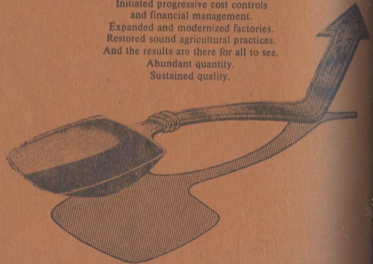


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## The Havoc that the British played with the Poor of India

By : Dharam Pal

LAST TIME I had made an attempt to delineate India's response to the loss of freedom and its total enslavement to Europe. Before we try to analyse and comprehend the causes of such response, it seems essential that I try to spell out, to the extent of my knowledge and understanding, some of the aspects of Indian life around 1750, or in many areas till 1800 or the 1820s, as it comes through the written record.

The concept of the 'Nadu' in parts of, southern India, and of the 'Khap' in areas of Rajasthan, Haryana, Western Uttar Pradesh, and in parts of Madhya Pradesh, seems to represent the basic units of Indian political and social organisation. That other parts of India had similar units of territoriality and organisational structure, which might be known by other names, can reasonably be assumed. The concept, and even the organisational and territorial structure of the Nadu, inspite of the later and continuing imposition of the still prevalent district, taluk, pargana, the development block, etc., still seem to survive at the more crucial and intimate levels of Tamil life and society. The size of the Nadu of course varies, as it perhaps always did. According to epigraphical evidence the majority of Nadus consisted of only 10-20 villages, while some did have 40 villages or more to each Nadu. To some of those closely linked with the present-day social and cultural life of rural and small town Tamilnadu, the Nadu in the areas of their activity seems to consist of around 43 localities, or habitats. In northern India the Khap consists of varying number of localities, sometimes of 84, and many others of far more or much less. The Khaps as well as the Nadus, as in earlier times, have supra-Khap and supra-Nadu linkages even today.

According to a prominent peasant leader of Northern India, it is the Khaps of the north which served as the major base and support to those who fought British power during 1857 and 1858. Further, according to him, it were the Khaps who put up resistance to Timur in the late 14th century. It also seems to be believed in peasant circles in northern India that the creation of Khaps throughout India was given legitimacy and formal shape in some historical gathering at Haridwar (perhaps at the time of some particular Kumbh) in the 7th century A.D. While much of what is current about the Nadu, Khap, etc. may be said to be based on hearsay, or on varying oral traditions, substantial epigraphical evidence and recent research exists on the Nadu in the times of the Cholas and in later centuries. Similarly, the indigenous Rajasthani archival material, kept in the Rajasthan Archives at Bikaner, has substantial material which deals

with Khaps, and their histories, functioning etc., during the period 1650-1800, and perhaps till much later. Material on such institutions must also exist in other parts of India.

Units and concepts like the Nadu and the Khap seem still central to the maintenance of whatever has been left of common resources and institutions for decision making on crucial issues, whether merely pertaining to the Nadu or Khap territoriality or to its relations with the wider world around it, and to the adequate celebration of festivities. The nattars and the chaudharis, forming part of the leadership of these formations, as we are becoming increasingly aware, still hold considerable power in the Nadus and the Khaps which they represent. As I said above, ordinarily the role of these ancient formations is apparently limited today to arranging festivities, supra-village decision-making, and the upkeep of local institutions, etc. But the recent sweep of the legislature polls by the Lok Dal in the state of Haryana is generally stated to owe much to the role of the Khaps during the past few years in that state. It is also quite possible, the subject is worth a major exploration, that the 1967 defeat of the well-entrenched congress party by the then DMK was, to an extent, made possible by Nadu organisations, and their traditional leaders, the Nattars, because of the unrest and ferment caused in them by 20 years of mechanical functioning and insensitivity to local aspirations and by continued official high-handedness.

WHILE it requires much fresh research into indigenous historical material to acquire some awareness of the historical role of the Nadus, Khaps, etc., and of their constituents, the villages and small town, an idea of how the base-level of Indian society might have been organised and functioned at the rural level comes out fairly clearly even from some of the late 18th century British created material. Perhaps the data (circa A. D. 1770) pertaining to the villages of the District of Chingleput demonstrates it best, though in a slightly different way, the data from pre-1800 Bengal seems to tell a similar story.

This data was collected through a survey of about 2000 villages of the Chingleput district during the 1760s and 1770s. The survey recorded the total land belonging to each village, the utilisation of this land for various purposes, the net cultivated land in each village (irrigated and unirrigated) and the details of manyams (the land which had been assigned to various village institutions and functions). Such assignments were of the tax which any land might have been ordinarily liable to pay to a duly constituted political authority, whether such authority was at the level of the village, or at any other regional or national level. The assignment customarily did not interfere with the right of the person, or persons who cultivated, or otherwise used such land. The only

alteration which took place was that the cultivator of the land, after such assignment had been made, began to pay the amount of the tax to the assignee instead.

The most important part of this survey, however, concerns the details of the allocations from the total agricultural produce of the village, generally called *swatantrams* in pre-1800 south Indian records, for the maintenance of the various institutions and infrastructure of the village and for supra-village institution and offices. The shares of the produce that were allocated for different functions and different institutions evidently had been determined by ancient custom and usage. This sharing was clearly not merely an economic arrangement, it was a way of defining the role and importance of the various recipients in the village or regional polity and much more it illustrates the historical organisational structure and budgeting of the localities of the supra-local arrangements.

### *The Nadus and the Khaps were the real units of Indian Society*

The allocations in eight villages range from about 26% to 36% of the total agricultural produce of each village. Incidentally, according to John Malcolm, a major British military Commander and later Governor of the Bombay Presidency (1827-30), the allocations for such purposes in villages of Malwa were in the range of 25% of the total agricultural produce. Besides, about one-sixth of the cultivated (or cultivable) land was classed as manyams. 288 whole villages out of 2,170 villages were additionally, till 1799, treated as Shrotrium villages in the Chingleput District. Shrotrium villages were historically such villages the land tax of which had been wholly assigned to various individuals (like *palegars* etc.) or institutions (like the great temples, mathams, Chatrams, etc). During British rule, however, the holder of the Shrotrium, i.e. those who were still allowed such villages, was made to pay an annual quit-rent which ranged from the merely nominal to as much as one half, or more, of the British enhanced land-tax of the particular villages.

In many of the districts of Bengal (A. D 1770), in the Ceded Districts of Cuddapah, Bellary, Anantpur, etc. (where British power and authority was consolidated by Thomas Munro during 1800-1807), and in many other areas the amount of cultivable land traditionally and historically classed as manyams was as high as half the total land of the

area, and perhaps in various parts of India whole districts were denominated as manyams largely for the support of the cultural and religious institutions, but some also for the support of the local and regional militias. According to a later (circa-1830) British note the number of institutions and individuals who had manyams assigned to them in the districts of the Bengal Presidency ran into tens of thousands in each district and in one district the number of claimants of manyams was around 70,000 in the 1770s.

The deductions for individual institutions and functions varied a great deal. Some of the allocations, those in the range of 0.05% to 0.20%, are indeed petty. The water-woman, the cow-keeper, the Koothady, the Panjangam, even some of the local temples, are in most places receiving such petty amounts. By and large, wherever there was irrigation, around 1%—4% of the total agricultural produce was allocated for its maintenance.

