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## MANTHAN' Monthly

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## Dear Reader :

Namaste !

You will be happy to hear that Shri Sailendra Nath Ghosh, distinguished thinker, technocrat and writer, has joined us. In this issue, he has done a very informative and highly perceptive piece on the Tamil issue in Sri Lanka.

We also carry a piece on the Sikh Psyche by Dr. Ahluwalia, Director, Guru Govind Singh Foundation, Chandigarh. But as a 'Filler' at the end of this piece will show, the current concept of Sikh identity is very different from what it was until recent time.

And then we have a thought-provoking piece on the role of Bhakti-Sufi movement as a solvent of the Hindu-Muslim problem.

Last year (Jan. 1987) we carried a special issue on the Bhakti movement. In the next few issues, we will carry a piece each on the impact of Sufi Saints on Indian life and literature.

Yours brotherly,

'M'

## Proposals for the Creation of an Institute for Researches on Sufi and Bhakti Tradition as Historico-Cultural and Psychological Basis for National Integration

Professor Moazziz Ali Beg, Ph.D., A.M.U.

Member, Association for Humanistic Psychology, San Francisco.

THE IDEA of National Integration which is diffused with political overtones requires a sober rethinking in a strictly scientific manner and outside the ambit of political perspectives. The need to transform this idea into reality, i.e., into psycho-social and cultural process is as immediate for the nation and the country as the need to gear our resources for advanced technology. The reinstatement of national spirit and national dignity may not be possible without such transformation. National integration would continue to remain a noble and esteemed aspiration so long as it is confined to an abstract concept embedded in our pious intentions.

In fact, national integration is one of the most challenging problems for the nation, and still more for any well-intentioned government which is set up for handling its affairs, particularly in this period of transition. This extraordinarily challenging problem requires efforts to see how the immense resources within us—our volitional potential and our ability to make calculated decisions—can be activated effectivel for preventing our national energy from being eroded and depleted through strifes, futile conflicts, and through stupid and pathological fears and tensions. It is, therefore, the immediate responsibility of the scientists working in psycho-social disciplines to see that this enormous devastation of our national energy is stopped.

National integration requires a general awareness on the part of the people that it is the most genuine concern of our national life at the moment. They must be made to understand that national integration would emancipate us from some adverse circumstances and bring us into a state of unbelievable prosperity, security and happiness. However, without its visible effects, the idea of national integration can be safely dismissed as utopia.

It is clearly discernible today that backward nations in this century are larger in number but what is not so clearly discernible is the fact that there is a sizeable number of sick nations in this world as well. This does not imply that sickness is confined to backward nations alone; it also exists in the highly advanced nations with the only difference that they have become increasingly aware of it and it has become a major concern for them on the national level.

We too, as a nation, are suffering from a peculiar sickness. - This sickness is manifest through an absence of buoyancy of the national spirit necessary to accelerate the pace of our overall advancement and progress. This impelling motive from within is indispensable for enabling us to handle our problems with a spontaneous sense of responsibility which requires minimum external pres-

*Today we are a sick nation,  
unable to go forward...*

asures. Apart from this, we are probably the worst victims of another most dreadful ailment: our neurotic involvement in religion. This neurotic involvement kills the very spirit of religion and renders it into a formidable destructive force. We do need religion, but only with sanity. Unfortunately, we have turned blind to the fact that as individuals we grow in a multi-cultural society out of historical necessity. And this historical necessity alone is a sufficient sanction for developing the ability to understand and accommodate incongruent ideational frames of reference. In other words, this necessity is certainly an imperative for us to learn to appreciate and respect the different belief systems which are an integral part of our multi-cultural society. These two ailments seem to be largely responsible for frustrating the efforts of those awakened minds of the nation who honestly intend to see that the aforesaid transformation toward national integration does take place in this country.

National integration may, therefore, be visualized as a transition from one state of our national life into another, which is more desirable. We need some powerful devices of such operative character as might capture those impelling motives and their guiding spirit which is necessary for initiating the process of transformation. History evidences the fact that the conceptual power of Indian thought has generated some traditions that are sharply oriented toward transcendental and mystic conceptions of religion, most congenial to the ethos of the multi-cultural society. These traditions include the Sufi

and the Bhakti that have flourished through the centuries and have acted as cohesive force. They cannot be dismissed as obsolete because their coherent dynamism has not exhausted itself and it still seems to be consequential for national integration. Modern scientific psychology has definitely unveiled the possibility of spiritual understanding of truth and particularly since the early sixties of the present century it treats the subjective, the esoteric and the transcendental datum of our psyche as the proper field of scientific inquiry. Sri Aurobindo had predicted long ago that the state of affairs existing in modern scientific psychology today was inevitable. (Sri Aurobindo: Social Sciences & Humanities for the New Age: Orient Longmans, 1962.)

To sum up the spirit of Sufi and Bhakti traditions, it may be said that they have tremendous resiliency to sustain the power of altruism and unselfish love by activating our inner resources of the self and through developing insight into those settled truths of human nature that unflinchingly repel hatred, and purge those foul and morbid sentiments from within us that tend to alienate us from our fellow beings. In fact the power of altruism and unselfish love provide the last hope for our survival on this planet. *If the Indian Nation can open the secret of unleashing this power, it would possibly attain virtual ideological supremacy in the world, and nation after nation would follow the lead in a total revolt against the insanity of nuclear competition.*

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An examination of the scientifically-based systems of psychotherapy that are thoroughly equipped with well-defined and tried-out methods tells it very clearly that their aims and goals are precisely consonant with the very spirit of Sufi and Bhakti traditions. The rise of alternative therapies in modern clinical psychology calls for the development of a system of psychotherapy suited to our own needs which cannot be isolated from our existing social and cultural circumstances. It can be surely demonstrated that Sufi and Bhakti traditions are not pragmatically barren and to this effect the hitherto work of the author of these proposals has been quite successful in relation to Sufi psychotherapy at least, which has been increasingly recognized in Europe and the U.S.

It is believed that Sufi and Bhakti traditions require exposition in a scientifically meaningful language suited for the needs of the moment. They transcend the rigid and even the arbitrarily created boundaries of our belief systems which block the meaning of religious piety. They also most effectively prevent that religious perversion which generates hatred and manifests itself through aggression and outright terrorism. And it is certainly true that the perceptible and imperceptible effects of an essentially therapeutic nature inherent in these traditions destroy the mainsprings of these pathological aspects of hatred.

Actually, these traditions have an equipment of their own as regards the methodology and the techniques which can draw people adhering to different

belief systems toward sharing such common experiences which make bonds of human relationship stable, purposeful and free from suspicions, mistrust, and disaffection.

