

frontier

Vol. 1 : No. 41

JANUARY 18, 1969

PRICE 35 PAISE

On Other Pages

COMMENTS ..	2
VIEW FROM DELHI THE STRONGMAN RETURNS FROM A POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT ..	4
AFTER PULPALLI RAMJI ..	5
CALCUTTA DIARY CHARAN GUPTA ..	7
U.P. POLLS—A PREVIEW INDUKANTA SHUKLA ..	9
THE RSS IN RANCHI N. K. SINGH ..	10
TALKS WITH PEKING? D. G. SATARKAR ..	11
THE PRESS MOTIVATIONS ..	13
SAGAN KI VAGHAN BY OUR DRAMA CRITIC ..	14
A GROUP SHOW BY AN ART CRITIC ..	16
PALLID SUSPENSE MRIGANKA SEKHAR RAY ..	16
LETTERS ..	16

Editor : Samar Sen

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

NO TEARS FOR GUYANA

THERE are other scandals besides Rhodesia taking place in Elizabeth Regina's Commonwealth of Nations; for example, last month's great election fraud in Guyana. This was one issue, however, which was not even alluded to at the conference of the Prime Ministers in London. Mrs Indira Gandhi is now going to have four full-fledged Secretaries in her Ministry of External Affairs; in the image of the USA, a Division of Policy Planning is being set up. There is no dearth of advisers for her; New Delhi's little village literally swarms with instant experts who can pontificate for hours on end on how to checkmate China in South Asia, or which anti-Ayub retired military figure to sympathise with surreptitiously in Pakistan. In London, Mrs Gandhi found her voice all right when it was a question of extricating Mr Harold Wilson from uncomfortable cross-examinations; on Rhodesia, her voice, was curiously—or perhaps not so curiously—muted. And so far as the outrage in Guyana goes, it was both her obligation and her prerogative to demand satisfaction. She however decided to stay miles away from the problem.

Mrs Gandhi cannot pretend that she is unaware of the facts. In the December election Mr Cheddi Jagan's People's Progressive Party obtained a plurality over Mr Burnham's National Party if only the votes cast in Guyana are considered. But the thoughtful Mr Burnham had earlier in the season rammed through a special piece of legislation whereby overseas Guyanese became eligible to vote for the first time. Out of 36,000 votes allegedly cast by these expatriates, Mr Burnham—what a wonderful thing—captured more than 35,000, and this superb sleight of hands allowed the National Party to squeak past the People's Progressive Party, and claim a majority in the legislature. Investigations, sponsored by organisations almost equidistant from the two parties, have revealed the wobbly nature of Mr Burnham's overseas electoral roll: sample surveys have shown that it mostly consisted of fictitious names with fictitious addresses. Had he wanted, Mr Burnham could perhaps have secured each of the 36,000 votes listed in the expatriate roll; there is no question that the entire thing was doctored as part of a big strategy to prevent Mr Cheddi Jagan's return to power.

Certainly in this conspiracy, the Government of the United Kingdom was a participant, and the U.S. administration had benignly looked on while it was being hatched and put into operation. On issues touching

colonial interests—and may be on other issues as well—Conservative and Labour regimes in Britain are technical identities. It was with the active support of the Labour Party that Mr Duncan Sandys had, as Colonial Secretary, arranged to change Guyana's electoral system from a simple majority to one featuring proportional representation, since the latter offered a greater chance to stifle the People's Progressive Party, which largely reflected the sentiments and points of view of the Indians, the largest population group in the country.

But what a pity, PPP also happens to have a rather strident socialist outlook. So out it has to go and it has to stay out. Besides, Mr Burnham has promised the Americans a permanent military base, from where it will be easy to watch—or, as the occasion arises, discipline Cuba's flank. By hook or by crook Mr Burnham must be kept permanently in power; if democratic processes have to be tinkered with for the consummation of the objective, ah, well, all is fair in love and war and the suppression of totalitarian communism. And if the majority in Guyana are to be deprived of their inherent right to rule their own country, the fault is theirs, they had no business in the first place to succumb to the charms of Cheddi Jagan.

At the Prime Ministers' Conference, Mrs Gandhi had both the time and the confidence to remonstrate with Kenya on the treatment being meted out to Indian traders, a thoroughly unworthy lot, whose unscrupulous exploitation of the local population in the past is the reason for the current mood of revulsion against Asians in general in many African countries. But capitalists and traders belong, Mrs Gandhi can plead for them. Cheddi Jagan is a different proposition; he is a socialist, he is also supposed to be an admirer of China and Cuba; such men are dangerous. Mrs Gandhi cannot speak in his support; India will continue to remain indifferent even as expatriate Indians get gradually decimated in a country where they constitute the majority. You see, the Americans too hate Jagan's guts and we have to be pragmatic in such matters.

Prevailing Wind

"Many Europeans, communists and non-communists alike, are beginning to look forward to the day when all of Europe will function as a single trading unit, permitting a new and more rational division of labour between East and West". So wrote an editor of *Newsweek*. Developments during the last two years do support this optimism. There has been a large number of agreements for joint East-West ventures, partnership and licensing as well as for the delivery of complete plants. The most common practice is for Western firms to supply technological know-how and machinery, while the communist partner provides the site, plant and cheap labour. Profit is shared 50-50. More than 150 plants are now being built in Eastern Europe and Russia by Western capitalist firms. Italian Olivetti, said to be the Soviet Government's adviser on mechanization and automation of office procedures, has been given a \$150 million contract for trimming the Russian bureaucracy.

True to the Marxist vision of international division of labour, Russia while perfecting the Lunik and Venus spacecraft, has handed over the job of manufacturing cars to Italy's Fiat. Under a \$890 million deal Fiat is building a 730,000 car-a-year plant at Togliattigrad. The World Bank has released a record loan to Fiat to enable it to carry out this venture. The loan has reportedly been granted with the noble purpose of strengthening the bridge between the East and West. (Incidentally, had it anything to do with the World Bank President McNamara's red-carpet treatment in Moscow?)

In their urge to 'develop' Russia the Kremlin does not want to leave any stone unturned. After considerable wooing the Japanese have recently agreed on a deal to develop the virgin timber land of eastern Siberia. Under the terms of the contract the Japanese will provide \$163 million worth of lumber and road-building equipment on a credit basis to develop timber areas. They will also provide

the consumer goods for Russian workmen to be employed in the lumber camps. The Russians will pay the Japanese in logs from the new lumber areas. Inspired by this agreement "heralding an era of Japanese co-operation" the Soviet Minister of Foreign Trade, Mr Nikolai S. Patolichev, has been pressing Japanese industrialists to invest in and offer credits for the development of Siberian natural gas fields. The Japanese are however more interested in Siberian coal, copper and Ural oil. One of the reasons why the Japanese investors are still dragging their feet is that Siberia being a labour-exodus area, they would not get cheap labour. They are ready to invest in spite of all such problems only if Russia cedes to Japan the Kurile Islands. It remains to be seen how far the Russians can go in order to 'develop' their country.

There is, however, a lurking suspicion that the bait of Siberian raw material held before the Japanese capitalists has not only economics but some politics behind it. As one Harvard Sovietologist has pointed out, "Quite nervous about China in Asia and Chinese claims against Soviet Siberian cities like Khabarovsk, the Russians would like to see China blocked by a strong Japan that has good relations with the Soviet Union; they would also like to see China confronted by intensely developed and well protected Soviet Siberian cities and frontiers." So, Soviet Marxist pundits should stop grumbling that Mao's dictum 'East wind prevails over West wind' is devoid of class content. The direction of the wind after all has changed.

Boycotting Examinations

The decision of West Bengal college lecturers to boycott examinations this year has produced one favourable reaction. The Governor has agreed to bring one group of lecturers, earlier left out, within the purview of the UGC recommended pay scales. The worth of his cavalier nouncement on election-eve is highly

doubtful though. He has not obtained the concurrence of the Union Ministry for the expenditure which is to be substantially met by the Centre. The decision to boycott examinations however is believed to stand, for the major demand of the lecturers, uniform pay scale for all, is yet unmet.

The lecturers in West Bengal may have by now learnt, although reluctantly, that militant steps such as boycotting examinations do pay. One such step two years ago secured for them the UGC pay scale, which however took two years to be implemented, after a series of bureaucratic bluffing. There were many even then and there are many now among lecturers who considered such threats, so far resorted to by bodies like trade unions, beneath their dignity. They consider themselves not wage-earners but members of a self-less vocation. Many of them have dissociated themselves from the WBCUTA resolutions and actions. The strength of their conviction however has remained untested; they protest, knowing well that the majority of lecturers in West Bengal would certainly go forward militantly and secure some benefits from which ultimately they, the protesters, would not be excluded.

Any protest action by the suffering teachers is welcome. But at the same time, they should make it clear to themselves that their demand for revised pay scales has little to do with improvement of education in the country. For one thing, such marginal increases in pay will not invite qualitatively different lecturers to college campuses. For another, even if it does—and some university and college lecturers are unquestionably fit for their job—the possibility of improvement in education will still be nil. The reasons for the stagnancy are all too well known; bias on annual or terminal examinations, curriculum which is a legacy from the colonial era, and the strange situation in which poor students join classes to qualify themselves for jobs which for most do not exist. It would have been befitting the lecturers if they resorted to such militant actions like boycotting examinations on these other campus issues as

well. They pride themselves on being the builders of the nation, without realising the nature of the upheaval that the building of an under-developed country, left at the mercy of petty politicians, means. Unfortunately the lecturers in West Bengal have not shown much enthusiasm when an issue other than the increase of their own pay is in dispute.

