

frontier

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PAUSE IN VIETNAM ?

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Editor : **SAMAR SEN**

IT would be irresponsible not to welcome any prospect of peace in Vietnam, but it would be premature to conclude that such a prospect has already been opened up. There is a little hope; the aggressor is frustrated and is not altogether unwilling to explore new ways out of what would always be a frustrating situation. Whether this search will have any bearing on the basic issues in the conflict remains to be seen; much has changed, but to what extent Washington will allow this change to affect its policy aims is not yet clear.

First the nature and extent of the change. The Tet offensive began at the end of January; at the end of March Mr Johnson announced a limitation of the bombing of North Vietnam. What happened in the intervening two months has had consequences whose significance is yet to be fully assessed. One consequence has been a realization even in hitherto confident American circles that not all the men and arms that the dollar can buy can win the war. The realization was painful and hence reluctant. Even after the first shock the U. S. Government and its propagandists elsewhere claimed that the offensive had failed to realize any of its objectives. In retrospect, it can be seen that it has succeeded in the area most central to the future of Vietnam; it has shown the futility of even the most massive foreign intervention to suppress the struggle of the Vietnamese people.

Far too many people have pretended to know in advance what General Giap's objectives were, and presumed to pronounce on his success and failure on the basis of what they thought he intended to do. Almost all such calculations went wrong; he did not even care to oblige the pundits by attempting another Dienbienphu at Khe Sanh. But it is now possible to see what he and the National Liberation Front in South Vietnam have achieved. First, they have established that North Vietnam, as Mr Robert McNamara once put it, cannot be bombed to the negotiating table. Second, and more important, the NLF has shown that the puppet regime in Saigon and its supporters cannot be protected by the Americans and their allies. Washington and Saigon sought comfort from the thought that the Tet offensive had not inspired a general uprising in South Vietnam; yet they must have pondered how the Vietcong presence in the country could be so widespread and powerful without the support of the general population.

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SEN FROM 61, MOTT LANE, CALCUTTA-13

It will never be the same again in South Vietnam. The Americans had to destroy much of it in order to save it; American bombing had to kill thousands of those they had come to protect. Ordinary people will never forget it; even American reports have recorded the fact that after the first thrust of the Tet offensive, most of the destruction and killing was caused by reckless American bombing of populated areas. Yet the Americans have not been able to demonstrate that they can assure the security of those who seek their protection.

The U. S. forces could not even ensure their own security. Their casualties reached a level unprecedented in the war, and it was small comfort that the casualties on the other side were reportedly much larger. For weeks, some five thousand Marines were at General Giap's mercy; the psychological effect of the siege, whether on the Marines themselves or on people in the United States, has been no less shattering than the likely impact of another Dienbienphu.

It was the effect in America that must have rattled Mr Johnson most. The anti-war campaign spread and powerful voices began to question not only the merits of his war strategy but also the fundamental assumptions about the war and its aims. An anti-war candidate for the Presidency severely mauled him at the New Hampshire primary and was on the point of trouncing him at Wisconsin. His nomination was gravely in doubt, re-election increasingly problematical.

Faced with such a situation, the crafty politician thought up a course that might afford him the only chance of political survival. By simultaneously withdrawing from the Presidential race and announcing a partial halt to the bombing of North Vietnam, he tried to give himself a new image. If Hanoi refused to respond, he would be free to escalate the war still further without inhibitions over effects on electoral prospects. If Hanoi did respond, he would be able to claim credit for a major step to end a particularly unpopular war, and might

even emerge as a national hero on the eve of the election.

Heavy bombing, over a much larger area than first indicated by Mr Johnson, continued even after his announcement, and now a big land offensive is on, but Hanoi seized the diplomatic initiative by agreeing to discuss a total and unconditional end to the bombing and all other acts of war against North Vietnam. Washington's bona fides will now be put on test. It will probably ask for reciprocal de-escalation, but clearly Hanoi cannot be expected to stop all aid to the NLF in South Vietnam.

In fact, Hanoi has made it clear that its readiness to discuss an end to American bombing does not imply any change in its basic stand on political issues. The statement in which it announced its readiness to meet U.S. representatives "to decide on the unconditional cessation of the bombing and other war acts against the DRV" also said: "They (the Americans) must withdraw their troops and the troops of their satellites out of South Vietnam, and leave the internal affairs of Vietnam to the Vietnamese people. The position of peace and independence of the Vietnamese people is the four-point position of the NRV, and the NLF political programme. This political programme . . . must serve as the correct basis for a political solution in South Vietnam."

Getting North Vietnamese representatives at the negotiating table will not be the central task for an acceptable settlement; the party more directly concerned is the NLF. Meaningful talks can begin only when the NLF joins them. Despite Saigon's objections, the Americans may eventually agree to the NLF's participation, but what role they will be prepared to allow the NLF in the affairs of South Vietnam is far from clear.

That the internal affairs of South Vietnam must be settled in accordance with the NLF's programme is one of the four points consistently insisted upon by North Vietnam and the NLF; in other words, the NLF must control the Government of South Vietnam after a political settlement. To start with, Hanoi and the NLF might agree

to a coalition Government in South Vietnam, with the NLF as the dominant element. But neither Washington nor Saigon is likely to give the NLF the recognition it deserves. Foreign Ministers of the countries in the American camp in Vietnam, who met recently in Wellington, New Zealand, specifically rejected the coalition idea. If this represents the unchangeable American position, negotiations can hardly serve any purpose. However, the racial turmoil that threatens Little Golden America may in turn profoundly influence the course of events in South Vietnam. The chickens are coming home to roost.

A Sermon On A Priest

The beginning of Aldous Huxley's minor novel, *Ape and Essence*, was rather amusing. "It was the day of Gandhi's assassination; but on Calvary the sightseers were interested in the contents of their picnic baskets. Ptolemy was perfectly right: the centre of the earth is here, not there. . . And Gandhi, I reflected, just couldn't do anything but resist oppression non-violently and go to prison and finally get shot. So there he (Bob Briggs) was, bound and committed to adultery no less irrevocably than Gandhi had been bound and committed to non-violence". Then this bit of dialogue:

"Do you think Gandhi was interested in art?" I asked.

"Gandhi? No, of course not."

"I think you're right," I agreed.

"Neither in art nor in science. And that's why we killed him."

"We?"

"Yes, we. The intelligent, the active, the forward-looking, the believers in Order and perfection. Whereas Gandhi was a reactionary who believed in people. Squallid little individuals governing themselves, village by village, and worshipping the Brahman who is also Atman. It was intolerable. No wonder we bumped him off."

The assassination of Dr Martin

... King in Memphis, Tennessee, probably reminded many of the killing of Mahatma Gandhi in New Delhi over twenty years ago. The differences are important. Gandhi was fighting for a majority against a very small minority; the number of British soldiers and civil servants was never more than a very small fraction of the Indian people; and their stooges were not great many either. Dr Luther King was fighting, with the same weapon of non-violence, for no more than a million Negroes out of the total American population of some 200 million. Was it non-violence that brought about the transfer of power in 1947? There are other claimants. The contribution of the terrorists, the RIN mutiny and various other factors such as World War II have not been scientifically assessed yet. The Quit India movement of 1942 was not exactly non-violent. Dr King was lucky enough to get killed before he reached the point at which he might have had to abandon his foremost principle, his non-violence. Violence saw him before the pastor was forty.

Priest

The history of Southern racialism is as cruel as it is long. In 1832 Thomas Dew argued that slavery had been the fertilizer of classical culture, that the Hebrew prophets and St Paul added its moral validity, that civilization required the many to work and the few to think. In a tract entitled *Amibals All!* George Fitzhugh wrote that the Negro was something less than human. John C. Calhoun began with the axiom that no wealthy or civilized society could exist unless one portion of the community lived upon the labour of another: "Many in the South once believed that slavery was a moral and political evil. That folly and delusion are gone. We see it now in its true light, and regard it as the most safe and stable basis for free institutions in the world". In 1822 Thomas Vesey, "a free Negro", encouraged slaves in an attempt to capture the city of Charleston. Betrayed by some of the "conspirators", Vesey's rebellion was nipped in the bud. But it is no use rummaging ancient history. More than a hundred years after emancipation the lot of the American Negro

remains subhuman—politically, economically and socially. And the myth that the Negro likes his slavery, that freedom is too good for him, is now beginning to explode on the face of the white American. The phrase "civil rights" no longer means merely the right to cast a vote every four years; it now includes a whole range of demands adding up to nothing short of complete equality with his white fellow-citizen.

To this end a mighty movement is now under way; and by shooting dead Dr Martin Luther King the Southern whites have given notice that, in their opinion, which is backed by strength, the only good Negro is a dead Negro. There are lots of well-meaning, liberal-minded Americans who honestly think that time will cure everything, that the Negro has only to wait. Perhaps there are some Negroes too who think moderation will eventually pay. These, however, do not represent the prevailing mood. Most Southern whites think that the "nigra" has got too "uppety", that a showdown is inevitable and it had better come now. Most Negroes think that Supreme Court judgments are simply not enough, that waiting only makes the white man forget his guilt.

Mr Johnson has to answer why he had to wait until the assassination of Dr King to order an inquiry into Negro aspirations. (As though he doesn't know!) All white Americans have to answer what they, individually and collectively, have done to restore to the Negro his human dignity. Negroes deceive themselves when they think "Black Power" will be theirs by shouting slogans and occasional rioting in the cities, even if it be conceded that a minority should seize power just because the colour of its skin is black. That would be racialism in reverse. Where the Negro case is incontrovertible is that, because of colour, the American Negro has been a second-class citizen for centuries; and this has taken away something from the American people as a whole. American brutality in Vietnam is not something extraneous to the American national character which is getting increasingly distorted by indecency at

home; Vietnam has only provided a concentrated area for cruelty to men, women and children of another colour. It may be as well that President Johnson, simultaneously with his decision, if that is what it is, has been confronted with the related problems, of Vietnam and Negro impatience. Related they are, for the American, the inexperienced colonialist that he is, cannot behave in one way at home and in another abroad. Perhaps Dr King did see this point and so spoke against the Vietnam war. All others struggling for justice anywhere in the world have to recognise that all struggles are somehow related, that it is not enough to cry or condemn, that man was not born free but has to make himself free. The arena is the whole world; the soldiers are all men without fear.

