. I am not even talking of the aggressive cultural freedom-wallas; the squabbles and acrimonies in the wake of the 'all-India' poets' conference, organised some four months ago here in Calcutta, are of more direct relevance. There is no 'peace' in poetry either.

Permit me, therefore, to write some more on 'political' matters. Each year, it is in the rainy season that the woeful inadequacies of civic amenities in this huge megalopolis are revealed in a starker form. The CMPO, the Ford Foundation experts, even the advent of Shri Shri Dharma Vira, have not made the slightest difference: Calcutta's problems grow a little more intractable week by week and month by month. Not that there is much lack of awareness of what are the several things that need be done. The basic issue is one of finance: all you need to salvage Calcutta are funds. The Corporation—and forget the poor Mayor who couldn't resist the temptation of a few weeks' good time in the United States—has to manage with less than Rs. 20 crores annually; in contrast, Bombay gets almost five times as much. By now, several crores of rupees have been wasted on the CMPO and the Foundation pundits: the end-product has been a junk of papers. The money would have been infinitely better spent if it were used, for example, to buy a few hundred suction pumps to drain away the flood water. Eight years ago, the World Bank estimated that an expenditure of Rs 200 crores will be enough to save and 'renew' Calcutta. New Delhi was very curt: it had no such money to waste on Calcutta, its priorities were different. The priorities continue to be different. I won't mention the eleven hundred crores which are being charmed away in the name of defence expenditure—following the Soviet arms deal with Pakistan, our defence budget in the coming year

is certainly going to jump by another couple of hundred crores—; let me pick a more humdrum example. More than two million tonnes of wheat have been procured this year from Punjab, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh. The Government agents—the Food Corporation included—bought all this wheat from the traders in the *mandis* at around Rs 80 per quintal. To all accounts, the traders paid the farmers only Rs 50 per quintal. Thus, New Delhi's munificence allowed the traders to net a margin of Rs 30 per quintal of wheat; for the aggregate of 2 million tonnes the handout amounts to Rs 60 crores. New Delhi, however, has no money to spare for Calcutta.

And it has no intention to join the fray on behalf of the striking newspaper employees. Such things, the Government of India has decided, is best left to mutual bargaining between the employers and the employees. The latter are fighting to enforce the recommendations of a *Government-appointed* Wage Board, but so what. A return to the *laissez faire* jungle is indicated because the chances are that thereby the employees would possibly be taught a lesson, something which would gladden this class-biased Government's heart. This doctrine was not quoted last year, when employees were laying siege against the employers: a thing like *gherao* was not deemed fit to be left to mutual bargaining between the employers and the employees. No, there is no trace of even an iota of culture in the Government's politics.

So there it is, and there is a danger that the strike of the newspaper employees might go the way several other strikes have gone this year. These are bad times, and trade union cohesion has not been such as to meet the combined aggressiveness of the employers and the Government. And yet, at least in so far as the newspaper strike is concerned, this is not the entire story. Even in the capitalist, imperialist United States of America, when a newspaper strike is called, the unions enjoin that even those papers which are outside the dispute are closed down, for otherwise the

impact of the strike on the general public is lost. Where the papers which are not party to the dispute are not closed down, the precaution is taken to freeze their print orders at the pre-strike figures; any extra import of newspapers from other cities is also vetoed. But just watch what is happening here: some people's perseverance has merely provided some others with the opportunity to make hay. In Calcutta, Bombay and New Delhi, employees of a majority of the newspapers have struck, but there is no total shutdown of the media, for the employees of some of the lesser papers, for various reasons, have referred to fall in. Some of the so-called "progressive" papers, while positively oozing with sympathies for the striking employees, have merrily proceeded to double or triple their print orders. And don't ask where they get the paper to print all these extra copies: for all one can surmise, some of the strike-bound papers will be only too happy to accommodate the bazaar "progressives" with amenities in case such accommodation will help to kill the strike.

\* \*

Even if I were steeped only in culture, and were altogether innocent of politics, I would still have come out in support of the striking newspaper employees. I miss my morning papers, but missing the papers has its positive aspect: I don't have to read about the daily exploits of the Governor of West Bengal. Over-exposure makes a man funny. In this case, there is of course ground for controversy: being funny perhaps is the inexorable fate of anybody holding that particular position.

---

FRONTIER is available at  
DESABHIMANI BOOKSTALL  
Main Road  
Trivandrum-1

---

For FRONTIER contact  
SANYAL BROS.  
26, Main Road  
Jamshedpur-1

## Wrong Thinking On France

ASHOK RUDRA

THE train of wrong thinking on France on the part of B. P. Adhikari (July 13) and many others—stems from the actually erroneous premise that "wherever the workers intransigently occupied factories, they did not seriously want control either of the government or even of the factories. They only made quantitative demands of an exorbitant salary increase..." "Quantitative demands" is a phrase that Adhikari uses repeatedly. And this he does to calumnise the French workers in as bad a fashion as one can. "They did take advantage of the mood created by the rebellious students, but did so for quantitative demands". One has to look through the wrong side of a very powerful telescope to reduce the epoch-making happenings in France to such banal dimensions.

Yet de Gaulle in his speech of May 30 said that after having deeply pondered over the consequences of his actions he has resolved: "In the present circumstances I shall not retire". Where did the question of de Gaulle's retiring come from if the workers were interested only in such demands "which are negotiable and were negotiated"? That it was not sheer demagoguery on the part of de Gaulle, that he did seriously consider bowing out before what he considered was a massive popular demand for his departure is indicated by the fact that de Gaulle, before making his resolution, had visited his army chiefs and had obtained from them assurances of support in case of a civil war in exchange of the release of some imprisoned OAS leaders. Why was this necessary if nobody was threatening civil war, if workers were only interested in negotiating wage increases? And how come that the negotiation of negotiable quantitative demands called for such drastic political actions as the dissolution of the National Assembly and re-election?

It is not necessary to labour the

point any further. The ten million workers of France did not spontaneously resort to a general strike, bringing the whole economy to a standstill for about three weeks, just to gain some wage increases and improvement in service conditions, which they knew, given the unchanged condition of capitalist production, would be wiped off in no time by the consequent inflationary price rise. De Gaulle did not declare a referendum to "prescribe a far-reaching reform of our economy and our university" in the absence of a nationwide demand for such reforms. He did not offer workers participation in management—however vacuous the reform may turn out to be in practice—in the absence of any such demand from workers themselves. But why do we require all this indirect evidence when there is direct evidence? Is it not a fact that when the communist trade union leaders emerged from rue de Grenelle thinking themselves victorious after having extracted from Pompidou substantial concessions precisely on exorbitant quantitative demands, they were received by striking workers with catcalls, and it took the communist leaders another one or two weeks before they succeeded in making the striking workers resume work?

