

# frontier

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## THE MIND OF HARYANA

WE are permitted to reach no conclusions even when the final results of the mid-term poll in Haryana are now known. By a queer turn of the wheels of probability, the Congress has ended up by claiming exactly the same number of seats—48 out of 81—it had captured in the fourth General Elections. But which half of the Eliotesque incantation is vindicated by this performance is difficult to say : the beginning may be the end, but the end could merely also be the beginning. Mrs Gandhi is every day gaining in confidence, or pretends she is. And yet, her assertion that the verdict in Haryana is a verdict against the politics of defection could well belong to the genre of famous early words. For one thing, it was her party which had taken the lead to chisel the crude game of defections into a quasifine art, and nobody can dare say that the Congress has, for all times, grown sadder, wiser and purer. Besides, the fun may indeed be only beginning. There is no a priori ground for assuming, that the present herd of 48 Congress legislators would be qualitatively much different from the 1967 herd of 48. It may all be a question of spoils, now as it was then. We have waited with bated breath for the election of the leader of the Congress legislature party, and shall have to wait for the aftermath, before we can conclude with any reasonableness that a phenomenon akin to a recurring decimal is not waiting around the corner.

The eclipse of the Jana Sangh and the Swatantra party would have lifted the heart elsewhere in the country, but, in the context of Haryana, party labels have ceased to have any meaning. All we can say is that the election strategy of the ladies and gentlemen who contested under the banner of these two eminently reactionary parties went sour, but it would be too much to claim that the results also dealt a death blow to their respective ideologies. In Haryana, ideology is for the birds. Even within the ranks of the victorious Congress, there must be several hearts which would respond to the baton wielded by Minoo Masani—or to the *trisula* waved menacingly by the Jagadguru Sankaracharya of Puri. After all, it takes all sorts to constitute a Congress menagerie.

But certainly the Left has been humbled. In the new Haryana Assembly, there will be not even a 'socialist' of the PSP hue; it will be an assembly of the Kulaks and Poujadists, and will ensure the class interests of the Kulaks and Poujadists alone. There may be the formality of adult

suffrage, there may be an extensive army of landless cultivators and emerging artisans, there may be increasingly larger instances of expropriation and other variants of exploitation, but the Left parties have still made little headway. If anything, the results of the mid-term poll suggest that it is a case of progressive enfeeblement for them. This is perhaps the retribution which, sooner or later, visits all lazy people: instead of trying to develop on their own extensive mass bases, several of these so-called Left parties had been dreaming of surreptitiously taking over, lock, stock and barrel, the mass bases developed by others, including the Jana Sangh. Such pipe dreams have now received their come-uppance. And we cannot even commiserate, amen.

## Revolt In France

France today seems determined to create history as she has so often done in the past. For the bourgeois and reformist Press the world over that country is merely living through one of her episodic crises, perhaps more acute than at any other time in the last thirty odd years. A few reforms here and a few concessions there could, according to them, re-establish the democratic way of life for a long time to come.

In fact, visible signs of anarchy (?) seem to have been growing in a crescendo from about the beginning of this month. At the time of writing, nearly all the universities and secondary schools in France have been occupied by the students, hundreds of factories have been captured and taken over by 5 to 6 million striking workers and the whole country is virtually paralysed. Both in its amplitude and depth it far surpasses an ordinary general strike or even a generalized gherao.

It all began as a student protest against the monstrosities of the "teaching barracks". Poorly equipped lecture halls where the students could hardly find leg space, an edu-

cational system with barely any contact between the teachers and the taught, an academic administration that imitated the pompous aloofness and the commanding attitude of a medieval seigneur in its relationship with the students—all these had been alienating the students for quite some time. Moreover, the recent slowing down of the industrial expansion in that country threatened the job prospects of hundreds of thousands of students. It all came to a boiling point over two issues: the students' right to hold political meetings inside the University premises, and the right of women students to receive their men-friends inside their hostel rooms.

If these original demands were essentially moderate and reformist, the ultimate objectives were quite revolutionary. Student participation at all levels of university management, restructuring the courses so that the students can enter into a meaningful dialogue with the teaching corps, the end to all examinations, a close interchange between the young workers and the students, opening the gates of the universities to every person irrespective of his or her educational attainments—these were and are some of the slogans. Instead of being pampered as future members of the ruling class these radicals want to obliterate any distinction of social rank between a graduate and a young worker. Indeed, as they took over Sorbonne on May 3, throughout that "night of liberty" passionate discussions were held without interruption in which hundreds of young workers rubbed shoulders with student comrades.

Although the later developments were full of surprises to the outsiders the masterminds behind the student agitation had in fact predetermined their strategy to a considerable extent. They had banked heavily on the foolish high-handedness of the men in authority: every time the latter thundered or sent police to beat up the students, the greater was the popular wrath and the reaction more

violent. It has now reached a point where the Government appears both ridiculous and powerless.

Nurtured by conflicting or not-so-conflicting ideologies of Lenin, Trotsky, Mao and Guevara, the student leaders have been consciously aiming at political power. This explains their eagerness to involve the workers right from the beginning. On the other hand, they did not have many illusions about the existing trade unions or political parties. Thus UNEF (the French National Union of Students), which has been the theatre of turbulent doctrinaire squabbles among various Marxist groups, was completely by-passed. The Communist-led CGT at first opposed the idea of workers occupying the factories; paradoxically, the ex-Catholic CFTD was less reluctant. Gradually, the CP and the Left-wing FGDS and all the central trade union bodies have rallied behind the movement. The powerful organization of young peasant militants, CNJA, has entered the arena with gusto. The teachers had thrown in their lot much earlier.

By all accounts, the present situation is revolutionary. The moment for an 'honourable and amicable settlement' is perhaps gone. A showdown cannot be averted any more. When more than half a crore people have thrown themselves into the fray de-Gaulle's army or police cannot prevail over them by brute force alone. The final outcome is bound to depend considerably on the emerging pattern of leadership. Latest reports indicate that neither the CP nor its partner, the FGDS, is prepared for a political take-over; together they may not yet be incapable of sabotaging the movement. But if some new organisational links could be forged between the rebellious workers, peasants, students and teachers spread all over that country, a revolution could be born even against the wishes of the French CP. The time for rejoicing has yet to come, but should de-Gaulle succeed in re-imposing his authority, neo-Fascism may raise its ugly hand with a vengeance that will not spare the Communists.

MAY 25, 1968

## Leaving It To Ajoy

Politicians may be under no obligation truthfully to tell the public at every stage what they intend doing at the next, but the game of evasions, half-truths and lies played over the future of Mr Ajoy Mukherjee's relations with West Bengal's United Front has gone on far too long to remain pardonable even in the name of tactics. The statement jointly issued last Saturday after what had been scheduled as a decisive meeting between leaders of the West Bengal BKD and the CPI(M) was dishonest. "We are determined to carry forward this united endeavour through the United Front. We shall do all that is in our power to preserve and strengthen the United Front..." So said Messrs Mukherjee, Dhara and Roy jointly with Messrs Das Gupta, Basu and Sen Gupta. If both groups were honest in their declaration, then they must have honestly meant entirely different things by it. But were they really so naive? Beginning with Mr Mukherjee's secret deal with the Congress last year to wreck the United Front Government, far too much has happened to make a mantle of innocence fit the hero of Midnapore all that easily.

It is, of course, possible to sympathize with Mr Mukherjee and his followers. They have never been happy in the company of Communists, but did not hesitate to profit from this association. They could eat the humble pie and go back to the Congress, but, apart from the humiliation involved, they thought, until at least the Krishnagar election, that in the electoral context they had more to gain by remaining in the UF. And a place in the third camp was no more promising than one in the Congress. At the all-India level, however, the BKD decided, perhaps at the persuasion of like-minded forces not excluding the Congress, to join in efforts to isolate the CPI(M), and Mr Mukherjee had to find a formula that would enable him to make the best of both worlds, at least until one could provide all he wanted. In spite of the BKD resolution which, by quite libellous implication,

ruled out co-operation with the Left Communists, the party's national leaders left it to A.M. to decide exactly when to part company with the alleged "anti-national, anti-democratic" forces. Mr Mukherjee must have told them that immediate dissociation from the United Front would gravely harm the West Bengal BKD's electoral prospects. It was probably agreed that the State unit should go on temporizing; if a viable electoral alliance without the Left Communists was possible, so much the better; if not, Mr Mukherjee could try to gain the maximum advantage from within the present United Front and abandon it after the mid-term elections.

Accordingly, Mr Mukherjee has been prevaricating in characteristic fashion. He would not say that he and his followers would definitely remain in the Front on the basis of a programme similar to the one which brought the Front into being. He said that the BKD would remain in the front if it did not have to sacrifice its principles. Which principles, Mr Mukherjee? Recently he mentioned five questions to which he wanted clear and satisfactory answers from the CPI(M). Has the latter satisfied him over each of these questions? Has the CPI(M) agreed, for example, to support police action against gheraos and mass movements? On the eve of the BKD-CPI(M) meeting, Mr Promode Das Gupta categorically stated that his party would not oblige Mr Mukherjee by calling China an aggressor or by agreeing to suppress mass movements or trade union activities like gheraos, and it is difficult to believe that the CPI(M) leaders completely changed their stand the next day. Why then did Mr Mukherjee subscribe to the joint declaration of intent to "preserve and strengthen the United Front"?