“A Good Year”

A correspondent writes :

The outlook for the Indian economy, we are told, has considerably brightened. Our rulers are quite sure that the recession in the Indian economy is a thing of the past; at worst there are a few “pockets where it still lingers”. The confidence of the industrialists also seems to have been revived. After all, 1968 was a “good year for the share market”, the *Economic Times* index of equities having recorded the greatest advance since 1962. Even though there may be a bit of electioneering in the continuous harping on the theme of prosperity, one has to admit that things now are not as bad as they were two or three years ago.

Certain doubts, however, remain to be clarified. Any assessment of the future prospects of the economy has to be based on an analysis of current trends and expectations regarding its future performance. These in turn would imply certain courses of action and rule out some others. Are those who talk of prosperous times ahead acting in a manner one would expect from people holding such views?

A decision that needs some explanation is that of continuing food imports under PL 480 on a fairly large scale. Under an agreement concluded recently India will import 2.3 million tonnes of wheat from the United States, though it is hoped that food output may even exceed the previous year's record level of 95.6 mil-

lion tonnes. In the 1950s when we had a run of good harvests, food imports were brought down to an annual average of approximately 1 million tonnes during 1954-56. Even if we concede that government stocks have been completely exhausted during the recent droughts, it cannot be claimed that the gap between domestic production and demand has become wider as compared with the position in the mid. 1950s.

If the government really believes in the ‘green revolution’, it ought to expect a rising trend in food production. Even if we have a brief spell of stagnation in agricultural production, again assuming the ‘green revolution’, the surpluses in the good year would be sufficient to meet the deficits in the lean years. Unless the government attaches a high probability to the recurrence of drought on the scale witnessed recently for two or more years in succession in the immediate future (a step which not only does not have any a priori justification but would also show that the government's faith in future prosperity is not as firm as it gives out), the government does not need huge imports to build up buffer stocks. The plea that a high level of imports would help to impart greater manoeuvrability in making purchases within the country cannot be accepted particularly when the FCI is reportedly unable to cope with the huge offers of grain from producers in some areas. Indeed, if the rising trend in food production continues, the problem would be not one of coping with the post-harvest rush of sale offers (at worst a short-run problem which can be tackled with proper organization of resources), but one of sustaining the trend by ensuring the profitability of improved methods of production in agriculture. The moral is not that one should be alarmed by the fact that post-harvest prices in the open market are now much lower as compared with the abnormal heights reached in the previous year, but that the government cannot justify large-scale food imports if it expects the rising trend in food production to continue.

The Strongman Returns

FROM A POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

A bizarre permutation of incipient Nadar casteism and an anti-power backlash swept Mr Kamaraj atop the poll in Nagercoil. With Mr Kamaraj's return, a new factor enters the power structure in New Delhi.

In 1967, three of the party strongmen who had stage-managed Mrs Gandhi's succession earlier—Mr Kamaraj, Mr Atulya Ghosh and Mr S. K. Patil—were defeated and she could claim that the people backed her and not those who had backed her. She thought she was the Prime Minister in her own right with the defeat of the strongmen.

Mr. Kamaraj is the first State satrap to have rehabilitated himself politically after the 1967 election defeat. Mr. Patil's fortunes depend on the outcome of the election petition against Mr. George Fernandes while Mr. Atulya Ghosh can hope for rehabilitation only if the Congress wrests power in West Bengal in the mid-term elections.

With Mr Kamaraj's return, the one-faction Government Mrs. Gandhi has been running with abandon would have to end. The Syndicate thinks Mr. Kamaraj's entry into the Cabinet would make for some kind of bifactionalism at the top but then it is a gamble once again. For, in 1967 the discredited rump called the Syndicate thought it was achieving exactly that by imposing Mr. Morarji Desai on the Central Cabinet. Now Mr. Desai is the best supporter Mrs. Gandhi can think of.

What is overlooked in the current political calculations is the fact that only Mrs. Gandhi and Mr. Morarji Desai have all-India factions while other leaders control only State parties or the dominant factions in the States. The Syndicate is a power factor at the Centre as a result of the vertical interlocking of State level factions. The Syndicate together with Mrs Gandhi's own all-India faction prevailed over

Mr. Morarji Desai's sparse faction in 1966. In 1967, the Syndicate and the two all-India factions combined and there was nobody to fight the combination.

The Syndicate is a power factor still. It will be more so with the return of Mr Kamaraj. But Mr Kamaraj would be committing a big mistake if he allows himself to be talked into joining the Cabinet. Anything from a Ministership without portfolio, Home Ministership and a Soviet-style second Deputy Prime Ministership or one parallel to Mr. Morarji Desai's is being suggested by the special correspondent tribe here. But Mr. Kamaraj's manoeuvrability will be lost the moment he enters the Cabinet. Mrs. Gandhi will so reshuffle the Cabinet that Mr. Kamaraj would find himself out-voted on any policy issue and once the Cabinet takes decisions, he would have to defend them. On the other hand, if he stays out of office and heads a pressure group, he would be more successful. The Syndicate seems to hope that Mrs. Gandhi could be toppled before 1971, in which case a Kamaraj waiting in the wings could be put up as the Syndicate's nominee for succession.

Mr. Kamaraj has been an over-rated strong man all the time. The ingenuous plan which takes his name was in fact the innovation of Mr. Biju Patnaik though it was announced through Mr. Kamaraj to give it a certain stature. At best he has been a slick operator who can handle the party machinery. Before he became the Chief Minister of Madras in 1954, his sole political achievement was his elimination of Mr. C. Rajagopalachari from the Pradesh Congress leadership.

In 1966-67, Moscow thought that even if Mrs. Gandhi was politically defeated in the general elections, Mr. Kamaraj would still be a strong man and Madras was still safe for the Con-

gress. But it so happened that while Mrs. Gandhi emerged stronger factionally, Mr. Kamaraj could not win his own State for the Congress.

Mr Nijalingappa has his own equations both with Mr. Kamaraj and Mr. S. K. Patil and the Syndicate is thus revived in a new form, with greater capacity for manoeuvre. A Cabinet reshuffle is likely to be forced on Mrs Gandhi soon after the mid-term elections. Any reshuffle should come before the budget session of Parliament begins on February 17. Meantime, another leader, Mr. K. D. Malaviya who has been in the wilderness since his ouster from the Nehru Cabinet hopes to rehabilitate himself by winning the Phulpur Lok Sabha seat and possibly, entering the Cabinet. Mrs. Gandhi might see some advantage in reviving that quantity called the "Leftist" or "progressive Congressman".

The new equation between the CPI(M) and the Congress that emerged at Nagercoil is significant. The CPI(M) leadership is hard put to explaining the shrinkage of the party's vote in the contest. It polled some 30 per cent of what it polled in 1967 in spite of the CPI's support this time. It is possible that in a prestige contest, the uncommitted anti-Congress vote which went to the CPI(M) last time went to the candidate who had a greater chance, against Mr Kamaraj. But that does not explain everything. The CPI looks visibly annoyed that the CPI(M) was closer to the Congress in Nagercoil than the CPI.

Trade Union

An indication of a coming political detente was available here last week when the executives of the all-India trade union organisations (which were the front organisations of various non-Congress parties) was held in New Delhi. The immediate result of this conference was the dissolution of the National Co-ordinating Committee set up in the wake of the Central Government employees' strike. At last week's conference it was found that the HMS (led by PSP) did not favour any permanent co-ordinating committee and was content to have a temporary machinery until the charter of demands

After Pulpalli : The Frame-Up

RAMJI

THE Tellichery and Pulpalli incidents have been twisted by all sections, progressives and reactionaries alike, to a fantastic extent. Right from the start the police action was curious and it became curiouser as it developed. Strangely enough, under a United Front Government, the police took along with them correspondents of the two leading language papers which are anti-communist and every detail of police tracking, capture etc. were flashed in these papers and reports resembled front-line despatches. More strange is the fact that the police gave these correspondents access to the case diaries and obligingly dressed and undressed and fancy dressed Ajitha, especially, for photographs. The publicity ballyhoo was unprecedented in the local Press and even Mr A. K. Gopalan, M.P., said he was mystified over these irregular proceedings by the police.

The papers twisted and tortured the facts to suit their slant and the two communist parties also played a role that matched the best efforts of the reactionaries.

The latest disclosure has come as a bombshell. The Marxist party has evidently used the *Blitz* Staff Correspondent in Kerala to plant a fabricated story in *Blitz* dated December 21.

In this front-pager, the staff correspondent claims that he was the only one who had the opportunity to meet Ajitha in jail and obtain an exclusive "confession" from her. The confession, so called, is an abject statement by Ajitha in which she has condemned herself and the movement and expressed regret for it.

It has now come out that the story is a fabrication. Ajitha has preferred an appeal to the Kerala High Court, praying that action may be taken against the paper and its staffer for contempt of court. She states that she "vehemently denies having given any interview to the *Blitz* correspon-

was presented on May 1. There were many issues of difference. While the AITUC has boycotted the National Labour Commission, it has no objection to participating in the Standing Labour Committee and the Indian Labour Conference. No central trade union organisation is boycotting all the three, which means they still want to have their line to the Government open. And when it was demanded at the conference that opposition to automation should be one of the points in the mass petition for May 1, the AITUC opposed it. It was generally found that the Hind Mazdoor Panchayat (SSP-led) had a more militant attitude to trade union struggles than the AITUC or the UTUC.

What became certain at the conference was that no single central organisation could do anything in the country by itself. So some of them, like the AITUC, want to have joint action with others but are not willing to embarrass the Government at the Centre or the United Front Governments of the present or the future.

But come to think of it, almost all the major mass actions like the U.P. teachers' strike, the NGO strikes in various States and the abortive Central Government employees' strike were not fought at the instance of any of the central trade union organisations but in spite of them. The Jana Sangh's potentialities on the trade union front have not been recognised by the Left parties. It is the party of the future among the government employees in the Hindi belt and the Left will be nowhere in the picture because it is now quibbling about united front at the top while the Jana Sangh is building itself up as a trade union-oriented party in working-class areas from below. The Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh is the organisation to watch in the coming months.