Politics Of "Incidents"

The Prime Minister's sudden visit to Calcutta last month to see things for herself denoted perhaps her anxiety over the communal riots in the city. She visited Allahabad later, and some of her senior colleague went to other parts of the country where communal harmony had been disrupted. But the frenzy persists, and there have been fresh points of eruption since then. Obviously, the problem is too complicated to be solved by flying visits by VIPs. Nor do the directives issued periodically by the Union Home Ministry and ritually circulated by the State Governments to districts seem adequate. If such routine measures could remove the scourge, many of the recent "incidents" would not have happened. They are occurring with more frequency for quite some time, and it seems trouble subsides in one area only to raise its ugly head in another. Mr Chavan's warning weeks ago against the possibility of communal violence must have been based on information available with the Centre: to be forewarned is not always to be forearmed.

Mrs Gandhi's air-dash to Calcutta was not universally liked. It is doubtful if all her colleagues in the Con-

Dr Martin

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gress party itself agreed that the visit was warranted. Such reaction is not peculiar to West Bengal alone as is evident from the resentment expressed by some Congress members of Parliament at a party meeting over "the tendency to magnify isolated incidents into a national problem". In the general devaluation of human life an impression seems to have grown that Authority need not stir before a tragedy has assumed certain dimensions. That even a single so-called sporadic, isolated communal clash is a rebuttal of all secular professions is not realised by either the administration or the political parties. However stringent the measures, they cannot be considered adequate so long as such "incidents" recur. The Prime Minister did not exactly help in bringing this home when she mixed politics with the avowed purpose of her visit. She tried not only to sell her own factional line to the State Congress but, what is worse, sought to exploit the riots politically by fixing the blame on some of the opposition parties. The Calcutta riots have shown that the democratic movement in the State is not so strong as is often claimed. To that extent, the United Front has to admit failure; but the UF as it is constituted here can hardly be accused of communalism.

The controversy, however, points to the crux of the problem. Communal riots will not stop until the political parties cease trying to make political capital out of them. Of course, their techniques differ. There are not many parties thriving openly on communalism like the Jana Sangh. To what extent the inclusion of the Jana Sangh in non-Congress coalitions in some States is responsible for the present communal tension is worth studying. It may also help left parties in determining the form of association they should have with communal parties. But there are less obvious means of exploiting communalism for party ends, one of which is to engineer communal trouble and blame it on rival parties. In West Bengal the danger is greater in view of the mid-term poll in November. The riots in Calcutta occurred suspiciously close on the visit of

Mr Golwalkar, chief of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh. The reported ascendance of the Jana Sangh, so long a negligible force, in some parts of the State and the party's decision to participate in the election in a big way cannot but cause concern. This may encourage the incipient communalism of some other parties to be more active. In West Bengal at least the threat to communal peace comes not so

much from parties like the Jana Sangh as from those whose secularism cannot resist the temptation of occasional adventures in communal politics to secure a few votes for themselves or make their rivals lose some. Whatever devices the Government may evolve will remain ineffective as long as the so-called secular parties do not really renounce communalism as a tactical weapon.

Calcutta Diary

CHARAN GUPTA

HERE we surface again. We have a different address and a different masthead, otherwise everything is very nearly the same. At least we hope our readers will find it so. This was a forced disappearance for three months. If you are trying to run a non-conformist journal in this country, beyond a point nothing helps. If you are irreverent, contemptuous of the Establishment, derisive of the cant that passes for profundity, if you feel morally obliged to bite the hand that 'feeds' you, out you go: even the greatest of socialists is at heart a feudal baron here.

Alas, a little magazine can command few friends amongst those who matter. In a society given to conventional mould, it has to fall back on its own puny resources, and scrounge for courage within its limited circle of friends. Let us not wallow in an excess of self-pity either. The treatment meted out to us was nothing unique. I remember in the early 1950's John Lehmann was thrown out of John Lehmann Limited. Sachin Chaudhuri built the *Economic Weekly* of Bombay from scratch, but the journal was taken away from him. I dare say we will soon find our feet back, with some sympathy from our readers and some absentmindedness on the part of those in authority. All we can say is that, till so long as we last in our new incarnation, there will be no dearth of forthrightness in these columns. We promise we will be, as ever, full of acrimony.

An interval of three months makes it a little awkward to get back into the stream of social and political commentary: where exactly does one choose to resume? On the other hand, nothing earth-shaking has really taken place here during this period. Atrophy seems to have taken over. The landscape is almost the same as when we left off, apart from the departure of the gentlemen who were smuggled into Writers' Building by the Governor. The Governor himself however is very much there. It is amusing how groups of politicians, who have issued unipotent statements demanding his recall are trotting into Raj Bhavan every now and then to make representation to Mr Dharma Vira and to draw his attention to matter x or matter y. Contentment has descended on the Left parties, which keep on protesting, but the protests are framed within the contours of an understanding implicitly reached with the erstwhile adversaries. Now that Dr P. C. Ghosh has been taken off and the date of the mid-term election announced, there is almost a vulgar anxiety to let bygones be bygones. Political leaders go through the usual motions, but nobody is taken in.

Let me narrate a bit of apocrypha. The year was 1952 and the First Five Year Plan had just been formulated. Jawaharlal Nehru was immensely proud of the exercise, and insisted that the Cabinet Secretary must read out long passages from out of the Plan to the entire Cabinet. The reading ses-

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FRONTIER

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Meanwhile, only the students continue to be unquiet. They are of course in turmoil everywhere, as much in East Europe as in the United States, and there can be any number of learned explanations of this worldwide phenomenon of alienation. The developments in and around Calcutta have however one or two points of particular significance. It is not my view that, in the series of incidents that have taken place during recent weeks, the student community as a whole has been altogether without blame. No doubt they have sometimes been impetuous, no doubt they have been on occasion wild and irresponsible in the way they have gone about. But there is the other side of the coin. After an interregnum of several years, students in this State have rediscovered their heritage of social awareness: Given the economic background of the overwhelmingly large majority of students, there would have been something wrong if this awareness were not forthcoming. There is also no question that, whatever the reason, most of the politically active students consider the hocus-pocus of conventional politics totally useless. It would be silly to suggest that, all of a sudden, the entire generation of students in this State, having turned wild, are bent on adopting irresponsible, anarchist and adventurist lines of action. There is something in the quality of the hinterland, in the working of the social processes, in the way politics has shaped, which have carried the students forward to where they have reached today. What I find frightening is the total breakdown of communications between these young men and women and the earlier generation of political leaders. Students will be students: it would in fact have been somewhat of a surprise if they did not turn to radical philosophies and give vent to an excess of emotions. It is the function of leadership to try to understand these strands of emotions and to mould them into a form which could help to strengthen the core of the political movement. Most of the time, however, the leaders have been in hiding. Little has been done to develop a

bridge between the established political leadership on the Left and the students. It is not so much a lack of charisma: charisma, after all, is something which you either have or have not. Some gesture of care and sympathy from even those leaders whose natural endowment does not go very far could have helped matters. In this respect I must say there has been a wholesale abdication of responsibility.

* * *

This failure of leadership is again the main reason why close to two dozen parties dare to try to exploit so cynically the general sentiment in this State against the Congress and for socialism. Many of the smaller parties are paper organizations and do not represent more than a handful of people. It could be that some of these individuals feel strongly about the ideological issues which keep them apart from the major parties of the Left. But the other aspect cannot be ignored either—the gains which follow in a period of confusion, such as the present one, when there is a premium on insubordination. If a group of unscrupulous men decide to make hay, they can now easily do so by staking out their separate claim, a claim which more often than not is atrociously unreasonable. And yet, if there were a proper mixture of tact and imagination in the dealings of the major parties, the smaller groups could have been either isolated or assimilated. This has not come about: any change following the mid-term election is equally unlikely. The existence of these mousy little 'parties' would make it extremely difficult to have a stable Left administration, in this State even if the Congress could be crushed.

* * *

Trepidation in my heart, let me now complete this mouthful by directing a few words to those students and others who are preaching instant revolution. They have taken a terrible responsibility upon themselves. Under all seasons it requires great courage to set oneself athwart the mainstream of the political movement. They may say that the parting has not been on

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went on and on, with most of
Cabinet Ministers dozing round the
All of a sudden, however,
was commotion. An innocuous
in the Plan had suggested that
to have any sizable increase
odgrains production in the coun-
it would be necessary to have im-
ment of a certain order. Imme-
ly Mr Rafi Ahmed Kidwai, who
then the Food and Agriculture
ter, raised his voice of protest.
d, after all, was his portfolio, and
planning people must leave food
of their business; besides, what
earth has investment to do with the
duction of food? I am told Mr
u, who was sitting next to Mr Kid-
tried to pacify him: "Please
take any umbrage, the planners
intend to do any harm. They
to write these things in planning;
do not mean anything." Given
solid assurance, Mr Kidwai relent-
and the Cabinet Secretary resumed
reading.
is this great Indian conformity
is now spreading: the conformity
comes from the acceptance of
notion that words are not intended
and for any programme of action.
Left politicians do not obviously
much when they demand the re-
of the Governor; naturally, the
re has taken the cue. Mr Dharma
appears to be very much there
enjoying his untrammelled reign
West Bengal. There is an all
transparent attempt on the part
several newspaper proprietors to
to project a benign image of the
emor, and to prove how much
he is doing to the State by his
tensing effort and constant vigil,
the chaos let loose during the
twelve months. The game of the
paper proprietors is perfectly
standable, but what I do not
stand is the alacrity with which
politicians of the 'revolutionary'
ies have fallen in. The lure of
ing the election, I must say, is a
civiliser: with the date of the
ion hardly six months away, none
the dignitaries of the United Front
eager to rock the boat by raising
they now consider to be a minor

their own choosing, and it is not they who have deviated. Yet, where do we go from here? To be candid, despite the angry words spilled in Calcutta, it does not seem that much is happening in the way of establishing Lin Piao in the countryside. The situation may be revolutionary, but the masses are not. I know the retort will be that this is precisely why a nationalisation of politics is called for, the masses will not turn revolutionary unless they are consciously guided to do so. My difficulty still persists. There may be isolated activities here and there; but by and large they do not add up to any revolutionary convulsion. The sprouting of romantic talk in Calcutta is a poor substitute for the promised encirclement of the towns and cities by the myriad of villages.