But a question must also be asked of the CPI(M) leaders. Why did they become a party to the joint statement in the absence of an unequivocal public declaration by Mr Mukherjee that he did not regard the CPI(M) either anti-national or anti-democratic, and that his group would not leave the United Front before or after the

mid-term elections? Mr Mukherjee's assurances seem to have been as vague as ever before. Evidently, the CPI(M) leaders are content with these inadequate assurances in the interests of a broad-based unity. But it has already been seen that broad-based unity is not necessarily the most durable, that it can be just an association of convenience, that it can be a cloak for the most cynical expediency and rank opportunism. Obviously, the CPI(M) leaders think that without the BKD's participation, the United Front might disintegrate, that the Front—even if it survived the BKD's withdrawal—could not hope to defeat the Congress without Mr Mukherjee's support. But what kind of a Front is it that has to be kept together by pampering an individual or a small group beyond all reason? What can another United Front Government achieve if it has to survive by constantly placating an individual whose ideas and interests seem to have little to do with the fundamental principles of a Leftist alliance? These questions are not meant to subvert attempts to forge a broad-based unity, but only to point out that real unity is more important than its apparent spread.

## A Fitting Rebuff

The non-gazetted staff of the West Bengal Government have dealt a well-merited rebuff to the Governor, Mr Dharma Vira, and his underlings in the bureaucracy who are running the State on behalf of the Congress Government at the Centre. These agents of New Delhi had not realised that the low-paid employees, many of whom have to stand to attention in the corridors of government offices when officers pass by, could treat their "stern warnings" with such utter contempt. Neither threat nor promise of reward could deflect them from their chosen course, and they confounded cynics and scoffers alike by a massive display of their spirit of defiance and solidarity. The strike of May 16 was different from any that preceded it; the mass casual leave of nearly two years ago was not strictly a strike, though the Congress Government had

tried to convert it into one by refusing to grant the leave prayed for. The strike this time was not part of a bandh; only the government offices went dead in the midst of normal activities everywhere else.

The employees have exploded the myth some were trying to build up sedulously in the past three months that the people of West Bengal were happy under Mr Dharma Vira and his cohort and the State has emerged out of a long dark tunnel of disorder and indiscipline. A Government whose writ does not run in its own secretariat cannot claim any rapport with the people. The strike has once again proved that conflict is Authority's creation and it is avoided if a government does not try to tread on people's rights. The strike was consequential to the Government's arbitrary order banning squatting on roads, a familiar and, should we say, time-honoured form of demonstration in Calcutta. Closure of a small stretch of road for twenty-four hours on a Saturday-Sunday would not have inconvenienced citizens, a few hundred motorists apart, with whom traffic jams and dislocations have become a condition of existence. Behind the Government's so-called anxiety for the public was its itch for a confrontation with the coordination committee of unions and associations of State Government employees, which had planned the 24-hour squatting near Raj Bhavan. The Governor wanted to goad the employees into a clash so that he might crush the coordination committee. This has been a dear cause of the Congress for some time. During Mr P. C. Sen's regime a rival organisation had suddenly sprung up under suspicious circumstances, and with sweet reasonableness Mr Sen conceded many of its "demands" while refusing to meet the coordination committee. But Mr Sen only burnt his fingers, which, as Mr Atulya Ghosh would say, is his wont. Mr Dharma Vira undertook to carry out the unfinished task of the Congress, maybe at the behest of somebody in New Delhi. He is better suited for the task, for despotism comes to him easily as he is responsible to none.

For the same reason the Governor and his mentors are refusing to learn from the humiliation heaped on them by their subordinate staff. A case is being sought to be made out that absenteeism on the day was due more to intimidation than to identification with the cause espoused by the coordination committee. But the lie will not pass; for in spite of the Government's open offer to condone absence on the day if only the employees would report to the police that they were being prevented from attending office, practically no such complaints were lodged. On the other hand, it is the Government which is guilty of intimidation. For days before the strike intelligence men visited government offices to inquire about likely strikers; the Chief Secretary issued a bunch of circulars to terrorise and suborn the employees simultaneously; on the day of the strike a massive show of force was organised in government offices and more than one hundred people were arrested for unlawful acts which none other than the police could see. All these have failed, but the Government is not prepared to give up. It is bent on carrying out its threat that the absence would be treated as a break in service affecting promotion and pension of some 1.75 lakh employees. Only a government gone berserk can think of enforcing such a drastic measure. Some of the employees have been suspended on the basis of police reports and further penal steps are being thought up. By such foolhardiness the Government is inviting a crisis and more ignominy on itself. The strike should have convinced the men who are running the Presidential show that they cannot overbear the employees; there is time yet for them to retrace and save whatever of face they have.

### A Murder Yet Unsolved

Even the newspapers have stopped mentioning it, the episode has, so to say, been filed. Weeks have passed since the murder of Martin Luther King. At last fifty Negroes got killed in the aftermath in the United States, property worth several millions of

dollars got despoiled. But the murderer has not been caught; till now, not a single arrest has been made in connection with the assassination. And so far as the news media are concerned, they have had enough of this particular affair: there are more exciting things happening around the world, in any case.

So that is that. If the country is the United States of America, one can obviously get away with murder—provided the one who is murdered happens to have black skin and crinkled hair. Abraham Lincoln's assassin was apprehended within seventy-two hours, following the murder; the interval between John Fitzgerald Kennedy's death and the high drama of Lee Harvey Oswald and Jack Ruby was still narrower. But it has to be different when a leader of the Negroes—never mind how eminent and revered outside his own country he might have been—is felled. The FBI then loses some of its keenness. The dragnet simply drags. Or maybe subliminal logic takes over: a white man has shot and killed a black man, the hunter has hunted down his prey, there has been a rendering of natural justice, so why bother?

Are Americans at all worried about their image abroad? It could be that, partly as a consequence of Vietnam, they have developed a kind of emotional obesity, and do not any longer react to what others think about them. And yet, one would wish the American administration—even President Johnson's near-imbecile administration, now suddenly face-to-face with the realities of existence—would ponder over the implications of its inability to bring to justice Martin Luther King's murderer. Colonial proclivities sprout through a succession of historic-objective events, and are partly imposed on an absentminded population by the ruling set. Under the rubble, there is little doubt there is much of goodness in the Americans, much of generosity; their potential to contribute to human welfare should not be underrated, the aberrations of the last twenty years should, in the absence of clinching evidence to the contrary, be treated as just such. The new insurgency

among American youth, and some of the more recent examples of the majesty of American dissent suggest that it simply would not do to develop a counter dogma about the Americans. The rest of us must have patience: America must be allowed to redeem itself. This is something which we owe as much to the American as to ourselves.

Which is why it is so frightfully important that the Americans themselves do something—and soon—about this shame of King's assassin continuing to remain at large. The re-exploration of understanding between Americans and those who are intellectually and emotionally arrayed against them has to be a two-way process. The Americans—those at least among them who are enlightened and would not like to write off the world—must chip in. There has not been enough of moral indignation given vent to regarding this astounding—or maybe not at all astounding—fact that, after weeks of the assassination of that leader of black men, the nation of superduper intelligence network and clever-clever electronic snooping could not track down the gunman. The pity lies not so much in the fact that the murderer remains untraced, but in the lack of felt exasperation over this failure. The Americans should rage in anger; that is a fire which purifies.

### And Now Laos?

That the existence of things becomes known only when they cease to exist or their existence is threatened is perhaps dialectical. At least that has been the record of U.S. penetration the world over. That Laos, the neutral paradise, harboured U.S. radar stations on her territory became public only when one such was overrun by the Pathet Lao last month. Now reports, indicate that the U.S. is up to something more than more bombing of the so-called 'Ho Chi Minh Trail' allegedly running through Laos. Specially in recent months Laos has witnessed long caravans of U.S. personnel in the capacity of civilian pilots, engineers and cartographers—all very decent and peaceful

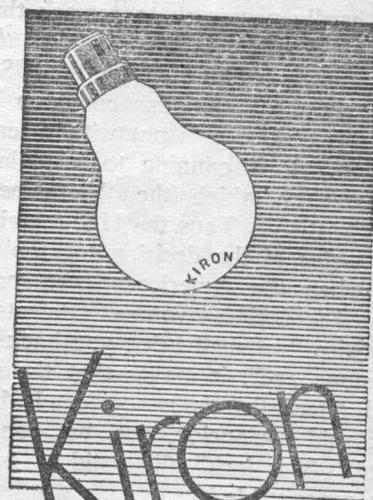
guys. The State Department admits of having 1,752 men in Laos. Such figures are, of course, for the gullible only. Meanwhile the CIA airline Air America and Continental Air Service are busy transporting war material for the Royal Lao Army and unmarked aircraft piloted by Americans spearhead the 'counter-insurgency' operation. Mr William Sullivan, the U.S. Ambassador in Laos, the kindhearted and saintly man that he is, has given some relief to Premier Souvanna Phouma by taking over some of his functions. A great Power like the USA cannot certainly be expected to be bound by such petty commitments as the Geneva Agreement of 1962 guaranteeing Laotian neutrality. For a Power with socialist morality, however, things are different. The Russians, as *Newsweek* gleefully reported, "have scrupulously refrained from interfering with the efforts of the U.S. backed Government of Souvanna Phouma to fend off the Communist led Pathet Lao."

Yet Laotian neutrality has been a transparent hoax almost since its inception. As early as 1963 Pathet Lao leaders had to quit the so-called government of National Union at Vientiane and slip into western jungles. Following the right-wing coup of April 19, 1964 terms like 'neutral' and 'right' became interchangeable. There is no wonder in 'neutralist' Premier Souvanna Phouma's packing his government by right-wing army men and regional satraps. This union could not make anyone happier than the Americans. Under their blessing 'neutral' Laos, with the lowest per capita GNP in Asia, can afford to spend two-thirds of her budget on the army. That Laotian revenue cannot provide more than one-third of the budgetary expenditure is no problem when there is a friend in Washington. The foreign aid that keeps Laos afloat is 80% American. Though the Geneva Agreement is long dead the ghost-like ICC still hovers over embattled Laos and has often been caught on the wrong foot while being engaged in some shady mission.