Mrs. Gandhi's hint of a dialogue with China, as reported in this column last week, does not mean anything tangible, after all. In fact there is no

preparation for a dialogue and no home work has been done. If by any chance China says it is ready for a dialogue New Delhi would look ridiculous. On the other hand, some work seems to have been done on Pakistan as evident from the proposals spelt out last week for some joint machinery.

Tashkent

Ironically, the proposals came on the Tashkent anniversary which went practically unnoticed in New Delhi, with not even that coterie of fellow-travelers called the ISCUS to knock together a meeting. And the third anniversary also witnessed the virtual death of the Tashkent agreement. For India's proposals implied the elimination of direct or indirect Soviet presence which made the Tashkent agreement possible.

Mrs. Gandhi's new offensive can be termed at best an exercise in independence, which indeed would embarrass the Soviet Union. Though the Russians have been pressing for a settlement on Kashmir, they would not like the way she is going about it without Soviet participation.

But it is significant that the Pakistani Press has been emphasising that "the President of Pakistan has already offered to sign a no-war pact with India if India could evolve machinery to settle the Kashmir dispute to the satisfaction of all the concerned parties."

The reference to "all the concerned parties" could only mean that Pakistan has a third party in mind, possibly China, because areas in Ladakh are part of the Sino-Indian border dispute. This underlines the new complication in the Kashmir issue which was absent in 1947. India would like to accept the fact that China is also involved in the Kashmir issue now. The Soviet pressure on India is to settle with Pakistan under Soviet guidance of sorts so that the Ladakh issue could still be a matter of dispute between India and/or Pakistan and China which would ensure a continued Asian confrontation.

Cocktail piece: Soviet journalists in New Delhi have renamed the combination Americans call "Bloody Mary" (vodka and tomato juice) "Naxalite."

January 12, 1969

FRONTIER is available from
CENTRAL NEWS AGENCY
22/90 Connaught Place
New Delhi-1

JANUARY 18, 1969

dent or any other correspondent" and adds that this has been wilfully published to prejudice her case. She is also planning to file a case with the District Magistrate, Calicut, for defamation, against the paper and its staffer.

Mr Mayan Kutty, Ajitha's advocate, has stated that he himself made enquiries at the jail and learnt to his full belief that Ajitha had not been permitted to grant any such interview and that such interviews with the Press are not permissible under prison rules.

These being the facts, it is fairly certain that the story was planted with ulterior motives to discredit the extremists who were causing such a headache to the Marxists: It is not difficult to presume that the story reflects the official Marxist line. The correspondent is more than a correspondent. For, he was one of the hand-picked few who were allowed to participate as an observer in the delegates session of the 8th Congress of the Marxists at Ernakulam. Surely a rare privilege when Marxists were shying at every shadow. Secondly, it is learnt that he travelled with the Marxist Minister in charge of Jails, Mr Imbichi Bawa, to Calicut when the Minister visited the jail.

The Minister gave out a statement refuting the stories that Ajitha and others had been manhandled by the police. Ajitha's advocate, Mr Mayan

Kutty, has stated categorically that Ajitha, Mandakini and others were cruelly beaten up by the police and that one Sankaran Master belonging to the group is now in hospital swathed in plaster with most of his ribs and other bones broken.

Letters

From the letters sent by Kunnikal Narayanan, K. P. Narayanan, Ajitha and Mandakini to the advocate, which were personally verified by me, it is evident that they are bitterly against the Right and Left CPI and also against the breakaway group led by K. P. R. Gopalan and others. They are confident that sooner or later the movement set afoot by them would prevail. And they have spurned the efforts of the Defence Council set up by the Right CPI. An extract from a letter from Mandakini dated 3.1.69 states: "In my opinion the leftists, the rightists and others all belong to the same flock. The Marxists have proved it by their Eighth Party Congress and the role of the Right has been revealed in the transport strike." Philip in a letter states: "When hardened politicians like K. P. R. Gopalan and Right CPI are involved we are not interested in such (legal) help." In another letter Mandakini reveals that she has written to Lalit Chari, the son of A. S. R. Chari of Bombay, to help them legally. All along their stand has been that they would gladly accept help from professional advocates and the public and from the professional politicians. The spirit in all the letters is at direct variance with the alleged "confession" published in *Blitz*.

It is interesting to note that they at first refused the offer of help from their present advocate, Mayan Kutty, thinking that he belonged to the Defence Council. Later when they knew he was acting on his own, as a professional man, they accepted him. Mr Kunnikal Narayanan has issued a statement through his lawyer condemning the efforts of the Right Communists and the K. P. R. Naxalites and the inhuman attitude of the Marxists towards them. He has affirmed his confidence in their movement and has

appealed to the public for help to fight their case.

An interesting sidelight is the role of the right CPI. When they set up the Defence Council at Calicut in December it was resolved to request the Government to treat the culprits as political prisoners. But it is interesting that the party has not done anything about it. It has not breathed a single word about it even in the Assembly so far.

Philip in a letter dated 27.12.68 said: "The CPI is helping and supporting a government which is treating us so mercilessly and on the other hand they come to us pretending they are concerned over our fate and want to help us. This is out and out characteristic of the dishonesty of the party."

The Congress and recently the Congress President have been seeing a Pulpalli in every nook and corner of Kerala. Nijalingappa's utterances and threats of take-over, (at Trivandrum) would discredit a Shiva Sena leader even. And the slogans of his followers during the rally at Trivandrum tell their own tale: "We are ruled by a dirty Brahmin (E.M.S.) and a dirty Muslim (Imbichi Bawa) from Malabar. Thugs and dacoits are in charge of the Government." These were the style and spirit of the slogans. And Nijalingappa capped the crazy pattern when he gave a very, very good chit to the Right CPI, during his Press conference at Trivandrum.

The Congress is straining at the leash ready to snap up power the moment it is taken from the United Front and the heroics of Nijalingappa and his open threat have come as a shot in the arm for the Congress to mount an open campaign of rowdyism and anarchy. Since the Congress cannot do any wrong, the resultant disorder would be blamed on the UF, particularly, the Marxists. However, there is not likely to be a take-over till the West Bengal elections are over.

For FRONTIER contact
Shri PABITRA KUMAR DEKA,
Assam Tribune,
Gauhati-3
Assam.

A. I. E.
M/s. ASSOCIATED INDIAN ENTERPRISES
PRIVATE LTD

Are
LEYLAND MAIN DEALERS
for
WEST BENGAL and BIHAR
CALCUTTA, SILIGURI, PATNA,
RANCHI, MUZAFFARPUR

225C Acharya Jagadish
Bose Road,
Calcutta-20

Calcutta Diary

GHARAN GUPTA

SUDDENLY, the fever is on. Now that the nominations have been filed, accepted or rejected, the reality of the imminence of the mid-term election can no longer be ignored. In contrast to previous elections, the campaign this time appears to be an extremely short-term, extremely tame affair. But maybe this is only taking a grammatical view of the thing. In a manner of speaking, the campaign for the mid-term poll got started the evening the United Front Ministry was dismissed by the Governor, so that, between the promise and the denouement, one can easily count fifteen long months. By and large, these have been fifteen months of non-happenings in the State. There have been deaths and destruction, which have however added nothing, contributed nothing. At one end, the young insurgents have shouted themselves hoarse importuning fellow citizens to forsake the parliamentary path and the elections. At the other end, a certain passivity has filled the atmosphere. It has been next to impossible to dissect the quality of this passivity, whether it conceals some deeper stirrings underneath, or whether it is passivity in the cloak of passivity itself. This makes it immensely difficult to prognosticate with any confidence on the prospects of the mid-term poll. Beyond the urban fringe, how much has been the impact of the Naxalbari uprising and its aftermath? How much will be the electoral pull exerted by the peripheral groups which pass under such diverse names as INDF, Lok Dal, National Party of Bengal and so on? What is one to make of the much-trotted claim of a shift in the predilections of the rural masses away from the United Front and back to the Congress? And, finally, what will be the arithmetic of the fact that the two anti-Congress fronts of 1967 are this time very much together, give or take the antics of such curiosities as the PSP and the SSP?

I honestly do not know, and, at this stage, will be most reluctant to play the

role of a soothsayer. I can merely purvey the gossip that makes the rounds and transmit the opinions of other people. Nearly everybody is agreed that it would be a matter of considerable surprise if, despite Nagercoil, the Congress is able to better its 1967 performance on February 9. But then, whether the parties within the United Front in their turn will be able to match, or surpass, their performance two seasons ago is also an equal enigma. Maybe, in about a fortnight's time, bits and pieces would tend to fall into a pattern and one would be able to infer a little more which way the votes will divide. For the present, I will allow myself the luxury of only a marginal comment. Given the recent mushrooming of new parties, the total number of candidates contesting the mid-term poll could well have registered a considerable increase over 1967. This has hardly come about. Following the withdrawals, roughly about one thousand-odd names are left in the field for the 280 seats; in the fourth general election, the number was more or less the same. What has merely happened is that the never-say-die candidates, who in other seasons used to declare themselves as independents, have this time been able to procure a party label. With so many parties jostling against one another, such labels are cheaper by the dozen. I am sure the transactions have in all cases been mutually advantageous, at least in so far material gains are concerned.