Our ignorance of the genesis, the historical context, and theory and practice of these health-fostering traditions is a great handicap, especially when there is a national urgency to have something really expedient for preventing the menace of violence and aggression which has now turned suicidal to the nation. What is most unfortunate at the moment is our failure to visualize this ignorance.

It is still more unfortunate that we are also largely ignorant about the fact that the technologically advanced nations in the world have rendered themselves at the mercy of an asymmetrical progress which is devouring them like a dragon, and they are desperately exploring something stringent, to give them an spiritual upthrust which is an existential necessity for them because their inner resources have become substantially depleted. They therefore look toward the East for a fresh transformation. We cannot help them unless we remove our own ignorance and handicap through intensive and extensive understanding which is possible only through scientifically planned researches.

If we choose to make the idea of national integration a social and cultural reality we must look back into history for a worthy lesson. We have an immense potential at our disposal. The Sufi and Bhakti traditions have already vindicated

*Let India unleash the power of love  
and attain ideological supremacy in the world*

what we desire and urgently need now. The renaissance of these traditions for national integration requires a research-based programme of a highly scientific order, and we need it as urgently as we need a value-based technology or a value-based politics.

However, a research-based programme of an extensive nature geared for our national interest—and national integration, of course—requires pooling of our intellectual resources which, in turn, requires the creation of a full-fledged institute for this purpose.

At the outset it may be envisaged that such an institute would have two major functions which may be stated here briefly. *First*: intensive and extensive researches concerning the theory and practice of these traditions and a historical analysis of their impact on society under the circumstances that existed in the past. This would include researches on their relationship with the cultural ethos of India. The research would extend over to the techniques for attitude formation and the direction of sentiments for nationally constructive goals. The techniques for attitude formation here imply those demonstrable methods for eliminating those foul and morbid tendencies which lead to violence and aggression resulting in overt manifestations of the most dreadful nature. These techniques are more posi-

tively oriented so far as Sufi and Bhakti traditions are concerned and they can be safely combined with the most advanced techniques of clinical psychology.

*Second*: the other major function of the institute would be to have liaison with Ashrams in India such as Swami Vivekananda Ashram and Sri Aurobindo Ashram. Moreover it would have liaison and interaction with institutes of alternative therapies outside the country such as those in Brazil, West Germany, U.S.A. and England. Sufi psychotherapy, and, for that matter, Bhakti psychotherapy as well, cannot be made a profession but since they should be an integral part of the programme, as may be carried out through the proposed institute, they may be practiced freely and their benefits can be assessed directly through statistics.

The layout of this proposed institute under specific heads is not being readily given here because, at the outset, it is deemed more urgent to seek the helpful advice and opinion of the concerned authorities in the National Integration Council, U.G.C. and the I.C.S.S.R. Hence the aforesaid statement is restricted to highlighting the aims and the spirit of the proposed institute from the point of view of immediate national interest.

(Dr. M. A. Beg, Zulfiqar Manzil,  
Dodhpur, Aligarh.) □

### Integrating the People

Hafiz, the great Persian poet, writes :

- Hafiza gar wasl Khwahā,  
Sulh kun ba Aam-o-khas;
- Ba Musalman Allah-Allah,  
Ba Bramin Ram-Ram.
- (Oh Hafiz, if you want Union—with God—  
make peace with one and all;  
Greet the Muslim with Allah-Allah  
and the Brahmin, with Ram-Ram.)



# The Sri Lankan Tragedy : Genesis, Policy Blunders, And The Way Out

—SAILENDRA NATH GHOSH

ACCORD in too great a hurry, and with too many loose ends often leads to greater discord. Accord confined to top levels, without involvement of the potent forces in the dispute, is like spreading a thin ice layer over a series of deep crevices, inviting disastrous consequences.

The haste in Indo-Sri Lanka accord was due to Rajiv Gandhi's panicky reaction to the blackmailing neighbour's threat to allow a military base to a super-power not too friendly to India. This panic, in turn, came from a lack of confidence in India's own strength and in the native people's power to make any foreign naval base at Trincomalee unsustainable. India definitely had the right to warn Sri Lanka that allowing any base to any alien power or inviting any foreign troops in India's immediate vicinity would be considered an unfriendly act and a threat to India's security. India had also the right to similarly warn other powers who seemed willing to send troops to Sri Lanka to suppress people who are already the victims of Sinhalese racism.

If India, by this global stance, could enhance its political strength, it could have been on a much stronger ground for it already had the moral strength as a doughty defender of Sri Lanka's integrity. It could, then, have had a much greater leverage to persuade Sri Lanka government to grant real regional autonomy to the northern-cum-eastern province to buy durable peace and national integrity. Success in this would have enabled India

to play a much greater sobering influence on the Tamil militants. Having failed to rise to this level politically and diplomatically, it sought solution in a reversal of the very process which alone could ensure a just settlement. In this reversal, it demanded that the victim of racism must surrender first and left the oppressive racist state power free to spell out the contents of regional autonomy later. It was this reversal of the process that has landed India in a mess.

Besides, the placement of Indian armed forces under the command of another country's President was an unconstitutional act. The Government did not even have the right to engage India's armed forces under its own command, in any military operation, on howsoever limited a scale, outside the country's border, except to repulse external aggression on this country.

Even the accord of July 29 did not visualise any combat function in Sri Lanka. Its declared function was to receive the arms, which the Tamil militants were not prepared to surrender to Sri Lankan troops, and to reassure the Tamils that the handing over of arms would not be to their disadvantage and, thereby, to hasten the process of conciliation. When the situation took an ugly turn after the breaches of accord by both Sri Lankan government and LTTE, there was need for further negotiation with both the parties, instead of jumping straight-away into the fray on a foreign land.

The Government of India has rightly condemned LTTE for the brutal massacre of innocent Sinhalese following the suicide of twelve LTTE men under tragic circumstances. But it has never publicly stated (i) that the Sri Lankan Government's continuing colonisation of the eastern province with Sinhalese population was a clear violation of the accord and that it was one of the issues that sparked off LTTE's savage actions, and (ii) that the Sri Lankan Government's vindictiveness in the attempted despatch to Colombo of the captured seventeen LTTE men was a blow to the accord which made the LTTE go berserk. To remain tongue-tied on these issues was capitulation to Sri Lankan Government.

Behind this weak-kneed response is the belief that the Sri Lankan government needs to be wooed lest it calls off the accord and provides a base to a super-power and invites alien troops. Fear of India's encirclement by a conspiracy of racists and unfriendly powers has so overwhelmed our rulers that they have remained blind to graver risks of revolt at home and longterm confrontation with guerillas on Sri Lankan soil. Our rulers lost nerve where they should have been bold and are showing over-confidence where they are likely to fail—if they have not failed already—on the question of securing genuine devolution of power.