View from Delhi

Kitchen Diplomacy

From A Political Correspondent

ALL the kitchen gimmicks have been overdone and yet Mrs Gandhi's record as External Affairs Minister is pitifully poor. Our foreign policy continues to be out of alignment with the proclaimed principles. Mr Johnson's Vietnam offer stole on the self-pitying Chairman of the International Control Commission unawares. Beyond platitudes about our martyrdom precious little had been about Vietnam. Even Mrs Vijayalakshmi Pandit thinks India could have done more. India's special position as the chairman of the commission was held out as an alibi for inaction. When Mr Johnson's offer came, New Delhi had no reaction of its own. A junior Minister, Mr B. R. Bhagat, just back after a rebuff in Nairobi, issued a statement while the Prime Minister chose to be silent. The anonymous spokesman of the External Affairs Ministry welcomed the proposal but the Prime Minister and her colleagues were not sure if the statement was premature. Parliament did not have

the benefit of the Prime Minister's wisdom until New Delhi had ascertained from our diplomats what everyone else thinks about it. When Mrs Gandhi did make the statement, it amounted to equating the aggressor and the victim in Vietnam and a gratuitous offer to mediate to end the "mutual distrust and suspicion."

India's foreign policy is now an aggregate of ad hoc responses, with no continuity to it. Diplomatic pressure to get India to sign the non-proliferation treaty has been mounting but Mrs Gandhi's hint that we should be prepared to go without economic aid does not convey much. The first threat along these lines came from Canada, and the United States has dropped a broad hint. But the Soviet attitude is puzzling. Prof Hiren Mukherji left his party colleagues intrigued by declaring in the Lok Sabha that India should reject the draft. Could it be that the Soviet Union does not really want India to sign it? The CPI has been rather soft on the Government over the huge defence spending. There is no sign of any anxiety on the CPI's part over the staggering burden it imposes on the common man. In contrast, the CPI(M) has been outspoken in its demand for a cut in defence spending. The Government's claim that the defence forces are now better equipped is justified. The five-year-plan for modernisation of our defence set-up has been implemented to schedule and the military balance vis-a-vis Pakistan is now in India's favour. To that extent our efforts to find a solution to the outstanding Indo-Pakistani issues would be inhibited. While frowning upon some third country routing U.S. military hardware to Pakistan, India has had no compunctions about getting massive Soviet military aid. The day will soon come when the Soviet Union would be obliged to route military hardware to Pakistan through Iran.

India's reliance is more and more on the Soviet Union—tanks, bombers, fighter planes and submarines. There is surreptitious lobbying in New Delhi for the purchase of Soviet civilian aircraft. With massive orders to boost recession-hit sectors of Indian industry

the Soviet Union has done India's business and its Government a great service. Perhaps the Soviet Union should prefer India not signing the non-proliferation treaty, despite its public postures in favour of the treaty. Do Soviet interests lie in India going in for a heavy defence budget? India's business would like it too.

Soviet stakes in the Indian Ocean are high. The Pentagon's Seventh Fleet strategy to contain China has been rendered obsolete by the Asian bomb. The Seventh Fleet moved into the Indian Ocean when it became certain that there were a few weak links in the chain of Anglo-American bases from the Rhine to Singapore. With the British decision to pull out of Singapore, the Pentagon's strategy has to undergo a drastic change once again. To what extent Soviet interests coincide with those of the United States in the Indian Ocean is hard to judge now. But Soviet activity in the Indian Ocean, which seems to have the tacit endorsement of India, should raise several issues. The Soviets badly need a submarine base in the Indian Ocean and who would oblige first remains to be seen.

Soviet diplomatic effort is now directed towards Burma and India, in the search for bases. Gen Ne Win's informal visit to India last month came amidst this effort. Some one planned a story in a Calcutta newspaper and a Madras newspaper about Burmese occupation of the Narcondam island in the Andamans. New Delhi maintains that the island is in India's possession and Gen Ne Win did not raise any dispute with Mrs Gandhi during their talks.

Burma's economy is tottering with a crashing fall in rice production. Gen Ne Win's present estrangement with Peking provides the opportunity for him to sound both the United States and the Soviet Union for economic aid. New Delhi could be useful at this. Mrs Gandhi and Gen Ne Win appear to have agreed at the Delhi talks that China is a hostile neighbour. Short of a joint communique denouncing China, Burma and India have found a vast area of agreement.

The Naga and Mizo problems might

India's big common to the two countries
 ent a great Gen Ne Win has his own prob-
 vnet Union with the Karens and Kachins.
 ing the non-der security was the main subject
 e its public discussion. Though Mrs Gandhi has
 treaty. Doed that the two countries have
 going in for ded on joint patrolling or a secu-
 India's big corridor, there is little doubt that
 co-ordinated action is coming.

Indian Ocean
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only after a fair interval. And they
 came from various countries. Some of
 the rockets used to blow up trains
 had French markings. Some other
 equipment used had Czechoslovak
 markings. Nothing of Chinese
 origin had been seized or recovered in
 the past.

Obviously, the subversion plot story
 is being used as a smokescreen for an
 offensive against the CPI(M). But
 the conduct of the CPI(M) leadership
 has only helped Mr Chavan. When
 the issue came up in the Rajya Sabha,
 both the CPI(M) members chose to
 be absent and Mr Bhupesh Gupta was
 trying to defend the "splitters." In
 the Lok Sabha, Mr K. Anandan Nam-
 biar played directly into Mr Chavan's
 hands by reminding him that the
 arrested persons had been expelled by
 his party and therefore had nothing
 to do with them. Mr Chavan snapped
 back to say that the CPI(M) disown-
 ed them after they had been arrested
 and that they had links with the party
 last year when they were receiving
 arms training. How come Mr Nam-
 biar's party was not aware of it,
 Mr Chavan asked.

The CPI(M) seems anxious to dis-
 own elements in the party whom it
 cannot control. Government state-
 ments of late take care to emphasise
 that it is keeping a line on the activi-
 ties of the "extremist elements" of
 the CPI(M) and not the entire party.
 Is the Government trying to promote
 a split in the CPI(M) now? In the
 CPI(M) parliamentary party, Mr
 Nambiar was pulled up for his indis-
 creet question which caused his
 leadership great embarrassment. But
 why is the leadership so quick to dis-
 own some of its elements? What the
 extremist elements in the CPI(M) say
 about its leadership was being said by
 the present CPI(M) leadership about
 the present CPI leadership. Mr Dange
 and his colleagues disowned the
 "splitters" and now the CPI(M)
 leadership is disowning the ultras.
 This is what Mr Chavan would wel-
 come if only it would provide material
 for a White Paper of the future to
 justify a round-up of the ultras and
 in the process split the CPI(M).

April 7, 1968

Politics, Bombay Style

I. AKHTAR

THE 'Left' or more correctly the so-
 called 'Left' parties have been
 routed in civic elections to the Bom-
 bay Municipal Corporation. The seeds
 which they had sown have sprouted
 bitter seeds. It was in the whirlwind
 days of the mass movement for the
 creation of a linguistic State of Maha-
 rashtra that the Samyukta Maharashtra
 Samity had been formed. Its chief
 architect was Mr. S. A. Dange and
 other leftists. The movement for
 a unilingual State of Maharashtra
 was a perfectly justifiable movement
 in the circumstances. But the
 leftists failed to broaden the people's
 political horizon and were themselves
 swept off their feet by the regional and
 linguistic chauvinism.

In those days the movement was

directed against the Congress. And
 now the Congress has let loose the
 same chauvinistic force, which has
 taken the more virulent form of
 the Shiv Sena, against the Samiti,
 whose main political plank is the
 struggle for Sampoorna Maharashtra,
 that is, for the inclusion of Belgaum,
 Karwar etc. in Maharashtra, with left-
 ist sounding slogans as a side attrac-
 tion. The Samiti, always a loose front,
 has come apart as a result of the civic
 election. The Samiti fielded 120 can-
 didates of whom only 8 could scrape
 through.

The leftists, who in their enthusiasm
 had gone to the length of worshipping
 regional heroes, now find their oppor-
 tunism of no avail. In a way, the
 deserts the 'leftists' have received are

well deserved. And it is very doubtful that the 'leftists' are capable of drawing appropriate lessons from their debacle. In view of their characterlessness, perhaps they would not even know what has overtaken them.

Still, the overall result of the civic elections has its own political significance, sinister and far-reaching. For Bombay is a premier industrial city. It is the happy hunting ground of the *laissez-faire* industrialists. And true to the dialectical law of "unity of opposites", it has a concentration of industrial workers in direct proportion to the exploitation.