I think the calumny that the workers of France were interested only in short-run material benefits can be laid to rest once for all if one examined the demands they were fighting for in each individual case. Thus, let us consider the strike that crippled the radio-television network at a time when de Gaulle had the greatest need to utilise this medium of mass contact, which he has always used with so much effectiveness, while preventing the opposition parties from any access to it. Of all the strikes, this lasted the longest. Here is what some of the striking technicians had to say:

"What has started the movement is shame. A shame that all of us have

felt since Saturday morning, May 11, after the night of barricades in rue Gay Lussac. The previous evening, in the programme 'Panorama' a news-reel on the student movement prepared by Michel Honorin had been suppressed on orders of the Minister of Information, M Gosse. During one week, the student demonstrations had constituted the most important news and none of it had appeared on the screen of the television . . . . . Then, on Saturday morning we all realised that it was no more possible for us to deal with information in a place which turns its back upon information, a place which had become for us, all of a sudden, dishonourable . . . . . That very day the fundamental principle of the autonomy of television was adopted unanimously . . . . ."

Fundamental principle of freedom in the distribution of news—this does not sound very much like a quantitative demand, does it? In the world of cinema, directors of such eminence as Jean Luc Godard and Truffaut took the initiative in preventing the Cannes film festival from taking place; and workers in the film industry worked upon programmes for the nationalisation of the distributive trade, workers' self-management in the film business, abolition of censors, liaison between cinema and television etc. The high-school teachers were concerned mainly with a fundamental re-organisation of the highly centralised educational administration of the country, involving greater participation of the teachers in that administration and participation of students and parents in the running of schools. Examples can be multiplied, but ought to be unnecessary. It should have been clear to anybody who followed the events in France that it was deep-seated dissatisfaction with the condition of bourgeois society and not exorbitant quantitative demands that united in a general strike people who were otherwise divided in more than one way—students and workers who openly disagreed on several matters; technicians, white-collar workers, and manual labourers; communists, social democrats and li-

berals; university professors and the people of the theatre world, including the strip girls of Folies Bergere. There is another point to be made here. Is there not such a thing somewhere in Marx or Engels that quantitative changes beyond a certain point give rise to qualitative changes? Whatever might have been the demands, can one fail to take into account any analysis of the fact that the general strike involved as many as 10 million workers and lasted as long as 3 weeks, unprecedented in the entire history of capital-labour conflict in Western Europe? Can one also fail to take note of the new forms which the workers' aggression took—occupation of factories and all other places of work and gherao of top management personnel?

#### Communist Role

The 'talk of workers' demands having been exclusively of the quantitative nature has however its roots in reality; and the reality is that, while the spontaneous uprising of workers was not caused by any petty economism, it is indeed to that end that the aspirations of the workers were reduced on the bargain counter by the communist trade union leaders who represented them there against the Government and the employers. And this brings us to the very heart of the story.

One need not have any disagreement with Adhikari when he writes, "The French working people are not itching for a fight to do away with the capitalist class". But one wonders whether it is either possible or important to know about the itches of workers. It is also surprising that he asks, "are the working people in France in a *mental* condition which will impel them to desperately go out and overthrow the order of things"? Is it not sufficient to observe that the workers took physical possession of the instruments of capital and made impossible capitalist production and exploitation and that when they resorted to this precipitate action no time-limit was set for the programme? Their action constituted a direct aggression on capitalism itself; how

much theoretical can one be that one should ask whether the French working people had the mentality for doing certain things when they were actually doing precisely that. However, what could be said is that the French working people did not resort to a general strike on a political programme of ushering in socialism. If overthrowing capitalism means consciously wanting the Communist Party of France to be in power, then, of course, it is true that the majority of the striking workers did not unite to overthrow capitalism. For it is well known that the Communist Party of France does not command the loyalty of more than about 20% of the French adult population, and the nationwide general strike which was not called by the party did not certainly indicate that the proportion had overnight swollen to above 50%. If revolution ever meant for workers picking "upon identifiable persons of the capitalist class whom they would hate so much as to physically harm them if necessary", then there was no revolutionary condition in France. But Adhikari has wandered miles astray from the concept of a social revolution. Overthrow of capitalism does not necessitate either personal hatred or physical harm to individual capitalists. What it involves is the stoppage of capitalist production. One way it could happen is after a civil war unleashed by an insurrectionary party with the revolutionary army taking over the capitalist enterprises, and such a civil war could of course involve personal hatred and physical harm. But it is no less a revolution, as a matter of fact much more purely so, if the workers take over control of the means of production directly. The fact that the workers did not itch for a civil war—maybe they were not even prepared for a civil war—does not take away anything from the fact that it was a revolutionary path that they were on. The lucidity that is necessary to realise the full implications of certain actions is not to be expected of the consciousness of the workers; if they would be so lucid themselves then what is the *raison d'être*

of a Marxist party going to be? The point is whether objectively the workers' action gave rise to a revolutionary situation or not. It is incorrect to ask, could the workers have responded if they were called upon to launch a civil war? It was not for the workers to start a civil war. The ball was in the other court. It was for de Gaulle to start it. It was for the employers to reoccupy their factories by using armed force. The workers would have certainly resisted and there would have been blood bath in every factory. If civil war was indeed started by de Gaulle in this manner which side would have won in the end cannot be said beforehand. Who can make confident predictions in such matters? Could anybody predict in the month of April that in May the students would convert the Latin quarter into a battlefield and the workers would take over factories all over France? And could certain knowledge of victory ever be accepted as a starting point in launching any revolutionary action? It has been pointed out that France is an industrially advanced country, that the French workers were facing a super-modern army, and therefore the conditions were not at all comparable to those in China or Russia during their revolutions. It is hardly convincing to argue the invincibility of modern armies after one has seen to what state the mighty American army has been reduced by the Vietcong. But let us pass that over. What does this line of argument lead to? To maintain that the workers had absolutely no chance of winning a civil war is tantamount to saying that capitalism in the industrially developed countries would never be overthrown; all that a communist party can do is what the French party has been doing—try to get more of bread and butter and houses and motor cars for the workers. A non-Marxist political scientist may certainly hold such a view. But a political party which advances it renounces all claims to being a revolutionary party.