The refusal to order a unilateral declaration of ceasefire for a few days to give LTTE respite for consultations among themselves on the issue of handing over arms, is just inexplicable. It is hard to believe that it would have an

adverse impact on our army's morale. "Surrender first, then we cease fire" sounds like a call to "accept humiliation or face liquidation". The Government of India ought to know that people who accept such humiliation cannot have the face to participate in electoral battles. And, without LTTE's participation, it would be a mockery of election if it could at all be held. The chances are that with LTTE standing outside the mainstream, few would dare to stand for election for fear of LTTE's reprisal.

The Government of India must reflect upon its objectives and actions. Is liquidation of LTTE its objective now? Does not LTTE deserve an opportunity to participate *honourably*, even after all these debacles? What is the leverage now by which the Government of Sri Lanka can be made to meet the legitimate aspirations of the Tamils? Now that the Indian army has decimated the sword-arm of the Tamils, namely LTTE, is not Colombo free to dilute its commitments? After having made IPKF do the dirty job, if Colombo now orders it out, how would the Government of India show the face to the world and to its own people? And where would the Sri Lanka Tamils stand? On the other hand, if it continues to stay on despite Colombo's wishes, it will be dubbed as an army of occupation; and the same powers who are now patting India on the back will start calling it names. In spite of Shri Natwar Singh's optimism about some "firm assurances" from the Sri Lanka Government, which he would not divulge under the "established norms of diplomatic confidentiality", Colombo's behaviour upto now has consistently given causes for grave concern.

## II—The Autonomy Than Sub

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## II—The Nature of Provincial Autonomy Offered— More Shadow Than Substance.

THE GOVERNMENT of Sri Lanka did not give the Government of India any chance to see its two bills—the 13th amendment to the Constitution, and the Provincial Council Bill—before introducing these to Sri Lankan Parliament. Evidently for fear of India raising questions about their lack of substance. Clause 2-15 of the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement required that residual "matters" relating to the devolution scheme which were not finalised during the negotiations conducted between May 4, 1986 and December 19, 1986, "shall be resolved" between India and Sri Lanka. Therefore, to process the bills unilaterally, bypassing India, implied non-adherence to the agreement's clause.

An analysis of the provisions of the bills would show that the provincial autonomy is utterly lacking in substance. Both Sri Lanka's President and Prime Minister have openly confirmed that this autonomy does not alter the unitary character of Sri Lanka State. Unitarism means forcible assimilation of ethnic communities to hammer one national entity. The unreality of devolution is seen in the following.

(a) On the question of setting up a single administrative unit of the northern and eastern provinces, perpetual power has been vested in the President, which means, even if this unit is established now, it would be an impermanent arrangement. This step, now to be taken by a Presidential proclamation, can be revoked at will by the present or any future incumbent. The provision for a single unit, therefore, hangs by a slender thread which could be snapped at the whim and fancy of individuals.

(b) Parliament retains the power to amend or repeal the chapter on Provincial councils and the list of their subjects and to legislate even on subjects transferred to the Provincial Councils, by two-thirds majority and the approval of the people in a referendum. In Sri Lanka, where the Sinhalese ethnic community constituted 74 per cent of the population, it would indeed be a simple exercise.

(c) The subjects on provincial list are few. Both the concurrent and the reserve lists have been framed to minimise as far as possible the provincial list. Even subjects such as the creation or demarcation of administrative subdivisions within the province, the Provincial Public Service, the Provincial Local Government Service, which are basic pre-requisites for the exercise of any devolved power, have not been included in the provincial list. This is contrary to the understanding that the list of subjects would be on Indian pattern.

(d) The provision regarding the Governor of the province is curious. Even though it says that the Governor shall, in the exercise of his functions, act in accordance with the advice of the Council of Ministers, it has been rendered valueless by his unlimited discretionary power exercisable on the direction of the President. Although India, during the Bangalore talks in 1986, had pressed for the kind of limited discretionary powers that Governors in India enjoy, this view was not accepted by Sri Lanka. It means, the executive powers of the "ministers" of the province would be extremely limited.

(e) The devolution package now on offer is that there shall be a Chief Minister and four other Ministers. This



is a departure from Colombo's earlier proposal that the number on the Board of Ministers would be not fewer than six and not more than one-third of the total number of members of the provincial council which is to be 71. The restriction now imposed on the number of ministers will devalue the set-up. Notably, the provincial body is not called a government, it is just the executive wing of a council.

(f) On the very sensitive issue of state land—it is sensitive because it is the abuse of this very land which promotes Sinhalese colonisation in Tamil areas and thus provokes ethnic conflicts—Colombo has gone back on its own proposals of September, 1986. One provision in the new legislation is that the power of alienation or disposition of all State lands shall vest in the President. The legislation does not confer on the Provincial Council the ownership of State land within the provinces, nor does it permit the Council to use, control or administer such land. The *Hindu* of November 14 reports that the concept of National Ethnic Ratio (i.e. the ratio which prevails on the national level) is being applied in relation to new inter-Provincial Irrigation and Land Development Schemes, which have been given a wide definition. The Tamil fear is that this would keep the gates open for continuing demographic changes in the Tamil areas. (The increase of Sinhala population in the Eastern province between 1947 and 1981 was 883% while the national increase in the Sinhala population was 238%).

(g) The legislation leaves widest possible scope for declaration of emergency on flimsy grounds. Whereas, under Indian constitution, emergency can be declared

only under conditions of external aggression, internal disturbances, and failure of constitutional machinery in the state, the Sri Lankan legislation provides that emergency can be declared and provincial government suspended even under the condition of "breakdown of essential supply and services."

(h) On the Trincomalee port's land and recruitment question, the legislation does not contain any provision despite earlier assurances given by the Sri Lankan government. Since 1983, an estimated 90 per cent or more of the recruitment for the port has been from the Sinhala ethnic group though this area is peopled mostly by the Tamils. Until 1983, the area of land vested in the Port Authority was just 16 acres. But in 1984, suddenly 5,500 acres of land out of the port's hinterland was vested in the Port Authority controlled by the Central Government. This was to present a *jait accompli* to the Government of India's mediating team. Nothing has been provided in the legislation to correct the situation.

All these suggest that the Sri Lanka side does not seem serious about implementing its part of the commitment as per the Accord.