First, here is the result in a nutshell: In a house of 140 seats the Congress contested 124 and won 65. In addition, its election ally, Republican Party, won 2 seats. The Shiv Sena contested 97 and won no less than 40; its election ally, the PSP, contested 32 seats and succeeded in capturing 11. CPI(R) contested 37 seats and won—hold your breath, please!—one "evolutionary" seat; CPI (M) contested 9 seats and captured 2 "revolutionary" citadels. Swatantra Party contested 46 and won one. It is not at all surprising, for the Bombay outfit of the Swatantra is mainly composed of Parsis and Catholics. Then it has nothing to worry about, for other carefully camouflaged parties are carrying on Swatantra's work quite admirably. The Muslim League, a half dead rat, squeaked in with two seats. The Jana Sangh, the Hindu-cum-Hindi party, fought on no less than 70 fronts and just managed to unfurl its saffron coloured banner in 6 constituencies. In the election imbroglio, there were no less than 186 independents. Of them only six slipped past the post. Most of the remainder lost their deposits.

The fiction of the rule of the majority was fully in evidence once again. This fiction is a constant fact of bourgeois elections. Most of the 'successful' candidates won on a minority of votes, for invariably all the opponents collectively polled more votes than the 'successful' candidate.

In 26 constituencies at least 5 candidates were in the field; in 17 constituencies 6 candidates begged for

votes; in 12 constituencies 7 candidates were in the fray; In 4 constituencies 8 candidates fought the battle of the ballot; In two as many as 9 candidates were locked in the fight. In short, every division and sub-division of castes, region, religion, language and even private rivalry was given the fullest opportunity of public manifestation. One cannot think of a worse device for deepening and consolidating the artificial divisions among the people. The present anarchy in evidence all over the country is perhaps the result of the consolidation of these artificial divisions, which are rooted in the dark and irrational past.

Thirty per cent of the electorate kept away from the polling booths. Evidently most of them could not care less for this kind of 'democracy' or at least they did not understand its intricacies.

The Shiv Sena, under the sole command of the local Maharashtrian "fuehrer", Mr. Balasaheb Thackeray, has emerged as the second largest party. And it is in the fitness of things; for despite the phoney election tussles between the Congress and the SS, it is irrefutably evident that the latter is the darling brainchild of the former. From North-East Bombay had come the first indications of this clandestine parentage. The police also have been too partial to the SS and its anarchic activities.

True To Character

True to its character, the SS celebrated its victory with riots and clashes. It did not take its defeats too kindly. Dharavi, a slum area where the South Indians predominate, and Madanpura and its neighbouring Muslim localities, were the scenes of clashes. The stage-managed clashes with minority groups confirm the relationship between the parent body and its freak offspring.

The Samiti opposition in the Maharashtra Assembly moved an adjournment motion on the post civic election riots. (Predictably the PSP opposed the motion). Members of the opposition spoke of the reign of terror let loose in Madanpura and Dharavi. Some members gave instances of collusion

between the SS, the Congress and the police.

Naturally, the ruling party denied the allegations but a Congress member while denying the charge of collusion between the SS and the Congress, maintained that the Congress and the SS had "seen to it that the Samiti was routed in the elections."

In all his authoritarian utterances Mr Thackeray has been vehement in his opposition to the left parties, while his criticism of the Congress, all too occasional, amounts to a zeal to reform the parent body. In a pre-election interview in which "I" was the most prominent feature, he eloquently explained his opposition to the Communists. He said: "I am a nationalist. If anything hampers the interest of the nation, I will clean it. But I believe in the freedom of *everything*. (Emphasis added). Accordingly as long as we keep them (the Communists) under watch with our thumbs on their spines, all will be well."

In this interview, Mr Thackeray more or less equated all those who come to Bombay from the North and the South as bearers of leprosy. The people in other parts of the country should count themselves lucky that as yet Mr Thackeray has not taken them into his reckoning.

The idea of Naxalbari being repeated in Bombay weighs very heavily on Mr Thackeray's sensitive mind. Expounding on the theme of banning the Communists, Mr Thackeray said: "They need not be banned as long as they are kept under watch but", he warned, "no Naxalbaris are to be repeated anywhere in Bombay and anywhere else in India."

Speaking of his chances in the election, he had said: "I am confident of victory. There will be only two flags flying over the Municipal Corporation building, those of the Shiv Sena and the Praja Socialists, after the election."

Fortunately or unfortunately, his prediction has not turned out to be exactly true, but he should take heart, for the Congress flag is as good as the flags of the Shiv Sena and the Praja Socialists.

The SS leader has averred that

in its issue of December 16, 1967. According to the report published in "Blitz", the Ceylon weekly wrote:

"News has also filtered into political circles that evidence has become available of embarrassingly intimate connections between certain members of the Praja Socialist Party (PSP) and the CIA. The Bombay police, it is now known, had recently searched the branch office of the PSP in Bombay.

"What has shocked official circles is that the police discovered in the office US made radio transmitters and more than 50,000 American dollars in notes. The police, it is reported, have taken into custody a group of PSP leaders, including Mr. who has long been connected with the well-known Indian Committee for Cultural Freedom, which is admittedly CIA financed. Mr. had also often visited the USA on the invitation of another CIA sponsored organisation, the MRA (Moral Re-armament Movement). No explanation has yet been forthcoming to explain the vast amount of US dollars or the radio transmitters found in the office of the Bombay branch of the PSP".

"Blitz" had written at the end: "The allegations made in this report are of a very serious nature. "Blitz" reproduces this in the public interest so that the Government may make proper enquiries and reveal the truth and the persons concerned may also clear

themselves of the allegations."

It is not known whether the Government made proper enquiries or the persons concerned cleared themselves of the allegations.

Still one might ask: What has all this got to do with Bombay's civic elections, with the PSP and the SS? In the circumstances, the answer would be: Nothing whatsoever, nothing at all.

Once upon a time, Mr Shripad Amrit Dange was considered an undisputed leader of Bombay's industrial workers. Now the SS has conquered all of his strongholds in the working class areas. This should provide Mr Dange with some food for thought, provided he has not had enough of it. Or do we have to wait for the proclamation of Mr. Thackeray as a "great socialist leader" who ardently believes in the "non-capitalist path of development"?

In the meanwhile, Mr S. K. Patil, the boss of the Bombay Pradesh Congress, has hailed the SS. He said that the Congress Party in the civic body would respond to the "constructive approach" which the Shiv Sena proposed to take in the Municipal Corporation.

Mr Patil assured Mr Thackeray, "The Congress is bound to respect this attitude. The Shiv Sena leader need not call himself an opposition."

A passing thought: Is the present centrifugal situation in the country symptomatic of the pantheistic anarchy of the Hindu mind?

The Madras Scene

A. S. SATYAMURTHI

FOR the first time since it was returned to power a year ago, the DMK Government is in serious trouble. Trouble, not emanating from its opponents, as one might normally expect, but from the innermost core of its supporters—the student community.

The students moved close to the DMK during the anti-Hindi stir in

1965, and though the DMK was not directly involved in the stir, it provided the inspiration that kept the agitation alive for months. Students paid back their debt of gratitude to the DMK by campaigning hard for the party and trouncing the then Congress President, Mr Kamaraj, in his home town, Sattur.

In twelve months, the canvas has

gress and its all kick politics out of the Corporation. Otherwise he is very political. party denied in a post-election statement the SS press member leader expressed satisfaction of collusion in the SS-PSP success in capturing 51 e Congress in alliance. He noted with res and the fact that the alliance had Samiti was the monopoly of the Communist-dominated Sampoorna Mahasamiti. The SS leader hoped vehemently the powers that be at the parties, while in the State would cease res, all to the Shiv Sena as an anti- to reform and anti-democratic organi- election in. He demanded that the powers be most to display more courage to curb itly explained "anti-national activities" of Communists, "Moscow-Peking-Pindi" agents. list. If any although the "Maharashtra first, rest of the later" super patriot has conveniently I believe left out "Washington agents" ing. (Em his elaborate list, Mrs Indira gly as long as Mr Chavan & Co. may kindly Communists) the demand.

Thackeray the same column the PSP leader those who M. R. Dandavate, described as North and Mr Thackeray in expressing pleasy at the success of the alli- and said that the "dirty politics" the country produced into civic affairs by the lucky that parties in the garb of the Samiti not taken come to an end.

The learned Professor is well being repent for his gushing admiration for heavily on clean American politics. His mind. Ex- miration for American democracy banning the its ideals is so great that if eray said: erica decides to devastate Vietnam I as long as a tactical nuclear bombs and ch but", he suddenly runs short of "courageous re to be re- as", Mr. Johnson need not worry ay and any- all, for if Professor Dandavate can

ces in the gladly volunteer to do the job. m confident but it is just a conjecture with so e only two ay big ifs, that it must be readily ipal Corpo- mitted that from Bombay to Viet- e Shiv Sena is a long jump. But jumps are avoidable in these jumpy times.

For example, of all places, in Ceylon mately, his weekly "Tribune" had published not out to be long ago a sensational report of a take heart, by the Bombay police on the good as the each office of the Praja Socialist d the Praja ty.

The Bombay weekly "Blitz" had verred that roduced the Ceylon weekly report

changed. The DMK and the students now find themselves arrayed against each other in an open, bitter fight. This is hardly a sudden development. Discontent within the student community, centred round the DMK's failure to provide a satisfactory solution to the language problem, has been brewing for some time and has in recent days taken a positive anti-DMK shape.

Knowing fully well that the DMK is in no mood to continue the language agitation (party leaders have been appealing to students to quit politics and go back to their studies), a section of students has irritated the DMK by raising the cry of a separate Tamilnad. Student leaders in the districts have held mammoth public meetings and hoisted the Independent Tamilnad flag in defiance of the DMK, and the Government had to order their arrest to remove the impression that it had anything to do at all with the separatist cry. In fact the DMK, which had for a long time toyed with the idea of a separate Tamilnad, was highly embarrassed by repeated enquiries from the Centre about the activities of the students who are known to have played an active role in voting the DMK to power.

Shrewd political observers see in last month's violent clashes between students and transport workers the hidden hand of the DMK Party to teach the former a lesson for overstepping their limits. Indeed the orgy of violence in the heart of this metropolitan city leaves wide scope for the belief that the Government deliberately adopted a partisan attitude against the students, leaving them entirely at the mercy of six thousand half-educated, frenzied transport workers.