The French Communist Party, which has long arrogated to itself

proprietary rights over all working class movements in France, has not yet openly declared its renunciation of revolution as its goal and acceptance of liberalism as its philosophy. The argument runs like this: if the Communist Party did everything possible to make the workers end the strike and resume work in exchange of some transient quantitative benefits, that was because in its judgment there were no objective revolutionary conditions. The Communist Party and the trade unions would have suffered terrible damage as a result of the repression that de Gaulle would have unleashed. The workers were not prepared to fight back. The civil war would have meant sure victory for fascism.

#### Objective Conditions

Leaving out for the moment the question of unpreparedness of the party itself, one may ask, what according to the French party would have constituted objectively revolutionary conditions? Out of the 10 million workers on strike, maybe more than 9 million workers did not consciously want a civil war; maybe 5 million did not even desire an overthrow of capitalism. This is the subjective part of the story. However, there was complete solidarity among the workers. There were no instances of any workers defying the strike order and reporting for work. There were no instances of fighting between striking workers and strike-breakers. The age-old bad blood between communist and socialist trade unions which had made joint action of workers impossible during the past 20 years had all of a sudden disappeared. All this in the face of constant propaganda on the part of de Gaulle and his men that there was a communist conspiracy to impose a totalitarian dictatorship on the country. This indicates, if it indicates anything at all, that if there was a revolutionary leadership to take forward the workers' movement beyond the point they had taken on their own, workers in their large majority would have followed the lead. The example of what happened with the students is rele-

vant here. The French students in their large majority are certainly not Trotskyists or Maoists or anarchists; they are not even communists beyond 25 or 30%. How did it happen that the extreme leftists could take over the leadership of a movement that surpassed, in its dimensions, in its mature constructive spirit, as well as in the fierceness of the battles it gave to the forces of repression, any youth movement in any industrially advanced country in the whole century? It can only mean that the masses of students, without being Maoists or Castroites or anarchists, accepted the leadership of these elements because it was only they who were prepared to lead them in a struggle which was an expression of their deep-seated aspirations and dissatisfactions, at a time when they were being disowned and condemned by the communist leadership. It is therefore perfectly legitimate to hold that the majority of the striking workers, even those who later voted de Gaulle in the elections, would have accepted a revolutionary leadership, if that leadership, instead of disowning their qualitative demands, took them up and encouraged them to go forward in the path of direct action which they had chosen for themselves. Of course it is possible that the workers might not have accepted the party leadership in going where their own actions logically led; it is more probable that a part of the striking workers would have given in, once repression started. On the other hand it is also possible that workers' solidarity would have increased in the face of repression; even that cracks would have appeared in the army ranks after the beginning of insurrection.

Despite all these uncertainties, if the conditions in France in May are not held to be objectively revolutionary to a greater degree than they have ever been in any industrially advanced country at any time in history, we would like to ask, what were the things that were lacking to make them so? Does the Communist Party of France wait for the day when the French capitalist class would, jointly

with the Soviet party bosses, hand it over the "revolution" on a silver platter, the French army being instructed not to fire a single shot? Bengali readers would be reminded by such a revolutionary programme of the famous poem in Sukumar Ray's *Abol Tabol* about a Bengali babu who asks a snake-charmer to bring him two live snakes "that have no eyes, no horns, no nails, that do not run, do not walk, that do not bite anybody, do not hiss, do not knock their heads against anything, that do not give any trouble, that only take milk and rice," so that he can teach them a lesson and do them to death with a big stick. We would like to ask the French Communist Party, which acted as such a good boy to save its skin, outbidding every other party in its loyalty to the Constitution that was imposed by de Gaulle unconstitutionally ten years back, for what eventualities has it saved itself? When does it expect to get more propitious conditions for revolution? Is it now being held as a theory that there cannot be any overthrow of capitalism in a country until and unless the army is already non-existent as a force? As this can happen only after a major war in a defeated country, how does this theory fit in with that of peaceful transition which rules out war? If it is being held that no insurrection can be successful unless a part of the army joins the insurrectionists, it is probably not an incorrect stand; but then a breakaway from among the ranks of the army can be expected—that is how it has always happened in history—only when the situation has reached the point of soldiers being called to shoot upon workers—not before.

#### "Peaceful Transition"

As the subject of peaceful transition has come up, it is as well to make the point here that the role played by the French Communist Party cannot be legitimised by the ideological guidelines of the 81-Party meeting and the 21st Congress of the CPSU. The theory of peaceful transition does certainly not prescribe that parliamentary elections are to be preferred

to mass action when the masses themselves on their own have taken to direct action, and when the election system of the country had been deliberately manipulated in such a way as to maximise the return of right-wing deputies. The theory of peaceful transition to socialism does hold that workers do not necessarily have to resort to insurrection to gain power, but it does not hold that violence cannot be unleashed by the capitalist class and it does not prescribe that when it does so happen the revolutionary workers are not to meet violence with violence. It is not even revisionism but sheer liberalism to have so much faith in the ballot box as to disown a revolution already in progress in the name of preparing for elections.

Whether the Party acted correctly or not in retreating from a civil war, that its anticipations went wrong about the elections providing a basis for the installation of a broadbased democratic government will not, I suppose, be disputed by anybody. It is easy to exaggerate the puzzling character of the election results. The swing from barricades to Father Christmas indeed calls for an explanation; but the cynical explanation of the French workers resorting to a dual behaviour pattern in a calculated fashion to gain material benefits as well as ensure social security need not be the only explanation. It is an accepted tenet of modern psychology that group behaviour differs significantly from the sum total of individual behaviour. The masses were emotionally swayed in a certain direction by the example of the striking workers and the fighting students. Eyewitness accounts describe many old people helping the students to set up barricades; that the students were helped in many ways by the inmates of the residential houses of Quartier Latin is borne out by all accounts. There is nothing incomprehensible if these same people voted de Gaulle in the elections in which there was not the same scope for the functioning of the faculty of sympathy. Then, in the families of the 10 million striking workers, there might well have

been another 10 million adults with voting rights—old people, women etc.—with markedly more conservative political reflexes. Among the 10 million striking workers themselves there were those who led and those who followed—we do not mean the institutional leadership, but the young enthusiasts who took initiatives and the old ones who followed passively. There is nothing incomprehensible if these old workers who abided by the strike decisions were nevertheless to vote de Gaulle later on. It is not to be forgotten that the uprising in France was also an uprising of the youth—in the ranks of the workers, it was the young enthusiasts who took inspiration from the barricades of the students to take to novel forms of action like occupation of factories. This youth did not count for much in the votes—either they were below the age limit, or they had crossed the age limit since the last elections and their names had not yet been entered into the register of voters. It is however to be admitted that all of this does not amount to any satisfactory explanation of the massive swing of votes in favour of de Gaulle, and the phenomenon will certainly be investigated by French sociologists and psychologists for quite some time to come.