### III—Behaviour Analysis of the Three Actors in the Drama

In the episodes that followed the accord, President Jayewardene has emerged as the cleverest politician, the Government of India the "sincere fool" and the LTTE the heroic but brutal, foolhardy spoiler of its own objective. At the time of the accord, the Sri Lankan President waxed eloquent on his unique powers under the country's constitution. He could sack any minister and also dissolve the

Parliament. Yet, he did not sack his Prime Minister or his Internal Security Minister who were totally against the accord and worked from inside to wreck it. It is they who took the first big step to sabotage the accord by their order to despatch the captured LTTE men to Colombo—an order which even President Jayewardene could not cancel. Prime Minister Premadasa has often been spitting venom, unjustly, against India in his fond belief that LTTE's arms were mostly supplied by India. The arms supplies from Singapore, intercepted after IPKF went into action, proved that it had diverse sources of arms supplies, giving the lie to Mr. Premadasa. Yet, President Jayewardene takes no action against his Prime Minister. The President now seeks to escape his constitutional responsibility for such defamations and abuses of India by giving evasive answers. (He told journalists at Delhi "Go, ask him.") Wiliness always kills trustworthiness. Does he realize that members of his own ethnic community, too, will never trust him, though they may, for the time being, gloat over the seeming success of his astuteness. Success built on denial of justice to a community cannot but be short-lived.

The Government of Shri Rajiv Gandhi, which takes a "high and mighty" attitude towards its own people and their kinsmen, took LTTE for granted because some of their leaders had been given sanctuary in India. Hence, after ordering the handing over of arms, LTTE leadership was left to be handled by officials of various descriptions and little effort was made to upgrade the process of political counselling to them. Evidently, the Government of India did not stand firm against the order of despatch of LTTE captives even though LTTE had

given notice as to how seriously they regarded the matter. Even when LTTE lost its faith in the Government of India and lost its head to get locked in combat with IPKF, could India not have minimised the losses on both sides by requesting some influential Tamil leaders from India, from different political parties and social organisations, to get in touch with LTTE and advise them to be realists and sober and to hand over the arms to IPKF? The Paramacharya of Kancheepetham had made an impassioned plea to the President for stoppage of hostilities. Evidently, many LTTE leaders were his devotees. Could not the Government silently seek the help of this highly respected religious leader for issuing a public appeal to LTTE to hand over arms? Efforts like these could have had greater effect. While we rightly seek to separate religion from politics, there is no harm in requesting help from a religious leader for a beneficent socio-political and humanitarian purpose. To keep everything on the Government's, or the Peace-Keeping Force's, shoulder was not wise.

Then, again, did the Government of India or its High Commissioner in Colombo make enquiries, in official-level discussions, about the contents of the legislations when these were at the drafting stage? The nature of regional autonomy depended on these legislations: hence these were crucial to accord implementation. If we had pursued this question as seriously as we did the arms hand-over issue, the autonomy content of the legislation would not have been as starved as we find it now.

Was it to cover up all these laxities on the Government of India's part that the Indian authorities had to launch a vehement campaign to put all the blame on LTTE's shoulders?

Shri Rajiv Gandhi keeps saying that LTTE has gone back on its every promise. So far as we know, the instances are only two—one is the insistence on making N. Padmanathan the interim administrator after President Jayewardene had already chosen Mr. Sivagnanam for the post from among the three names earlier suggested by LTTE itself; the other is the false statement about the percentage of arms surrendered. The former could not be treated as a serious offence. It was only a counterpart of the game the Sri Lankan Government was playing. The Government was trying, even after the accord, to settle more Sinhalese in the eastern zone to defeat the Tamil cause in the referendum. The LTTE, in a counter-strategy, wanted a man from the eastern zone as administrator evidently to win over easterners to the idea of a single unit combining the east and the north.

As regards arms surrender, the crucial question was the assessment of workability of the accord. LTTE, from the very beginning, was convinced that "the Sinhala racists would wreck the accord and that the Government of India has fallen in their trap." So, why surrender all the arms? This was their logic. In a sense their assessment has proved correct. A regional autonomy, to the essence of which the council of Ministers was opposed, the ruling party and the major opposition party were opposed, the major ethnic community was opposed, could not be given effect. At best it would be a shadow of regional autonomy, under which some Tamils would be offered some alleged ministerships and, in their ineffectiveness, made the butt of bitter grievances from the Tamils themselves. While the Government of India could possibly

accept, for tactical reasons, a formula which meant slight advance, the Tamil mind was naturally impatient for equality, security and human dignity. In this situation there was need to continually divine the mind of the Tamil militants and to keep in constant touch with them for political counselling. Like oppressed colonial people, they were hungering for full freedom, complete severance from the rest of Sri Lanka, and hence for a partition to which we were opposed in their own as well as the Sinhalese's ultimate interest. But in the context of their sufferings over decades it was not easy to convince them. Whoever belittled their misgivings or overlooked the reasons for their objections, did commit a grave political mistake. The questions which weighed with them were: what is the value of the regional autonomy in the context of continuing hatred and hostility from the dominant race? Without proportionate representation of the Tamils in the armed forces, is this not going to be an illusion of power sharing? What safeguard is there against the possibility of the Sinhalese racist elements, backed by armed forces, launching attacks on Tamils after IPKF withdrawal? Is it not always open to the President to dismiss the provincial council on some pretext or the other?

People in India, where ethnic hatred is confined to a few belts and is not so intense, may find it difficult to appreciate the depths of these fears but these are vital concerns to Sri Lanka's Tamils. Where distrust is immense, mere accord at the political level, without the support of a socio-cultural movement for approximation, does not produce results. Neither Indian nor Sri Lankan political leadership understood this.

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It means, India did not do well by trying to paint LTTE as the *sole* villain in the entre drama, despite its hegemonism and intolerance of other militant groups and its barbaric acts on several occasions in response to provocations. For that was not the truth. India has, for some reason or the other, underplayed the sabotage role of the Sinhalese recists inside the Sri Lankan administration. There was also no need for India to underestimate the immense loss, in terms of civilian life and property, as a result of the fighting. In a *Times of India* report published on October 25 under the title "Lanka: The Truth Lies in-between", Richard De Zoysa writes: "The current fighting, and the Indian insistence that civilian casualties have been kept to the minimum has turned that initial faith into disbelief and anger." It also says, "One unconfirmed report talks of the Indian troops 'going berserk' after several of their men, dropped by helicopter into one of the areas of heaviest resistance, were mowed down by Tiger gunfire as they landed".