I may mention here that according to a 1818 British survey, the district of South Arcot had over 7,000 great, medium, and small temples and several hundred muttums and chattrams. Most other districts, in the Madras Presidency where such a survey was ordered, reported 3,000 to 4,000 temples, mathams etc., and at a rough estimate, in 1800, Madras Presidency might have had about 1,00,000 temples, muttums and chattrams of varying importance and size. The number of such institutions for the whole of India might have been in the range of 5,00,000 in AD 1800. Possibly around 5% of them might have been places of Islamic worship and learning, and perhaps around one thousand those of christian worship most of which would have been in Kerala or near the coastal areas of southern Tamilnadu.

The Karnam or Conaccupillay (which really implied the office of registrar of the Village, a sort of secretariat, rather than a single individual) generally had an allocation of 3% while the Teliyari (i.e. the village police, which may have included several persons) generally had an allocation of around 1.5% to 3%. Incidentally, it may be useful to know the offices of the Teliyari, the corn-measurer, the settler of boundary disputes, and a few other village offices, were generally filled by persons from the Pariah and allied castes. As many will know, in Maharashtra, it was the Mahars who constituted the village police. It is also worth noting that in cases of theft, etc., if the police or the Palegar (the head of the militia and perhaps one who also acted as a modern Inspector General of Police for his area) were unable to recover the stolen property, they were expected to compensate the aggrieved party from the incomes allocated to their offices.

Though this and similar data requires a much deeper analysis it does imply that every person in this society enjoyed a certain dignity and that his social and economic needs were well provided for. Food and shelter seem to have been natural rights, given India's cultural norms, and made easier by India's fertility, etc. According to a historian of mediaeval India the only data which was available about the expenditure details of Delhi referred to the free feeding of the people who required such a provision. It is possible that perhaps this was the major expenditure even of this alien imperial state and the state had adopted this practice from the prevalent norms of Indian society.

The allocations were not merely for internal village institutions—varied and complex as these allocations were—but also for the support of the supra-local religious, cultural, political, accounting, and militia purposes. Thus while the village or the locality managed and organized its own internal affairs, and thus in a way could even be symbolised as an autonomous republic or corporation, it was by no means isolated, or unlinked

### *Many of the rural office-bearers were Pariah by caste*

from other localities. In fact it seems to have contributed to the support of the supra-local systems, and it can reasonably be assumed that the supra-local systems, looked after the requirements of systems which in their own Indian way, provided support and integration to much larger areas. In a sense, the polity which such data suggests is the kind of polity that Mahatma Gandhi tried to spell out in his idea of the oceanic circles, where the innermost circle retained the utmost internal autonomy and only such fiscal, moral and other supplement was extended by them to the outer circles which was essential for performing those residual tasks, which would not clearly be performed at any local level.

An approximate idea can also be had from this 1770 Chingleput data of the proportion of these allocations which went for various groups of functions. There were considerable variations amongst the several sets of localities (for want of another name these may be likened to large Nadus). The largest allocations in each, however, were for administration, including police, direct support to agriculture, and irrigation. Popular religion, as mentioned earlier, has an edge over Agamic religion, while the share of scholars and education though, not exactly negligible, is not also remarkable. It could be that in an earlier period scholarship and education had a much larger allocation, and also that allocations for popular and agamic region in part contributed to the support of scholarship and

education. General services, including a variety of professionals, come out fairly well. There is much larger variation, however, in the supra-local allocations. While this variation is relatively less pronounced in the sphere of political administration, the variation as regards supra-local religion-culture-scholarship allocation is marked indeed. All the eight villages were contributing about 0.4% each to a scholar in distant Coimbatore who perhaps was the head of some celebrated scholarly academy.

Thus, it may be assumed, that, while a fairly large proportion of the production went towards the maintenance of the supra-local infrastructure and its small and great institutions, the proportion which went to the apex state (whether at regional or at a more central level) was fairly small. According to early British authorities there had been no land tax in Malabar till A.D. 1740, none in Canara till the 15th century, and an insignificant amount in Ramnad, etc. even in the 1790s, and no more than 5% to 10% even as late as the early 19th century in Travancore. That any land tax (for the purposes of the apex state) which had been levied in India had historically been very low is also apparent from the amount of rent (or share of the agricultural produce) which the cultivators of the manyam lands paid to those who held these manyams till at least A.D. 1800. According to Thomas Munro it was no more than one-fourth of the rate of revenue which the British had imposed, and at times, according to him, the cultivator only paid what he wished, to the holder of the manyam. The Bengal Collectors in the 1770s report a similar situation and mention that because of the heaviness of the British land revenue (again about four times the traditional rate) and because manyam lands were around one-half of the cultivated land, in many districts the cultivators in large numbers tended to give up lands which paid revenue to British authority and instead moved over to cultivate the manyam lands. This problem of cultivators, leaving land paying revenue to British authority and moving on to manyam land continued even in the 1820s in the Madras Presidency, and Thomas Munro as Governor then threatened that such holders of manyams who allowed this to happen would have their manyams confiscated.

It may, in the context of the above data, be worth knowing that the exchequer receipts of the Mughal rulers (AD 1556-1707) at no time exceeded 20% of what was termed as the total revenue of the empire (perhaps a wholly notional estimate) and in the reign of Jahangir, these receipts were no more than 5% of this supposed total revenue. It may also be worth noting that the land tax in China historically is said to have been about one-sixteenth of the agricultural produce. If this was the position in China it may be assumed that a similar arrangement had also obtained in other areas of East and South East Asia as well. The

maximum which the Manu Samhita ordained in India was one-sixth but what it seems to have advocated far more was one-twelfth of the gross agricultural produce. Incidentally, it may be mentioned that for various reasons the Manu Samhita was given great importance by the British from about 1780 onwards. Around 1815, when London had begun to discourage the translation and printing of various Indian texts, the published version of the Manu Samhita, with the commentary of Kulluka Bhatta, was the only book which was encouraged to be printed again.

It is however true that in 18th century Western Europe the land rents collected by the landlords ranged from about 50% to 80% of the agricultural produce. And it seems that the assumption that in India the situation was similar to that in 18th century West Europe is one of the bequests which the Indian historian and intellectual has received from his Western masters.

### *There was much less inequality in India than in England*

The village (or the locality) having contributed for the maintenance of the cultural and religious institutions, for the support of the accounting, political and militia systems (the Cannoonogee, the Deshmukh, the Palegar, etc.), probably also made a contribution of around 5% of the above allocations (which would have meant an immense amount as it must have been received from tens of thousands of localities, for the direct support of the apex authority, or to Mahatma Gandhi's outer-most circle. That such arrangements led to a militarily weaker system (at regional or wider levels) may possibly be true, but it is quite possible that the elements of such military or institutional weakness lay elsewhere and not primarily in the decentralised fiscal and social arrangements of Indian polity.