In the mean time, we may observe that if de Gaulle's getting such a massive swing of votes be indeed puzzling, the communists getting the licking they got is much less so. Why should anybody who had been caught up in the revolutionary elan of the barricades and the gheraos retain any enthusiasm for a party that had condemned and ridiculed the barricades and obliged the workers to give up the strike and take up work? Elections were not what the workers wanted, workers on their own did not think that the change in the structure of society they wanted could be brought about through elections. Why should their revolutionary enthusiasm for direct action be expected to get transformed into massive votes for a party that did not put forward any programme distinguishable from that of any timid liberal party? Can we blame the French masses if they were

not convinced by the argument of CGT that "the elections ought to provide scope to the workers to express their desire for change, to extend and complete their victory in the matter of their demands"? After all, if the election system under the Gaullist constitution was indeed such an effective vehicle of social changes what could anybody have against Gaullism?

It would help us understand how the Communist Party isolated itself from the masses if we considered some of the typical public statements it had been issuing during those few crucial days when time came to a stop in France. While the entire liberal opinion in Europe saluted the genuineness and courage of the students in revolt, the communist leadership condemned it as being the work of provocateurs and adventurists. The CGT chief Seguy went to the extent of finding fault with de Gaulle's television speech for not having specifically named the real trouble-makers—this was almost calling for more punishment for the student leaders. In his public exchanges with the Catholic trade union, CFTD, the same Seguy found fault with the latter for pressing demands other than purely quantitative ones. While the Secretary of the CFTD took the stand that "it ought to be as much normal to elect the director of an enterprise as a mayor or a deputy", Seguy protested, "At the time of negotiations, the leaders of the CFTD advanced equivocal propositions like trade union power, workers' participation in management etc. which did not have any place in our common programme". Commenting upon the incidence of a group of demonstrators attempting to set fire to the Paris Stock Exchange, *l'Humanite*, the organ of a party that claims the heritage of the occupation of the Bastille, wrote, "It is not by such acts that one makes a revolution." One wished it explained how, according to it, one does make it.

#### Communist Record

The premier Marxist party of France cannot itself escape the inexorable working of Marxian dialectics

by which institutions that at one stage of history are instruments of progress become, at a later date, obstacles to it. The Communist Party of France, which is a part and parcel of the social structure of France as it is today, has become an obstacle to progress, an impediment to revolutionary transformation of the society. It knew its most revolutionary days during the war when, though commanding the loyalty of a much smaller section of the population than now, it could all the same be the effective leader of the resistance movement. It could do so by virtue of the logic by which leaders are selected in active struggle, which is different from the logic of leader-selection through the ballot box—the logic of leadership going to the organisation that is most prepared and capable of giving leadership in the field of battle. At the end of the war the French Party commanded, broadly speaking, the same kind of supremacy in France as did Lenin in Russia and Mao Tse-tung in China at the time of the Russian and Chinese revolutions. When the French Party voluntarily laid down arms at the behest of Stalin—and went to the ballot box it turned out that it was a minority party commanding no more than 25% of the votes. But then would Lenin or Mao Tse-tung have won a referendum on the issue of whether to carry out a revolution or not? Since that time, with the exception of a brief period of organised labour unrest in the late forties, the French CP has resigned itself to the role of a well-behaved opposition party, and the trade unions under its influence have resigned themselves to the promotion of workers' welfare in purely material terms. Over this entire period its support has remained limited to about 25% of the population which comprised a large section of the industrial working class and a small section of the various urban middle classes. It could never free itself of this straitjacket of 25%, as the class structure in France is such that the industrial proletariat remains a numerical minority in the population. Parliamentarism and bread-and-butter trade unionism reduced its capa-

city for mass leadership to such an extent that throughout the bloody Algerian war it remained a helpless witness of the French working class getting infected by racialist prejudices. And then came 1958. If May 1968 shows that the Communist Party of France is neither prepared nor willing to lead the masses on a revolutionary path, the experience of May 1958 showed that it is also not at any time prepared to defend the country against a fascist onslaught. In May 1958, when the French paratroopers rebelled in Algeria and imposed de Gaulle on France under the menace of tanks rumbling down towards Paris, what did the Communist Party do? Nothing at all, except drawing cartoons in *l'Humanite*. It is only thanks to the fact that de Gaulle is not that naked fascist he was thought to be that the Party survived at all. If instead of the communists it was the fascists in Algeria who were decapitated and if all democratic liberties in France were not extinguished, it was thanks entirely to de Gaulle's personal variety of liberalism, with no contribution from the party. But the fascist danger has always been round the corner in France, and how can the party justify the fact that it remains as unprepared in 1968 as it was in 1958 to face up to the menace of the armed force?

A party that is neither capable of leading the masses when they are already on a revolutionary path, nor to defend democracy in the face of a fascist onslaught, a party that is good enough only to extract quantitative concessions for workers from the ruling class, such a party has outlived its usefulness and would be left behind on the way side of history unless it has an internal revolution of its own. This is the conclusion one has to draw from the resounding defeat of the communists in the elections.