It will be interesting to note that students who suffered most in the recent outbreak of violence are those who are vehemently opposed to the Government's policy of doing away with English at higher levels of education. In fact, medical, law and engineering students have been the most vociferous in their protest against the introduction of Tamil as the medium for higher education; they think that this would bar the door to higher knowledge, and it appears they were

particularly picked out for a brutal attack.

Merciless Beating

One could say without any qualms of conscience that even during the British Raj students were not beaten up so mercilessly or property damaged in the way it was by the employees of the State Transport Department on the night of March 25-26 under the very nose of the DMK Council of Ministers. Of course, in the clashes both students and workers were injured. But what was the provocation for the workers to attack several hundred students living peacefully in hostels in different parts of the city in the wake of a trivial, isolated incident between law college students and a bus conductor? Who gave the green signal to transport workers to go about the City in State transport buses, gathering goondas and threatening the students with dire consequences? What were the police doing when frantic appeals for protection were made by students in distress?

Behind the student-worker clash lies an entire history of the DMK Government's pampering of transport workers to make its half-baked policy of bus nationalisation a success. In a bid to honour one of its election pledges, the DMK, immediately on its coming to power, announced its intention to nationalise the bus transport service. But this did not prove an easy task. Most of the senior bus drivers and conductors had to be persuaded to go to the districts to man the long-distance routes and for this the Government had to make many concessions to the transport workers, who have been practically dictating terms to the Transport Department. Also hundreds of new workers have been recruited to man the City routes and these workers, raw and untrained, are a menace to the travelling public. Their utter lack of sympathy for the passengers and indifference to their safety and comfort have shocked the citizens of Madras, though the Government has chosen to be extremely tolerant towards them.

This is the main reason why students have directed their venom

against the Transport Minister, Mr Karunanidhi, and demanded his resignation. During the recent disturbances, Mr Karunanidhi is reported to have made a statement which showed which way his mind was working. He is stated to have assured transport workers that while crowds of workers were being dispersed with tear-gas, students were being shot. Though the statement has since been denied, students have refused to be taken in. An effigy of Mr Karunanidhi was burnt by them and the Chief Minister was heckled at a meeting in the Madras Medical College when he made a lukewarm effort to defend Mr Karunanidhi. (We beg of you not to speak on behalf of Mr Karunanidhi. We have got faith in you—the students said).

It may not be out of place to mention here that the relations between the two stalwarts within the DMK—Mr Annadurai and Mr Karunanidhi—have not been particularly happy. Mr Annadurai has always considered Mr Karunanidhi as a potential troublemaker and even during the formation of the DMK Ministry in March last year, Mr Karunanidhi created difficulties for the Chief Minister by demanding the Home portfolio, which, of course, was not given to him. The fall in his prestige is, therefore, reported to have given Mr Annadurai some secret pleasure.

In the meantime the Congress party, waiting for an opportunity to hit out at the DMK, has utilised the situation to make fresh contacts with the student community. Congress leaders have made heroic speeches in the assembly in defence of the students and staged several walk-outs after frequent references to the law and order situation.

That the situation in Madras is abnormal does not need to be exposed by the Congress. The very fact that every bus that runs in the city has a police escort and that the newly-erected statue of Mr Annadurai on Mount Road is under police guard speak eloquently of the state of turmoil in the city.

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The Black Revolution

MARC GREENBERG

ALTHOUGH the Bible has not been noted for its accuracy in prophesying, we may today agree with the statement that a society which sustains itself by violence must necessarily be destroyed by violence. In the United States, a nation subsisting on the oppression of the blacks at home, by exploitation, counter-revolution, and colonial wars abroad, has already precluded the possibility of a peaceful domestic revolution. In the question of violence as opposed to peaceful change no longer counts the twenty-two million black people in the United States, any more than it does the rest of the so-called First World. The oppressive and exploitative nature of the American power structure has resolved the question of change in favour of violence. Historically, as any imperialist power does, the United States rose to its position of power through violent means. Its territorial expansion was effected by the slaughter of millions of American Indians and by the seizure of lands belonging to Mexico. The consequent transformation from a rural, agricultural America into an urban, industrial capitalist State, was fully assisted by the enslavement of millions of blacks in the South, and the exploitation of immigrant labour in the factories, stockyards, and railroads of the North, Midwest, and Far West. The crystallization of industrial capitalism by the end of the nineteenth century necessarily forced the United States into overseas imperialism in search of markets and sources of raw materials to satisfy the ever-expanding production of its corporations. The contradictions within this exploitative system were temporarily resolved by the use of force and economic control wherever needed, and by the complete suppression of the poor at home by means of a domestic military police, the police force. In recent years the antagonisms between the United States and the peoples it oppresses developed into revolution;

Cuba, for example, rose up in arms to expel imperialism for ever. In the Dominican Republic similar antagonisms were momentarily halted when American Marines put down the 1965 revolution. The people of Vietnam, however, are proving to the world that the contradictions within the American imperialist system are fatal and can only lead to the inevitable downfall of that oppressive system.

The black people in America, too, are quickly reaching a stage in their development which marks the beginning of the end of the U.S. capitalist system. As former Vice-President Richard M. Nixon said on January 8, 1968: the United States can expect "not riot in the streets, but war in the streets" in summer. He further added that a riot is spontaneous, but "a war is subject to advance planning and the radicals are presently planning the destruction of public facilities and the bringing of great cities to their knees." The U.S. is "torn apart by a race conflict that runs very deep." The "race conflict" is so deep in fact, that even men such as Nixon foresee the inevitability of violent revolution in the United States. For the very nature of capitalism is at once both the cause of "race conflict" (i.e., class conflict) and the eventual gravedigger of itself. And the black people are reaching that stage where revolution becomes inevitable.

In human history, antagonism between classes exists as a particular manifestation of the struggle of opposites. Consider the contradiction between the exploiting and the exploited classes. Such contradictory classes co-exist for a long time in the same society, be it slave society, feudal society or capitalist society, and they struggle with each other; but it is not until the contradiction between the two classes develops to a certain stage that it assumes the form of open antagonism and develops into revolution. The same holds for the transformation of peace into war in class society.¹

The white power structure in the U.S. not only realizes that a revolution is about to occur within its own borders, but is attempting to prepare for

it. Advanced "riot-control" devices have been perfected, urban police forces are adding thousands more to their numbers, and National Guard units are already on the alert. The black people, too, are preparing themselves for the confrontation with capitalist America. They are being armed and psychologically trained for the eventual struggle; they are coming to realize exactly what is needed.

Total revolutionary unity would be required among the youth and a strong revolutionary nationalist spirit would have to prevail throughout the land. The spirit of self-sacrifice, selfless dedication to the triumph of a cause greater than any single individual, a feeling of confidence in ultimate victory, unshakable courage, and identification with the struggling oppressed peoples of the world would be some of the salient attributes for the success of a minority revolution. In keeping with the principles of people's war, wherein the great masses of exploited peoples of the world represent the rural masses surrounding the cities (the exploiting industrial countries) the Afro-American revolutionaries represent a mighty urban underground within the city. Our people must further develop and master people's warfare.²

The stage of black political consciousness within the United States is comparable to the stage reached by an oppressed colonized people who have realized that their only hope lies in a national war of liberation. It is a necessary stage for American blacks to have reached, but it must not be a final one. The Black Revolution, which will inevitably bring U.S. capitalism "to its knees," must not halt there. A trained leadership with a socialist ideology will emerge and assume control. At present this black leadership, as with all revolutionary leadership, is arising out of the very struggle for liberation. The present leadership realizes the vital necessity of such a trained, politically committed, and experienced core of revolutionaries.

The task of the black leadership must have as its overriding concern, the exposure of what the revolution

really is—a class war. It must see to it that the revolution will not have as its objective simply destruction and vindictive violence against the whites, but must look beyond the veil of racism, to the class nature of capitalism. Once the black people are aware that capitalism itself is responsible for racism and exploitation, the revolution can then have as its objective not only the destruction of the white capitalist power structure, but the construction of a new socialist America, based on real equality, an equality which black people already fully understand. Robert F. Williams notes the importance of a trained and tested leadership, but that must not be the only qualifications which a leader would possess. Lenin said: "Without a revolutionary theory there can be no revolutionary movement."¹ Without a revolutionary theory, the black revolutionary movement in the United States will be one of destruction only.

Since the Black Revolution is not only a national but an international struggle for liberation, it must look Cuban and the Chinese revolutions abroad and profit from the experiences of other peoples. The Cubans, for instance, won a revolution in 1959 through armed struggle, but had to undergo a second, socialist revolution; for capitalism is no longer an alternative to the oppressed peoples of the world. China underwent a series of revolutions before conditions were present for a socialist revolution to be victorious. The American blacks must likewise become aware of the fact that their revolution is an anti-capitalist, anti-imperialist struggle, not unlike the one that is being fought in Cuba. Once this is realized the future of a socialist America is secure.

The fact that the American blacks

¹ Mao Tse-Tung, *On Contradiction, Four Essays on Philosophy* (Peking, 1966) p. 69.

² Robert F. Williams, *The Crusader Newsletter* (Peking, September-October 1967) p. 2.

³ V. I. Lenin, *What is to be Done?* (New York, 1929), p. 28.

⁴ Williams, *op. cit.*, p. 12. (This was written before the assassination of Dr Martin Luther King).

represent a minority does not in the least preclude the possibility of their winning the revolution. On the contrary, the black people are in the most advantageous position conceivable. They are located directly within the complex of production, communications, and commerce. The paralysis of these systems would render the entire continent helpless and create chaotic conditions resulting in the collapse of the social superstructure. The United States is so dependent on automation that without electrical power, without modern transportation, without the industrial apparatus on which it thrives, the nation would be totally devoid of resistance. And "Out of the ashes of anarchy and chaos a new order could be reconstituted."⁴

To repeat, the white power structure is well aware of the potential consequences of a Black Revolution. It is preparing its defence and will stop at nothing, probably not even nuclear weapons, to ensure its survival. Both sides realize that attempts to improve the condition of the blacks are hypocritical and are merely frantic efforts at capitalist self-perpetuation. The demands of the oppressed can never be met through capitalism.