THERE seem to have been various systems of land-rights in different regions of India and even in the same region. But most of these systems seem to have assumed the supremacy of the village community over the land, its disposal, or the way it was worked. There were villages where the village community (perhaps the community of only those who cultivated land and those who held manyams and not necessarily of all the families in the village) seems to have been organised as a Samudayam and while its members had specific shares in the land of the village, the land which any of them cultivated was changed from time to time. Such a change in the district of Thanjavur, where around 30% of the villages were classed as Samudayam

in 1805, was stated to be based on the assumption that a certain alteration occurs in the fertility of all land from time to time, which creates inequality amongst the members of the community and hence occasional redistribution was considered necessary. Again in Thanjavur in 1805 the number of meerasdars (i.e. those having permanent rights in land) was put at 62,048, of which over 42,000 belonged to the sudras and castes below them. The number of cultivators of the group termed "pariah" in the Baramahal (present Salem District) was estimated at 32,474 out of a total population of around 6,00,000 just before 1800. The number of meerasdars actually listed by the Chingleput Collector in the District in 1799 was put at 8,300 but the Collector was of the view that the actual number of meerasdars there was about ten times more i.e. around 80,000. In 1817 the number of meerasdars in 1080 villages of Tirunelveli district was estimated to be 37,494. It is unnecessary to add that throughout India the rights of the actual cultivator were permanent and hereditary and these began to be scrapped by the British from 1790 onwards, firstly to enable them to realise a greatly enhanced land revenue and secondly because British ideas of ownership did not admit of any such cultivator rights in Britain itself.

With regard to 'agricultural production and the wages in agriculture, according to the journal 'Edinburgh Review' (1803-1804) the wages of the Indian agricultural labourer in the Allahabad-Varanasi region around 1800 were in real terms, substantially higher than the wages of his British counterpart, and the journal at that time wondered that if these wages were so high at this late period of great economic decline, how much higher such wages must have been when they were first established. According to a recent computation by an economist of the University of Madras, the wages of the agricultural labourer in Chingleput during the period 1780-1795, at 1975 prices, would have been about Rs. 7.50 per day in 1780-1795, while in 1975 itself such wages were Rs. 2.50 per day only. The productivity of wheat in the Allahabad-Varanasi region was more than double of that in England on similar land. Further, it may be mentioned that Britain, like the rest of Europe, produced only one crop a year, while in India many lands produced more than one crop.

An idea of the Indian economy and the consumption pattern is provided by some 1806 data from the district of Bellary. It is concerned with an estimation of the total consumption of the people of the district and further indicates the detailed consumption pattern of the three categories of families in which the population was divided by the British authorities. The three categories were *first* the more prosperous (total population 2,59,568); *second* the families of medium means (total population 3,72,887) and *third* the lowly (total population 2,18,684). According to this estimate the consumption of the first article in the schedule,

foodgrains, differed in quality and value between the families in the first category on the one hand and those in the second and third categories on the other. But the quantity of food-grains estimated to have been consumed in all three was the same, i.e. half a seer of grain per person per day. The schedule included 23 other items including pulses, ghee, oil, tamarind, coconuts both fresh and dry, drugs and medicines, cloth, firewood and vegetables and also betel-leaves (pans). As illustrative of the pattern of this consumption the number of pans consumed per year in a family of six is given as 9,600 pans for the first category, 4800 for those in the second category, and 3,600 pans for those in the third category. The consumption of ghee and oil was in the proportion of 3:1:1 approximately and of pulses, 8:4:3. Prices were so low that the total per capita per annum consumption was estimated at Rs. 17-3-4 for those belonging to the first category, Rs. 9-2-4 for those belonging to the second category and Rs. 7-7-0 for those in the third category.

### *Udaipur's monthly allowance of Rs. 1000 was raised to Rs. 30,000 !*

An indication of the extent of differential between the really high and the really low is provided by some 1799 data from the Karnataka area. After much enquiry about the incomes of the officers of state in Tipoo's domain, the British came to the conclusion that the highest paid officer of Tipoo, the governor of the fort of Chitradurg, had a total salary of Rs. 100/- per month during Tipoo's reign. The wage of an ordinary labourer in this area at this period was about Rs. 4 per month. The new differentials which were brought in to being around this period by the British are indicated by the salary of the British district Collector, about Rs. 1,500 per month, and a member of the British Governor's Council receiving Rs. 6,000-Rs. 8000, while the wages of the labourer were constantly reduced from 1760 to 1850.

What the Indian labourer, craftsman, etc. received as wages around 1850 in real terms was, in all probability, no more than one-third or at the most one-half, of what he would have received till around 1760.

The new disparities, however, were not altogether limited to British salaries. Where state policy so dictated, similar decisions were taken with regard to the emoluments of Indians at high levels. An example is provided by the raising of the personal allowance of the Maharana of Udaipur. Till Udaipur came under British protection in 1818 the

Maharana was supposed to have had an allowance of Rs. 1,000 per month. Within a few months of British protection, while various other expenses of the kingdom were either abolished or reduced, the allowance of the Maharana was raised to Rs. 1,000 per day!

The British took similar steps in other areas of India. Soon after the death of Tipppo, the allowances of his sons were increased six-fold of what Tipppo permitted them, as a matter of policy. On the other hand Purnaeah, the Dewan of the newly established Mysore rajya, was instructed by Governor-General Wellesley, through the British Resident, that the expenses on temples and Brahmins had to be drastically scaled down and Purnaeah and the new Maharaja were warned that any lapse or disobedience in this matter would not be tolerated. For, according to Wellesley, as according to many other contemporary British officers and observers, the personal expenses of the Hindu rajas hardly amounted to anything, but these rajas suffered from two 'vices'. They gave all the surplus to the temples and Brahmins. Naturally, such 'vices' had to be effectively countered and any persistence in them suitably punished.

BEFORE arriving at a conscious policy regarding education in India the British carried out certain surveys of the surviving indigenous educational system. A more detailed survey of it was carried out in 1822-25 in the Madras Presidency (i.e. the present Tamilnadu, the major part of the present Andhra Pradesh, and some districts of the present Karnataka, Kerala and Orissa). The survey indicated that 11,575 shools and 1,094 colleges were still in existence in the presidency and that the number of students in them was 1,57,195 and 5,431, respectively. Much more important and, in view of our current assumption, unexpected information which this survey provided is with regard to the broader caste composition of the students in the schools. According to it those belonging to the Sudras and castes below them formed 70%-80% of the total students in the Tamil speaking areas, 62% in the Oriya areas, 54% in the Malayalam speaking areas, and 35%-40% in the Telugu speaking areas.

The Governor of Madras estimated that over 25% of the boys of school-age were attending these schools and that a substantial proportion, especially of girls, were receiving education at home. According to data from the city of Madras, 26,446 boys were receiving their education at home while the number of those attending schools in Madras city was 5,523. The number of those engaged in college level studies at home was similarly remarkable in Malabar: 1,594 as compared to a mere 75 in a college run by the family of the then impoverished Samudrin (Zamorin) Raja.

Further, again in the district of Malabar, the number of Muslim girls attending school was surprisingly large: 1,122 girls as compared to 3,196 Muslim boys. Incidentally, the number of Muslim girls attending school in Malabar 62 years later in 1884-85 was just 705; and the population of Malabar had about doubled during this period. Besides Malabar the proportion of girls attending school was also high in the Jyppoor area of Vizagapatnam.