#### Future of France

One need not however hold equally gloomy views about the future of France. There are some who think that the events of May were just some passing phenomenon that would soon become a nostalgic memory. But

others who do not believe in making such shallow sociological analyses would hold, with Mendes-France, that "the return of a Gaullist majority will lead to newer crises, deeper than the one that took place. Workers' unrest would reappear despite the nominal salary increases that would be wiped off by inflation; students would continue to express dissatisfaction even if vague promises of autonomy and participation are made; unrest in the country as a whole would persist, because everyone is conscious now of the fragility of a system which, one pretended, was stable and solid". And with Mendes-France they would hold that, whatever happened in the elections, the left has won in so far as there has been a reconciliation in the field of action among different sections of workers and the youth. And with Malraux, himself a Gaullist Minister, they would recognise that the events of May are only but the preliminaries of far vaster things to come. In his words, "The dress rehearsal of this interrupted drama announces the

general crisis of Western civilisation. The meeting of the youth and the working class is a phenomenon without precedence." And they would further recognise the chain of student agitations in unprecedented forms—fierce fighting with the police in Berlin over Vietnam, take-over of university buildings in provincial England, gherrao in Italy—reminiscent of the role of avant garde played by students and youth in the countries of Western Europe during the years of turmoil beginning with 1948, indicates that all of us were wrong, along with the French Communist Party, in thinking that the well-fed well-housed masses of the advanced Western countries were content with their lot and did not have any stomach for revolutions. It is on the contrary on the cards that the progressive movement in Western Europe is going to reach a higher level from now on; that struggle will take place from now on not only on bread and butter issues, but on issues having to do with alienation of man in bourgeois society. True, expressions

of this movement, as of now, have the characteristics of rebellion; and rebellions cannot lead to revolutions in the absence of effective leadership. But it is equally true that when old leaders fail to understand or take advantage of a revolutionary situation, new leaders equal to the task make their appearance sooner or later. It may not of course happen. But one is permitted to hope that this is going to happen in Western Europe. To those senile cynics who would sneer at such hoping, we would pose the question; can one ever make a revolution if one does not dare to hope, if one is not prepared to face physical destruction along with the destruction of one's hopes?

---

FRONTIER is available from  
 S. P. CHATTERJEE  
 Steel Market  
 Statesman Office  
 Durgapur-4

---

## *indec*

Manufactured in India to PETTER designs under license from  
**Hawker Siddeley Industries Ltd. U.K.**

by

**Indian National Diesel Engine Co. Ltd.**

*Type—PH 1*  
 Single Cylinder  
 4—8.2 BHP  
 1000—2000 RPM

*Type—PH 2*  
 Twin Cylinder  
 8—16.4 BHP  
 1000—2000 RPM

AIR COOLED DIESEL ENGINES

### *Special Advantages*

1. Fixed or Variable Speed and Clutch Assy at choice.
2. Additional Half Speed Shaft for Slow Drive.
3. Conforms to BSS 649/1958. Also ISS 1601/1960.

*Sales Office* : 5, Fergusson Road, Worli, Bombay-18.  
*Regional* : 6, Little Russel Street, Calcutta-16.  
*Sales Offices* : 175/1, Mount Road, Madras-2.  
 8, Parliament Street, New Delhi.  
*Regd. Office* : Hall & Anderson Building, 31, Chowringhee Rd., Calcutta-16.

## The White Backlash

ROBI CHAKRAVORTI

**I**N understanding the Republican brand of politics, it is more important to know who lost rather than who won at the Miami convention of the party.

Rockefeller and Reagan lost; Nixon won. Rockefeller had lost before, in 1960 and 1964. In 1960, Nixon won. In 1964, Goldwater. Goldwater was buried under the Johnson landslide, but they brought him back alive in the form of an *avatar*—Ronald Reagan. Ralph Abernathy, who organised a pathetic demonstration for the poor people at Miami amidst all the slick comforts and garish neon-lights of the all-too-American city of Miami, rightly said with a sadness which has become a trade-mark of his visage, "Republicans want to win on the white backlash."

The white backlash is what the two contenders for party nomination were after. Reagan, a second-grade movie actor, suddenly catapulted to the national scene, behaving like an up-pity politician grabbing for Southern voters who are frankly racist. They are, by and large, tuned to the wavelengths of George Wallace's racist messages. Reagan appealed to them, because while Wallace was somewhat crude and outspoken, Reagan wore sheep's clothing. He was smooth and knew how to sell the Wallace ideology in a less offensive package. Besides, there was fear among Republican ranks that Wallace was invading Republican strongholds in the Southern States, and pollsters—the witch doctors and soothsayers of presidential elections—were warning them of Wallace's increasing popularity among the militant whites.

No one stopped to inquire whether this analysis is flattering to the Republican image. The only thing that mattered was winning votes, and may God bless America and the platform committee of the Republican Party. Senator Dirksen may be allowed to

act out antiquated oratory—orchestrated sentences delivered with a cadence which one thought had died out with Gladstone. The ideology, couched in pretty, meaningless phrases, may ornament the manifesto of the platform committee. But the real issue was winning votes. Ideology was nonsense and even perhaps a sign of weakness. You might almost be called a sissy or a neurotic, if you're too 'hung up' on ideological issues. The main thing was to win votes, and this Reagan tried to do assiduously by telling Southern delegates that he was really as conservative as Wallace. And, in good measure, he added: "Look I am the Governor of the most populous State in the Union, a position for which Nixon had once run and lost. I defeated the man—Pat Brown—who had defeated Nixon."

If this was Reagan's ploy, Rockefeller's was different. The most articulate and to all appearances the most capable of the candidates, 'Rocky' hoped that his prospects would skyrocket, if only the delegates would realise a simple fact of political life: No Republican candidate can win the Presidential election unless he can win the votes of the liberals and the uncommitted. Merely conservative votes are not enough; he has to make deep inroads into the close preserves of the Democratic Party. The New York Governor was telling the delegates that he was the only candidate who can win the liberal and uncommitted votes and swing the balance in favour of the party which has remained a minority party for the last 40 years.

The statistics were in Rockefeller's favour—not the volatile poll results, but the statistics of Republican performance in the last four decades. The change in the image of the Republican Party during this period is a part of the dramatic history of the political party system in America. The Republican Party, which is equated today with conservatism and the upper-middle class ethos, had indeed been a progressive force until the first decade of the century when a fatal feud between Teddy Roosevelt and Taft broke the party apart. As Theo-

dore White, the expert on the making of American Presidents, has pointed out in his analysis of the 1960 election, it is often forgotten how much of the architecture of America's liberal society was drafted by the Republicans. "Today they are regarded as the party of the right. Yet, this is the party that abolished slavery, wrote the first laws of civil service, passed the first anti-trust, railway control, consumer-protective and conservation legislation, and then led America, with enormous diplomatic skill, out into the posture of global leadership and responsibility we now so desperately try to maintain."