This is one aspect of the matter which is both saddening and infuriating. There is no question that dubious funds have been put to work to multiply the number of candidates per constituency and thus increase the confusion amongst the electorate. There is no need to suggest that in all instances it is the Congress which has been instrumental in planting candidates who could split the United Front vote. But certainly the source of inspiration and patronage of the more

blatantly jingo, outrageously chauvinist groups, which are attempting to cash in on anti-Centre sentiments, is very suspect. I would not at all be taken aback if some of these elements—so vocally ultra-Bengali—are in fact subsidised by moneybags with domicile outside of this State: if some vaporous slogans could split the anti-capitalist vote, never mind their content, why not sponsor on the sly such slogans? Much worse is the general aura of the market place which has now descended on the West Bengal political scene. One could be haughty twenty or thirty months ago and claim that the purchase of legislators and would-be legislators is the exclusive vocation of politicians in the north and north-western parts of the country; the conscientious and ideologically devoted public men in this State will never allow themselves to fall a prey to such manoeuvres. This, alas, was a tall claim, a premature claim. The goings-on since July 1967 have demonstrated that the scum in West Bengal is qualitatively no different from the scum in the other parts of the country. You can buy legislators here with as much ease as elsewhere; you can offer a consideration and sponsor men to stand in an election, or persuade them to stand down, here as much as elsewhere. The general decline in morality across-the-board has left none of us unaffected: West Bengal is no island, whatever the ideologues might say, this State has been proven to be very much a part of India.

What makes it infinitely more galling is that in this progressive slide towards corruption, those who should have been, ah, well, the standard-bearers of high morality have proved the worst of culprits. It is mostly members of the academia who have migrated to politics who have shown that, at least so far as this State is concerned, in the lack of moral scruples they will be hard to beat. It is distasteful to name names. I can of course mention the instance of Dr P. C. Ghosh, but why pick him out alone, there are several who can keep him company. Many of these gentlemen had, once upon a time, something

to do with teaching and other educational work: they were respected, much honour was bestowed on them by the masses, who had precious little else to offer. In one's romantic moments, one could think that the entry of such persons into the political field would raise the quality of public life, and would, to borrow Richard Nixon's cliché, add 'an extra dimension' to political activities. Precisely the contrary has taken place. In this business of defections and hire-purchase of politicians, the teachers-turned-politicians have played the most repulsive of roles.

It would be said that I am being unfair to the academic community; that only a minuscule amongst the teachers desert education to join the fray of politics; and that it is usually the shadier ones who cross over. All this may well be true, but I have a feeling that there could be quite another explanation why academicians behave so caddishly once they are in politics. To seek power is human; most people are enamoured of power. In the

existing system, teachers and other academic men are by and large outside the power syndrome; conceivably, a sense of deprivation keeps haunting them. Thus, once they enter politics—which, after all, is nothing if not an exercise in the objective of capturing and using power—they cave in to the attendant temptations much too easily. It is the hangover of accumulated frustrations which makes them anxious to make a pile as quickly as possible, exploiting the advantage of their proximity to power. It is a kind of windfall complex: garner as much as you can while the going is good, for it cannot last for long. The fear of the short-term overwhelms them; they are therefore prepared to go to any lengths, sell their conscience and morality, be a crook, a double-or triple-crosser, all for a mess of cash and hardware.

Several academicians have behaved in an identical fashion even when they have been called in by the Government for special assignments, such as serving as commissions. Normally

university professors are invited to such commissions because of their alleged detachment and objectivity. I have however seen many amongst them succumbing to the lure dangled by private business, and to give awards favouring the latter; the considerations behind such awards have been revealed only subsequently—such as cushy jobs for their sons, or a post-retirement sinecure job even for themselves.

It is mostly men of this genre who are now crowding the fly-by-night parties which have sprung in recent months. This statement of mine is statistically verifiable. Going through the list of candidates set up by the different parties, it will be easy to discover that the concentration of teachers and ex-teachers is highest in those parties whose declared goal is to cash in on the prospective legislative impasse in case neither the United Front nor the Congress is able to secure an absolute majority in the mid-term poll. Funnily enough, their very hope of success rests largely on the fact that they are carrying a large con-

*The Marvellous ...
Magnificent ... Superb
Circus Show is*

GEMINI CIRCUS

At: Mahim Causeway

Opposite: HIGHWAY BRIDGE, BOMBAY

Phone: 538027

Daily 3 shows

3-15, 6-15, 9-15

**See the "Sea Lion" and many
more attractions in
"GEMINI"**

tingent of teachers and former teachers. There is the phenomenon of a cultural snobbery at work here. These persons are assuming that the mere fact that once upon a time they were in the educational field would influence a section of voters to look favourably towards their candidature, allowing them to squeak through: they may be crooks now, but they were teachers once, so vote for them.

This brings me to my major assertion. Compare this sorry cross-section of turncoat educationists with the ordinary run of party workers. A large number amongst the latter gave up studies during their late teens and went to prison; some perhaps pursued their studies while behind bars, and might have even sat subsequently for one or two university examinations. Their family life has been always near to non-existent, for it has been a continuous cycle of leaving prison and returning to prison at regular intervals of two or three years. Many of them are in their fifties and sixties; they have nothing to look forward to at this juncture of their career. Most of them would now be confirmed in their cynicism that the social revolution they have been dreaming about for the last thirty or forty years is as remote as ever. They have witnessed too the accentuation of ideological confusion within their ranks; former comrades have turned into sworn enemies. All they can be proud of is their integrity and devotion to the cause. It is again this sense of devotion which will make them work between now and the next three weeks, round the clock, to ensure the victory of their parties' candidates. Even if the mid-term election is won, the precedent of Kerala will tell them that there is nothing particularly rosier to look forward too. They can sustain themselves only because they somehow retain the conviction that even if the Revolution is not achieved during their lifetime, there is still an inner core of satisfaction in living and working and dying for an ideology. Pardon my saying so, but it is they—and not the scab generation of teachers—who constitute the salt of the earth.

U. P. Polls : A Preview

INDUKANTA SHUKLA

POPULAR apathy towards the imminent mid-term polls is as marked as the mute yearning for stability. The vacuum and uncertainty in the political life of the State threaten to stay put. Recent defections in droves have depleted the parties.

The apish gambols of the SSP and the Jana Sangh during their SVD rule have helped the BKD consolidate itself at their expense. The SSP, morbidly preoccupied with inner wranglings, has let go the chance to rally the leftists round an agreed plank. This was the only State party with leftist inclinations of some major importance. The Jana Sangh which had edged forward as a viable alternative to the Congress in the last elections has lost much ground. The CPI in this mammoth State does not count for much even though it may better its previous record. The decisive contestants, then, are the Congress and the B.K.D. Without a formal alliance the CPI, CP-M, and SSP have agreed not to put up candidates against one another. This will help them all.

But the political weather vane points to the Congress emerging as the largest legislature party and the BKD trailing it closely. So the country can expect some thrills from the tricky job of government-mongering in the State which had the decree from destiny to supply India with Prime Ministers. The BKD's surfacing as a strong surrogate is an event of significance. Mr Charan Singh has impressed the rural vested interests, kulaks, the cash-crop growers and their ilk. Mr C. B. Gupta, famous as a friend of the sugar barons and tycoons, has forfeited their support. The BKD's championship of kulaks and backward communities spells its popular character which is a development worth watching. This is a strange mixture, but we too are a strange people. However, this will considerably erode the position of the SSP, Jana Sangh and the Congress. What is more, despite his known caste affinities Mr Charan

Singh continues to be a magnet for a large number of erstwhile Congressites. The ministers in the ill-starred Gupta ministry of thirteen were all banias of different descriptions except only four. The State Congress boss, Mr Tripathi, is a Brahmin. To Mr Singh this has come handy. His anti-Congress jihad is thus easily converted into an anti-"bania-Brahman rule," which he has pledged to end. They are the bulls in the China-shop of U.P., according to the BKD.

This explains his studious care in putting up powerful candidates from the backward classes against the Congress leaders. One example is Mr Moti Ram Shastri, a former MLC from SSP, poised against Mr Kamalapati Tripathi. An Ambedkarite Buddhist, he is aged 36. As if this was not enough to give Mr Tripathi the jitters, the SSP candidate in Chandauli, Varanasi, Mr Chandra Shekhar Singh, the sitting MLA, is someone to reckon with. Mr Tripathi may have to change his constituency as Mr C. B. Gupta did, swinging from Ranikhet to Sarojininagar, Lucknow. Mr Gupta's opponent in Ranikhet, Mr Govind Singh Mehra, 35, locally quite influential, had lost to Mr Gupta in the last elections by a bare 70 votes.

The BKD has fielded in Saidpur, Ghazipur, Mr Ram Prakash Chaube, a local candidate with a caste weightage in his favour, against the former Industries and Labour Minister from SSP, Mr Prabhu Narayan Singh. To be plain, the determinant is either caste or personal following in most cases. No ideology is involved. Perhaps, that is why the Congress took some time to finalize its nominee for the Phulpur, Allahabad, parliamentary seat vacated by Mrs Vijayalakshmi Pandit. The Congress has been deeply undercut by the BKD in the countryside. BKD may not do so well in the urban areas.

The Congress is riven with dissensions, despite the improvised facade of unity put up by Messrs Gupta and Tripathi. The rank and file remain unconvinced and the animosities become quite articulate, if not always aggressive. This is speeding up the disintegration of the moribund party. But, curiously, of all parties it is only

the BKD, the alter-ego of the Congress, which has benefited most from the Congress debacle.

The failure of the SVD Government had led a push-back to the Congress but this sleazy sentiment went up in smoke and the smeech fills the air what with police atrocities in rural areas, teachers' strike, disaffected Government employees, organizational splits and schisms, sugarcane growers' hum for higher prices, student unrest and the bureaucratic hauteur and highhandedness under Governor's rule. As if to complete the chaos, the list of Congress nominees includes feudal, communal, capitalist climbers and parvenus. Sugar, industry and privy purse lobbies have all their men in the list. And overriding all is the pervasive caste which will vitiate this election in U.P. as it had never done.