But a 1790 report on the University of Navadweep which, incidentally, William Jones said was his third University, gave the number of students at Navadweep to be 1,100 and the number of academics as 150. The report also stated that the number of students a century earlier was 4,000, with a corresponding increased number of academics.

WILLIAM ADAM, at the beginning of his survey of indigenous education in the five Bengal-Bihar districts made a computation from post-1800 writings of the institutions of higher learning in various districts of Bengal and Bihar. Here is the subject-wise break-up of institutions

### *Pre-British educational system was something to be proud of*

of Sanscritic learning and the number of students taking up particular subjects, in the five districts of Bengal and Bihar, surveyed by William Adam during 1835-38: out of the 2,524 students reported to be studying in these institutions, the largest number of 1,424 were studying Grammar, 378 Logic, 336 Law.

The 1835-38 survey in Bengal also gave a more detailed caste-wise break-up of school students. This data may be even more instructive, though providing a somewhat different picture than is provided by data relating to the Madras Presidency.

Similar details are available from Adam about the caste of school teachers in these surveyed districts. It will be noticed that the largest number of teachers are of Kayastha caste; Brahmins come next, and teachers also come from many other castes, including Chandals.

In the same way as the Madras Presidency survey, William Adam also gives details about the medium of instruction in the surveyed districts. Bengali is the major language, followed by Persian, Hindi and Sanskrit.



Oriya is the medium in the Midnapore area, and Arabic and English in just a few schools.

Adam divided the period spent in elementary schools into four stages. These, according to him, were, first, seldom exceeding ten days, the young scholar was taught "to form the letters of the alphabet on the ground with a small stick or slip of bamboo", or on a sand-board. The second stage, extending from two and a half to four years, was "distinguished by the use of the palm leaf as the material on which writing is performed", and the scholar was "taught to write and read", and commit "to memory the Cowrie Table, the Numeration Table as far as 100, the Katha Table (a land-measure Table), and the Ser Table", etc. The third stage extended "from two to three years which are employed in writing on the plantain-leaf". Addition, subtraction and other arithmetical rules were additionally taught during this period. In the fourth and the last stage, of up to two years, writing was done on paper, and the scholar was expected to be able to read the Ramayana, Mansa Mangal, etc., at home, as well as be qualified in accounts, and the writing of letters, petitions, etc.

SIMILAR information is available, in the British records, on 17th-18th century Indian science and technology. Much more is, of course, known today about them partly due to extensive work in this field in the 1920s and 1930s, and because of more recent research by many scholars. We obviously know a great deal about the manufacture of iron and steel in India since ancient times, and of its world-wide fame and superiority. As has been established recently, iron was being manufactured in India, in a place like Atiranjikheda in Uttar Pradesh, at least as early as the 12th century B.C., but what is little known is that even around 1800, this industry was widespread and flourishing and the technical details of this manufacture were highly sophisticated. A rough estimate of the number of furnaces which manufactured iron and steel may be put at about 10,000 around A.D. 1800, and each of them seemed to have had a potential capacity of producing about 20 tons of very superior steel annually if the furnace worked about 35-40 weeks in the year. These furnaces were very light and able to be moved by bullock-cart.

That 18th century India produced artificial ice by freezing water, and not in Himalayan winter but in moderate cold weather in places like Allahabad, or that India long had the practice of inoculation against small-pox, may come as a surprise to many.

According to William Adam, there were, around 1835, still 21 specialists in the Indian method of inoculation against the small-pox in the thana of Nattore in the district of Rajshahi (presently in Bangladesh).

Nattore also had 123 practitioners of Indian Medicine, 89 of them being Hindu and 34 Muslim. It also had a medical school at Vaidya Belghariya. Additionally there were 205 practitioners of folk-medicine, both men as well as women, whom Adam termed as uneducated practitioners, who administered medicines of both vegetable and mineral origin, and 297 women mid-wives. Adam also noted the presence of numerous class of 'medical pretenders' going under the name of conjurors or charmers, or as snake-conjurors. Their number was not less than 720, some villages having as many as ten of these to one village. According to Adam, the snake-conjurors took nothing for the performance of their rites, or for the cures they performed. But they possessed great influence over the people. If a quarrel took place in the village the intervention of the conjuror quelled it sooner than by any one else. The art was not hereditary. One of the conjurors was a boat-man, another a chowkidar and a third a weaver. It appeared inexplicable to Adam that they had no mutual jealousy, each readily allowing the virtue of other incantations than his own. There were also about a dozen *gunis* (gifted persons) in Nattore who were believed to possess the power of preventing the fall of hail which could destroy or injure the crops of the villages. It may reasonably be assumed that what obtained in Nattore some 150 years ago had in varying degrees obtained in practically every Khap, Nadu or similar territorial formation in most parts of India.

### *We manufactured steel and ice and inoculated for small-pox*

Surprise may also be felt at the details of Indian agricultural practices, the agricultural implements which the Indian peasant used, and the much higher productivity which he achieved. Incidentally, a set of the implements (including drill-ploughs, etc.) was sent to Britain by one of the pre-1800 British collectors from a Madras Presidency district with a view to help improve some of the agricultural implements then used in Britain.

Whether the late 18th century Indian elite was consciously aware of the then existing sciences and technologies of India or not, these were taken serious note of by European specialists during the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries, as and when they were looking for knowledge, information, design, technique, etc., in any particular fields. The examples of such European search, attention, study and borrowing are innumerable. The collection of Indian botanical texts by the Portuguese and the Dutch goes back to the early 16th century. The Hortus-alabariacus, in 12 volumes, with

illustrations of 750 species of Indian plants, was published in Europe during 1678-93, and it is said to contain certificates from four Kerala and Konkani Pandits about the authenticity of the information in the 12 volumes. The design and function of Indian agricultural implements, especially the drill plough, was important to late 18th century British agriculture, as was the Indian practice of inoculation against the small-pox and its rationale, or as the method and rationale of the artificial manufacture of ice in the Allahabad-Varanasi region had been a few decades earlier. Similar or perhaps even greater attention was devoted to an understanding of Indian building materials and techniques, to various chemicals used in Indian industry and other processes and their sources, in Indian steel and its technology, in the prevailing Indian surgery, and even in the method of teaching in schools in India, especially in those in the south. A note of the method of teaching, was first made in Karnataka itself by Peter Della Valle in the early 17th century. An account of his travels was widely published in several European languages by about A.D. 1650.

The existence of petroleum wells and the use to which the oil was put, was first observed in Burma around 1797. The number of wells, in the area visited, was said to be 520, and their annual oil production about one lakh tons valued at over ten lakhs of the then Indian rupees. The oil was used for lighting lamps, for the painting of timber and the bottoms of ships and boats, and also used medicinally as a lotion in cutaneous eruptions, as an embrocation in bruises, and in rheumatic affections.