### Alienation

The alienation of the Republican Party from the intellectual mainstream of the nation is evident from its performance in Presidential elections. From 1860 to 1932—a time period of 72 years, more than two generations—only two Democrats were elected President, Cleveland and Wilson. Wilson won, it may be remembered, because the Republican Party was split between Taft and Roosevelt who, between themselves, won more votes than Wilson did. Compare this with the record of the Party in the past four decades—only two men elected President on the Republican ticket. They were Hoover and Eisenhower and both were bigger than the party. They had not been identified with the party's hardcore politics. Hoover was a strong Wilsonian and Eisenhower, before his entry into Presidential politics, had been wooed by Democrats, including the left-wing of the party, the Americans for Democratic Action (ADA) which, now headed by Galbraith, is supporting McCarthy.

The lesson of the past few years would be that the best way is to pick a candidate who looks and sounds as little like a Republican as possible. Nelson Rockefeller was the only Republican candidate for the party's nomination who filled this requirement. This was Rockefeller's source of strength, and, as it turned out, the only source.

Rockefeller lost out simply because the conservative elements of the Party

are strongly entrenched in power and the winds of the disaster in 1964 had not shaken them loose. Nixon's advantage was that he had known for years the key bosses in the party.

Nixon was the party's choice because of his negative virtues. He was not a pushy greenhorn reaching out for a national office after less than two years in office in California. He was not an affluent aristocrat like Rockefeller. Although living in New York, he was not a part of the Republican Party's eastern establishment. What is more, he was not controversial. The diehard Republicans liked this. They also remembered his rabid anti-communism of the past. He has been changing his stance from time to time earning the title, "tricky Dick". But, then, this is how liberals criticize him, and aren't liberals selling the country down the drain?

Nixon was threatened more from the right than from the left; more from Reagan, that is, than from Rockefeller. Reagan is quite a phenomenon in recent American political history. He is still a novice in American politics, and yet by a shrewd demagogic exploitation of the conservative upswing in the country in the wake of the frustration over the Vietnam war and the riots in the Negro ghettos, he has been able to project himself into the national scene. He shows all the signs of a pocket fascist; only in place of combining nationalism with 'socialism', he talks in terms of American destiny and free enterprise. His rapid emergence reflects an aspect of American political tradition which is terrifying, and at least one critic of Reagan has traced it all back to the effects of the Vietnam war. The late Dr King said sometime last year, "When a Hollywood performer, lacking distinction even as an actor, can become a leading warhawk candidate for the presidency, only irrationality induced by a war psychosis can explain such a melancholy turn of events."

This brings us to the question of Nixon's chances of victory in the Presidential election. The election politics this year have been unpredictable, and at this stage of the game, it is difficult to predict the outcome. If, how-

ever, Humphrey is chosen as the Democratic Party candidate, then it will be a fight between two persons with smudges on their images. There are lots of people in the country who do not trust either. There has been a lot of talk about the new Nixon, but the question still lurks in many minds whether it is just a put-on job. Additionally, Nixon has to fight the image of a two-time loser; some who hate Nixon are praying that he is going to score a losing hat-trick in November.

HHH, a one-time liberal, has to live down his guilt by association. As a member of the LBJ administration and often its over-eager advocate, Humphrey has to share the unpopularity of his boss. He has identified himself too much with LBJ, and it may be too late to remove the stain of his association with Johnson. This is Humphrey's handicap. If Richard is tricky Dick, Hubert is a weak-minded windbag.

It appears that the fight between Nixon and Humphrey (assuming the latter to be the Democrats' choice) is going to be a handicap race. Both have handicaps, and it remains to be seen whose is deemed worse by the voters. Another factor to be considered is the degree of frustration in the country. The President of Yale University said after RFK's assassination that there was a "pall of negativism" in the country. The head of the polling agency in Los Angeles wrote in the *Nation* magazine, "What seems to be out of the ordinary in the current political landscape is the presence of a radical epidemic negativism, virulent and extensive." Sampling experience, he said, shows that people become more involved in protests against rather than in support of particular issues or policies.

If this analysis is correct, then it seems that the Democrat candidate may lose the election this year. Since neither Nixon nor Humphrey is an exciting, charismatic leader, none can mobilize the country on constructive, affirmative lines. It is, however, easier to exploit the negative feelings against LBJ, much of which will rub off on his Vice-President. This is one handicap less for Nixon.

## The Press

# The Board That Failed

COMMENTATOR

THE strike situation in the major Indian newspapers remains unchanged. Both sides appear to be engaged in a game of patience, and the Government is looking on as a disinterested observer. But there have been other developments temporarily throwing the strike into the shade. The Board of Trustees of *The Statesman* has been dissolved; which may mean drastic changes in the paper's editorial policy and organisational set-up. The ownership structure may also change now that the transfer of shares will not be subject to the approval of the Trustees. If only half of what is being heard proves correct, the paper that will come out when the strike is over will have many surprises for its readers. It will perhaps espouse the cause far more loudly than before, and no opposition to this stridence will be brooked. The organisation will be trimmed to this purpose, if necessary; some of the familiar cards in the old pack may be found missing and some others battered, though undiscarded. Of course, there may be some new ones also—people who will actually run the big biz in Chowringhee Square. For the first time, the paper is going to have a managing director; the incumbent was joint secretary of the Swatantra party and is the author of a book about the menace of communism in Bengal. By the way, the present chairman of the paper's Board of Directors is a Swatantra man.

The news of the dismissal of the Board of Trustees was surprisingly broken by a provincial paper—*The Searchlight* of Patna. The paper ran a front-page banner to announce that the Board of Trustees with the former Attorney-General, Mr M. C. Setalvad, as chairman, and Messers G. L. Mehta, S. M. Bose (?) and Ramaswami Mudaliar as members has been "sacked" by the Board of Directors of

*The Statesman*. The bold, though somewhat unorthodox, treatment of the news can only mean that the paper had no doubt about its authenticity. How a Bihar paper could get at this news is puzzling; one is reminded, though, that the Tatas have their headquarters there.

*The Searchlight* is not satisfied with the bare disclosure only. Describing the dismissal of the Board of Trustees as "an unprecedented event in the history of journalism in the country", the paper attributes not wholly correctly it to some differences between the editor and the management over the publication of an editorial in *The Statesman* at the time of the dismissal of the UF Ministry in West Bengal by the Governor, Mr Dharma Vira. The Board of Trustees was said to have upheld the stand taken in the editorial and maintained that there was nothing in it which went against the general policy of the newspaper. "The Board of Directors evidently thought otherwise and promptly did away with the entire Board of Trustees".