Muslims

With the Harijan votes predisposed towards the BKD, it is natural for the Congress to dither. The only hope, the Muslims, have had their honeymoon with the latter and their picnic with the crassly communal Muslim Majlis and Jamat-e-Islami is over too. Muslims would not have the Jana Sangh win. But they will not be happy with a Congress victory either. Any secular party which can assure protection to their cultural identity, person and property, would command their votes against, primarily, the Jana Sangh, and, secondarily, the Congress. They dread the bigotry of the one and the betrayal of the other. It is a pity the CPI or CP-M are precluded from cashing in on this sentiment. This is a token of the overall bankruptcy of the left which neither could inspire nor shore up the popular sympathy in its favour.

The Congress promises a stable Government, the BKD a "strong, honest, stable and clean administration." The Jana Sangh having squeezed the Cow and Hindi dry, now gives a snide slogan: "work for every hand and water for every field." The SSP has grandiosely declared that it would abolish land revenue within thirty days of return to power. This is as amusing as its "no objection" to alliance with Jana Sangh is alarming.

The Jana Sangh has lost much of its primacy and some of its popularity. As a major constituent of the SVD Government it betrayed itself as a reactionary party in its responses and reflexes. Mr Charan Singh, a rightist, by himself would have committed more flagrantly the misdeeds of omission and commission that the Jana Sangh is regarded guilty of, perhaps a little too harshly. By the people now know that if the Congress has not much use for socialism, the Jana Sangh has none whatever.

Besides, the RSS, a close cousin of S(hiva) S(ena), the strong arm of the Jana Sangh, is succeeding supremely in scaring people away by its hooded Ku-Klux-Klaniship. The business community, usually behind the Jana Sangh, has not yet forgotten that the pottering of the Jana Sangh leaders led to the fall of the SVD Government. For a recurrence of such instability they are not likely to bargain. So the gap between the current expectations and the coming achievements of the Jana Sangh is wider than it cares to realize.

As no party is sure of returning home a clear winner so as to form the Government on its own the newly discovered game of defections will be found quite relishing and remunerative. Mr C. B. Gupta and Mr C. Singh have got from their party candidates guarantees against defection. In vain.

It is a futile exercise guessing who among BKD, Jana Sangh, and the Congress has a bigger kitty. The Jana Sangh has earmarked Rs. 1 crore. Mr Gupta's declared target is Rs. 75 lakhs, of which nearly Rs. 25 lakhs have come from the sugar mill owners and the rest from the industrial and business houses in Kanpur and Calcutta. The gur and khandsari interests have liberally endowed the BKD. Industrialists have given also to the coffers of the BKD and the Jana Sangh, besides that of the Congress. The kulaks have donated sumptuously to the election funds of persons and parties of their choice. Thus the performance at the hustings will not be handicapped for lack or leaness of funds.

Money would flow towards the for-

mation of a Government and then towards keeping it alive. Defector darlings are a sensitive species, fed only on baby-food called MONEY. Of this ample supply is assured of both the indigenous and imported varieties.

The RSS In Ranchi

N. K. SINGH

THE RSS is now-a-days very active in Ranchi city where it has occupied parks, playgrounds, and school grounds for daily *shakhas*. In the HEC the development of the RSS has been extraordinary. Before the communal riots there were only a few members, but now in the HEC the number of the "Swaymsewaks" is near three thousand. They attend their *shakhs* every morning. The evening classes are exclusively for children, who are under the special care of the RSS, as the German children were under the special care of the Nazi Youth Organisation. On Sundays, instead of holding their "shakhas" at different places, they gather in the HEC stadium for a common "shakha".

Mr Chavan told the Rajya Sabha that according to information received from the HEC authorities, RSS "shakhas" are held within the township of the Corporation, though no permission has been given for holding such *shakhas* by the corporation authorities.

After the August 67 riots, the Muslim employees of the HEC were moved into the "Artisan Hostel", for safety. The HEC chairman held consultations to persuade them to go back to their quarters. To give them security, it was decided that they should be given a group of 100 houses on Site 5 of Sector II, where there were already 40 houses that had been vacated by them. If 50 to 60 more houses could be made available by the residents of the locality, the management could arrange for their accommodation. The HEC management desires to house the Muslim employees in such a way as to facilitate integration on the one hand and create a sense of security on the other.

So a general appeal was issued by the management to certain residents of the township asking them to vacate their houses purely on a voluntary basis.

But the RSS and the Jana Sangh spread rumours about a separate concentration of Muslim employees. They brought out a procession in the HEC breaking Section 144, IPC. The uproar continued throughout the day and the night. Their food was supplied during this period of dharna by the Ranchi seths.

The private sector fears socialism above all things and believes that the RSS is a safeguard of their vested interests. The HEC ex-chairman, Mr K. D. Malaviya, took some measures to establish communal amity in the organisation. His various programmes to increase production have borne some fruit. Production of the machine plant as well as foundry and machine tool production has increased considerably. The RSS does not like it and is trying to block progress.

RSS Training

The RSS trains its members through parades, P.T., the use of lathi, spear and such other weapons as do not require licence. The historical stories told in the 'shakhas' are such as to instil communal hatred in the people. Stories in which Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Christians and other communities fought shoulder to shoulder in order to win independence during 1857-1947 are ignored. Their slogan is, "Where there is a Muslim, there is a Pakistan." In these shakhas children from a very tender age are taught to look upon what Guru Golwalkar says as gospel truth.

Once in a month members of various branches are brought together in rallies. Once in a year, the Swayamsewaks carrying lathis and other weapons move round the town. (Not in villages, because there are no big businessmen there). Training is given to members for working as officials in the organisation during summer vacation.

Members are divided into "pathikas" according to age. "Shishu Pathika" is for boys between 6 and 10 years of age, "Bal Pathika" for

those between 10 and 16, "Kishore Pathika" for 16-20, and those above 20 are admitted into "Purush Pathika". In the 'shakhas' there is a "Mukhya Shikshak" who is under a "Karyavah" and a "Sangh Chalak". Their uniform is khaki half-pants, white shirts and black caps. In the 'shakha' they first salute the "Bhagwa Dhvaj" and then the "Mukhya Shikshak". They go there with a stick in hand.

The Sangh 'shakhas' are attended not only by immature young men, but also by a number of lawyers, government servants and traders.

There are three wings of the RSS. Among the students there is Vidyarthi Parishad. Through this organisation it prepares volunteers and workers for the Jana Sangh. In the political field there is the Jana Sangh. Among the workers the RSS organisation is the Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh or Hind Mazdoor Parishad.

Hitler and the Nazi party maintained that elimination of Jews was necessary for the survival of the German race. The same fascist propaganda technique is adopted by the RSS. If an accused in a murder case is a Muslim, the whole community is described as murderous. In Ranchi the police recently rounded up four goondas. They were Muslims. A former Jana Sangh MLA immediately started a rumour that the Muslim community was collecting arms and ammunition and all the Muslims were supporters of these goondas.

The conception of the RSS from the very beginning was pro-British and anti-Muslim. The history of the freedom movement shows that through communal riots the RSS stabbed the national movement in the back.

According to the RSS there are three enemies of India—non-Hindus, Communists, and those who talk of democratic socialism. The "Guru" is anti-socialist and anti-democratic because these things have failed to make the people patriotic. In his opinion, equality is possible only on the level of the spirit and no other level. He is very angry with freedom of speech, while using it fully himself.

Talks With Peking ?

D. G. SATARKAR

IT has become almost a ritual for our leaders to voice a desire for talks with China at regular intervals. So Mrs Gandhi has done it again. She has said in very categorical terms that India is ready for talks with China. In late 1967 Mr Chagla had also voiced similar sentiments. We have had our usual quota of newspaper comments on such "peace-feelers". It would seem that there is a method in all this periodic expressions of a readiness to talk with the Chinese. Mr Chagla had earlier, on his South-East Asian tour, described China as a "menace". Later he seemed to have changed his mind. It may not be a bad idea to talk with the "menace" after all. He again changed his mind and we got the standard explanation that the newspapers had misquoted him. Mr Chagla, indeed, was a difficult man to understand. Now we have another variety of the same exercise. Mr Morarji Desai has declared that the Chinese would some day be thrown out from the area they have occupied (or words to that effect). On the other hand we now have the Prime Minister telling us that she for one is ready to talk with China; the implication being that but for the intransigence of China the talk would have by now begun. Mr Sundaraiyya, the Secretary General of the CPM, also clapped the Prime Minister's announcement and said his party had been advocating precisely the same policy line. What is this policy line? What is this offer to which China is supposed to respond favourably?

The policy seems crystal clear. One has to make brave noises in Washington. Leave this job to the "reactionaries" in the Cabinet. This, incidentally, consoles those "progressives" who think that not everybody in the Congress is bad after all. When you have a visitor with a million-pound note in his pocket, throw a red-carpet welcome to him. Let him meet the provincial leaders and the business lords. If students in Calcutta make

an unpleasant scene at the Dum Dum Airport, attribute that to the worldwide student trouble. The French, the German, the British, the American, the Pakistani (and after all that's the world we know) student is protesting; so is the student in Calcutta. So nothing to worry; no embarrassment while begging. Do that and then declare that you are ready for talks with China. The socialists will applaud the decision. The newspapers will be gloomily optimistic. China, of course, being an intransigent country, will refuse to talk to those who are more in need of dollars and roubles than border settlements. The result will be that the gullible public will once again be convinced of the abominable arrogance of the Chinese and all will be well again. The defence expenditure will not have to be reduced. Everybody concerned can heave a sigh of relief that the much talked about 'self-reliance' does not threaten to be imminent.