The U.S. build-up, however, fails to impress the Pathet Lao. They

know what is a true bastion of power—not the hardware exchangeable for dollars but millions upon million of men. By successfully waging a people's war they have liberated more than half of Laos. Early this year several strategic towns, including Nam Bac, the last Government position north of the royal capital, Luang Prabang, fell into their hands. At a time when Luang Prabang and the provincial capitals of Saravang and Attopen are encircled by the Lao People's Liberation Army. News from Saigon cannot but send cold shivers down the spine of the Souvanna Phoumas and Boun Oums of Laos.

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MAY 25, 1968

# Genocide

JEAN-PAUL SARTRE

V

THE declarations of U.S. officials have not the frankness that those of Hitler had in his time. But this is not indispensable; it is sufficient that facts themselves speak. The talk which accompanies them *ad usum internum* will be believed only by the American people. The rest of the world understands too well. The governments that are accomplices keep silent, others denounce the genocide. But one could well answer the latter that it was never the case and that this accusation without proof shows their motive. In fact the U.S. Government says that it has always proposed to the Vietnamese—of south and north—this option: either you stop your aggression or we break you. It is hardly necessary to remark that this proposition is absurd, for the aggression is committed by the USA and only the Americans can stop it. And this absurdity is not without calculation. It is cunning to formulate an exigency which the Vietnamese cannot satisfy. Thus the U.S. remains the master of the decision to stop it. But when the Americans even proclaimed: declare yourself defeated, otherwise "we shall bring you back to the stone age", it means that the second alternative is *genocide*. It has been said: genocide, yes, but conditional. Is it juridically valid? Is it even conceivable?

If the argument had a juridical sense the Government of the USA would narrowly escape the accusation of genocide. But as Mrs Matarasso has remarked, law does not allow this subterfuge by distinguishing between intention and motive; a genocide, if it is, above all, undertaken for several years can well have the motive of blackmail. They can well declare that they will stop if the victim submits. These are the motivations and there are no possible restrictions on the action following therefrom—intentional genocide. Particularly when,

as is the case, a part of the community is annihilated to compel the rest to submit. But let us take a closer look and see what are the terms of the alternative.

The following is the choice in the south: the villages are burnt, the population is subjected to massive and deliberately murderous bombardment, cattle is shot at, vegetation destroyed by defoliants, cultivation is ruined by toxic spray, everything is ruthlessly machine gunned, people are plundered, raped and killed. In a very rigorous sense it is genocide, in other words, mass extermination.

What is the other alternative? What should the Vietnamese people do to escape this atrocious death? Join the U.S. army or that of Saigon and allow themselves to be imprisoned in the strategic hamlets or the villages of 'New Life' which are different from the former only in name, that is, in the concentration camp. We know about these camps from some of the testimony. They are surrounded by barbed wire and elementary necessities are not satisfied there. There is under-nourishment and total absence of hygiene; the prisoners are huddled into tents and narrow hovels where they suffocate; the social structure there is destroyed; husbands are separated from wives, mothers from children. Family life, so respected by the Vietnamese, no longer exists. As the household is dislocated the birth rate falls; possibilities of a religious and cultural life are shut; even labour—labour to sustain their own life—is refused. These unhappy lots are not even slaves. Their servile condition has not prevented the blacks in the USA from having a profound culture; here the community is reduced to an aggregate, at its worst to a vegetative life. When they want to flee this state, the only basis of unity of these people, atomized and ravaged with hatred, can be politics. They regroup themselves clandestinely for resistance. The enemy guesses it. Result: These camps themselves are raked twice or thrice; even then security is never attained and the atomizing forces work without respite. If by chance a headless family is set free—children with a

grown-up sister or younger mother—they go to swell the sub-proletariat in the big cities; the elder sister or mother, having to feed a number of mouths without any means of livelihood, end up in the disgrace of prostituting to the enemy. As testified to by Mr Duncan, this is the lot of one-third of the southern population. The things described are nothing but another sort of genocide, equally condemned by the Convention of 1948:

"Serious damage to the physical and mental integrity of the members of the community.

"intentional subjection of the community to a condition of existence before bringing out their total or partial destruction.

"measures to check child-birth in the community.

forced transfer of children."

In other words, it is not true that the choice is between death and submission. For, in these circumstances submission itself is genocide. Rather they have to choose between immediate violent death and slow death in terms of physical and mental degradation. *There is no choice*; there is no condition to fulfil. The chance of an 'operation' and often terror decides what type of genocide one will suffer.

Is it different in the north? On the one hand there is extermination; not only everyday risk of death but the systematic destruction of the economic infrastructure—from dykes to factories not a single stone of which is left. Deliberate attacks on the civilian population, especially rural population. Destruction of hospitals, schools, religious places—a sustained effort to wipe out the achievement of twenty years of socialism. Is it simply to terrorise the population? But this can be realized only by daily extermination of increasing sections of the community. And this terrorism with its psycho-social consequence is itself a genocide.

The other alternative is capitulation. It means that the Vietnamese of the north should accept partition of their country and American dictatorship, direct or through puppets over their compatriots, rather the members of

their family who have been separated by war. Will this intolerable humiliation end the war? It is far from certain. Although fraternally united, the NLF and the DRV have different strategies and tactics because their position in the war is different. If the NLF continues the struggle despite the capitulation of the DRV, American bombers will continue to ravage her. But if the war is stopped, we are told by official declaration, the U.S. would show itself generously disposed to furnish mountains of dollars for the reconstruction of the DRV. This exactly shows that they want to destroy the whole economic base of socialism by private investment or conditional loan. And that is also genocide. A sovereign country is chopped into two, a half is occupied and ruled by terror, costly enterprises are ruined. By economic pressure and calculated investment they are tied to the boots. Vietnam as a nation is not eliminated, yet she does not exist any longer. She is economically, politically and culturally subjugated.

#### No Choice

In the north as well as in the south there is no choice but two types of extermination: collective death or disintegration. The most significant thing is that the U.S. Government has been able to test the resistance of both the NLF and the DRV. It knows that anything short of total destruction will not be effective: the Front is stronger than ever, North Vietnam is unshakable. Particularly for this very reason calculated extermination of the Vietnamese people cannot aim at making them capitulate. They tender peace offers with the knowledge that they will not be acceptable. The real intention of imperialism, that of gradually escalating to the extreme position, i.e., total genocide, has been hidden by the facade of alternatives. One might object that the U.S. could have attempted it immediately and cleared Vietnam of all Vietnamese by a blitzkrieg. But apart from the fact that the extermination supposes putting in place a complicated system and, for example, creation and free disposition, as in Thailand, of air bases from

which bombers can fly to a distance of 5000 km, the essential objective of 'escalation' was and remains to this day the preparation of bourgeois opinion for genocide. From this point of view the Americans have certainly succeeded a good deal. The systematic and repeated bombing of the populated quarters of Haiphong and Hanoi, which raised violent protests only two years ago, is now taking place amidst a general indifference. The game is well played. What is actually preparation of minds for the final genocide is accepted by public opinion as mild and continuous pressure. Is this genocide possible? No. But it depends completely on the Vietnamese themselves—their courage, the admirable efficiency of their organizations. As regards the U.S. Government nothing can absolve it from crimes under the pretext that the intelligence and heroism of its victim limit their effects. One can conclude: two attitudes are possible towards people's war, a product of our epoch—response to imperialist aggression, and revindication of sovereignty of a people conscious of their unity. Knowing that the whole nation has stood up against him, the aggressor halts and makes peace. Or realization of the ineffectiveness of conventional strategy leads him to pure and simple extermination without, if possible, injuring its interest. There is no other choice, but this choice at least is always possible. Since the U.S. army, far from restraining itself, is becoming entrenched in Vietnam, intensifying the bombardment, trying to subjugate Laos and planning invasion of Cambodia, there is no doubt that the U.S. Government, in spite of its hypocritical denial, has opted for genocide.

Facts follow from intention. And as Mr Aybar has said, it is necessarily *premeditated*. It is possible that on other occasions genocide had been committed suddenly and in a fit of anger in course of feudal or tribal struggle. Anti-guerilla genocide, the product of our age, presupposes an organization, bases, and budget appropriation. It must be thought out and planned. Does it mean that the authors of genocide have been clearly

conscious of their intentions? Perhaps some collaborators of the State Department are so habituated to lying that they come to imagine that they wish the Vietnamese well. It can be deemed that these fake naives are less and less numerous after the declaration of their spokesman: We are defending ourselves; even if the Saigon Government requested us we would not leave Vietnam, etc. Anyhow, we need not bother about this psychological hide and seek. Truth can be seen on the field, in the racism of the American combatants. Certainly this racism—anti-black, anti-Asian, anti-Mexican, is a fundamental fact with deep roots which existed in a latent or active form long before the Vietnam war. U.S. refusal to ratify the convention against genocide is a proof of this. It does not mean that it had the intention of exterminating people since 1948. But it would have gone, in her own admission, against the internal legislation of a number of States. To put it differently, the present leaders wish to have their hands free in Vietnam (since their predecessors desired to protect the anti-black racism of the southern whites.) Whatever it might be, the racism of the Yankee soldiers in Vietnam from Saigon to the 17th Parallel has increased since 1965. The young Americans torture, shoot at unarmed women, trample underfoot testicles of the wounded Vietnamese, cut off ears of dead people as their trophy. The officers are worse. A general boasted before a Frenchman, who has testified before the Tribunal, that he hunted the VC from the sky on a helicopter and shot them on the ricefields. He meant, of course, not the fighters of the NLF who knew how to protect themselves, but the peasants who cultivate rice. Gradually the Vietcong and the Vietnamese are mixed up. It is commonly said, "there is no good Vietnamese but dead" Or the inverse statement meaning the same thing: "every dead Vietnamese is a Vietcong." South of the 17th Parallel the peasants prepare to harvest the rice. American soldiers drop in and set fire to their houses and plan to transform the place into a strategic