Going berserk when the comrades are killed, is a characteristic of all security forces. It happened with IPKF, it had happened with LTTE. For both are military forces. LTTE's savagery, after the cruelty on their captured men, can be better understood in the light of IPKF's frenzy after the killing of its men. It can be said that the Government of India, too, went berserk. Otherwise, it would have, on its own, given pauses in action and invited LTTE to talks through influential channels. Trying to disarm a force—which is entrenched among the people and is mostly indistinguishable from them—by military means, was unwise. Only by a political process of intense explaining and winning the local people's—and their

militants'—confidence could this be done with minimum loss.

Now, to LTTE. It, on its part, should have understood that the northern and eastern zones account for only 53 per cent of the total Tamil population of Sri Lanka. Even if these two zones succeeded in forming a separate country, would this not have meant utmost misery—the misery which comes from being the object of hatred and suspicion—for the remaining 47 per cent of the Tamils in Sri Lanka? Could this be a viable State? Would there be any peace? An Eelam in perpetual warfare with the Sinhalese—is that the way to a better life?

LTTE committed a great mistake by not considering the positive aspects of the accord. If the accord, despite its many limitations—and despite the initial scares thrown up by intending saboteurs—could be implemented with the willing cooperation of all Tamil groups, India would, in future, have greater moral authority to influence events in the region. Its capacity to influence the Sinhalese thinking could be greater (for the sceptic Sinhalese who feared domination and suspected India of secret sympathy for Sri Lanka's vivisection would know the truth and be more open-minded). In the event of any breach of faith by Colombo, India's voice in Sri Lankan affairs would evoke greater sympathy in international fora and make the restoration of Tamil rights irresistible. Even at this stage, LTTE should care to know that militancy, without breadth of vision and political sagacity, does not pay.

#### IV—Genesis of Sinhala-Tamil Conflict

Both the Sinhalese and Tamil ethnic communities claim their descent from

ancient Indian communities. Both have been living there for millennia. Both claim to be the original occupants of the island. Both have some common features.

Archaeological evidences show that Sri Lanka was a part of Southern Indian peninsula in the pre-historic past. Both Sinhalese and Sri Lankan Tamils had relations with South Indian kingdoms until the advent of the British in 1825. The two communities have had common features through the ages.

In 1825 the British brought migrant labour from India to develop tea and coffee plantation in the Central highlands of Sri Lanka. Later, they inducted Indian migrant workers in the ports, railways and urban factories too. The migrant Tamils and Malayalees were considered more industrious than the Sinhalese.

In the history of nations, resistance to foreign domination often took the form of religio-cultural revival—rousing the people's pride in the past and assertion of the dominated people's cultural personality. In Sri Lanka of the 19th century, too, nationalism found expression in the movement for revival of Buddhism. But this nationalism failed to blossom into a liberation movement; it stagnated as a mere religious agitation (against butchers' shops, taverns, western dress etc.) and later degenerated into communalism against minorities.

The British rulers always favoured the British planters and manufacturers. Subsidiary to British interests were: one class of Sinhala and Tamil landowners and planters, and another class of merchants, speculators and professionals belonging to all communities but mainly

from coastal non-agricultural areas. Both were unable to venture into export-import trade and there was little scope for formation of industrial capital. Only the ethnic community of the Tamils plus the religious community of Christians had the advantage of receiving English education while the Sinhalese engaged themselves in the study of Buddhist scriptures (much like the Muslims in India). The small landowners received education in vernacular and shared the religious revivalist fervour. The farmers, sharecroppers and landless labourers, eking out a precarious existence, and with little prospect of a better life, pinned all their hopes on religious revival. As a result, the demands for clerks, teachers, minor bureaucrats, keepers of modern stores etc. which were spawned by the plantation economy and state sector and service sector activities were met mostly by English-educated Christians and Tamils. Competition in limited job opportunities gave rise to animosities.

In those lines of commerce in which British capital was not interested, it was the merchant capitalists from India who dominated. In export-import trade and inland wholesale trade, seven Borah family firms and a few Memon and Parsi firms dominated. In retail trade, the smaller Sinhalese traders failed to compete with the Muslims and Chettiar; and at the village-level petty trade, too, it was the Muslims who were ahead. In money-lending, too, it was the Chettiar and Pathans who dominated. Hence there were calls to boycott Muslims' shops and attacks on "the merchants from Bombay and pedlars from South India."

But what were the faults of the native Sri Lankan Tamils, except that they were ahead in Government jobs and the

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professions? Certainly, there was no scope of mass employment in these lines. The Sri Lankan Tamils did not have even the scope for graphite or liquor renting; and few Tamils had coconut or other large plantations. The Sinhala Buddhists' feeling that they were a disadvantaged and deprived community led to their wrath against every other community. The brunt of the attack fell on the Tamils who were the major group among the ethno-religious communities. No thought was given to the fact that the most disadvantaged and worst exploited people were the Tamils working as plantation workers.

The Sinhalese Buddhists' morbid dislike of all other ethnic and religious groups has an interesting genealogy. In 1903 it began with a movement to rid the sacred city of Anuradhapura of not only taverns and butcher shops but also churches. The period, 1904-1912, saw a strong temperance movement. In 1909, they called upon all Sinhalese to refrain from transactions with the coast Moors, the Cochins and all foreigners. Through novels, they went on preaching hatred against the Tamils and Muslims. In seeking the revival of Buddhism, they emphasised only the narrow ritualist and communal aspects, casting aside its universalist values. Without contact with the outside world, lacking contact with liberal thought, they kept cultivating only narrow-minded bigotry.

Freedom from British rule gave these fanatics full freedom for their campaign of hate. Since 1947 colonisation and settlement in traditional Tamil areas, and systematic attacks on Tamil temples, monuments and libraries have been in progress. In 1948, the Tamil plantation workers were deprived of citizenship

rights; in 1949 they were disenfranchised; in 1956 the S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike government adopted the "Sinhala only" language policy. Large-scale massacres of Tamils were organised in 1956, 1958, 1977, 1981, 1982 and 1983. Sri Lanka became the world's only state which, at one stroke, made 12 per cent of its entire population stateless. These were the Tamil plantation workers.

In 1957 and 1965, there were glimpses of momentary sunshine, followed by enveloping darkness. In 1957 the S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike-Chelvanayakam Pact was signed providing for the creation of regional council for the northern and eastern provinces, with wide-ranging powers in education, land, land development, industries etc., which raised hopes of conciliation. Again, in 1965, Senanayake-Chelvanayakam pact was signed with similar provisions. But the pacts never got off ground. These had to be abrogated following protests by an alliance of J.R. Jayewardene's party and the Buddhist clergy.