A CURIOUS example of the transfer of technology from Pune to London in the 1790's is provided by the Indian practice of plastic surgery. It is perhaps best that I describe it in the words of a founder of modern British plastic Surgery, J.C. Carpué, FRS. This is what he wrote in 1816 :

"It was in this manner that the nasal operation had become forgotten or despised, in at least the west of Europe, when, at the close of the last century, it was once more heard of in England, from a quarter whence mankind will yet, perhaps, derive many lights, as well in science, as in learning and in arts. A periodical publication for the year 1794, contains the following communication from a correspondent in India, which is accompanied by a portrait of the person mentioned, explanatory of the operation; Cowasjee, a Mahratta, of the caste of husbandman, was bullock-driver with the English army, in the war of 1792, and was made a prisoner by Tippoo, who cut off his nose, and one of his hands. In this state, he joined the Bombay army near Seringapatnam, and is now a pensioner of the Honourable East India Company. For above twelve months, he was wholly without a nose; when he had a new one put on,

by a Mahratta Surgeon, a Kumar, near Poona. This operation is not uncommon in India, and has been practised from time immemorial. Two of the medical gentlemen, Mr. Thomas Cruse and Mr. James Findlay of Bombay, have seen it performed as follows: A thin plate of wax is fitted to the stump of the nose, so as to make a nose of good appearance; it is then flattened, and laid on the forehead. A line is drawn round the wax, which is then of no further use; and the operator then dissects off as much skin as it covered, leaving undivided a small slip between the eyes. This slip preserves the circulation, till an union has taken place between the new and old parts. The cicatrix of the stump of the nose is next pared off, and, immediately behind this raw part, an incision is made through the skin, which passes round both alae, and goes along the upper lip. The skin is now brought down from forehead; and, being twisted half round, its edge is inserted into this incision; so that a nose is formed with a double hold, above, and with its alae and septum below, fixed in the incision. A little Terra Japonica is softened with water, and, being spread on slips of cloth, five or six of these are placed over each other, to

### *Plastic surgery for man who had his nose cut off by Tippoo*

secure the joining. No other dressing than this cement is used for four days; it is then removed, and clothes, dipped in ghee, are applied. The connecting slip of skin is divided about the twenty-fifth day, when a little more dissecting is necessary to improve the appearance of the new nose. For five or six days after the operation, the patient is made to lie on his back; and, on the tenth day, bits of soft cloth are put into the nostrils, to keep them sufficiently open. This operation is always successful. The artificial nose is secure, and looks nearly as well as the natural one; nor is the scar on the forehead very observable, after a length of time."

On the basis of the above and other information, J.C. Carpué started his own experiments. But before starting them he made more enquiries. About these enquiries he wrote :

"On undertaking the first of the two cases to be hereafter narrated, I was induced to make such personal inquiries as were within my reach in this country, concerning the Indian method. I did myself the honour to write to Sir Charles Mallet, who had resided many years in India, and who obligingly confirmed to me the report, that this had been a common operation in India, from time immemorial; adding, that it had always

been performed by the caste of potters or brick-makers, and that though not invariably, it was usually successful.

"Mr. James Stuart Hall, a gentleman who was many years in India, assured me, that he had seen the operation performed, and that it was of tedious length. From Dr Barry, of the India Service, I learned, that he had also seen the operation; that it occupied an hour and a half, and was performed with an old razor, the edge of which, being continually blunted in dissection, was every moment re-set. Tow was introduced to support the nose, but no attempt to form nostrils, by adding a septum, was made.

"I am obligingly informed by Major Heitland, of the India Service, that in India, several years ago, in the time of Hyder Ali, Mr. Lucas, an English surgeon, was, in several instances, successful in the operation, which he copied from the Hindoo practitioners."

Summing up this information J.C. Carpué observed :

"It will be observed, that the whole of the foregoing accounts are agreed upon these points, that the performance of the operation is confined to a particular caste of Hindoos, and that this caste is said to be the Kooma (Kumhars) or potters or brick-makers. The combination appears, at first sight, to be singular; but an explanation is not difficult, and may not be unacceptable. Most of the Hindoo castes, though fixed within positive limits, as to professions, trades or other occupations, are yet allowed a certain range, a certain variety of pursuits among which the individual is free to make his choice. The castes are known to be divided into sub-castes; and there are degraded castes, making branches of the pure castes, with respect to whom a still greater laxity is allowed; 'The profession of astrology and the task of making almanacs', says a late writer on India, 'belong to degraded Brahmins; and the occupation of teaching military exercises and *physic*, as well as the trade of *potters*, weavers, *brasiers*, fishermen, and workers in shells, belong also to the descendants (meaning the out-castes) of Brahmins.' Thus astrology, medicine, and *pottery* are among the several pursuits allowed to one and the same caste.

"That *astrology* and *medicine* should be thrown into the same lot, excites no surprise, ...It is hence that our ancient almanacs contained instructions concerning the health of the body; and, at this day...Francis Moore, though he calls himself 'physician', is plainly an astrologer. The adjuncts of *pottery*, *weaving*, etc., in the same caste with the former, appear to evince, that the Indian institutions are less restrictive on the particular genius for disposition of individuals, than may have been commonly supposed."

J.C. Carpué then goes into a discussion of the origin of plastic surgery, its knowledge in ancient times in Asia as also in ancient Greece, the difference between the later Italian method and adds :

"We have now seen that the nasal operation, and all the physiological facts upon which it depends, were known in Europe at least as early as the Christian era; that the fact of adhesion was known to Hippocrates, and that where our history fails us, is simply the point beyond which we have no records. We have now, also, before us, the greater part, if not the whole of the information which was possessed by Taliacotius; and, beside satisfying ourselves that this eminent person was not (what he never pretended to be) the inventor of the art, we may venture to judge in what degree he advanced it.

"That the art has subsisted from the most ancient period in India, and other southern parts of Asia, and was at no time carried thither from Europe, is probable from further evidence than the simplicity of the Indian method, as compared with the Italian; the ordinary recourse which is had to it in India; its practice by a particular caste, and its junction with religious observance : it is probable, likewise from the frequent occasions for it, from the favourableness of the climate, from the temperance of the people, and from the plainness of the road by which Nature

### *How Indian science got internalised in the West*

leads to the invention. The adhesion of divided parts, however little understood, till lately, in France or England, was one of the first spectacles presented to mankind. If we fancy that we are entitled to refuse to the Orientals the reputation of science, this makes no alteration in the case; for no depth of science but involuntary observation, was all that was wanted here."

As we now well know, such an operation is described in detail in *Susruta*. Though perhaps less dramatically put, the narratives about the Indian method of inoculation, on the manufacture of ice, on Indian agricultural implements, regarding the technical details and economics of the manufacture of Indian steel, on Indian chemicals and dyes more or less follow a similar strain. The narratives seem to have been responses to urgent and contemporary British or European need, and it may be assumed that India was one amongst several places where such enquiries were conducted. The manner in which the narratives were analysed, discussed, published for specialists and scholars seems to suggest that what was relevant in them

to contemporary British or European requirement was incorporated in the corresponding practice of the borrower, in time internalised and thereafter, perhaps within a period of fifty years, the origin of the incorporated, at least in practice, quite forgotten.