hamlet. The peasants protest. What else could they do with their bare hands against these soldiers? They say: "The rice is so beautiful. We like to stay to eat our rice." It is enough to enrage the young Americans. "It is the Vietcong who have put these things in your head. And you have been taught to resist them." The soldiers are now in a wild mood and they see subversive violence in the feeble protest which their own violence has produced. There is no doubt a deception at the root of it: they have come to save Vietnam, to liberate it from the Communist aggressors. Soon they realize that they are not liked by the Vietnamese. From the role of liberator they pass into that of occupiers. It is the beginning of a new consciousness: they do not like us. We have nothing to do here. But this wrangling does not go very far. They get angry and they simply say to themselves that a Vietnamese is by definition a suspect. And from the neo-colonialist point of view this is true. They vaguely comprehend that in a people's war civilians are the only *visible* enemy. Suddenly they begin to detest them; racism does the rest. The people are there to be killed. There is no one here who is not a powerful Communist. That they hate the Yankees is a proof of this. We can now find in these obscure and teleguided minds the truth about the Vietnam war. They join with Hitler's declaration. The latter killed the Jews because they were Jews. The U.S. armed forces torture and kill men, women and children of Vietnam *because they are Vietnamese*. Thus, whatever might be the lies and verbal precaution of the Government, the idea of genocide is in the heads of the soldiers. And it is the Government which has thrown them into a situation of genocide. One witness, Martinsen, a young student of 23, who had "interrogated" Vietnamese prisoners for ten months and could not endure his memory, told us: "I am an average American. I assembled all the students and told them that I am a war criminal." He correctly added that "it does not matter who comes in my place". His only mistake was to

attribute his degrading crimes to the general influence of war. No, not the influence of abstract or non-existent war, but this war conducted by the greatest Power against poor peasants, a war sustained by those who make it the only possible relation between an over-industrialized and an under-developed country, i.e. like genocide which expresses itself through racism.

Total war supposes a certain equilibrium of forces, certain reciprocity. Colonial wars were waged without reciprocity, but colonial interests restrained the genocide. The present genocide, the final result of the unequal development of societies, is a *total* war conducted by *one side without the least reciprocity*.

The American Government is not guilty of inventing modern genocide, not even of selecting it, or choosing it from other possible and effective antidotes to guerilla war. It is not culpable of preferring it for strategic or economic motives. In fact, genocide offers itself as the *only possible reply* to the insurrection of the *whole people*, against their oppressors. The American Government is guilty of having preferred and still preferring a policy of aggression and war aiming at total genocide to a policy of peace. This policy could have called for change because it would necessarily mean reconsideration of the principal objectives which were imposed on them by big imperialistic companies through their pressure groups. It is guilty of pursuing and intensifying the war although each of its members realizes everyday more and more clearly through the reports of the military chiefs that the only way of defeating the enemy is to "liberate Vietnam from the Vietnamese. Sly, evasive, lying it is guilty of embarking a little more every minute, the lessons of this unique and intolerable experience notwithstanding, upon a path that leads it to the point of no return. It is guilty, on its own admission, of conducting knowingly this *exemplary* war to make out of genocide a challenge and threat to all the people. We have seen that one of the factors of total war has been the constant increase in

the number and speed of the means of transport: ever since 1914 war cannot remain localised, it is necessary that it extends to the whole world. In 1967 the process intensified the links of the 'one world'; this world, on which the USA wants to impose its hegemony, does not cease to be closer and closer. By this logic, which the American Government is perfectly aware of, the actual genocide—as an answer to people's war—is conceived and perpetrated in Vietnam, not at all against the Vietnamese alone, but against the whole of humanity. When a peasant, cut down by machinegun fire falls on his ricefield we are all struck in his person. Thus the Vietnamese fight for all men and the American forces fight against all. Not at all figuratively or abstractly. And not simply because genocide in Vietnam is a crime universally condemned by human law. But because, genocidal blackmail little by little basing itself on atomic blackmail, that is, on the absoluteness of total war, extends to all humanity and because this crime, perpetrated every day and under all eyes, shows all those, who do not denounce it, as the accomplices of those who commit it, and in order to enslave us thoroughly begins by degrading us. In this sense imperialist genocide can only radicalise itself: for the group that is struck and terrorised, *through the Vietnamese nation*, is the human group in its entirety.

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## Haryana

FROM A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

FOR the next week, the Haryana results will keep Delhi's political bosses busy. Much is being made of the Congress victory, and the myopic Congress High Command here has already lost sight of the fact that immediately after the last general election, the party was in the same position of an absolute majority with 48 seats—the same number with which it boasts today of a spectacular victory.

It is a well-known story by now how the Congress majority was reduced within a few days to 40, thanks to the initiative of the incorrigible Rao Birendra Singh, who by emerging as the highest bidder in the race for winning Haryana MLAs, inaugurated the vicious circle of "Aya Ram-Gaya Ram"

The Rao is back again on the scene. Immediately after the results were out, he summoned a meeting to hatch new plans. The Jath caste feeling, which was played upon by the Rao last time, is raising its head again. About 36 Congress MLAs have demanded that Mr Bhagwat Dayal Sharma, a non-Jath, should be made the Chief Minister. The disgruntled Jath Congress MLAs may be the prospective recruits for the Rao. And as money flows smoothly in Haryana, the Rao will not find it difficult to win over MLAs from the other parties too.

While it is yet to be seen whether the Congress victory is a nine days' wonder or not, Mrs Gandhi and her sycophants are busy claiming the results as a vindication of their policy of refusing nominations to defectors. However hard she may try to prove that she has at her heart considerations for the future of the party and therefore will have no truck with renegades, the careful observer will hardly find any consistency in her actions. While in Haryana she is against defectors, in West Bengal and Bihar it is she who is encouraging defectors against the official party there. There is no

use concealing that Mr Ashu Ghosh in West Bengal and Mr Binodananda Jha in Bihar are her proteges.

In fact, judging by the varying reactions among the different factions in the Congress High Command here to results of elections and by-elections, it seems that the leaders are more interested in setting up their particular groups in the States, rather than in consolidating the Congress party as a whole. The by-election results in Rajasthan, where the Congress candidates trounced the Swatantra party, were interpreted, for instance, as a victory for the Syndicate.

While these indicate that the Congress is fast disintegrating and the leaders are anxious to have their own groups in different States—groups even outside the Congress if necessary—the Leftists are pitifully failing to take advantage of the situation. It is significant that all the four Leftist parties which contested in Haryana—the two CPIs, the SSR and the PSP—have drawn blank at the mid-term poll there. And this in spite of the fact that the bulk of the voters are the rural peasantry. The political backwardness of the affluent peasantry, benefited by land reforms, has operated always against the Leftists. Casteism rather than economic programmes determines their voting habits. They are happy with the gains already made and content for the moment to support the landlords.

There is no use attributing the cause of the Congress victory in Haryana to the failure of the Rao's United Front Government. In States where the UF was made up of more political elements with a definitely Leftist inclination, the coalition governments failed to show any better record. Defections could not be prevented even by threats of "mass upsurge." Instead of mincing matters, one should realize that it is a deep-rooted malaise.

Politicalization of the voters is the basic requirement and only a solid majority of Marxist parties can make the United Front experiment successful to some extent.

Talking about defections, Mr Chavan's committee on defections met here some days ago. Both the Communist parties are represented on the committee. But none dared to suggest that the right to recall should be incorporated in the Constitution. They were content with a proposal prohibiting defectors from holding an office for a year after crossing the floor. But a defector is not necessarily offered a ministerial office always. He has means of gaining other things by defecting to a particular side. This should be known to both the Congress and the Opposition who have been meeting all these months to find ways to prevent defection.

Apparently, defections help both the Congress and the Leftists. While, previously in a bid to assuage their conscience, the Communists described defectors from the Congress as "Progressives", now they do not even care to analyze the motives of the defectors in their eagerness to join a coalition with them. The latest example is provided by the CPI in Bihar. Without any qualm, it deserted Mr Mahamaya Prasad Sinha, who in his usual ebullient fashion, only a few days ago addressed the party's Patna Congress. The CPI found a better ally in the notorious Raja of Ramgarh, who also deserted Mr Sinha's BKD to join the Bhola Paswan Ministry. Had the CPI in Bihar curbed its desire to join the Ministry and stood by Mr Sinha for some time at least, it would have neutralized Mr Sinha against the pressure of the staunch anti-Communists in the BKD, who carried through the resolution directing Mr Ajoy Mukherjee to quit the West Bengal United Front. Apparently the Bihar unit of the CPI was more concerned about its position in the Bhola Paswan Ministry than about the repercussions of its decision on the West Bengal United Front. It is only another instance of the strength of regional pulls preponderating over national interests.

# Calcutta Diary

CHARAN GUPTA

CAN one use these columns for a confession session? The situation around us seems so utterly confusing. What does one write, what views does one offer, what assertions can one make in the present state of bafflement? It is easy to point an accusing finger at x, y, or z, and analyse where and how each of them has gone wrong. For a journal of dissent such as ours, this will remain the primary task. But, beyond a point, dissonance by itself may become what the Americans would say 'weary-making'. I am sure the readers of this journal—at least a majority amongst them—love to grope for hope: they have every right to look for suggestions for concrete lines of action. This is where we throw in the sponge. There is turmoil, discontent, a deep sense of uneasiness. We feel abhorrence for certain individuals and things and try to give vent to our feeling in as forthright a manner as we are capable of. But having done all that, can one honestly indicate what the obvious alternatives are? Readers for example would have discovered by now a love-hate relationship in our attitude toward the leading Left parties in the country. We have criticised these parties in our recent issues, often severely. While the vacuity of thought which these parties are exhibiting deserves to be brought out in the open, let us have the decency to admit that at the same time, we have precious little positive thinking to offer as substitute.