This leads us to the essential condition of an understanding with China. It is that China will not talk with us while we choose to remain or rather beg to remain under the protective custody of the super-Powers. This is not because the Chinese have a special sanctified theory about foreign aid; but simply because they can talk about our future with our benefactors directly if they want to. It is idle to believe that we have enough elbow-room in our relations with China and that we can thrash out our problems with Peking without an eyebrow raised either in Moscow or in Washington. Tashkent was all right because the peace there was at their initiative. Have we ever asked ourselves whether our patrons would like our making peace with China? More important, does it not help them that we should continue to be at loggerheads with China? If we make peace with everybody, where will they sell their obsolete arms? Has not everybody been telling us that our China problem is related to the China problem of South-East Asia? That being so, we have to take "initiatives" in South-East Asia. And how can we

take them if our China problem were to be solved tomorrow? Almost by definition the China problem cannot be that simple. At any rate it must not be allowed to look that simple.

Nuclear Obsession

It is possible to retort, of course, that why should China allow our 'dependence' on the super-Powers to continue? If she settled her dispute with us, this will give us some manoeuvrability vis-a-vis super-Powers, or so the argument runs. Our dependence on the West has grown primarily because of the 1962 conflict and so on. So it is China which is responsible for our dependence. This looks an impressive argument indeed, but does not look very valid after a closer examination. It misses the crux of the problem for it puts the cart before the horse. Throughout the late fifties and early sixties we became the most vocal champions of the present world order and peaceful co-existence, little realising that this ideal of peaceful co-existence really works against the interests of the underdeveloped world. At the Belgrade conference, for example, the things which worried us most were not the liberation of one third of Africa or the end of racial regimes or the economic inequalities between the rich and the poor of the world; but rather the possibility of a nuclear holocaust, the fear that the super-Powers may not see the sense and move towards an inevitable clash. Rightly or wrongly these are not and have not been the major issues for the Chinese. They seem to suspect that the fear of a nuclear holocaust is largely a contrived one. It is a device to distract attention from the more compelling problem of the two super-Powers riding roughshod over the heads of the other less fortunate peoples. The plain truth is that the day we accepted or even welcomed the understanding between the super-Powers we endorsed something which, given the present international situation, would inevitably go against the interests of the developing countries.

Then there were internal factors at work to ensure our perpetual depen-

dence on the West. The philosophy of more aid to end all aid, the PL480 wheat, the Western expertise we are supposed to need, the kudos we want to earn from the West as "the largest functioning democracy", all this has tied us with the USA. We are, as a consequence, in a tragic situation now—it is we who need the USA, and not, the other way round. The unavoidable consequence of this is the political price that has to be paid. The price is the surrender of the right of decision-making. The centres of decision-making have moved out of this country, primarily because of our own making. The West reigns supreme because we want it to, not because China has forced us.

If this were not so, it is not altogether easy to explain the vilification campaign against China in our Press. It is no use denying that we have let our quarrel with China to be a part of the cold war between China and the two super-Powers. We are worried, why one does not know, about Britain's plans to withdraw from this part of the world by 1971. For some reason we, more than the Chinese themselves, seem to have accepted that the thought of Mao Tse-tung is responsible for all the trouble of the Asian States. Every other month a hundred odd Nagas seem to cross into China. (At this rate, within a year or two practically every Naga would have visited Peking!) for training in guerilla warfare.

In other words we seem to be convinced that China, an expansionist country, is determined to carry on subversive activities in India, wherever possible. Somebody writes a slogan on a Bombay building wishing long life to Mao and that becomes a headline. An attack on a police station, at least five thousand miles away from Peking, makes us see nightmares of guerilla warfare. We say that we want to talk with China, against this background. There is a difference between a move and a gimmick. Our pretence of sincerity is not good enough to blur the distinction in Chinese eyes.

Motivations

COMMENTATOR

THE Shahanshah of Iran himself may have been surprised by the welcome he has received in India. This was not his first visit to this country; he was here before with Queen Soraya. The drill was gone through on that occasion also, but there was no conscious effort then to mark out the royal visit from those by heads of governments from other countries. Nothing has happened to Indo-Iranian relations since then to make anyone here go wild over the visit of the Shahanshah and his new Queen. But that is exactly what the newspapers did. It seems some journalists were taken to Iran on the eve of the Shahanshah's visit to this country, and their dispatches coincided with the royal arrival. For days the newspapers were full of the white revolution which the royal régime is supposed to have brought about in Iran with occasional reminders of our own "green revolution" so that our patriotic sentiments may not be hurt. The visit itself held the front-page for days, and every bit of what the Shahanshah said and did was reported. Special interviews with the Shahbanou on topics supposed to interest women were published with appropriate pictures, and Agra University held a special convocation to confer a doctorate degree on her. At the Shahanshah's Press conference in New Delhi reporters brought up the Kashmir question as if his views could alter the situation. The inevitable question whether he would like to mediate in the dispute was put and dismissed with what by now has become the stock VIP reply. This studied boost cannot be a silly-season phenomenon or a throw-back to our own feudal past. There are weightier reasons for the sudden warmth in our attitude towards the Shahanshah. The Americans have pulled out of the fertiliser project of the Tatas, and the latest move is to have the project in

collaboration with Iran. Whether the Tatas get it or not—a matter which will be decided by the Prime Minister herself—India is interested in the collaboration proposal. The Shahanshah must have seen through this. Whether the deal comes off is a different matter, but we have not enhanced ourselves in the eyes of Iran. That is, of course, of no consequence to the Government, which seems determined to play the cheer-leader as often as necessary to wheedle visiting dignitaries into conceding what it wants.

Between the Shahanshah's visit and the Prime Minister's visit to London to attend the Commonwealth Prime Ministers conference came the Government's decision to reinstate all Central Government employees whose "offence" did not go beyond participation in the strike of September 19. Most papers have taken this as illustrative of the Government's generosity and used the occasion to lecture the employees. *The Hindustan Times* says that a besetting feature of labour relations in this country has been the presence in and influence exercised over trade unions by outside leaders whose true interests are often at variance with the unions. The difference in approach between political union leaders and rank-and-file union leaders was apparent during the negotiations that preceded the strike of the Central Government employees. Legislation may, therefore, well be necessary to exclude such meddlesome outside influence, though the problem needs to be viewed in the larger context of trade unionism as a whole. Another aspect of such outside influence seeking to assert itself in trade union questions is provided by the Kerala Government's recent decision to withdraw prosecutions against all Central Government employees posted in the State, no matter how culpable their involvement in the strike. For obvious reasons, the question of discipline among Central Government employees cannot be made to depend on the geographical accident of an employee's posting. Constitutional rights apart, considerations of justice require that the Centre should be able to apply the

law in a uniform and even-handed manner to all its employees.

Warning against the dangerously easy conclusion that the Government of India began with tough postures and finally succumbed to pressure, *The Statesman* says it has undoubtedly done a bit of both. Yet Mr Chavan's difficulties deserve wider appreciation. He could hardly have condoned the strike, as the United Front Government once did in West Bengal with "considerable irresponsibility". The various threats held out almost certainly reduced the proportions of the strike. The actions taken since may well deter any repetition of September 19 which was a deplorable display of a lack of sense of duty on the part of the Central Government employees, even if some of the harshness of the earlier action is now softened by the recent concessions. Once the strike was a fact however, Authority could hardly ignore the human aspects of the punishment meted out or threatened. Some hardship could perhaps have been averted if the Home Ministry had been prompter with its new leniency; but those who absented themselves on September 19 in full knowledge of what awaited them hardly have a right to complain. Beneficiaries of the latest concessions should see in these not the weakness of their employer but mainly the spirit of tolerance which still mercifully informs New Delhi in most matters. It is perhaps late in the day to tell Government servants that if they want to be paid better there must be fewer of them doing a little more work apiece.

Hindusthan Standard presumes that the Government's move is aimed at easing tension at the Secretariat and normalising its relations with its employees. The number of those whose services have been terminated or who are under suspension is not insignificant. The latest "act of grace" will benefit a fairly large number, and save a handful against whom charges of intimidation or violence are pending, others will now be able to rejoin duty. The point has to be stressed that no administration can function with smoothness and efficiency if it is not at peace with the employees. Even

when the latter go wrong things cannot necessarily be set right by striking up a vindictive posture. At the same time, indiscipline among the employees has to be checked in the interest of public well-being, if not for anything else. A Government cannot deliver the goods if its employees be not amenable to discipline. New Delhi's aim seems to be to avoid extremes and be as soft towards its striking employees as is consistent with the needs of stability and order. The employees' initial reaction to the new proposals has, on the whole, been favourable, and their relations with their employer, one hopes, will henceforth be marked by cordiality and understanding.

Different View

A different view has been taken by *Patriot* which says that the latest decision to allow all those employees who merely participated in the token strike to rejoin duty would have been satisfactory if simultaneously a break in service had not been ordered and a period of three years had not been fixed for the authorities to give the employees concerned a clean chit. Once it is decided that those whose offence was mere participation in the token strike and staying away from office would be condoned, there is no reason why they should not have been reinstated with continuity of service since in any case they have suffered punishment by way of loss of wages. According to spokesmen of the unions concerned, the conditions prescribed for such reinstatement imply that only about a sixth of the 12,000 employees affected will be taken back with a break in service; the cases of the vast majority remain. The cases involving violence are negligible, and in many even of these police provocation will no doubt be found to be at the bottom of the trouble. But these are not the only ones excluded from the latest decision of the Government; employees supposed to have "instigated" their colleagues to join the strike and those who flouted prohibitory orders will also not be taken in. The Government's aim should be the speedy restoration of

normal conditions in the establishments affected by the token strike and its aftermath. This cannot be achieved by leniency in instalments. The authorities should decide to trust their employees and deal with them on a fair and reasonable basis. The very first requirement then is reinstatement of all those who are not involved in serious cases of violence; and the second is the restoration of recognition to all the representative unions. Without taking these two essential steps the Government cannot hope to revive confidence among its employees.