The outcome of the Black Revolution in the United States will have important ramifications for the remainder of the oppressed world. If the revolution destroys the capitalist system in the U.S., it will at the same time be freeing much of Latin America, Asia, and Africa from the noxious, stultifying, dehumanizing system which grips them so tightly. Every effort must be made to assist the revolution, every sacrifice, however great, must be made without hesitation to further the cause. The success of the Black Revolution, however, is directly linked up with the success of the international revolution. The heroic Vietnamese people are a major source of inspiration for the American blacks as well as for other oppressed peoples. Their successes are giving tremendous impetus to the Black Revolution in the United States, and the final victory over imperialism will mark the beginning of international liberation and international equality.

The Grand Gesture

M. S. PRABHAKAR

THE best that one can say about Mr Johnson's announcement is that it was made on the eve of April 1, and yet, it is not going to fool anybody. Here, we need not concern ourselves with his decision not to seek or accept his party's nomination for Presidency. Of course, no tears are shed for his departure; but it is no cause for jubilation either. Whoever succeeds Mr Johnson can be counted upon to carry out faithfully 'the policies of President Johnson, not because they were his policies, but because they are part of American global strategy. Every U. S. President has not merely been an initiator of cold war policies, but often their instrument as well. If the example of JFK has not cured us of our illusions about liberal American Presidents, only we are to blame. In spite of John Kennedy's record, one committed the mistake of pinning one's faith on him (surely a triumph of good public relations). The result was the invasion of Cuba, and later its blockade. But at least one thing has to be said in favour of Mr Johnson. He is so immensely crude, so folksy and so much a parody of himself that at least no one can be deceived about him. The same cannot be said of his predecessor, or his possible successor. The danger of the Kennedys lies in their sophistication, in their image, in their command, not merely of vast sums of money and all the appurtenances of the Kennedy machine, but also of sufficient liberal jargon, good public relations, glamour, and since 1963, the aura of martyrdom, tragedy. But one can surely count upon the coming Kennedy to be as ruthless in the prosecution of the cold war, through he would be much more graceful and subtle than the present leader of "the Free World."

But while Mr Johnson's decision not to run again for Presidency would not really affect the nature or the objectives of 'Pox Americana', his decision about stopping the bombing of

The Press

Johnson's Choice

COMMENTATOR

WHETHER April will prove the cruellest month for American hawks is not yet known. But Mr Johnson's sudden decision to drop out of the presidential race has released a spate of speculations. Not all commentators are prepared to accept the presidential broadcast at its face value; nor would they agree as to his motive. Some would call it a gambit; others a retreat. In the meantime, the babbling and the bombing of North Vietnam continue, and unrest over the murder of Dr King spreads. Though the cessation of American bombing is only partial, Hanoi has agreed to negotiate with Washington. Regardless of whether any country is prepared to listen to it, the Government of India has contacted several envoys in New Delhi to explore the possibilities of peace talks. The 58-day session of the second United Nations Conference on Trade and Development has ended in New Delhi. The presidentship of the conference apart, India appears to have had other expectations from the conference which have not been fulfilled. Mr Dinesh Singh is sore that the conference could not evolve a global strategy of development and an international programme of cooperation for the elimination of poverty. Some newspapers tried to make up for the loss of interest in the conference with tidbits on delegates and the conference staff, enlivened by photographs of stenographers and interpreters shopping or coyly mimicking Khajuraho figurines, of course with clothes on.

The Union Home Ministry has brought out a document suggesting that the Prime Minister and the State Chief Ministers should be given the right to seek dissolution of legislatures while still in command of a majority in the House as a measure to prevent frequent floor-crossing. The Ministry's concern is understandable, for

that further efforts would be made to alter the stalemate to America's advantage. In ordering partial cessation of bombing of North Vietnam, Mr Johnson has done what even knowledgeable military experts in the U. S. itself had been stressing: that the bombing was having no significant impact on the DRV's capacity to move men and supplies to their compatriots in the South. One might even hazard a supposition that perhaps the World War II stockpile of ammunition and bombs on American bases in the Pacific Islands has been exhausted. But apart from this admittedly odd kind of 'peace gesture', the rest of Mr Johnson's speech is only a thinly veiled ultimatum to the Vietnamese people: Either agree to my terms, or else, . . . is indeed an odd peace gesture which announces a further build-up of combat troops, increasing the level to 550,000, and an additional defence expenditure of over \$5 billion (more than 4,000 crores of rupees) during the current and next fiscal year. Surely all that money is not going to be spent in pursuit of peace!

Mr Johnson is also reported to have said that the U. S. had no intention of widening the war ("We seek no wider war": Catch any echo?), but would not accept a "fake solution. . . and call it peace." It is precisely this danger that the Vietnamese people ought to guard against. No people have fought so valiantly against a predatory imperialism as the Vietnamese people have done these past years; no people have suffered and endured more, sacrificed more, and nobody has any right to tell them when or how they should sue for peace. But it is also true that twice, within living memory, when real victory was at hand, it was cheated out of them at conference tables, and the dream of national unification remained a dream. All the suffering, all the sacrifice, all the blood spilled on the battlefields, all these cannot be, should not be, in vain. And nobody knows it better than the Vietnamese that what they have been waging all these years is part of a worldwide struggle of the world's dispossessed against a system, a people who have dispossessed them.

major part of North Vietnam to be examined in some detail, one fears that he has been successful in making a generally favourable impression with his 'generous gesture'. The statement itself (even in its reworked form in *The Statesman* of April 21) is so full of contradictions, truths, threats, that one wonders those who applaud the statement not already made up their minds to applaud whatever Mr Johnson said to be applauded. So one is really surprised to learn that the Government of India welcomed his statement and Mr Desai even went to the extent of saying that it was a 'significant step'. What is this magnificent step, in essence? First, we find that the statement is the first official acknowledgement by the U. S. authorities that there has been extensive bombing of heavily populated areas of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam. As far as I can remember, Mr Johnson announced, the U. S. authorities had been only emphasizing their bombing was not merely distinguished by pinpoint accuracy, it was strictly selective, directed as was only to bridges, railway tracks, marshalling yards, ammunition and oil camps etc. Any suggestion that large numbers of civilians were being killed was officially scoffed at and people like Felix Greene who came back with witness reports of large-scale civilian casualties as early as early 1966 were dismissed as, at best, unwitting propagandists of the Communist regime. But now, all of a sudden we find The Great President Himself acknowledging that all these months and years, populated areas were being bombed. This brazen and cynical acknowledgement of a barbarous crime is applauded by his minions in New Delhi and other parts of the Third World. Even if people do not have such short memories, governments can be counted upon to have their memories conveniently short. Mr Johnson's statement is not merely a cynical acknowledgement of a chain of barbarous crimes. It is also a curious combination of an acknowledgement of what is, at best, a military stalemate, and veiled threats

the Congress has, of all the parties, fared the worst in the game of defections. It has lost 175 members and gained only 138. The CPI (M) is the only party to have remained unaffected by defections either way. The Defence Minister has assured that there would be no let-up on defence preparations and should the occasion arise, India would be able to give a better account of itself than in the past. The Prime Minister and the Home Minister have both denied that there was a rift between them; it seems that reports of a rift are persisting despite the Prime Minister's angry denial of them in Calcutta last month. The Home Minister refuses to accept the CPI (M) Politburo's denial of the party's connection with extremists in Assam, and his anger at the party has not abated. More reports of a triangular collusion between the CPI(M) extremists, Naga hostiles and China have appeared, and pressure for a ban on communists is mounting. The communal flare-up at Tinsukia is the latest in a chain; the Home Minister's directive to the State Governments to deal firmly with communalists is yet to show result. The MPs may be unreasonable but the Railway Minister cannot be. Having offered to resign once and being advised by the Prime Minister not to press it, he is, therefore, silent after the train accident near Allahabad in which twenty people were killed. What Prof M. S. Thacker does when news of the demand in Parliament for his removal from the chairmanship of the Industrial Licensing Policy Enquiry Committee reaches him in the U. S. remains to be seen. But the Industry Minister has declared that no action by the Government is called for, as the professor has turned down the offer of directorship of a bank though he attended a meeting of the board of directors.

Johnson's Motive

Like the commentators, the leaders-writers are also at a loss to fathom the motive of President Johnson. *The Times of India* believes that the real reason for Mr Johnson's withdrawal is exactly what he has hinted

at—his disgust at the prospect of nasty and brutish intra-party quarrel in the remaining four months before the convention. It is also not impossible that the growing vehemence of his critics and the sheer strain of conducting U. S. policies in a most difficult phase of its history has affected his stamina and self-confidence and his desire to continue in office. If anything is certain, it is that the stress hereafter is going to be on change rather than on continuity. Against the background of either direct or indirect admission by almost all the contestants for presidentship of the need for a change in U. S. policy, President Johnson's announcement of a halt to the bombing of North Vietnam is unlikely to evoke any response from Hanoi. (This was written before Hanoi's move was announced). His reaffirmation of his desire to continue to insist on such peace terms as are acceptable to him has simply ceased to be credible. Hanoi can also assert, without contradicting what it has been saying earlier, that no peace talks can start unless the bombing of North Vietnam is stopped totally and unconditionally. It is unlikely that President Johnson will de-escalate further and halt all bombings in a bid to win the peace.