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Of course, in the very short run, to express oneself strongly against a line of action which is wrong to the core can be of at least as much significance as the propagation of genteel truths. Yet the responsibilities of a political analyst cannot quite end there. In the present juncture, readers perhaps would want to know about the character of the Indian polity, the trends that are likely to emerge be-

tween now and the next few years, and also perhaps about the content of socialist thinking even as the situation keeps on changing. Despite the verbosity of party hacks and professional polemicists, little has been written or discussed in recent years which has relevance to the specific Indian situation. The state of things now is hardly better than what it was in the late 1940's: I remember that the Marx Club in the North Indian university where I was then teaching would have an inaugural session, invariably on the subject "What is Marxism"; the inaugural session would also happen to be the final session of the season; next year, the Marx Club would again assemble, the topic for the inaugural session again being "What is Marxism"....

Time must not have a stop. Answers will have to be sought, and provided, for contemporary themes. For instance, how should one treat the matter of Centre-State relations? Should one place a premium on the need for preserving the 'integrity' of the country and plump for a strong, stable Centre, on the assumption that only the existence of such a Centre would some day ensure the victory, at one go, of the Left? Should one therefore support the views of those who place the maximum emphasis on capturing power in New Delhi, even if it be through opportunistic alliances with retrograde parties? Or is it that the cookie will crumble in a different manner—that there can be no capturing of New Delhi if the States are not tackled properly in the first place? Should the principle of policy then be to encourage atomistic tendencies and covertly support the stand of those State Chief Ministers who are for a weak Centre and for quasi-sovereign States? It may after all be impossible to spark off a revolution simultaneously all over the country. Since the economic forces are in different stages of maturity in the different parts, the political developments could be dis-

parate too, and it would be futile to expect that areas with advanced political ideas would sit back and wait for Lefty to catch up elsewhere in the country.

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I for one have few clear answers to many of the contrary arguments of the above sort. What should be the proper order of juxtaposition of the parliamentary and the extra-parliamentary methods of operation seems to be an issue of equal intractability. To give the call to revolutionary arms after shunning completely the parliamentary path is a sufficiently clear-cut line to adopt. Unfortunately, in our climate things tend to get jumbled up: revolutionary fireworks come to co-exist with shoddy municipal politics. For those who on the contrary preach the line of a peaceful transition to socialism exclusively through the parliamentary process, the primrose path is of course always there. It is the search for the middle version of truth—how much of parliamentary politicking to be combined with how much of barricade-manning—which is awkward. For many of the Left parties, parliamentary activity has been reduced to parliamentary activity for its own sake—and for the sake of gracious living on the part of the representatives sent up—; meanwhile, the original objectives of policy have got lost. Entry into the legislatures may certainly have its own uses. It can offer the party an additional forum from where to preach the cause; it can also be made use of to cater for friends and supporters, and thus provide a variant of 'economism': The parliamentary apparatus can even be utilised to improve the party's organisational base, and, finally, the party cadres may be asked to enter the legislatures for sabotaging established institutions and processes. I have a feeling that, in this matter, the Left parties managed to mix up the 'object-subject' relationships, and now inertia has assumed the role of the major decision-maker: we exist in Parliament and the assemblies, therefore we intend to continue to be there.

\* \*  
 Part of the difficulty lies in the absence of any coherence between the short-term strategy and the frame of policy for the long run. This is a reflection of the *ad hocism* omnipresent in India, amongst ministers, amongst the lesser ones belonging to the ruling party, amongst civil servants, and amongst even businessmen. Everybody believes in playing by the ear, including the great politicians of the Left. Let me illustrate what I have in mind with reference to an issue which should be the concern of all political parties, particularly those believing in socialism and national self-sufficiency. Between now and the next few years, food and land policy should form the crux of what happens to the other sectors of the economy. The price and availability of foodgrains along with the tenurial and revenue-raising institutions, would largely determine the general cost of living, the level of industrial costs, the degree of dependence on foreign food, and the pattern of income distribution between the States. There was a time last year when in both Punjab and Uttar Pradesh, the Minister for Food and Agriculture as well as the Land Revenue Minister were Communists; this is true for Kerala even today. In Bihar, the Revenue Minister was—and is again a Communist. In West Bengal, at least the Revenue Minister was a Communist, and, if rumour is to be believed, any of the Communist legislators could have had the Food and Agriculture portfolio too for the asking, instead of making a gift of it to the Kulak nominee, Dr P. C. Ghosh. This was a heaven-sent opportunity: the Communist Ministers could have got together and drawn up a common socialist policy on food, on the tenurial system and land taxation, on the mode of procurement and the level of procurement prices, on the agency of procurement and arrangements for inter-State movements, and so on. If only these gentlemen had agreed beforehand on a programme of action and presented a solid phalanx, the Centre would have caved in; after all, following the sharp reversals in the elections, Mrs Gandhi's Government

was then very much on the defensive. But no such thing happened. It is said of Richard Nixon that he did not lose the 1960 American Presidential election, he blew it. Our Communist ministers blew their opportunity last year in similar fashion. Each of them decided to fend for himself or herself: the exigencies of the very short term—and those related to one's own State—came to the fore. It is ironical that Mr Namboodiripad is today demanding a budgetary grant from the Centre for covering the subsidy for the rice being provided through the ration shops in Kerala. In the absence of such a subsidy, the issue price of rice would be beyond the reach of the ordinary consumer, for the simple reason that the procurement price at the all-India level was fixed inordinately high last September with the concurrence of Mr Namboodiripad himself. At that time, the Kerala Chief Minister, along with the rest of his Left colleagues, lent support to the view advanced by the kulaks from Punjab, Haryana and Andhra that the only way to have successful procurement is to offer sufficiently high 'incentive' prices to the rich growers. If you allow a high procurement price for Kerala, you have to allow similar prices for all the States. Despite the high procurement price, Mr Namboodiripad has been able to procure not more than 40,000 tonnes of rice this year, much less than the State's record during the previous three years. Kerala's requirement of rice from the other States, on the other hand, continues to be as much as 60,000 to 70,000 tonnes every month, for each tonne of which the price is now jacked up by at last Rs. 250. A Communist Chief Minister, maybe unwittingly, thus became responsible for adding to the cost of living for the large mass of the working class and landless labourers,—and for the further fattening of the lush kulaks. It is somewhat incongruous that Mr Namboodiripad should now demand that the Centre dole him out extra cash so that he could cover the consequences of his past follies.

Or am I once more ending on a negative note?

The Press

## Verdict In Haryana

COMMENTATOR

FOR two consecutive days the victory of the Congress in the mid-term poll in Haryana made lead stories in most newspapers. It appears that the leader-writers were waiting pen-in-hand for an absolute majority for the Congress so that the papers may not be late in congratulating the party on its success. Most of the papers have tried hard to ferret out reasons which would make the slender majority of the Congress look more impressive than what the election results indicate. Whether their readers have been impressed by the discoveries or not, the leader-writers have been and most of them have read in the election results signs of returning confidence of the people in the Congress. West Bengal and Uttar Pradesh, two other States where mid-term poll is due, have inevitably come in, and a cautious hope has been expressed that the Haryana results may be repeated in these two States.

Disregarding the open commitment *The Hindustan Times* has captioned its editorial as "Heartening Verdict". It says that the Congress can justly be proud of its performance in the mid-term poll in Haryana. The party's ability to capture as many seats as it did in the last general election is creditable because in the intervening period it not only suffered large-scale defections from its ranks but also gave the impression of being a waning political force in the State. Its triumph has shown that it still stands head and shoulders above all other parties severally or jointly. It would be unrealistic to assume that the result of the Haryana poll will "necessarily" influence the course of similar impending trials of strength in Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal. What can however be assumed is that the Congress will derive considerable inspiration from its achievement in Haryana when it goes into fresh electoral battles. The Prime Minister and other members of

the Central Government who campaigned extensively in the State will also regain a measure of confidence, and the impact of improved morale can be far-reaching. The paper however cautions that it would be unwise to take it for granted that Haryana marks a turning-point in the party's fortunes. This may make for complacency which the Congress leadership cannot afford. The Congress cannot honour its commitments to the electorate nor can it meet future political challenges until it demonstrates greater cohesion and purposiveness. Haryana did not vote Congress because of its record, but because it is the only party that can provide political stability.

*The Statesman* thinks that the people of Haryana, not among the more sophisticated in the country, have served a reprimand upon the more wayward of their leaders. Excuses will not conceal the real reason for the severe discomfiture of the non-Congress parties; which is the "astonishingly poor performance" of Rao Birendra Singh's Ministry and the blame this shed on all who joined or supported it. If any group as a whole did conspicuously worse than any party, it was the defectors of all parties and especially those among them who had become habitual offenders. Nothing else can explain the instructive downfall of some of the most well known leaders of Haryana; the bigger they were the more resounding the crash, which shows once again that the heart of the people is in the right place even if that of the leaders it not. Qualitatively the outcome is more favourable to the Congress than the mathematical appearance would suggest. The party's stern and thoroughly commendable decision not to have anything to do with its own or other parties' defectors should have sufficiently deterred those who might otherwise have had any intention to rat. Further deterrence, if it was needed, has been served in good measure by the fate which has followed the floor-crosser. The paper says that more than the stability of future governments in Haryana, the fate of the Congress in U.P., West Bengal and wherever

else mid-term polls may follow, will depend upon whether the Congress can consolidate its ranks in Haryana. It is possible to hope that some recognition of this will penetrate through the layers of bad habit which still surround the thinking and behaviour of many Congressmen. Otherwise the gain in Haryana, instead of extending to other States will be more than offset by the subsequent disillusionment.