If the Patna paper is not wrong, it is not difficult to surmise what the brief of the new set-up is going to be. It will have to prove itself by containing the editor and those who are supposed to have been urging him on to a path not wholly approved by the Board of Directors. The owners of *The Statesman*, even if they be steel, textile, jute, or hardware merchants, know best how to run their paper. But it has to be pointed out that if they really diminish the stature of the editor, they will commit a breach of faith. What they had promised the present incumbent may be largely, though not wholly, a matter of private dispute. But they had, on taking over, given a pledge to the readers that they would not interfere with editorial independence. In an expansive mood they had likened the position of the editor to that of the Prime Minister under the Indian Constitution and reserved for themselves the passive role of the President. Under the Constitution however, the President can, in an emergency, sack the Prime Minister and dissolve Parliament; what a Gov-

ernor can do in a normal situation we have seen in West Bengal. Perhaps the owners of *The Statesman* feel that an emergency has arisen in the paper warranting a violation of the pledge they had given to its readers.

The highest dignity of another big paper, *The Times of India*, appears to be in difficulty. Bennett, Coleman and Co., which runs the paper, has now a government-appointed Board of Directors, headed by Mr D. K. Kunte, General Secretary of the Bharatiya Kranti Dal. A deputation of the paper's employees met the Prime Minister a few days ago to request her to institute an "immediate inquiry" into the conduct of Mr Kunte. The deputation is said to have submitted a memorandum to the Prime Minister drawing her attention to "several irregularities". Signed by about 3,000 employees of the paper, the memorandum demanded the removal of Mr Kunte from the chairmanship of the company. The workers' union claimed that the Prime Minister had promised to look into the matter.

The third development is really an offshoot of the strike. With the bigger papers closed *sine die* the papers that are publishing are in bonanza, both in advertisement and sales. This is not being liked by those hit by the strike, and a rift appears to have developed in the Indian and Eastern Newspapers Society, the organisation of newspaper proprietors. *Patriot*, which is one of the two New Delhi papers unaffected by the strike, has published a letter received by its manager from the managers of six big papers on strike. In the letter the attention of the manager of *Patriot* has been drawn to the decision of the IENS that if one particular newspaper is affected by a strike, other newspapers "should exercise self-restraint and not exploit the situation". The Society took this decision in the interest of all members, and it was necessary that there should be solidarity in this respect at least. When the All-India Newspaper Employees' Federation "has succeeded in getting all its member unions together to take joint action, it is the least that we

can do to counteract it to safeguard our interests".

Accusing *Patriot* of not conforming to this decision of the IENS the letter says that this was an untenable situation. Jointly protesting against this attitude of *Patriot* the six managers have said that should the paper "continue to exploit the situation we will have to consider what action we can ask the Society to take against such flagrant violation of the Society's decision". *Patriot* is in no mood to listen; otherwise it would not have published the letter. Other members of the IENS to whom the strike has been a godsend must also have received similar letters. Amusingly, the president of the IENS may himself be a defaulter in this matter, for he belongs to a Calcutta paper which is not only coming out but trying desperately to recover the ground it has lost over the past few years. The letter of the managers refers to a communication sent by the IENS president last month requesting the members to conform to the Society's decision in the event of a strike in "any particular newspaper establishment" in their regions. It seems the president of the IENS has violated his own directive. More is likely to be heard about this development.

#### "Research Projects"

The Government of India has come in for some severe criticism after the discussion in Parliament on the California University's research project on the Himalayan border countries. Calling the Government's acquiescence in the project a "Himalayan blunder", *National Herald* says that the project should never have been approved by anyone alive to the nation's self-respect and security. No outside agency should have been allowed to go near the Himalayan border, in the name of research, even if it only meant bird-watching. Mr Bhagat's reservation that the Government did not wish to discourage genuine and legitimate research by foreign scholars is rather naive and futile. Whether it is study of the language and culture of Tibetan refugees in and around Mussoorie or of some centre of some Mahesh

Yogi, and whatever organisation in the United States finances it, research and intelligence have been so inextricably involved during the postwar period that the Government, who should have been long ago aware of the pseudo-scholarly probes of foreign strategic services, should not have allowed themselves to be caught unawares. Mr Bhagat's statement that there should be counter-intelligence is a desperate anticlimax. The heart of American wartime intelligence, it is acknowledged, was a collection of highly implausible "operators"—scholars and researchers, economists, engineers, historians, linguists, anthropologists, and sociologists, especially those who knew strategic regions—and most of them came from universities and private research institutions, commercial firms and research organisations. Unfortunately for American scholarship and scholars, such operations have remained a part of the hang-over of the war. Every kind of information becomes a part of a strategic pool, though it may be a small drop of it, and the U.S. President is served daily with a sheet or two of select information, which makes him the best informed man in the world. An attitude of subservience even in intellectual matters has developed through the accumulated collaborationism of encrusted secretaries of the Education Ministry, and there have been rackets within rackets of research. It may be all right to study the microbes in Delhi, milk or the earth worms in the Buddha Jayanti Park, but one does not go to the Himalayan border only in search of the abominable snowman. The Himalayan border region, as far as we are concerned, is not meant for research by foreigners; we should be able to afford it ourselves.

Choosing not to be so outspoken *Amrita Bazar Patrika* wonders why the U.S. Defence Department should take so much interest in a research project covering such innocent subjects as the language and culture of the Tibetan refugees in and around Mussoorie and administrative-cum-religious centres in the Himalayas. If the project is really what it claims to be, it cannot pro-

vide data which can be of any use for military purposes. That something more than pure academic research is involved is evident from the fact that Senator Fulbright received a letter from one of the California professors criticising the Defence Department for financing sociological research in India. The discussion in the Lok Sabha was not entirely without result. The Prime Minister promised a careful scrutiny of all the US-sponsored research programmes in the Himalayan region. Such a scrutiny should have been undertaken long ago, for rumours about the California project had been heard in the past. The matter should have been raised during the recent Indo-US talks in New Delhi; the American spokesman should have been given an indication of India's reaction to the misuse of her hospitality in the academic sphere. The paper wants the US Government also to look into the matter and consider whether the intrusion of the Defence Department into academic matters is likely to be profitable in the long run even from the American point of view. It would be bad day for both the countries if American scholars engaged in teaching and research programmes in India were exposed to suspicion as secret agents for military espionage.