In 1972, the Sri Lankan Government adopted the "standardisation" policy in education, which meant that the Tamil students' marks would have to be weighted downwards vis-a-vis the marks of Sinhalese students for university admission. This made the Tamils realize that they had no scope of living in dignity in Sri Lanka. It is from this time that violence became internalised among the Tamils, too. In 1979 came the Prevention of Terrorism Act on the model of South Africa's Terrorism Act of 1967.

During the 80s, the period of Jayewardene's rule, ethnic chauvinism became Sri Lanka's national ideology. Whoever opposed it as distortion of Buddhism, came

to be branded as "traitors to Buddhism" or "traitors to race and religion". In 1981, he declared emergency which has continued to become Sri Lanka's permanent feature. The same year, over two lakh Sinhalese families (i.e. about ten lakh persons?) were settled where a Tamil population of 22 lakhs existed on 3000sq miles, to alter the demographic and social profile of the Tamils". In 1982, the Sri Lankan government extended its own life by resorting to a referendum marked by intimidation, violence and malpractices. The repeated massacres of Tamils in 1981, 1982 and 1983 marked Jayewardene's regime. The result has been civil war since 1984.

How far Mr. Jayewardene has changed, is the moot point. Among all heads of governments and leaders of political parties, his role has been the most vicious over the last three decades. While he accuses Prabhakaran of being a murderer, he may find that the spill of innocent blood weighs heavier on his Buddhist conscience. The only genuine change that seems to have come over him is the realization that insistence on only one language makes two nations, while acceptance of two languages can make one nation. His regional autonomy formula, however, is way behind the provisions the late Bandaranaike had agreed to three decades back.

Indo-Sri Lanka pacts, too, have a peculiar history. The Sirimavo-Shastri Pact of 1964 for repatriation of "Indian Tamils", whose domicile in Sri Lanka went back to about 150 years; the Sirimavo-Indira Gandhi Pact of 1977 on expatriation, again; and the Rajiv Jayewardene Accord of 1987—each of these was first acclaimed as a remarkable achievement of statesmanship. Every

time it was followed by a tragedy. This is because none of the Indian leaders cared to consult the people concerned: the people whose fate was being decided were taken for granted. The pacts for expatriation provided for "the world's largest exodus from one nation to another under bilateral agreement". And, a commentator has rightly said that in the 1987 accord, India's Prime Minister with his "illusion of grandeur as the leading peace-monger in the Third World and a South Asian power", took LTTE and other militant groups for granted and did not consult them on their minimum demand, short of which they would not compromise. Presenting them a *fait accompli* was no consultation.

#### V—The Way Out.

Permanent solution would require a sea-change in the attitude of the Sinhala Buddhists primarily. For it is they who, in their fear complex of India, and in their hatred of everybody outside their ethno-religious community, have created this crisis. The advice which the Indian leaders have always been giving to the Tamil population in Sri Lanka, would remain classic in the ideas of harmony-building and neighbourliness. In 1927, Mahatma Gandhi said in Colombo to the Indian Tamils :

"I would leave one or two thoughts with you before I leave Colombo. Since you are earning your bread in this beautiful island, I would ask you to live as sugar lives in milk. Even as a cup of milk which is full up to the brim does not overflow when sugar is gently added to it, the sugar accommodating itself in the milk and enriching its taste, in the same way I would like you to live in this island so as not to become interlopers

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and so as to enrich the life of the people in whose midst you may be living."

Pandit Nehru and Shri C. Rajagopalachari spoke from India in the same vein in 1954 and 1958. Yet, Sri Lanka's dominant ethnic community's hatred poisoned the "milk", to the minorities—and ultimately its own—ruination.

It is not only in the economic and security spheres that the majority community, too, has been, and is being, ruined in terms of mounting defence burden, raging inflation, threats to life and disensions within its own ranks. Its ruin has also been in more fundamental terms.

The French sage Romain Rolland had once said: "Victory is always more catastrophic for the vanquisher than for the vanquished". The Sinhala Buddhists now face the starkness of this naked truth. For the last forty years, their racism, not their humanity, has been raging as the victor: It remains the victor after the Tamil revolt has been quelled by IPKF. But if there are ears to hear, the Buddha in every Sinhalese heart is now crying over the abuses in his name. The wail will grow louder. The ferocity in the name of Buddhism cannot but corrode every form of intimate relationship of the hatefilled people themselves.

Sri Lanka surpassed South Africa in racial hatred and genocide although it has remained less advertised in world fora, thanks to India's reticence. It should, therefore, take note of what has been happening to the white people of South Africa. "South Africa is now considered one of the psychologically most ill societies of the world. There is now

an alarmingly high level of depression, tension and uncertainty in the different racial communities. Inter-group conflicts have led to interpersonal conflicts. These are evident daily with painful consequences. Brutal aggression has become a tragic way of life." Butchery of fellow-humans belonging to other communities has brought butchery within.

The solution for Sri Lanka lies in the discovery of the compassionate Buddha who does not advise killing of fellow-beings in the name of religion.

The most creative Tamil scholars in Sri Lanka always considered Sinhala and Tamil as two eyes or two sisters. Therefore, the Tamils, even after this bloodbath, will do well to give higher priority to Sri Lankan national unity over world Tamil unity.

Both communities must realise that there is no basic incompatibility of interest between the Sinhalese and the Tamil populations of Sri Lanka at the grassroots level. Those people, who suppress Tamil language, also prevent the common Sinhala people from coming up high in socio-economic or cultural level. Those, who deny the Tamils their due share of jobs, also misdirect economic development, so that people become dependent on Government jobs or jobs in the tertiary sector (in the offices of trading companies), instead of opening up opportunities for productive mass employment through land improvement, water- and forest-related developments-cum-self employment generating industries, which could lead to universally shared prosperity. In a different kind of development, it is possible to improve the lot of the poor and provide full employment for both the Sinhalese and the Tamil populations.

The Sinhalese mind must not work in negative channels. So far their accent on unitarism of the Sri Lankan State has been actuated by the desire to check the Tamils. But this has also prevented the self-expression and full development of the central, western and southern regions of Sri Lanka. It will, therefore, have to move towards federalism in the interest of the Sinhalese themselves.

In a situation where an immediate solution is needed, one cannot hope for an ideal solution. But it is necessary to have a concept of what could assure the Tamils the most, while brightening the hopes of the masses of the Sinhalese, too. The realization of this concept might be a far cry from the present situation; yet it needs to be spelt out.