The above does not necessarily imply that post-1800 British and European technologies owe a great deal to the information and knowledge which it received from India. From about the 13th century there was much flow of ideas, knowledge, and technologies to Europe, particularly from Asia. All this took time to be absorbed and internalised and by stages Europe seems to have been able to integrate or graft what it felt important, on to its own technological frame, and its stock of knowledge. By about 1820 or 1830, Europe had far surpassed in matters which interested it, all those who had contributed to its scientific and technological growth and had therefore no need to remember details of the sources from which the borrowings had been made.

However, the erosion and decline of Indian industry and technology in the late 18th and the first half of the 19th century had, as is well recognised today, little to do with factors relating to Indian technological practices and their economic efficiency. In these respects many of them could have withstood foreign competition as Indian cotton textiles did for many decades till about 1850. The decline and destruction was politically and fiscally induced by deliberate British policy. The way this decline happened in the Indian textile industry is well mapped out amongst others by Dr. Jitendra Gopal Borpujari in his recent study.

THE REALITY indicated by the above data does not seem to have depended merely on some dead custom or mechanical routine. A moral sense about things seems to have been deeply entrenched and whenever it seems to have been violated there was much recourse to opposition, to protest, to dharna, to peasant movements, to even what in modern usage may be called civil disobedience. The prolonged protest against the imposition by British authority of a tax on houses in 1810-11 was centred in the city of Varanasi. According to official reports the whole city had completely stopped work for days together creating a situation that not even the dead could be cremated and had therefore to be cast in the Ganga without the performance of customary rites. According to the Varanasi collector, over 20,000 persons had been continually sitting in dharna, while another estimate placed the number of people at more than 2,00,000. The data on the frequency of peasant movements in Canara, Malabar and parts of Maharashtra is indeed vast.

One of the early documented protests against the salt-tax took place at Surat in the 1840s. A more curious case of protest relates to two men of

Nagore and Nagapatnam area in Tamilnadu just before 1800. They felt wronged regarding their claim to some land and in protest climbed the spire of a temple and threatened to kill themselves by jumping from it unless their grievance was redressed. As a result the men were promised that the wrong would be righted and they agreed to climb down. The newly established British collectors, however, did not take kindly to such solutions.

While protest in the form of dharna etc., was resorted to when the populace felt that they had been wronged by some particular action of the political authority, and when such a protest occurred, it was taken, by the relevant authority, to be a legitimate expression of the political process and as an occasion for reviewing the disputed action, yet recourse to such protest was perhaps not often necessary. It seems that the polity allowed for continued dignified dialogue between the populace and the representatives of the political authority, the king and the pategars etc., and dignities due to the populace in such dialogue were sanctioned by long-standing custom, which continued to operate to some extent even during the early

### *From Himalaya to Rameshwaram there were Chatrams & Dharamshalas*

phase of British occupation. In south India, the offering of presents, usually in the way of a piece of cloth, a shawl etc., by the British governmental authority to the heads of villages or even ordinary peasants, who happened to visit such authority, was all too frequent till about 1800. Where the British had yet to learn this gesture, and the gesture was still important to the British as their consolidation was not yet complete, the villagers themselves suggested the offering of such presents, and even volunteered to defray the expenses of these gifts themselves, as happened in Baramahals in 1792. According to another report from Ramnad in 1796, even those who had to present themselves before the British courts to sign bonds of good conduct, expected to be offered, and did receive, *betle* at the *Cutcherry*.

BEFORE I end this lecture, let me give a description of the life of the people at the very top of the Indian polity. Despite the impressions of luxury and fabulous life created by chronicles of the Mughal court, or the accounts of celebrated European travellers and especially descriptions like the one given earlier on the life-style of the young noblemen of Delhi, the impression which ordinarily comes through from the British records is of a certain simplicity and frugality in India at the top levels. Even in the

Muslim-ruled Hyderabad, in 1780, a perceptive British officer found it difficult to distinguish the great nobles from their servants. According to him the only thing which seemed to separate the two was the fact that the clothes of the servants looked less clean. It was not that he was fascinated by such a state of affairs. He was, perhaps, actually disgusted with such indiscriminate mixing of the two.

As I mentioned earlier, according to one of the more powerful early British Governors-General, and what he said is echoed by many others before 1800 and even till 10-20 years later, the Hindu rulers in fact spent very little on themselves. But according to him they suffered from two great vices. These were that they gave away most of what they had, to the brahmins and the temples.

It is possible that the terms Brahmin and temple were used in this period in a much wider sense and included all who were given to scholarship of one kind or another, and to institutions which catered not only to religious needs but which also served purposes of scholarship, culture, entertainment and comfort. For instance, in the detailed description of the practice of inoculation against small-pox in India, it is said that the Brahmins performed such inoculation. Obviously, anyone who exercised some intellectual, medical or other professional skill seems to have been taken to be a Brahmin, even by fairly knowledgeable Europeans, in this period.

It also appears to have been the practice in places as far apart as Kedarnath in the Himalaya on the one hand and Thanjavur region of Tamilnadu extending to Rameswaram on the other, to provide chatrams (Dharamshalas) for the stay and comfort of the pilgrims. Public funds, in the shape of assignments of sources of revenue, including revenue from sea-ports and similar other sources, were given over to such institutions to cover the expenses of these chatrams, etc. In the case of the chatrams at Kedarnath, it was further stipulated, that if an unspent balance got accumulated over a number of years, such a balance was to be wholly spent on the Kumbh, which happened every twelve years, and a fresh start was made again, beginning with an empty treasury. This may remind many friends here of a similar practice, which seems to have prevailed in India in the time of Harshavardhans.

*(To be concluded)*

## The Deeper Causes Behind Gandhi-Bose Conflict :

### A Comment on Nirad Chaudhuri's 'Thy Hand, Great Anarch !'

NIRAD CHAUDHURI's is one of the better minds produced by the English impact on India. More than thirty-five years ago, his "Autobiography of an Unknown Indian" made the waves. The second part of his autobiography—"Thy Hand, Great Anarch !" (Chatto & Windus, London) for the period 1921-1952—is now out. It too has led to much lively controversy. And I am sure Nirad Babu enjoys every bit of it.

We are all different from one another. But Nirad Babu is very different from everybody else. He believes in 'empires'; he believed in the British empire and he would welcome a Hindu empire. He is so enamoured of Churchill—who wanted Gandhiji, that "naked fakir", trampled "under elephant feet"—that, he says, he hangs his portrait in his house. His biggest regret is that Indians and Englishmen did not work together to produce a utopia, something better than either India or Britain, on Indian soil. But this his very independence of thought gives you new insights into the Indian political scene. And these are well worth all the 978 pages—and Rs. 300.

Nirad Babu is no great admirer of Gandhi—or, for that matter, of any other Indian leader. He found Nehru and Bose, ignorant of history; he also found that both, Sarat Bose and Subhas Bose did not know the Bengal land laws; and he had no doubt that both Gandhi and Tagore were actors. But even he was moved by the sheer authenticity of Bapu. The Dandi March brought tears to his eyes. And he had a close view of Gandhi and his entourage when they stayed with Sarat Bose in Calcutta in 1937. (Nirad Babu was Private Secretary to Sarat Bose.) "I was quite prepared to see a man of insignificant frame and plain looks. (But) what struck me was the expression on his face, which diverted all attention away from his features or figure. It was one of extraordinary innocence and benignity, with two soft beams streaming out of his eyes."