## Rangasri's Benju

RUDRAPRASAD SEN GUPTA

ONE of the recent productions at the Theatre Centre and the Mukta Angan is *Rangasri's Benju*. To go to the point, *Benju* is a flop. The drama, written by Ramen Lahiri, is largely unreal. Though the problem it deals with—the horror of war projected through the trial of an innocent deserter has good drama potential—the treatment makes it somewhat alien to our experience. As it is, we don't have much experience about war. Naturally, to make a war play acceptable to us, such points should be highlighted as would ensure proper communication. This does not happen in *Benju*. The forced in-

roduction of a Christian background and the character of the chaplain further alienate the audience. Above all, the unreality is enhanced by the foreign-flavoured dialogue of the play. Mechanical translations of English phrases and customary expressions abound; non-Bengali syntax intrudes all through. The author has given an elaborate apology explaining why the play occasionally echoes foreign plays and makes a plea for the acceptance of this foreignness. We can accept the author's apology only partially.

The production is unimpressive. The set and decor are ridiculously old-fashioned, the make-up of most of the players is unnatural and inconsistent, the music mostly hackneyed in tune and stereotyped in conception and application. Owing to a maudlin portrayal of Benju, the character looks more effeminate than sensitive. Satya Chatterjee plays the rôle of blunt and plainspoken Captain Karma-kar with considerable ease and naturalness. Nishith Banerjee certainly deserves special mention for his impassioned yet balanced performance in the complex role of Captain Sharma.

One noticeable thing about this production is that every one in the troupe seems pretty serious about the whole thing, though sincerity does not help matters much.

## Letters

### Cinema Crisis

After the failure of the cinema-hall workers' strike another movement is on, by the Chalachitra Sangrakhshin Samity. It arises out of the contradiction between the hall-owners and distributors on one side and producers, directors, artistes and technicians on the other. The arguments and counter-arguments by the two groups offer no solution. The rôle of the representatives of the Sangrakhshin Samity at the time of the cinema-hall workers' strike should be condemned in the strongest words. The present attitude of the Samity is also not encouraging. Unless they coordinate their movement with that

of the major section of cinema-hall workers, technicians, artistes, progressive youth organizations and the middle-class intelligentsia, it will not get the proper support from the major section of the public. Though I agree with *Frontier's* view ("Saving the Cinema," August 3), there are reasons to believe that the Samity's movement is represented by a section of vested interests. I wish to quote from Mrinal Sen's letter in *Amrita Bazar Patrika* of August 2, 1968:

"According to the said resolution (taken at the council of action meeting held on July 19, 1968) to put it in my words, any producer who for some reason or other, cannot reconcile himself with what the Samity stands for, will not be given in future any facility whatsoever that may be indispensable for film production. The Samity has accordingly directed the studios, the laboratories and the outdoor equipment owners not to extend facilities to any such producer having independent views. To be more precise the Samity has issued mandatory instruction to all involved in the business of film production not to enter into trade relation with the producers who do not agree with the Samity's activities."

If the Samity seems to maintain the exploitation of a certain group, then the major section of the film industry along with other progressive-minded people, should resist it resolutely. The Samity should come forward with a clear ideology and carry on the movement in the interest of the people related directly or indirectly with the film industry, which, naturally, requires a clear class outlook.

CHIRANJEEB ROY  
Calcutta

Moscow, Prague

Your editorial "Rage in Heaven" (August 3) prompts me to write this. The recent course of events in Czechoslovakia is a painful revelation to the Kremlin and its supporters who swear by everything to defend its each and every political stance. In 1956 when the counter-revolutionaries, aided by foreign agents, went on a rampage in the streets of Budapest, Nikita Khrushchev brought the situation under control in a brutal fashion. In that bloody counter-revolutionary insurgency the world lost some of Hungary's finest poets, literateurs, artists and sportsmen. Mr Kosigyn and his comrades, having practised peaceful

co-existence with the Yanks, seem to have lost the power to use force at the right moment and for the right cause. This process of emasculation of the Kremlin's brass-hats, in fact, started from the day of the Twentieth Party Congress when Stalin was kicked around for his (mis)deeds. Alas, they did not realise that they had set in motion something else!

Russia and America have now evolved almost a common programme for the containment of China. In doing so the Kremlin has lost to the Yanks on two scores. First, its intimacy with the USA has created a yawning gap in the socialist camp; and the second, which is worse, during this period of peaceful cohabitation America has successfully made inroads into some of the East European communist countries. The Action Programme released by the new leadership of the Czechoslovak Communist Party the "2000 words" and Libermaism etc are but a few symptoms of this Americanisation of the European communist bloc. The Kremlin's China bogey is by no means a sufficient smokescreen to hide this rhapsody in the Red.

ABHEEK DASGUPTA  
Jadavpore

PLACE A REGULAR ORDER FOR YOUR

FRONTIER

Subscription Rates

INLAND

One year : Rs 16.50 Six Months : Rs 8.25  
Five Years : Rs 75.00 Seven Years : Rs 100.00

Foreign AIR MAIL Rates (One Year)

Europe : Rs 120 or 15 dollars  
Asia : Rs 88 or 11 dollars  
America : Rs 168 or 21 dollars

By Surface Mail

All countries : Rs 40 or 5 dollars

Long-term subscriptions will help the new weekly

FRONTIER

61, MOTT LANE, CALCUTTA-13

Please supply the FRONTIER for

Six Months/One year/Five Years/Seven Years

I am sending Rs.....  
by cheque/money order\*

Name.....

Address.....

Signature

\* Cheques should be drawn in favour of *Frontier*.

AUGUST 17, 1968

**“The wise do not sanction a fourth delivery even in a season of distress”,** said Kunti.

(Mahabharata, Sambhava Parva)

When Pandu desired to have more children after the birth of Arjuna, the third Pandava, Kunti reminded the King that a fourth delivery was not sanctioned by the wise. Times have changed, as also the social customs and values; but the words of the celebrated queen have not lost their significance. In fact they have acquired a new meaning today, in a different context. Today “the wise do not sanction a fourth delivery” because they do not want more children than they can provide for. With

fewer children, each child gets better care, enough food and more opportunities for a happy life. Having many pregnancies is also harmful to the mother's health.

You can stop having more children, and you can also delay having them until the time you want them. Please visit the nearest Family Planning Centre. Services are available free of charge.



**a small family is a happy family**

नातश्चतुर्थं प्रसवमापत्स्वपि वदन्त्युत



davp 68/92

contains the 7 vitamins your baby needs



**A balanced meal  
in every feed,  
With vitamins  
that babies need.**



**Amul** MILK FOOD  
contains the 7 vitamins your baby needs