Commenting on an allied subject *The Indian Express* has asked the Government to apply its mind to the findings of a research study on the attitudes and motivations of civil servants employed in government agencies handling development programmes in agriculture and industry. The paper says that Jawaharlal Nehru used to refer to the new role of the civil service in the task of national construction on every possible occasion. At the same time, he appeared to have a great deal of regard and respect for the old "steel frame". This double-think no doubt explains why no radical changes were made in the structure of Indian bureaucracy in the Nehru years. A change of name was considered sufficient. When the politicians in power complain about the inadequacy of the civil service in the context of today's needs, they are in fact condemning themselves. The rigid caste structure of Indian bureaucracy and the status symbols devised during British rule remain unchanged. This has affected the basic attitudes and motivations of our civil servants at every level of administration. In these circumstances, it is futile to expect any remarkable change in the basic motivations of those working in the development programmes. The combination of increased responsibility and diminished power can only have an adverse effect on the efficiency and effectiveness of our civil servants. If they are to meet the challenges of development, the politicians in power must create the necessary conditions and climate for dedicated and efficient work.

Sagan Ke Vaghan ?

BY OUR DRAMA CRITIC

WRITTEN in Gujarati by Adi Marzban, *Sagan ke Vaghan* is a biography of an average middle-class Parsee couple who court, marry, have children and having fulfilled their earthly roles dump themselves on the sands of time waiting for the hour-glass to run out.

The play is a free and frank translation of life portraying the tragedies and comedies, its successes and its foibles. Since life is like an hour-glass it can be described in two ways: either half full or half empty. Adi Marzban takes the view that average people can only let "biology do it work." But then Marzban is well within his rights to give us a narrative and no commentary, state a fact rather than pose a problem—although the title of the play translated means "Good luck or bad?"

To develop his characters in the play the author draws upon as wide a range of individual experiences as is possible and in doing so was able to touch, in lighter moments, different people differently in the audience. This perhaps explains why there were more isolated chuckles and giggles than general outbursts of laughter.

What stood out in the dialogue was the clever use of innuendo and pun. It gave serious moments a lightheartedness and lighter moments a seriousness which is one of the characteristics of reality. One of the most tragic scenes—the still birth of the first child—is laced with humour while the changing of the 'mother's portrait' which hangs on the wall is lined with seriousness more than it warrants. But then such is life and thus *Homo sapiens* behave!

The play dwells far too long on the early periods in the life of the two main characters which necessitates almost a rushing through towards the end. There could be two reasons for this: First, from the point of view of acting; to save the cast from performing too strenuously a part, and second,

which is more plausible, the author's sneaking fear of old age.

One of the highlights the audience must have missed was the preparation of the daughter's marriage, its hurly burly, its excitement, its importance and its significance. There is nothing quite so comic when it lasts and nothing quite so tragic when it ends. A daughter's going away is almost foretaste of death and the only thing that makes this separation bearable is the expectation—one that touches the very core of human nature—of grandchildren or the perpetuation of the species.

Chorus

The performance begins before the curtain rises. An invisible 'chorus' explains what the play is about in a lazy tired voice (I must admit that not knowing the language is a disadvantage and that this criticism could well be irrelevant. My devotion is my plea). When the curtain rises the stage sets and decor at once demonstrate that we are about to witness an intelligent and well-thought-out production. The stage depicts a one-

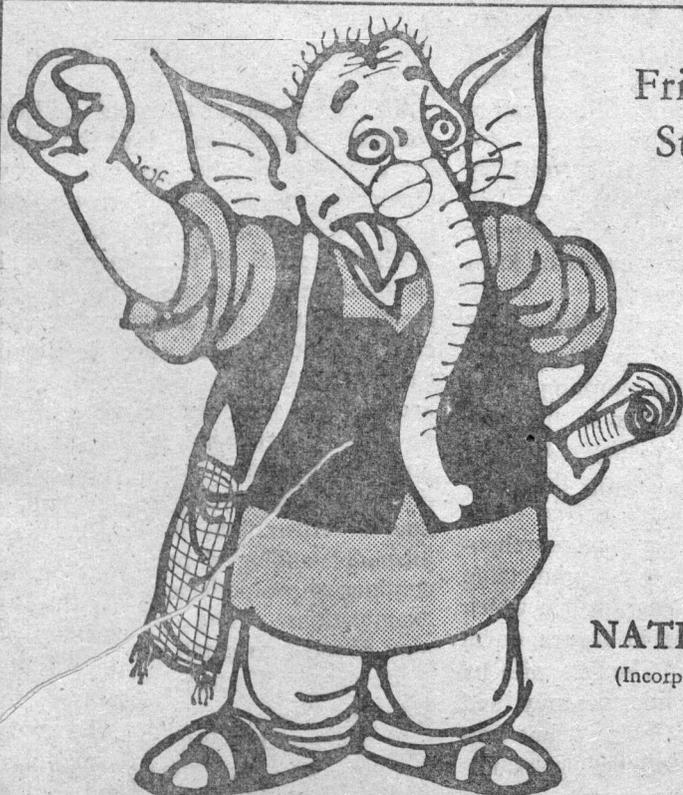
room apartment. The delineation of the walls is cleverly provided by a wooden framework from which hang the doors—there are three—one window and some pictures, one of them of the 'mother' referred to earlier. It is fair to mention that Parvez Mehta never once forgot to pay homage to her on entering the room. One could read a symbolism into the transparency combined with the peeping Tom next door and the ever present landlord (who walks around with binoculars himself). One is almost convinced that the lives of ordinary people read like an open book. One of the scenes which should have been most touching ended in wild hilarity when the landlord surprises the young couple at a moment of connubial intimacy and after just a moment of embarrassment exhorts them to "carry on".

However, the play commences with the bride's parents fixing up a room for their son-in-law-to-be. Hilla Norman as the mother took the stage by storm and swept all before her, meaning her husband and the landlord. Her flow of rhetoric, her positioning

and the reactions of her protagonist assured the cognoscenti that a treat was in store. When during the conversation she sat on the bed, and gave it a testing prod she gave proof of the finished standard of acting, intelligent direction and excellent ideas of production.

The play bristles with deft, touches of acting and direction. If Bomi Datwala's drunken scene was good, his wife's 'pregnancy' was better. In fact these two pieces were virtuoso performances. The introduction of humour when Dolly is about to leave for the hospital is poignant indeed for it serves only to heighten the agony which she is suffering. The acting here was truly the highest point of the drama.

The music in between scenes needed knowing for the audience to catch its telling aptness. But one wonders how many can possibly be familiar with modern jazz among Indian audiences. Even those who know something about it could not have relished it in between scenes that were rather Indian—Westernised perhaps but Indian nevertheless.



Friends, face the future without fear
Start saving, open a new frontier.

Saving is surprisingly easy at
National and Grindlays.
You need only Rs. 5/- for a start.

NATIONAL AND GRINDLAYS BANK LIMITED
(Incorporated in the United Kingdom. Liability of members is limited)

THE BANK FOR ALL BIG AND SMALL

A Group Show

BY AN ART CRITIC

A group exhibition has been organised by the Birla Academy, in its fifth floor gallery, to mark the Academy's Second Anniversary.

The exhibition includes forty-five paintings and fifteen sculptures, by thirty-one painters and nine sculptors. The sponsors have tried to include as many of the leading lights and up and coming figures of the local art world as possible. Most of the painters, for instance, are represented by a painting each, presumably of their own choice.

The point that one is wishing to make is that such a highly distilled exhibition raises high hopes. One is happy to say that these hopes largely survive albeit with a minor dent or two. It can be safely said that those who wish to visit the exhibition will find it worth their while.

To this reviewer, however, who has to make dutiful rounds of the art exhibitions, partly under duress, the group show seemed rather like a repeat performance. And a repeat performance, unless specially asked for, could turn out to be a bit of a bore. A sizable number of exhibits in the show are by artists who held their group exhibition about two weeks ago. Although some of them may have made an effort to exhibit different types of paintings in this show, the impression is inescapable that one has seen them all already *only recently*. In the case of the other artists, the exhibits chosen for this show are uncomfortably identical to those they exhibited at the Academy's annual show.

However, enough of this carping which, after all, is not unopen to objection. The reviewer found most of the paintings of high technical and artistic order and some smaller paintings, sketches and etchings particularly fetching.

The exhibition will remain open till January 20.

Pallid Suspense

MRIGANKA SEK HAR RAY

THE usual banalities in Hindi films can at times be excused for their instant entertainment values, not always clean perhaps, but somehow a sort of patched-up escape from the daily boredom. But these days the Bombay filmwallahs are no longer content with dishing out entertainment for its own sake. So comes nauseating stuff like *Raat Aur Din* (directed by Satyen Bose) in which the conventional formula is laced with psychological overtones, a curious mix-up of Freud and vaudeville with the resultant loss of the best in both. A gentle housewife turns into a twist-crazy dipsomaniac in her sleepwalking fits. The malady is rooted in her unhappy childhood under a possessive mother and the solution is found inevitably on the analysts' couch. The cameraman's efforts have been wasted in rubbing the patina of time off Nargis's face and the editor's job in this film seems only the clipping of the clapstick and joining the first rush print without infusing any kind of pattern or rhythm. While Nargis is more or less convincing in her role of an alcoholic (her good woman bit is rather a pale show), Harindranath Chattopadhyay as the psychiatrist surprisingly looks and behaves like Stan Laurel in a mental asylum and Pradip Kumar draws a blank both as a caressing lover and as an irate husband.