The author, however, does not think too well of the men and women around Gandhi. "During the stay at Sarat Babu's house three of his senior officers were in attendance. They were his indispensable personal assistants. I had heard about them of course. Now I saw them for the first time, and what I saw gave me a more or less adequate notion of what the Gandhian milieu was like. These men made up more than fully for what Gandhi lacked in the way of arrogance in looks and behaviour. I had never before seen such impassive hardness of countenance, nor such cold hauteur on the faces of men. They did not speak spontaneously to

anyone who did not belong to the order of worldly power and position. If they were compelled to listen to ordinary persons, they did not look them in the face, but kept their eyes either turned away or lowered, and then answered in grave and slow speech. I never saw them smile or even look relaxed."

As for Gandhiji's women followers, "they were all feline, although some were catty and others pussyish". One of them summoned a Birla car every morning for the 100 yards from Sarat Babu's house to the gate of an adjoining park.

Nirad Babu was not at all impressed by the Congress Working Committee. "They were twelve in number, whether in imitation of the Apostles or not—I am unable to say. But they were the leading members of the Congress Party. Congressmen had got into the habit of describing themselves in very grandiloquent political terminology. For instance, even Mahatma Gandhi, in writing to a President of the Congress, would call the Working Committee his 'Cabinet'. The public and the Press called it the 'Congress High Command', adopting a military and not civil terminology. This revealed the subconscious militarism of the Hindu mind, as also its admiration for the Germans and their military genius. The name Congress High Command was only a translation of the German Oberste Heeresleitung, although that might not have been consciously done."

"The first impression of the Congress leaders that I received from my visual experience was one of physical unattractiveness. With the exception of one or two, none of them could be described as handsome or even physically imposing. In this the leaders of the Gandhian era were the opposite of those of the pre-Gandhian period.

"Yet this unattractiveness was the least unattractive quality of the outward appearance of the Congress leaders. They repelled, instead of merely failing to attract. What struck a beholder most forcibly in them was an overbearing expression of arrogance, which coated their faces and seemed to lie like make-up on cheeks and foreheads.

"Of all the Congress members, only Babu Rajendra Prasad, who was a member of the Congress Working Committee and, after independence became the first President of the Republic of India, had impeccable manners and unaffected courtesy towards all. He would raise two folded hands to his forehead even before the other party who had caught his eyes had time for it. But Rajendra Babu had been in Calcutta with the gilded youth of that city, and, besides had innate affability."

In the Gandhi-Bose conflict, the learned author finds Bose more in the wrong. He believed all kind of stories; he accused the "Rightists" in

the Congress of "conspiring" with the British to accept the Federal Plan; at the Tripuri Congress, Bose supporters shouted down Nehru. He could not run the Congress without the support of Gandhi; and Gandhians were not prepared to cooperate with him on his terms.

At one stage, Subhas realised this and decided to continue Congress President with Gandhiji's blessings. He even asked his brother Sarat to go and see Babu in Delhi in this connection. "But Sarat Bose did not go. What prevented him was astrology, which, as everybody knows, has become today the obligato of the political cacophony in India. Sarat Babu did not feel sure about the intentions and attitude of Gandhi and therefore could not judge what chance of success he had. So, he consulted the priest, guru and augur of his family, who was also a professor at Calcutta University. As a result to that, he telegraphed to Subhas Bose on 16 March: 'Ashoknath (Sastri) strongly advises meeting Gandhiji after fifth April Meeting earlier fruitless. Meantime do not get perturbed or take precipitate action but co-operate with doctors for complete recovery.'" That is how the chances of a settlement by means of frank discussion with Gandhiji were thrown away.

## *The haughty men and women around Mahatma Gandhi*

Subhas' health was also a factor in his political isolation. "Subhas Bose had behind him a long record of illness. Even from his early twenties he had been delicate. More than once he fell ill in jail, and was at last released by the British administration on the understanding that he would leave India and remain in Europe for treatment. It was only in 1937 that he came back. The reason behind his illnesses was as much psychological as physiological. Although he had contracted tuberculosis, he did not look delicate or hectic.

"His inherent constitutional fragility always broke to the surface when he had to remain inactive, or was in any way thwarted and frustrated. With any compulsory restraint on his freedom of action, he showed consumptive symptoms."

Nirad adds: "He could not have helped the feeling that he was up against a wall. I believe that kept him in fits of rage like a caged beast of prey, and made him emotionally tense and unstable beneath a cold mask. However, an intimate friend of his, who was also at college with

me, seemed to attribute that to sexual repression. One day he said to me: "The madcap is becoming more and more mad every day. Is there no frenzied, beautiful hussy in Calcutta who could shut herself up with him in a room and rape him, so that he would feel in honour bound to marry her? Then the madcap would become normal."

However there were bigger political reasons behind the Gandhi-Bose rift. The British had been singularly unfair to Bengal by giving heavy representation to the British community and scheduled castes at the cost of "caste" Hindus. Even so Congress had a chance to share power in the provinces in 1937. But it did not avail of it. "Just before the Muslim ministry was set up in Bengal, there had come to the Congress and Hindus of Bengal an opportunity for exercising political power by sharing it with the Muslims. This possibility arose out of the existence of two Muslim political parties and not one in the province. The more assertive Muslim party was the Muslim League, but it was, an all-India Party, and besides, in Bengal it was the party of upper-class Muslims. Therefore, those Muslim leaders who stood for the poor Muslim masses had formed another party and gone to the electorate as members of this party. Its leader was Fazl-ul-Haq, and the party was called the Krishak-Praja, or the party of peasants and tenants. Its leader declared that he would form what he described as Dal-Bhat or 'Rice-and-Lentil-Soup' ministry, that is to say, a ministry which would devote itself to the welfare of the masses and provide both the basic food and essential necessities of life for them. It had gained a majority of the seats reserved for the Muslims, but that was not sufficient for forming a ministry by itself. On account of the electoral system, a ministry in Bengal could be formed only by a coalition. Many members of the party were nationalistic, and therefore inclined towards the Congress. So, at first, Fazl-ul-Haq showed a readiness to combine with the Bengal Congress and create a broad-based ministry of all Bengalis. This overture was not accepted owing to the decision of the all-India Congress not to accept office even in the provinces where it had obtained absolute majorities. It was also unwilling to let the Congress Parties in such provinces, where they had no majority, co-operate with any other party. It would not make an exception for the Congress Party in Bengal, even though an opportunity to enjoy power in so important a province was not likely to come again. Thus it happened that Fazl-ul-Haq turned to the other Muslim party and formed a Coalition Ministry, as it was called, with it."

A year later, Sarat Bose almost succeeded in toppling the Huq ministry, to give the Congress and Hindus a break. But Gandhiji would not support the move. The Maulana was against disturbing a Muslim ministry in a Muslim majority province. And, according to the learned author, G.D. Birla, spokesman of Marwari business interests, also did not want a Congress-Muslim coalition ministry in Bengal.