*The Times of India* says that the fact that the Congress has not improved upon its performance in the last general election does not detract from the quality of its achievement. On that occasion it went to the polls as the party in power; this time its role was even more modest than that of a party in opposition, for it fought the election as a party which had been displaced from power by defections which had not only weakened but almost battered it out of shape. By declining to give its ticket to defectors the party took a bold stand on principles in a political climate in which every principle had been reduced to a sham and a pretence. In all this it took a calculated risk and it has paid off. Purged of the opportunists who had swollen its ranks, it has become a more cohesive unit with promise of functioning in a more disciplined manner. It has still some hurdles to cross particularly when it comes to choosing a leader. But the vote it has secured should give it confidence that if it is true to its principles it has nothing to fear from the electorate. The paper thinks that the whole strategy of united fronts has been thrown into confusion in a campaign in which the allies were so often seen working against one another. Not the least gratifying result of the polling is the virtual elimination of splinter groups. How this will affect their fortunes in the remaining mid-term elections remains to be seen.

A somewhat different line has been taken by *Patriot* which holds that the Congress victory in Haryana should make the party's leaders at the Centre pause and think rather than celebrate. The number of Congressmen returned to the new Assembly is the same as in the last. What is to be seen is

whether those returned now can achieve greater solidarity and loyalty to principles than the party did when it was led into office by Mr Bhagwat Dayal Sharma. Many of those now returned are fairly new to power politics and may, if properly led, be amenable to disciplined and purposeful work. All such hopes however largely depend on the directions they will receive from the national leadership of the party which itself is not free of a number of blemishes that had made the Congress what it was in the last Assembly. The Congress was fortunate in that none of the Left parties has been able to establish a base for itself in the State. It may have been quite another story if a Left United Front capable of projecting a clearly stated radical democratic socialist programme were in existence. In the absence of any such force, the vague and often double-faced economic programmes of the Congress and its secularism which, on many occasions, has proved to be only political varnish appeared the only choice possible. If the party and its leaders resist the pulls of factionalism and refuse to be suborned by vested interests, as they were when they got into office last time, Haryana may have a stable-government.

#### Paris Talks

For some unknown reason newspapers decided to keep silent about the Paris talks on Vietnam last week. The agreement on the venue of the talks was welcome by papers possibly because it could be done without any commitment. After that nothing much has appeared by way of comment on the progress of the talks. Some of the papers have shifted their London correspondents to Paris who appear to be having a difficult time giving an Indian angle to the discussions. The cake for outstanding performance in this sphere should go to Sitanshu Das of *The Indian Express* who has quoted a "spokesman" of the North Vietnamese delegation as saying that what Mrs Gandhi has suggested about the unconditional cessation of American bombing is "indeed the view of North Vietnam also".

In an editorial the paper says that neither side can bypass the necessity for general elections without exposing its bona fides to suspicion. One major difficulty here is that the bombing in Vietnam is unilateral, being confined to the Americans. As a commentator puts it, "the North Vietnamese are not bombing Washington". But a quid pro quo might be extracted from Hanoi which could be required to withdraw its regular units from South Vietnam and comply with the San Antonio proposal whereby the USA would stop bombing if North Vietnam stopped its infiltration of troops and supplies to the South. In all likelihood Hanoi will press for the acceptance of the NLF in South Vietnam as a negotiating party. If this is conceded in return for the presence of Saigon's representatives, the hurdle could be overcome. The mistake the Americans make is to treat South Vietnam as a sovereign and independent State. The mistake Hanoi makes is to assume that the NLF is committed unreservedly to the Communist cause. The negotiations might reveal

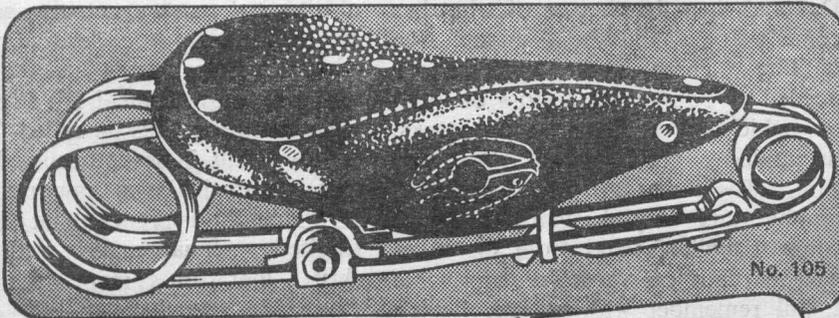
a fair nationalist element within the NLF. The paper says it is not only the Americans who constitute the "outsiders". Russia and China are there, and by no means working entirely in concert. In the end, the fate of Vietnam will probably be decided mainly by these three great Powers.

Putting the blame squarely on Hanoi for the continuance of American raids *The Hindu* says that the opening remarks of the Hanoi delegate have indicated that his country is not prepared to promise any concession for the cessation of raids over the whole of North Vietnam. Reports from the area show that the North Vietnamese have taken advantage of the stopping of bombing in the frontier area to step up their infiltration of the South, and it is not surprising that President Thieu of South Vietnam should have called for the resumption of bombing. Hanoi will be making a miscalculation if it believes that President Johnson is under such heavy pressure at home that he dare not go back to unconditional bombing of the

North. The direction of the war effort as well as of the diplomatic effort in Paris are both firmly in his hands and he is by no means a prisoner of the "doves". The paper also accuses Hanoi of going "some way beyond" the Geneva Agreement in naming the Vietcong as the true successor government for the South and speaking only of eventual reunification. President Johnson agrees with President Thieu that the Vietcong cannot be recognised as a government but even the latter is willing to hold informal talks with the Vietcong on the basis that the political future of South Vietnam must be worked out in South Vietnam by the people of South Vietnam. The formula might yield a legislature in which the Vietcong may be heavily represented, and this will in turn raise the question of coalition government. This is a possibility which looks very unpleasant to most of the politicians in Saigon but it is up to them to close their ranks to ensure that the Vietcong do not dominate the legislature or the Government.

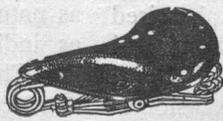
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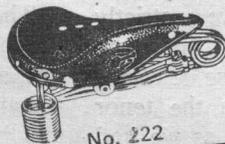
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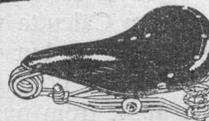
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# Bengali Love : Made In England

NIRANJAN MAJUMDER

ONLY recently in Calcutta a procession of teachers, lawyers and sundry other busybodies marched to Writers' Buildings to demand suppression of pornographic literature. I have known of its existence in Calcutta for the last thirty years and occasionally tasted it. I was usually repelled by the bad writing and awful taste in most of these efforts. Having been deprived, however, for most of my life of any healthy, frank and free discussion on man-woman relations, I have never wanted a ban on supposedly obscene literature. Illiterate police intervention in matters literary has always horrified me; and people who demand it, be they teachers or anything else, arouse in me nothing but loathing and despair. Only free and civilised discussion of love and sex—the two need not be segregated—can drive out the bad coin of indecency; and a healthy society takes care of itself in this regard. What have Writers' Buildings and Lal Bazar got to do with it? The teachers' and lawyers' demonstration was an admission of their failure.

Nearing the age of 48, when prospects of further adventures in the department of love or passion are far from bright, one can afford to be frank about questions of love and related matters. I do not mind acknowledging my inspiration to Mr Nirad C. Chaudhuri who, at the age of 70, has published his first Bengali book (*Bangali Jibane Ramani*, Mitra & Ghosh, Rs. 10) and chosen for his subject "Woman in Bengali Life". The treatment is worthy of the theme, the theme of the treatment; the importance of either may be lost on both the screamers against obscenity and those who purvey pornography with or without literary pretensions. I suppose one had to be 70 to write a book like this; but the not-so-old and the not-that—young may be permitted to add a footnote or two here and there.

My own love-life has been undistinguished, mainly uneventful in its

external manifestation, but not on that account totally unrepresentative of the Bengali Hindu middle class of my time. Sex was never discussed, even among friends, except by the back-benchers in school whose company we were taught to take great care to shun. In my mofussil township in East Bengal there was then the air of terrorism; and we who vaguely sympathised with its aims and secretly admired its discipline and courage were told to look only at the feet of women and consider them our mothers or sisters. Any other kind of relationship was severely frowned upon; and, at the age of eight or nine, we found the philosophers readily acceptable. I was not observant at that age. If there were profanities in the sweepers' colony, which is not at all improbable I knew nothing of them. One heard vague references to the "para", the red light district near the bridge over the canal, which was always referred to as "the quarter"; but curiosity was not encouraged. Nor was one's curiosity unbounded. We were too busy reading proscribed books, those on Bhagat Singh and Jatin Das and the other heroes of what has come to be called the Agniyug, Age of Fire. These banned publications needed to be concealed from our elders which, apart from school tasks, demanded a good deal of effort and care. There was no time for pornography; and a washerman's daughter come to collect water from the tubewell by the river, whose face and name I still remember without ever having talked to her, caught my eye only occasionally. Some of the Brahmoised elders went to the "dhap" and "khemta" shows during Kali Puja; some of the younger aunts occasionally indulged in restrained ribaldry imported from Calcutta where they were going to college; but we were strictly excluded from both. We knew no women apart from our close relations and knew no difference in the tenor of our life. Such relations as we had

were agreeable; and we would never have suspected that our love was not entirely "swadeshi".