The ideal solution would be a thorough-going federalism with four tiers of elected government with their constitutional rights (as governments)—at the block level, district level, regional level, and federal level. This type of federalism is more advanced than the type of federalism we have in India. Not having this ideal kind of federalism ourselves, we did not have the face to ask Sri Lanka for a radical federalism in which power resides in the people. This kind of federalism will go a long way towards a lasting solution of the ethnic, lingual, religio-communal conflicts because in this system, all ethnic, religious, lingual and regional groups will share power at different levels and the federal level will be left with little scope to impose its will overbearingly on others. Yet, in matters of external affairs, defence against external threats etc., the federal level would have unfettered authority and the

time for uncluttered attention. Democracy can be very real if alongside this kind of federalism, there is a vibrant movement of the poorer and disadvantaged people to guard against the despotism of the local rich and anti-social elements. This, however, is not on the immediate agenda because this concept has not so far been popularised in any country. But whoever wants power to the people and prosperity of the masses will find this kind of political structure essential.

In the context of the existing realities in Sri Lanka, there is immediate need for a socio-religio-cultural movement for the union of hearts. Political process alone cannot heal the wounds. Tamil Hinduism and Sinhalese Buddhism are two arms of the same culture. Their harmony will purify and enrich each and may even influence reform movements in other countries. Out of the depths of this crisis can, then, emerge a new culture to take Sri Lanka to the heights of glory. □

November 16, 1987

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Their articles appeared in the Sri Lanka issue of the *Seminar* (September 1987). □

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# The Punjab Crisis & The Sikh Identity

Dr. Jasbir Singh Ahluwalia

Director, Guru Govind Singh Foundation, Chandigarh.

**O**NE OF THE most significant dimensions of the Punjab crisis relates to the crisis of contemporary Sikhism, a comprehension of which is essential for understanding and resolving the Punjab situation.

The Sikh problem, or the Sikh crisis, as a dimension of the Punjab crisis, refers to the very evolutionary dialectic of Sikhism and Sikh society; this, in a sense, is the inevitable phenomenon of the Sikh community becoming self-conscious for the first time in the course of its ethno-social and ethno-political development as an ethnos. This growing self-consciousness reveals the quest of the Sikh people for re-defining their individual and corporate identity in the context of the present day social and political reality. This leads to some correlative questions: Where do we situate and realize this identity? In territory? Or in the national mainstream of India, of which the Sikhs are an integral, indivisible part? How do we ensure autonomous self-growth and survival of the Sikh identity, both in its individual and corporate forms?

The problem of the Sikh identity is as old as Sikhism itself; it was faced by Guru Nanak himself as revealed by the Multan Sakhi. However in the past few years the identity consciousness has become accentuated due to a variety of causes. The *diaspora* of the Sikhs all over the world has brought them in interaction with other cultural and ethnic groups in the midst of which the question of their own distinctive moorings comes to the surface. The encounter of Sikhism and Sikh society with modernism also

makes them aware of their own tradition—such being the dialectic of tradition and modernism. Thirdly as we approach the 21st century, we find the resurgence of religion both as a spiritual phenomenon and also as the source of new revolutionary ideologies in the aftermath of the appropriation of the leftist revolutionary ideologies into the status-quoist Establishment.

However, unfortunately this growing identity consciousness has taken the form of an identity crisis for a number of reasons. First, the development of the Sikh identity has followed an un-even path of evolution. The political ascendancy of the Sikhs in the 18th century also saw the feudalization of the movement with the correlative Brahminization of Sikh society and Vedanicization of the Sikh doctrine to a point where Sikhism came to be treated as just another form or phase of Hinduism and Sikh society as nothing more than a sect of Hindu society. Secondly in the modern period the unitarian model, characteristic of the Western capitalist (classical) phase of socio-politico-economic development, as adopted and adapted in our country, has also proved incapable of ensuring self-flouring of our religious, cultural and ethnic diversities as conceived in the notion of unity-in-diversity.

Thirdly we have seen all over the world, the collapse of the long-cherished myth that economic determinism, by providing for individual integration of the members of a minority community into the socio-economic system, would *ipso facto*, bring about its corporate integration in the



## *Over-identification of Sikhs, and under-identification of Hindus, with Punjab—that is the problem*

national mainstream. This has not happened, particularly in the case of the Sikhs.

The fourth factor that has deepened the identity crisis of the Sikhs is that the Sikh ethos remains past-oriented. In the absence of updated ideological awareness, political awareness remains nebulous and easily lends itself to negative political adventurism which has brought under mental siege a section of the Sikhs, though very small in proportion. In this process the heroic revolutionary tradition of Sikhism has become confused with the credo of violence which has no place in Sikh doctrine and history.

Fifthly, what has compounded the problem is the co-mingling of the specific economic interests of the predominant strata of Sikh society and the regional concerns with the general Sikh interests of existentialist nature. The over-identification of Sikh society, and even of Sikhism, with Punjab, its language, its culture, its economy, its geography, coupled with psychological withdrawal of the Hindus from Punjab—its language, its culture, its economy, its geography—has led to two epi-phenomena. (The recent physical migration of the Hindu families from Punjab in the wake of terrorist activity is much less significant than the more serious psychological migration of the Hindu community from Punjab since 1947.) The first resultant epi-phenomenon, is that for the first time the situation of over-identification of one community with Punjab and the under-identification of the

other community, on the other hand, has resulted in a momentary aberration. (But a momentary aberration, if allowed to drift, can become a historical reality; hence it should be dealt with seriously.)

Sikhism does not entail an exclusivist, self-limiting territorial nationalism, this being a world historical religion of universal-humanistic character and mission. In this context the question of situating the Sikh identity becomes pertinent. The corporate Sikh identity can and should be realized in the national mainstream of our country and not in separatist territory. Sikh religion is not a territorial religion (confined to a particular territory, race, class, caste or ethnic group) in the limited sense of the expression. But for realizing the corporate Sikh identity in the national mainstream, it is essential to have and evolve systemic relationships of a pluralistic character.

The second epi-phenomenon produced by the situation is that the existentialist concerns of the Sikhs in a particular area—important though they are—have taken precedence over the universal-humanistic concerns of Sikhism. Will Sikhism and Sikh society end up as self-limiting categories? This underlines the imperative of pursuing the quest of Sikh identity in a positive way; the negative pursuit of the Sikh identity in certain circles has aggravated the identity crisis of the Sikhs in the modern period. This in turn has compounded the Punjab crisis.

In brief, the question of the Sikh identity should be pursued in a positive,

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and not in a negative, way or form. This means that this issue should be de-linked from self-limiting separatism and terrorism, which have no place in Sikh doctrine and history. The Sikh identity, both in its individual and corporate form, can, and should, be realized in the national body politic of India, of which the Sikhs are an integral part. The Sikh identity, the Punjabi identity and the national identity should be seen as complementary, and not antagonistic, to each other. Religion being an essential ingredient of

our nationalities—as a result of the historical situation in India—the Sikh identity, the Hindu identity and the Muslim identity are integral parts of the composite Punjabi nationality which is the solid basis of the communal unity in Punjab and should be pursued as such; in turn, Punjabi nationality is an essential component of our national identity, of Indianness.