To *The Statesman* Mr Johnson's decision to bow out of a contest for the sake of party or national unity hardly seems in character. By stepping aside, he has saved himself from embarrassment, if not humiliation, that seemed increasingly likely. Whatever the calculations behind it, the decision will be widely welcomed, for Mr Johnson's way of doing things has often earned American policies greater opprobrium than they deserved. Mr Johnson's temperament and style often lent them a brusque abrasiveness which did nothing to add to their strength. He has also changed policy emphases and thereby content, almost always for the worse so far as Vietnam is concerned. If he is now sincere in trying to reverse the trend, his next few months in office may redeem much of his past record. Mr Johnson's gesture ordering de-escalation has fallen short of not only what

Hanoi wants but also what is reasonable. Yet the extent of de-escalation ordered is too large to warrant suspicions that the gesture is a fake or a ruse. The paper thinks that there will be little sense in Hanoi waiting for doing business with some other American President. One sure result of such a course would be to prolong the fighting and the suffering for at least another seven months. And there is no certainty that the next President will be a dove.

The Hindustan Times has noted that an incumbent President has not been denied nomination since 1884, but Mr Johnson has preferred not to risk it. The war in Vietnam has been his undoing; he has been humbled not so much by the North Vietnamese or the Vietcong as by mounting public opinion in his own country against the war. The bombing pause with no time limit is a notable advance on President Johnson's San Antonio statement of September 29 where the accent was on assurances from Hanoi before a pause could be ordered. What makes the difference is that Hanoi must now take into account Mr Johnson's decision to retire as an earnest of the U. S. desire for a political settlement. After this, the onus clearly falls on Hanoi to demonstrate its interest in bringing peace to a war-ravaged country. Speculating on the effect of the statement on U. S. relations with Russia, the paper says that Moscow's response hitherto had been to blame U. S. policy outright and criticise President Johnson for not stopping the bombing of North Vietnam. But the changed situation poses a genuine challenge to Moscow to exert its influence on Hanoi to engage in fruitful talks. Peking may pull in the opposite direction and will certainly interpret Mr Johnson's speech as a victory for Mao's Thought—especially on the art of infiltration and subversion.

Warm Praise

The immediate reaction of *The Indian Express* was one of warm appreciation of Mr Johnson's decision, for "by this simple, single, superbly contrived act President Johnson seems

is reasonable to hoist the hawks and the escalation with their own petard". Whether a rampant suspicion accepts his gesture or not, Mr Johnson's political position and prestige stand to be strengthened, and the paper cannot rule out that all American might prove to be a curtain-raiser of such a rousing Draft-Johnson-for-President campaign. In a second editorial the least anonymous pleads that Mr Johnson's decision here is not to de-escalate the Vietnam war. A president will impose a "massive clamp" on American bombing deserves the ap-

has noted and support of men of peace it has not goodwill the world over. In this recent 1884 text, humanitarian considerations need not to override the tugs of ideological and political attachments. The Government of India should keep this paramount consideration in mind while finding the way of all contending sides to the negotiating table. To have this, New Delhi should control its built-in tendency to lean heavily to

side. The Government's "fatal nation" to support "selective rearmament" has cost this country heavily international influence and prestige and has too often protracted conflict instead of helping to restore peace. When one party to a dispute is willing to make a commitment of "90 per cent of a million" in the hope that the other party might be induced to come to the negotiating table, it does not lie with a peace-maker to insist as a pre-condition that the other party should get the entire 100 per cent—else give peace the go-by. President Johnson has come 90 per cent of the way. It is India's plain duty, as chairman of the International Control Commission, to persuade Hanoi and Moscow to move 10 per cent in response.

Refusing to believe that Mr Johnson changed his spots *Patriot* says that the American President is a wily and cunning politician who has regularly launched peace offensives to camouflage warlike intentions. The present offer differs from the previous ones because he has been compelled to bow to the race for nominations. But it still speaks of America's willingness to defend an "honoured cause" and continues to ignore Hanoi's demand

for an unconditional cessation of bombing. The announcement is a dramatic move by a master of political chicanery. There is no mention of any negotiations with the National Liberation Front, which is bearing the brunt of fighting in the south. It is the future of South Vietnam that is the real issue, and any negotiations which exclude the representatives of the people of South Vietnam cannot lead to concrete results. The Viet-

namese people have been deceived once and they are no longer willing to put their trust in mere words. Mr Johnson can prove the sincerity of his quest for peace only by an unconditional cessation of bombing and negotiating the modalities of American withdrawal from Vietnam. He has to accept that Vietnam is a single country, and the kind of government which the Vietnamese people elect is a matter for concern only to themselves.

Remembering Gorky

SAROJ ACHARYA

HE hasn't been always that remote and shadowy as now in his centenary year. Ritual, a properly formal duty, makes him look even more remote; also, alas, too solemn to be the living, moving force as Maxim Gorky really was to us, say, forty years back. Memory is a sleeping giant, and remembering Gorky is like remembering one's lost youth, one's hopes and illusions all.

Today's youth has little or nothing to remember of Maxim Gorky. There is the inevitable generation gap. But there is more to it than mere distance in time. A sense of indirection seems to have distracted many of the present generation, and to them Gorky has become just one of those effigies of literature known to all but read by few.

It was not so in the early 1920s; from then onward up to the 1940s Gorky, together with other great literary crusaders like Shaw and Romain Rolland, held us in spell, helped us understand the present and strive for better things. Gorky came upon us unannounced in the early 1920s. The effect was immediate and overpowering, although at first in a vague way. We didn't know—at least not many of us knew then—who Maxim Gorky was, what position he held in the world of letters and what exactly he wanted us to accept. The Bolshevik Revolution conveyed very little sense to us then. Also Gorky's spiritual or

actual links with it were unknown to us.

All we could feel was that he hated tyranny and exploitation. So did we. He was bitter, too, but in a large way and never with any personal grievance to air about. In a large way, we, too, shared that bitterness; it was the bitterness of a rising generation of youth in a colonial country. Gorky deepened our understanding of the nature of the political conflict which, we began to sense, was at bottom a universal social conflict.

More than Marx and Lenin, it was Gorky who made us aware of the contradictions of capitalism; in other words, he "blew the dust off our souls" with the great cleansing wind of doctrine sweeping through his *Chelkash*, *Mother*, *The Lower Depths*, *The Philistines*, *The Creatures That Once Were Men* and several other pieces of marvellous power and beauty.

Marx said, quoting Goethe, in the beginning was the deed; so it was with Gorky. He took us by surprise and overwhelmed us. We didn't have to wait for recognizing Maxim Gorky as an institution, as the father-figure of Socialist Realism. He came first and he stood, and still stands, above and beyond the reach of the tricks and tortured course of the credo of Socialist Realism.

Our youth owes him some of the noblest strivings for active humanity. For the human situation remains basi-

cally the same, certainly at least in our part of the world. The creatures that once were men are still with us; the Lower Depths are not far to seek and the Enemy, the Philistines, are determined more than ever to defend their privilege, resist change and divide and weaken the will of the oppressed masses in order to put off the day of final reckoning. In several parts of the world the working class has come to terms with the rule of capital in exchange for crumbs of comfort.

"Not even an ocean of blood can drown the truth", Gorky's Mother proclaimed. The truth now seems in danger of being drowned in hire-purchase happiness and promises of high consumption benefits. Since the trend appears to be strong in both the capitalist and socialist sectors of the world, celebrating the Gorky centenary might as well be the end of the stormy petrel.

Kabi Kahini

By A DRAMA CRITIC

BADAL Sarkar's entry into the circle of contemporary Bengali playwrights has been with a bang. When *Ebong Indrajit* was first published in the July '65 issue of Bohurupee magazine it evoked immediate interest, admiration and surprise. The surprise was because those who had read his earlier published plays like *Ram Shyam Jadu* or *Baro Pishima*, or had seen them on the stage had not imagined that a dramatist with only a few slender comedies to his credit could suddenly write as serious and disturbing a play as *Ebong Indrajit* and succeed at the same time with a formal experiment that was almost revolutionary. In any case acquaintance with his earlier plays could not have been wide and to most who read or saw it performed *Ebong Indrajit* was Badal Sarkar's first play. With Bahurupee's production of his next published play *Baki Itihas* his reputation as a serious and gifted dramatist became secure and he came to be regarded as one of the most important

of contemporary playwrights whose modernity and inventive command over form were beyond dispute. But even then most people did not recollect or did not know that he had himself produced and acted in plays long before *Ebong Indrajit* was staged by Souvanik. That was before he went to live abroad and was long ago. It came therefore as a surprise to many when, a few months ago, Badal Sarkar announced that a new theatre group formed by him, Satabdi, would produce a new play by him, *Kabi Kahini*, with two shows every Sunday on the Rabindra Sarobar stage. The news naturally raised considerable hope and expectation. But at the same time it was not without some apprehension that one went to see the play which one had already heard described as a "light comedy."

It need not be a paradox that, as it turned out, while the expectation was at least partially fulfilled, the apprehension was found to be justified as well. *Kabi Kahini* is in the vein of the author's earlier comedies. The author has found it necessary to print a statement in the programme notes to say that *Kabi Kahini* was written after and not before *Ebong Indrajit*. One sees his point but chronology does not disprove a reversion and if in *Kabi Kahini* there is ample evidence of the author's remarkable grasp over the craft of playwriting—his unflinching sense of the theatre, his easy build-up situations, his sureness of touch in writing theatrical dialogues and his nimble wit—it reveals at the same time a certain care for safety and a regard for caution, if not actually for the conventional. *Kabi Kahini* is a very well-made play but well-madeness is not exactly what one hopefully goes to look for in a new play by Badal Sarkar.