## In Calcutta

Coming to Calcutta, that was 1936 and one was fifteen and a bit, made a slight difference. Living in the Oxford Mission Hostel on Vivekananda Road one could not help meeting students of all sorts. In the company of some, profanity in speech seemed the smart thing; and I began fluently to utter words I had never heard in East Bengal. Some of my companions smoked; so I started to smoke too, which in Chandpur I had considered sinful and no less. Two years later I went to a co-educational college. Only three of my female classmates did I come to know, and that was many years after I had left college. The reason was not indifference, nor my lack of interest in the other sex, but only my total lack of courage, my rank cowardice. Perhaps opportunities too were not as great as they may be today.

I am not, however, writing my autobiography; the only point I have to make is that I knew women only as mother, sister or aunt or a close relation. I was a stranger to love between man and woman, as I suspect Mr Chaudhuri was, until he read a lot of literature and eventually got happily married. For several women, most of whom I never had the opportunity to know at all, I felt stirrings of what would perhaps be called "romantic love" but it never occurred to me that this might be an imported thing. Mr Chaudhuri argues that it was. Limited acquaintance with Sanskrit literature made me think, when I thought at all instead of only feeling, that romantic love was as natural as the kadamba flower and as indigenous as our Meghna river. Mr Chaudhuri will have none of it. The new sensibility came from Europe; on our own we had known nothing of it.

The discussion is opened with two brilliant quotations from Bharatchandra and Rabindranath. In the first a man sees a beautiful bathing woman and instantly wants to sleep with her

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in lieu of wealth and jewellery; in the second love has taken over and the body is subordinate to the heart. Mr Chaudhuri's argument has already been set out; but he immediately makes clear that his respect for physical relations between man and woman is as firm as that for the sensibilities. He quotes Bertrand Russell's reference to Gandhi's "vile morality", which stemmed not from Hindu morality but from Christian Puritanism. It is really a question of sensibility, which need not exclude physical relations but in the "lesser" (a matter of opinion) kind of man-woman relationship there is nothing besides or beyond (a matter of opinion) physical relations. Mr Chaudhuri remains a moralist still. He likens romantic love to champagne cognac; the other sort to country liquor. "Country love" appeals to him not at all; love must come from champagne. This is one way of looking at things, certainly; but the current inadequacy of vinological analogies with an Indian audience is capped by Mr Chaudhuri's description of the Government of India: "Our Government which is hypocritical, exploiting and petty-minded has made civilised existence impossible". But some love, surely, can still be imported; the Prime Minister's son has done it himself.

#### 'Sordid Sex'

Mr Chaudhuri's personal observation of sordid sex in Bengal in his youth seems remarkably limited and not very relevant. That one man suffered from some venereal disease and another talked about an attractive prostitute proves nothing at all; he himself admits as much. If in the nineteenth century lofty love and low sex co-existed in Bengali life, it does not seem to have been a very different kind of time or a very different kind of place. But disapproval of the coarse and the vulgar in Bengali life, mainly by the English-educated, was growing; in the process, Bengali literature was totally transformed. If the sociological evidence adduced by Mr Chaudhuri is mostly trivial, the literary evidence he has culled from Bankimchandra and Rabindranath convincingly proves the

revolution that came over, if not overcame the English-educated Bengali. It may well be argued that the literary revolution would hardly have been possible without a corresponding revolution in the mind and the heart of the Bengali. In man-woman relations now came a new beauty and a new grace. A certain cynicism has undoubtedly eroded a part of the old romanticism, which was sometimes ridiculously overdone; but it hurts a middle-aged Bengali to think that the old grace has altogether disappeared. Nor is such a thought supported by experience in this writer's admittedly small world. One need not swallow Saratchandra whole to suggest that Mr Chaudhuri's horror of the world of prostitutes may be a little exaggerated; and the instances cited from Vidyasagar and Sibnath Shastri are interesting rather than relevant. What Jitendranath Chakravarti or Gajendranath Mitra has to say about contemporary man-woman relations is not even interesting.

The reader seriously interested in love as a new phenomenon in Bengali life will turn to the last four chapters of Mr Chaudhuri's book, where Bankimchandra and Tagore are discussed at a level unknown in contemporary Bengali writing. The more he quotes from Bankim the more he persuades his younger readers that here was a clear, unclouded mind which was also capable of great feeling. Mr Chaudhuri's response to some of Tagore's short stories is as unsurpassable in its analytical quality as in its own literary excellence. *Gora* is seen in an altogether new light.

Mr Chaudhuri had read *Gora* many years ago and considered it a great social document. He has since looked it up and read the novel at least 50 times. He is now sure that the theme is not Hindu conservatism v. Hindu liberalism. *Gora* is a tale of love; the real conflict is between love of woman and love of country as conceived at the time; the religious conflict provides only the external frame. Mr Chaudhuri is at his best in establishing a relationship not only between Bengali love and the European impact but also between the new awareness

and the undying beauty of nature in Bengal, especially the great rivers of East Bengal by which were born some of the greatest short stories of Tagore. The unknown Indian, it appears, never quite came to terms with Calcutta; his heart is still in the countryside of East Bengal which nurtured him. Not the least significant part of Mr Chaudhuri's analysis is that he relates the 19th century Bengali ethos not only to the sharp and manifest impact of English education but also to the new response to the country's old and enduring feeling for nature and beauty.

The duality in Tagore, as in the author or any other Bengali with some sensibility, is best illustrated by Mr Chaudhuri in his analyses of some selected short stories by Tagore like *Kankal*, *Manabhanjan*, *Madhyavartini* and *Nathtanidh* ("in which Calcutta has defeated literature") on the one hand and *Samapti*, *Atithi*, *Megh O Raudra*, *Drishtidan* and *Subhadrishti* on the other. The difference, Mr Chaudhuri brilliantly shows, is not one of degree but of kind. The un concealed rusticity of East Bengal apparently responded more sensitively to the Western impact than the superficial urbanity of places like Calcutta where a certain sordidness had already begun to surface. The setting set the pace for Tagore's prose in these writings; and Mr Chaudhuri's feeling delineation of both is nothing short of masterly. Here his clinical intellect combines with his throbbing heart to produce passages of Bengali prose not seen since Bankim and Tagore ceased to breathe. There is a similar quality of breathing in Mr Chaudhuri's writing, English or Bengali.

There are things in Mr Chaudhuri's book which will disgust a sensitive Bengali reader today; there are whimsical and personal asides here and there which are not always amusing; but the same reader's sensibility towards man, woman and nature that constituted Bengal will be immensely enriched by the book. It is not every book, in any language, which arouses thoughts and emotions in equal proportions and also makes the common reader think again of his own life and environment. Only this last reaction

will excuse the fragmentary autobiographical references early in the article. I shall read *Bangali Jibane Ramani* again and again and implore Mr Chaudhuri to think it possible that, while writing in English may in many ways be more rewarding and satisfying, writing in Bengali for Bengalis who came after him for no fault of theirs, may not be wholly a waste of time. Does one have to live outside Bengal to remain a Bengali? Does one have to write in English to keep alive one's love for the Bengali language and the literature it once produced? So much the more necessary to make Mr Chaudhuri write more in Bengali. I have by now forgotten man-woman relations. Though very important, that is only one aspect of Bengali life in its totality about which there is so much more to learn and so much more to write.

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## Film Crisis

PRABODH KUMAR MAITRA

**M**OST showhouses in West Bengal have been closed for nearly two months and a half now. The employes, determined to fight for their existence and the good of the film industry in general, have shown their mettle. That they have been able to enlist a measure of support from the State Government, which has given them equipment to screen films for raising funds should be noted for whatever it is worth. But despite all this, dithering persists in the industry itself and the end of the deadlock is not in sight.

The strike and its aftermath point to a deep malady. No palliative seems good enough. Partition was the first blow to the market for Bengali films. Moreover as an industry it is possibly the greatest functioning anarchy. It is not organised properly and what with the drift that was allowed both by the Government and the components of the industry itself, the situation worsened. The Government has been content to have its share of amusement tax and the sharks in the industry their "profit" or by whatever other name one describes their greed. Add to this the embargo on building showhouses for over a decade and the exhibitors' dominance in the show business becomes apparent.

The strike has thrown everything out of gear; but complacency is hardly a casualty yet in the industry. A Samity composed of producers, distributors, technicians, directors, actors, studio owners and equipment dealers has been set up to find a way out of the situation. The exhibitors, the *bete noire*, are left out as they have had the most substantial size of the cake so far leaving the distributors disgruntled and the producers in penury. How far the self-appointed self-regulatory set-up succeeds in working out any solution will be watched with interest.

Anomalies abound. The Eastern India Motion Picture Producers Association is the organisation representing the producers, distributors and exhibi-

tors. The exhibitors however, by virtue of their dominating position in the industry not only dictate terms to other sectors, they have virtually monopolised the EIMPPA. These stalwarts did not honour the last Wage Board awards. (Meanwhile a new Wage Board covering the whole industry has been instituted). But there are quite a few who are producers, distributors and exhibitors all at once. Some of them took the lead in forming the new Samity. But even though the EIMPPA is primarily the exhibitors' outfit, the "allrounders" will not sever their connexion with the august body. They will operate from the Samity with the intention, it may be suspected, of having another plank to build their own pressure lobby. The facts point to that direction. A whip purported to prevent documentary makers from applying to the State Government is an act of opportunism. The strike is hardly a subject on the agenda and no formal resolution has been passed either to support it or to ask the exhibitors to see reason. Even the doves of the EIMPPA have been prevailed upon by the hawks.

The Samity consists of other elements also, mainly the technicians who include the directors, and the actors' union, both of which have consistently taken a progressive role in the midst of warring factions. Both these organisations have made common cause with the strikers. It is their concerted move which alone will guarantee effective measures.