Baharon Ki Manzil (directed by Hussain Rizvi) keeps up this pretension to seriousness by churning out a conventional crime-thriller in the garb of a complex memory play. But the suspense is too thin to grip the audience. The *raison d'être* of the crime is beyond any intelligent comprehension, the solution too predictable and the climactic retribution (in which the villain's car goes in flames down the cliff) just inane. The film with its competent colour photography and plush sets is nice to look at, but neither this superficial technical gloss nor an ageless Meenakumari gliding

through the film like a nymph in trance could fill the vacuum.

Kakhono Megh (directed by Agrodoot) has the ingredients of an average intelligent commercial and had it been a bit more effective technically, we could have had the first successful comedy-thriller in Bengali film. The boy-meets-girl theme has been handled quite credibly and there is a touch of sophistication in the dialogue. But that the total effect is not so overwhelming may be due to defective visualisation. Obviously influenced by Stanley Donen's *Charade*, this film lacks the lustre, wit, thrill and the pace of the original. The photography is poor, and studio-made Calcutta and the Darjeeling backdrops (with the irritating jugglery of diffusers and the fog-machine) are totally lifeless. Of course, when we come to think of it, why should we feel cheated? After all, Agradoot is not Donen, Uttamkumar, despite his coy, debonair look, is not Cary Grant and Anjana Bhowmick is a far cry from the elfin-like grace of Audrey Hepburn.

Letters

Apanjan

The successful running of a Bengali film, *Apanjan*, all over the State has added, it may be presumed, a new dimension to the Bengali movie—the commercialisation of politics. The aesthetic appeal of the film, or its directorial value does not deserve any mention, unless one is inclined to discuss pathology. But what is significant is that the film has been well accepted by some people who, having no idea of students, politicians and goondas, consider it authentic. Student unrest, according to the film, is due to frustrations in love through misunderstanding of pure motives and continuous postponement of university examinations. The politicians employ goondas to catch voters and thus catch votes. There is nothing special about goondas except the fact that students are goondas. Thus says the director who is congratulated on choosing a bold contemporary theme.

JANUARY 18, 1969

PLACE A REGULAR ORDER FOR YOUR

FRONTIER

Subscription Rates

INLAND

One year : Rs 16.50 Six Months : Rs 8.25

Five Years : Rs 75.00 Seven Years : Rs 100.00

Foreign AIR MAIL Rates (One Year)

Europe : Rs 120 or 15 dollars

Asia : Rs 88 or 11 dollars

America : Rs 168 or 21 dollars

By Surface Mail

All countries : Rs 40 or 5 dollars

Long-term subscriptions will
help the new weekly



FRONTIER

61, MOTT LANE, CALCUTTA-13

Please supply the FRONTIER for
Six Months/One year/Five Years/Seven Years

I am sending Rs.....

by cheque/money order*

Name.....

Address.....

.....
.....
.....
.....

Signature

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



The January 25 issue of

FRONTIER

will be a special number

It will contain, besides the regular features, a number of special articles

including

Options before America

by Marclygreenberg

Foreign Aid : Illusion and Reality

by N. K. Chandra

State Capitalism in India

by Paresh Chattopadhyay

The Dragon and the Sacred Cow

By S. Dutta

The Struggle for the Muslim mind

by Iqtidar Alam Khan

Price 60 Paise

Students in this country are indeed generous by allowing the movie-maker fatten his purse at their expense.

BECHARAM GUIN
Calcutta

U. P. Teachers

Mr Shukla's appreciation of the (U.P.) teachers' agitation (December 28) suffers from a contradiction. The degree college teachers declare that theirs is "purely an educational problem" and Mr Shukla would rightly consider such declaration as merely sugarcoating "the bitter pill of defiance." But only a few lines ahead I find him saying: "the teachers have to be wary. No political party should be permitted to divide their loyalties and disrupt their unity."

As no sensible person (and teachers are expected to be sensible) can nourish the slightest illusion about the educational policy of the present government, there cannot be anything but a united leftist (i.e. progressive) movement to combat it. Unity must be there and that too leftist unity.

My warm heart beats for the U.P. teachers. Let there be left politics in their movement.

AMRITAVA BANNERJI
Calcutta

Arms And Arabs

Your analysis of the Middle East situation in "Arms and Arabs" (January 11) seems a bit queer. You say that Israel believed it "would be able to impose its own peace on the licked Arabs and there were expectations of 'upheavals in at least Egypt and Syria' where regimes responsive to compromise would be installed." If Israel did indeed believe that it would be able to dictate its own peace terms, then it was making a dangerous mistake. But, from the statements of the Israeli leaders it is clear that Israel had no such illusion, but instead wanted to force the Arabs to face the reality of its existence and gain diplomatic acceptance from them. But the Arabs have refused to accept their

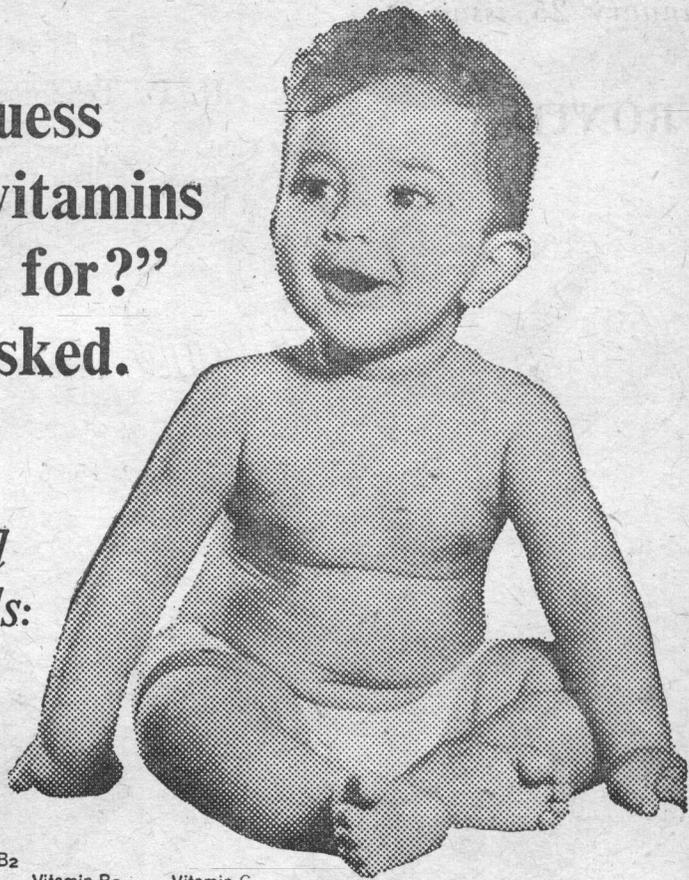
crushing defeat as final. With a false sense of pride and national honour buttressed by the extravagant Russian military aid, they are preparing to avenge their defeat.

If there was any hope of political upheavals in Egypt and Syria after the Israeli victory in June 1967, it has not been altogether belied. There has already been some upheaval within the ruling Syrian Baath Party and the Government. President Nasser also has not been totally free from trouble. He has had to remove a number of his close associates and high-ranking leaders within the Arab Socialist Union—the only ruling party in Egypt. His resignation immediately after the inglorious Arab defeat in June 1967 and his triumphant return in a wave of public acclaim, were to some political observers a political master stroke. Whether, after all these any moderation has influenced Arab policies or not is open to question.

The increasing militancy of the terrorist Arab (mainly Palestinian) commandos like the Fedayeen is a disturbing reality in the Middle East situation. The commandos by their militant activities have not been able to make up for the Arab defeat but have done enough to sabotage any peace effort. Unless the Arab governments can seize the political and military initiative from these terrorist organisations (who have a great deal of popular support behind them), and negotiate a durable peace settlement with Israel, the chances of a major confrontation with wider implications than that of June 1967, remain. While Russian aid and support to the Arabs is meant to strengthen their hands, the former may be getting into a awkward position if the USA does indeed plan to counteract to their excessive presence in the Middle East and the Mediterranean. Any peace settlement must be guaranteed by the four Powers; the USA, the USSR, UK and France, because their interests are too deeply involved in the Middle East and hence "the desperate move for a four-Power settlement" is justified.

GAUTAM SEN
Calcutta

“Can you guess
what the vitamins
in Amul are for?”
baby asked.



“Yes,” chorused
the little animals:



Amul MILK FOOD
contains the 7 vitamins your baby needs



For the foot in action

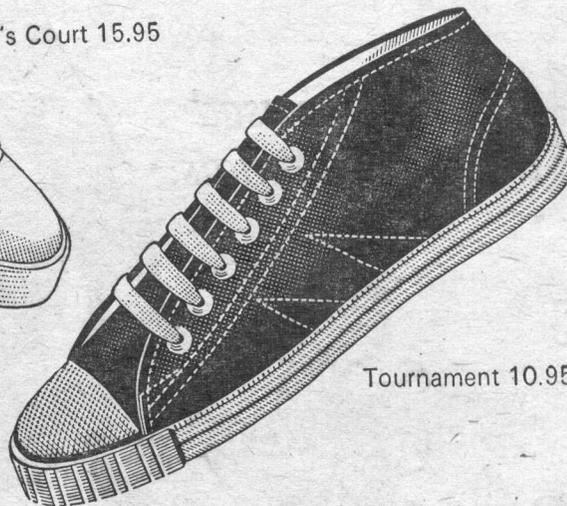
Bata Sport Shoes are engineered for the foot in action. Shoes that move with the foot not against it. Look what you get for comfort and support : Cushion arch and insole absorb jolts and jars. 'Breathing' duck uppers reinforced at points of wear. Heavy bumper toe guard. Slip-resistant sole and heel. Indeed, a tough combination to beat.



Low Cut 15.95



King's Court 15.95



Tournament 10.95



Olympic 10.95

Bata