Set Types

Kabi Kahini is a satirical comedy about an aspiring political climber preparing for an election with an aspiring literary climber for a wife preparing for a literary soiree which "the famous modern poet" Smarait is expected to attend as the chief guest. The daughter has both suitors

and secret literary ambitions. The poet does not arrive but a journalist, working in the rival candidate's paper and impersonating the poet, does. With election politics, modern poetry, an imposter, one young woman and several young men, the situation is of course explosive and crackers, together with several well-timed mines planted cunningly, go off at a brisk rate. But even as they go off and one is genuinely amused, an undercurrent of disappointment is difficult to avoid. The characters are quite openly drawn from set types. The semi-literate candidate, the overbearing party boss, the local touch, the impossible wife, the vacuous daughter—one has met them all before. Nor are the structural levers—the election battle farce and the comedy of error—particularly original. Even some of the scenes, as for instance, the one where the fake poet composes modern poems out of advertisements and household letters ring a faint bell of recognition and one has an uneasy feeling that the gag has been used before. It is not suggested that there is any element of copy in the play. Its ambience is entirely indigenous and the details are both clever and fresh. Badal Sarkar's undoubted talent and competence rescue *Kabi Kahini* from being a humdrum comedy but they have not been able to transform the conventional set of comic situations into a play which one had hoped would do for the comedy what *Ebong Indrajit* did for serious drama, that is, achieve a breakthrough.

The regret might have been less if the production did not leave something more to be desired. The set and the lighting could have been devised more imaginatively to underscore the funny situations and the satire. The female roles have not been cast to best advantage nor has the deficiency been overcome by Sm Putul Sarkar and Sm Bijaya Sarkar's acting. A pleasant surprise was to find in Badal Sarkar an actor of considerable ability. Himangshu Chatterji, formerly of Bohurupee, could be expected to exploit fully the ample scope the role of the fake poet allows. He did so with practised ease. The ren-

of Pankaj Munshi's Sanat, the school teacher, and Suphal Mohon, the local tough, is praised because they succeeded in measure in redeeming the type from a rusty, clichetic fate. *Kabi Kahini* is Satabdi's first production. No one will grudge it a long which it deserves, being far superior to what commonly goes for a briskly in the Bengali theatre today, and one let us hope, at the same time, that recurrent Sarkar, now that we know him to avoid an actor and a director of no drawn order, will choose as Satabdi's -literate production a play with more meat ty boss than *Kabi Kahini*.

First Show

By An Art Critic

MARENDRA Lal Chowdhury, a painter who has participated in several group shows in various cities India, had his first solo exhibition Calcutta last week at the premises the Academy of Fine Arts. Most the exhibits were in oils, and some Badal. One's first impression on entering hall was that Mr Chowdhury is sincere artist and that he devotes considerable thought to his work, struggling to exteorize, in line and colour, innermost emotions. Not that always succeeds, but his striving is evident in a large number of his canvases. His grammar is sound and he commands a good vocabulary. But there are, unfortunately, a few examples where there is a tendency towards thinness, born out of a desire easily please. This commercial attitude all the more unfortunate because there are a good many pictures that emotionally crystallized. Among Mr Chowdhury's better examples were, we thought, "Still Life" (No. 6), with its vibrant colours and all forms, "Still Life" (No. 16), with its integrated patterns, and "Disrupted" (No. 11), where the division of space is competent and the arrangement of colours dextrous.

"Scholar Exchange"

(From *The Denver Post*)

WHILE doing research and traveling in India, last summer under the auspices of the U.S. Educational Foundation in India (Fulbright programme) I was very surprised to be asked by a number of Indian intellectuals whether American students and scholars in India might not really be fronting for the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). The notion seemed to me ridiculous and I reassured them that this was a false rumour.

I ask now what the State Department and the CIA would have me write to those Indian scholars. Shall I write that our conversations about Indian philosophy, education and politics were indeed in good faith on my part at least? That I was not beholden to CIA funds (although, in fact, perhaps I was without my knowledge)? That I listened with an open mind and was not gathering information for an American espionage agency?

And if I do say so, apologizing for whatever deception must unfortunately have been practised upon them by some American students and scholars, what reason would they have to believe my present statements, since that is exactly what would now be said by a scholar who had already exploited his status as a university professor to stage, for the benefit of the CIA, supposedly above-board discussions?

The Fulbright programme must have spent about \$ 4,000 on my travel and research. The benefit to me as a professor of philosophy has been enormous, but the main purpose of the programme is cultural exchange. By my modest presence in India I was supposed to contribute something to Indian intellectual life, too. But the government which sent me there has, through its CIA operations, cancelled out any such possible benefit. Indeed, so far as Indian understanding and trust of American scholars are concerned, it would have been better had I and others never gone to India, if we were to be disgraced before the world six months later.

Now I see—and I hope that the American public and the Congress can see—better than last summer why the Indian parliament rejected Vice President Humphrey's apparently generous offer to assist Indian education by the amount of \$300 million and hundreds of American educators.

FOREST WILLIAMS,
(Professor, University of Colorado)

Letters

I am afraid something more solid and lasting requires to be done if a paper is not to fall a victim to financial sharks.

I would like to discuss the whole question with you in detail.

Y. KOLHATKAR
Poona

I would do all I can for the new venture; for me it would not only be love's labour, it would be hate's labour also, if you know what I mean.

I. AKHTAR
Bombay

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G. RAMMAIAH
Guntur (A.P.)

I wonder if you received my previous post-card in which I had informed you that I am greatly interested in your forthcoming journal. I shall be happy to receive a specimen copy.

S. S. MIRAJKAR
Bombay

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As a token of my appreciation and wishing you all success in your new venture I am enclosing a small cheque, which I hope, you will find useful. The only point I wish to make clear—I would rather you started a weekly which follows closely the CPC line of thinking than a weekly which has no clear-cut view of its own.

C. S. RAO
Andhra Pradesh

As you are starting a weekly, I am personally with you and assure you the cooperation of quite a good number of fellows here. You know, our Panjab is intellectually barren (almost). Anyway we shall try our best.

R. K. MEGH
Punjab

I look forward to your next venture, especially if it turns out to be less politico-cultural and more culturo-literary.

SUJIT MUKHERJEE
Poona

I have just heard from my colleague that you intend to bring out a weekly magazine in the near future. You probably don't remember me, but I met you with some friends at Calcutta on New Year's Eve 1966, being the Englishman you so gently insulted.

As a regular reader of I was very disappointed when your connection with it was severed. I am therefore very interested in the proposed new magazine, and would appreciate it if you would add my name to the list of subscribers.

C. J. W. BANNER
Bihar

My humble suggestion is that you should devote more space in your weekly to factual articles on world events and on socio-political and socio-economic conditions in India and other countries, rather than stereotyped criticism of our present rulers.

We are getting enough of that from our impotent left politicians. When action fails miserably, what is the use of your crying in the wilderness? I personally feel this type of nagging without action creates a sense of helplessness, drives man to fatalism and turns him into a hollow man, useless for the very purpose for which you stand.

D. CHAKRABARTI

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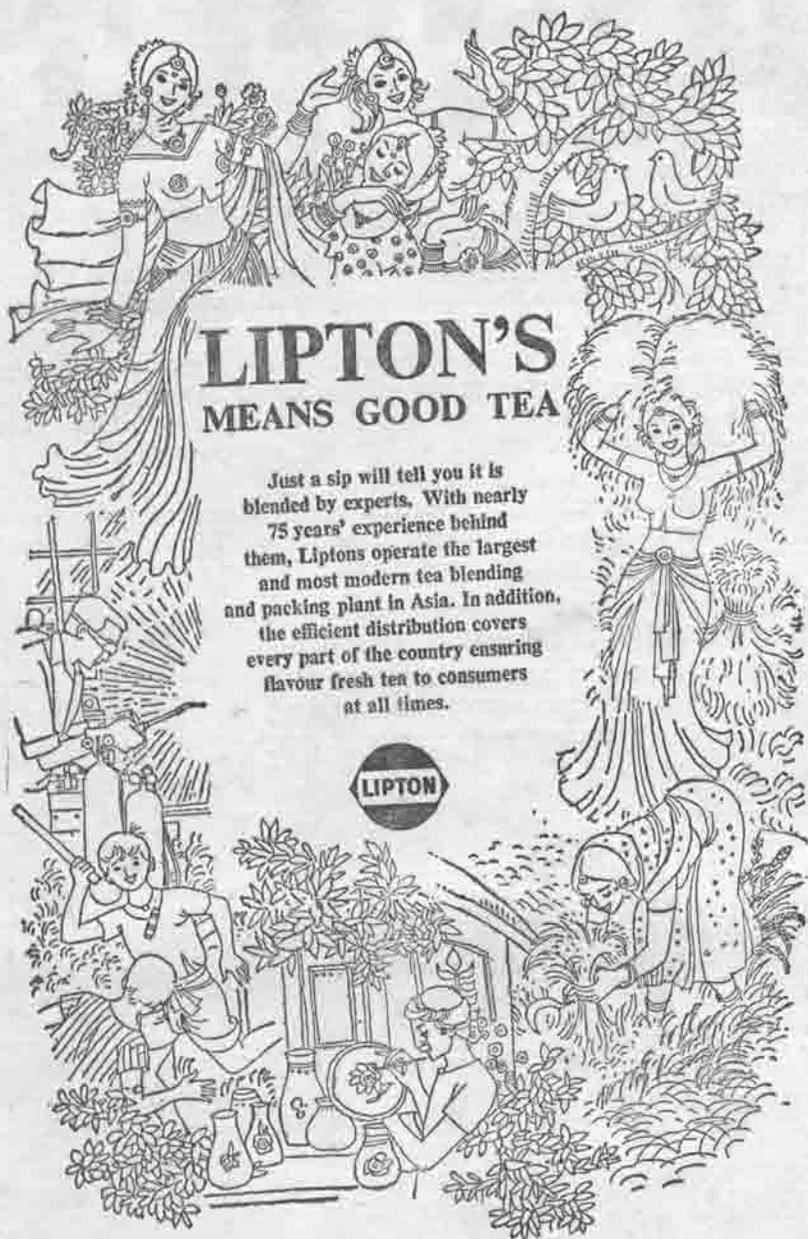
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