The three most important resolutions the Samity has framed so far relate to the necessity of having more showhouses, a compulsory provision for showing of Bengali films in all the houses for specified periods varying with the number of Bengali-speaking people in different zones, and the formation of a release committee which will supervise the release arrangement of new films in accordance with the date of issue of such films by the censoring authorities.

The first two are explicit and will doubtless remove some difficulties in the production of more films in Bengali, which dwindled to a paltry 25 last year. But the third, pertaining to

the release committee, is contentious. There seems more to it than meets the eye because producers and distributors think that only they are eligible to sit on the committee. This may very well turn out to be the lever which some powerful producers and distributors are looking for to keep the machinery under their control. An unholy alliance might develop with some exhibitors. No appellate authority is contemplated even in the Samity itself. This might raise doubts about its bona fides. The usefulness of the Samity, the first forum of such a nature should not be allowed to be circumscribed by such petty acts on the part of those who owe it to the people to give a clear account of themselves.

The strike by the employees of showhouses has caused the crisis to come to the fore even though it existed all through. But it is daily deepening and no tinkering will solve matters. The State, it is widely felt, should take a decisive hand in it not only to end the deadlock but to provide institutional support to the moribund industry. Too long has it been allowed to drift, and further drift will spell disaster. The rationalisation of resources should take into account the utilisation of the services of technicians in the trade and encouragement to form more co-operatives to make films and to exhibit them. A State Board with comprehensive power to oversee the functions of all the sectors is an immediate necessity. State-owned chains of show houses and an up-to-date studio should not be considered a tall order in this context. The self-regulatory mechanism sought to be devised by the trade itself in the shape of the Samity may be given a fair trial provided proper checks and balances in terms of others besides the producers and distributors are ensured.

The accent so far has been on more films to save the industry. But not much is heard about making better films. What is involved is not mere preservation; more films of better quality can sustain a stronger industry.

## More Exhibitions

BY AN ART CRITIC

THERE was a joint exhibition, recently of the sketches of K. C. Prashar and Vivek Saha at the South Gallery of the Academy of Fine Arts, Cathedral Road. There were sketches both in black and white, and colour. Both the artists have a capacity of holding, in a few fleeting lines, the character of their subjects, their mobility and stance, zest for life and dejection. Also, both have a lot to say.

Mr Saha, in a pencil drawing of a "Rickshaw-puller" that was full of movement, captured the speed of the running man. His "Burden", a colour sketch, was clean and without any overstatement. "Depressed" was a good portrait.

Mr Prashar, a geologist by profession, is an amateur painter. But he is an amateur in the original sense of the word, that is, lover. His exhibits show him to be immensely in love with line and colour, and with life, as is more than proved by his "Pond". This picture's delicately defined forms created an atmosphere with which he is definitely involved. His "Lamentation" was good. It was free but not facile. We look forward to seeing his next exhibition.

The Academy had on view, up to May 22, an exhibition of paintings by Amal Chandra Chakladar. Mr Chakladar is a thoughtful painter who combines intellect with emotion, the two being well balanced in his words. Technically competent and careful in execution, he is, nonetheless, not tied down to grammar. His colours are chosen with discretion, but his imagination, at the same time, is given full play.

Of his exhibits, some of his Indian-style paintings, especially "Arjuna", were good. Among the others, "Portrait of a Wise Man" had character. "Cock-fight" was violent but rhythmic and orderly in its confusion. The serene atmosphere of "City Behind a Temple" was elevating. There was one exhibit which we thought was rather cloying in its sugary sweetness, and that was, "King of the Dark Chamber".

## Letters

### United Front

How to reply to Mr Paul? He asks me to explain why the upper classes opposed the UF Ministry. I had based my entire letter on the assumption of this—all that I deplored was that the leftists and the Communist leaders in particular were utterly unable to grasp the nature and depth of this opposition. He contrives to suggest that since the upper classes oppose the UF Ministries the UF must be serving the poor people—most of my letter was devoted to saying that this was expected, but this was not so. In forestalling and suppressing this inevitable opposition and sabotage from the vested interests the Left Communists in particular, in whom we had great faith, lacked awareness, foresight and organisation. Accommodating themselves to the immediate turn of events, they forgot the fundamental interests of the proletariat, and this is characteristic of both their thinking and actions. Dulled by pedantry and debilitated by scepticism, Mr Paul has developed a penchant for sarcastic remarks and lashes at me with acrimonious phrases: but this is futile. Abuse is no substitute for reasoning.

Whoever distorts a theory which soberly presents the objective situation into a justification of the existing order and goes to the length of striving to adapt himself as quickly as possible to every temporary decline in the revolution, to discard "revolutionary illusions" as quickly as possible and to turn to "realistic" tinkering, is no leftist, no Marxist.

PROBODH CH. DUTTA  
Dankuni, Hooghly.

Mr Sukumar Paul, I am afraid, has not read Mr Dutta's long but useful letter carefully or else he has not understood it. Let me tell him how I see things. Not all sections of the upper classes were hostile to the UF Ministry. Participation by the Bangla Congress and the PSP in West Bengal, by the Muslim League and the SSP in

Kerala, the Jana Sangh in Bihar and U.P. in the UF ministries will bear it out.

The upper classes naturally want to monopolise power in their own interest but, failing to do so in the face of mounting resistance from the working class and the peasantry, they manoeuvre and choose the second best—the petty bourgeoisie.

Broadly speaking, a petty bourgeois is an anti-capitalist so long he is not one. He is a revolutionary so long he sees no danger.

The moment, the movement which he likes is seized upon by other classes and taken seriously, he begins to equivocate. His petty-bourgeois existence depends on exploitation but his share is so very meagre that he is unable to pull as well and he becomes jealous of the capitalist and gravitates towards the proletariat. His very situation in society makes him oscillate between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat and correspondingly his opposition to the rich and love for the poor are conditional, halting and not thorough-going. This explains the indecision and irresoluteness of the so-called leftist, of the Communist leadership in particular.

As Delhi's *Shankar's Weekly* says: "The supreme tragedy of many Indian Communist leaders is that in their hearts they know they are outdated and irrelevant to the challenges and stimuli of contemporary events".

ASIT MAJUMDAR  
Calcutta.

### "Aging" Leadership

Charan Gupta's Calcutta Diary (May 11, 1968) is interesting, as most of his articles are. But his dig at the Left CPIs—(he includes the Right CPI also) assessment of the situation is somewhat arbitrary and peculiar. The party's tactical move for the unity of all democratic forces against the main enemy, the Congress, according to him, is due to the age-structure of its leadership which as if, wants to save its skin under UF protection. Does he mean to say that the effulgence and pseudo-revolutionary zeal, born out of frustration and lack of understanding of the younger

section, counts more in the struggle for revolution? Should not the objective and subjective situation ripen before a greater struggle is launched? Is the Marxist-Leninist approach to programmes incongruous with the advanced age of the leadership? What is required is correct analysis of the situation and suitable tactical moves to prepare the ground. Is not impatience an infantile disorder?

PRAKASH SINHA  
Bishnupur, Bankura

### "Little Spark"

Time seems to have softened the spark and fire we have been used to from you. Your comments were like lashes shaking the doves. That is as it should be. You have to be cruel only to be kind.

SHYAMALENDU CHAUDHURY  
Calcutta.

### The Cow In Parliament

The cow ate at least 40 precious minutes of the Lok Sabha on May 9. The trouble started over Mr Jagjivan Ram's statement that an influential section of scholars held that people ate beef in the Vedic age.

Poor Jagjivan Ram! I sympathise with him. He will lose the election next time. The Jana Sangh-SSP clique has found a point to exploit and use it as a powerful political weapon against him.

The Jana Sangh-RSS inspired cow trouble started in November 1966, exactly three months before the 1967 general elections and immediately after the elections it ended. Now again the cow has started rocking the country because at least four States of India are in the grip of a mid-term election fever. I must thank the cow-friends for letting the poor animal go on a holiday from February 1967 to April 1968.

After reading the proceedings of Parliament in the daily papers, one feels that the cow and Kutch have become the most important problems of the day. I would like to remind the heroic cow-savers and Kutch-savers (sitting in the air-conditioned and

scent-filled Lok Sabha Hall) that the country named India is facing numerous other problems. If they don't know these problems I shall assist them by naming some of the important ones. Food, clothing, employment, housing, education, corruption and bureaucratic, bungling, must also get some of the time of our legislators who are fighting for more salaries, allowances and other facilities for themselves.

The period between February 1967 and February 1972 is sufficient for them to mend their ways. Otherwise there is a possibility, rather a danger, that when the next elections are held those MPs who only wasted the time of the Lok Sabha by raising unimportant issues may be thrown out by the people who will rise in revolt.

J. S. CHOPRA  
New Delhi.

### Trouble In Ajmer

Hats off to Mr J. S. Chopra for highlighting the atrocities committed on the Muslims of Ajmer (May 11). Mr Chopra has even dared to incur the wrath of the Jana Sangh-RSS backed Hindu-Hindi-Cow lobby by giving his residential address.

Only by revealing the terror created by communalists in India and condemning them vehemently can we bring a stop to the murder of the minorities. Many killings like the one in Ajmer take place throughout the country, which go unreported and unnoticed. I request *Frontier* readers all over India to share their experiences with each other by writing informative letters, as Mr J. S. Chopra has done.

LEELA DUTTA (Miss)  
New Delhi.

### On Marx

Mr Sudhis K. Ray (*Frontier*, May 11) has not told the whole truth. Mr Humayun Kabir has never said that he "is the *only* (underline mine) person who knows anything about Marxism, having read Marx in the original German". But then falsification of facts is a qualification with the 'left' revolutionaries.

SAMAR BOSE  
Calcutta.

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