(No. 15, Sector 4-A, Chandigarh)

### Ranjit Singh's Sikh Identity

When Nadirshah was leaving India after 1739 with great loot, the Sikhs looted Rs. 30 crores worth of gold etc. from him. The Peacock Throne and the Kohinoor diamond could not be looted only because they were too strongly protected. The Sikh chiefs wrested Lahore from the hands of Afghans on the joint request of Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims of the city. Ranjit Singh was anointed with Tilak on April 12, 1801, and proclaimed Maharaja. He occupied Amritsar the following year.

Maharaja Ranjit Singh visited Har Mandir, Amritsar, on Gur Prabhs, Dussehra, Diwali and Vaisakhi. He specially visited it on Amavasya and Sankranti. He visited Hardwar for Ganga-snana.

The Sikh Sardars vied with one another by feeding cows and maintaining Brahmins.

When Lord Aukland was visiting the Golden Temple in 1838, some Akalis and Nihangs planned to oppose it. Ranjit Singh threatened to cut them to pieces if they did anything unpleasant—and ordered the Mandir illuminated for the occasion.

While most of the Army commanders were Keshadharis, most of the administrators were Monas. His chief diplomat was Faqir Nuruddin 'Babaji'. His chief of artillery was Mian Ghaus.

When Ranjit Singh was dying, he called on a Sadhu and bowed to Guru Granth Sahib. He gave Rs. 8 lakhs in charity and willed the Kohinoor to Puri Jagannath. He took Tulsi leaves and Bhai Govind Ram whispered 'Ram' in to his ears thrice; Ranjit Singh repeated 'Ram' twice and breathed his last.

## World Round-Up

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### Female Heart is different !

When they first learnt from the Westerners that the heart is positioned on the left, the Chinese were sure their own hearts must be positioned on the right—since the two races were so different from each other. While all hearts proved to be on the left, recent researches reveal that the female heart is quite different from the male heart !

"There certainly are differences", said Dr. Peter Formmer, Deputy Director of the U.S. National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute, who characterized the new evidence as "tantalizing leads".

On Nov. 16, researchers at a meeting of the American Heart Association, in Anaheim, California, reported that women who have had children, tend to have wider coronary arteries, which may help explain their protection from early heart attacks. Others at the meeting reported a study of monkeys, indicating another difference: on a high-fat diet, female monkeys tend to produce more high-density lipo-proteins, HDL, which carry cholesterol away from blood vessels, than male monkeys do.

The most obvious difference is that women tend to develop coronary heart disease far later in life than men. Heart disease becomes the No. 1 killer of women only in their mid-60s, but it is the No. 1 killer of men at the age of 39. That disparity points to the long-assumed protection offered to pre-menopausal women by their hormones. Also, female blood vessels are better able to repair early damage from high blood pressure.

### The sky is the limit in Japan

Prices are much higher in Japan than anywhere else in the world. And land prices are the limit. Commercial land is priced at Rs. 13,00,000 a square metre—three times for the comparable sites in London or New York. Even a modest family house, one hour's drive from the city of Tokyo, would be worth Rs. 3 crores. A nice apartment in central Tokyo would carry a monthly rent of Rs. 2 lacs !

There are countries which are closing down their embassies in Japan—for reason of cost.

### The Wall Street Gallery of Berlin

The Berlin Wall, Peter Unsicker says, is the only really German art since the war. "It's built by Germans in the East, painted by Germans in the West". He calls it the Wall Street Gallery, and it is currently filled by a large long structure named the Trojan Horse.

Like most of the 40-year-old sculptor's works, the Trojan Horse is meant to plumb ambiguities and questions raised by the wall. The horse's head, for example, can be faced either way and the wall can be viewed through either end, an effect intended to raise what the artist's calling card terms "the daily question—do I stand before or behind the wall?" "You can't live here and not be tied to the wall", he said. "It's not that I'm for it or against it—I'm totally confronted by it."

The wall is, first of all, a graffitiist's dream, a smooth, almost unbroken surface

13½ feet high and about 100 miles of (160 kilometers) long, extending well beyond the boundaries of Berlin proper. It mocks the grand pretensions of the system behind it, the utopia whose citizens must be corralled behind reinforced concrete. It puts a literal barrier to the reunification of the defeated nation it divides, it draws a tangible line between East and West.

Yet, for all its dogs, watch-towers, barbed wire and concrete, the wall can seem almost playfully absurd at times, zig-zagging through back alleys or across canals.

At the dawn of wall art, East German guards would climb over now and again to paint over the graffiti on the wall, which is actually several feet inside East Berlin. Now they come only to erase especially embarrassing works, like the urinal affixed to the wall by an artist, Christophe Bouchet.

Earlier this year, the wall was put to a new use by West Berlin's lively counter-culture. Whole stretches were papered over with census forms as part of a leftist protest against a West German government census that was perceived by its opponents as an ominous probe by the state into private lives.

### Nestle fined \$ 2 million

Beech-Nut Nutrition Corporation of USA, a subsidiary of Nestle of Switzerland, a large baby food producer, has pleaded guilty to 215 felony charges of intentionally shipping millions of jars of bogus apple juice for babies. According to US

Government, Beech-Nut knew the jars contained a cheaper mix of other juices and sugar syrups.

The adulterated juice was bought by wholesalers and food chains in 20 states, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, and five countries: Bahamas, Dominican Republic, Japan, Saudi Arabia and Taiwan.

U. S. District Judge, Thomas C. Platt in Brooklyn, imposed a \$ 2 million fine last month—the largest ever under the Food, Drug and Cosmetics Act of 1938.

### After 'Gandhi', 'Cry Freedom'

Richard Attenborough, Director Producer of the film 'Gandhi', has now made one on the oppression of Africans, titled 'Cry Freedom'. The film centres round Steve Biko, who died from head wounds on Sept 12, 1977, while in police custody in South Africa.

Attenborough has always felt "very passionately, very deeply, about prejudice, persecution, intolerance and so on." It came from his home life as the son of Frederick and Mary Attenborough, who assisted refugee Basques during the Spanish Civil War and European Jews before and during World War II.

Returning from school one day, Richard and his brother David were told there would be two new family members—Irene and Helga Bejack. "So for eight years, during the war and just after, my brother and I had two German Jewish sisters," he says. "So it doesn't seem exceptional or unnatural to make socially conscious films like "Gandhi" or "Cry Freedom".