"So intelligent a man as G.D. Birla could not have been unaware of the bearing government in Bengal had on the interests of the community, the Marwaris, in the province. These were very large. So long as British rule lasted, the Marwaris could do nothing to prevent the British trading and industrial interests being supreme and theirs being in second place. But their, too, was a close second, and some British companies took Marwaris as partners. But the more ambitious Marwaris wanted to supplant the British, not co-operate with them. Therefore they generally supported the Gandhian movement. Gandhi was given to understand by G.D. Birla that as regards money, they could always depend on the house of Birla. But he would also want to see that the British withdrawal from India did not harm Marwari interests in India and, in particular, in Bengal. As regards India, he could depend on Gandhi and the Congress to support all Marwari interests. But the Bengali intelligentsia, which resented the overshadowing Marwari presence in Calcutta, might try to get rid of it. Birla also knew that the middle class Bengalis were inefficient in business and would not by themselves be able to harm Marwari vested interests. But the Bengali Hindus could become dangerous if they combined with the Muslims. Whether they did any

### *Why G.D. Birla did NOT want a Congress-Muslim coalition*

good to themselves or not, the Hindus and Muslims between them could injure the Marwaris. So Birla's prime concern would be to prevent a combination of Hindus and Muslims of Bengal. I have no doubt that in appearing to support the Muslim Ministry in Bengal, he had in mind the prevention of Hindu-Muslim co-operation. It was the British game which was adopted by the Marwaris." That is how the Sarat Plan for a coalition with Huq fell through.

Perhaps somebody from the Birla side could throw some light on this matter.

Nirad Babu wholly disapproved of this dubious Congress attitude to Bengal. He looks upon Gandhi as the "Black Eminence", whose "affectionation of unctuous benevolence towards Subhas Bose makes his role appear almost sinister."

"No two men could be more unlike in social affiliation, upbringing, character, temperament, opinions, and behaviour. As Gandhi's are well known I shall not particularize them, but only describe what Subhas Bose's traits were. In the first place, he was a Bengali gentleman and had

that gentleman's class-consciousness, and with that a low opinion of the trading class to which Gandhi belonged; over and above, he had the Bengali gentleman's contempt for the proletariat which Gandhi had become by choice. New, Bose not only had the Westernized Indian's impatience with an attitude of mind which was anti-intellectual, and naive even in its ethics; he also had the modern highly educated Bengali's intellectual arrogance, which in every case became hypertrophied by an Oxford or Cambridge education. Thirdly, Bose was not only a nationalist of the Bengali stamp, but a Bengali revolutionary as well. This revolutionary type was nurtured on Italian, Russian and Irish doctrines and methods of revolution, and was prone to think in terms of militaristic as well as terroristic violence. Lastly, there was a definite Hindu streak in Bose's dislike for Gandhi, although he was in no sense a bigot or even orthodox Hindu. But he had grown up in the first two decades of the twentieth century in Bengal, where owing to the influence of Bankim Chandra Chatterji and Swami Vivekananda, there was a fusion of religion and nationalism, so that the nationalist feeling had a pronounced Hindu complexion and Hinduism a pronounced political character. Thus the neo-Hinduism of that era, being a part of Bengali nationalism, influenced Bose.

"It not only made even highly educated Bengalis subject to told Hindu superstitions, but also gave them a sectarian prejudice derived from a traditional dichotomy in Bengali religious and social life. In their sectarian affiliation, Bengali Hindus were divided between two cults, namely, that of Vishnu in the form of Krishna, which professed non-violence; and that of the Mother Goddess Durga, which extolled power and was militaristic. The adherents of Krishna were called Vaishnavas and the worshippers of the Mother Goddess, Saktas, which by itself means votaries of power. The worshippers of the Mother Goddess therefore always looked down upon the adherents of the non-violent sect as cowards. As this sectarian division very largely corresponded to the class division between the gentry and the tradesmen, the Vaishnavites got a double amount of contempt from the gentry, who were mostly Sakta—the tradesmen being Vaishnavas.

"As Gandhi was both a tradesman by caste and class, and a Vaishnava in addition, he would naturally be identified as regards his personality, with a Bengali Vaishnava tradesman. Subhas Bose could not perhaps have taken this view of Gandhi consciously, but the prejudice was so old and deepseated that it was bound to be present subconsciously. I have heard typical Bengali nationalists call Gandhi *napumsaka*, a word which has no exact English equivalent, but means, literally, a man who is born without virility, and figuratively, a feeble and ineffectual person, a dud in fact. Even more outrageously abusive language was used by the Bengalis about him."

There were thus deeper reasons for Bengal and Gandhi never getting along well together. At the Bengal provincial conference held at Sirajganj, a resolution was adopted on 1 June 1924, which, as a matter of form, disassociated the Congress from all violence and reasserted the principle of non-violence as enjoined by Mahatma Gandhi, but which also put on record that the Conference 'appreciates Gopinath Saha's ideal of self-sacrifice, misguided though it was in respect of the country's interests, and expresses its respect for his great self-sacrifice.' The man who led the discussion to adopt this resolution was C.R. Das, the foremost Bengali nationalist leader who had become an adherent of the Gandhian doctrine of non-violence in 1920.

There was at once a loud outcry among the British community that the Congress was supporter of political assassination. Mahatma Gandhi was scandalized, and himself spoke for a new resolution before the All India Congress Committee, when it met on 29 June 1924. It regretted the death of Mr. Day, offered condolences to his family, and unequivocally condemned political murders. But C. R. Das moved an amendment, by

### *The Gandhi-Bose dispute was rooted in Shakta-Vaishnav differences*

which the expression of sympathy for Gopinath Saha as embodied in the Bengal resolution, was to form part of the Congress resolution. In the voting Das's amendment was lost. But the voting was significant. Seventy members of the All India Congress Committee voted for him and seventy-eight against. Unconditional non-violence won only by eight votes.

No less significant were certain words used by C. R. Das. He said that if the Congress had any sympathy for the sentiment of Bengal, they should all vote unanimously for his amendment. In plain words, he committed Bengal to political violence in its lowest form, political murder. In this Das and the Bengalis had the support of the delegation from Maharashtra, where political murder had begun. Dr. Paranjyape said sarcastically that Mahatma Gandhi was indeed one of the many saints of India, but he was trying to ram his saintliness down the throats of his less saintly countrymen:

Mahatma Gandhi took his victory by only eight votes as a defeat and wrote about his feeling. He said that those who spoke in favour of Das's amendment had room for political murder in their philosophy and had argued that the philosophy which accepted violence was the



common philosophy of all civilized nations. He declared that it was a false philosophy and had failed everywhere. He talked even of leaving the Congress.

"From this date began the alienation of Bengal from the Gandhian nationalism, which finally inflicted irreparable harm on Bengal, and from which the Bengali people are still suffering. The anti-Bengali feeling in Mahatma Gandhi increased with the years, and made him indifferent even to the real injustice inflicted on Bengal from 1932 onwards. Yet the irony of the situation was that the Bengalis could neither accept Gandhi nor resist him. They fell between two stools."

And that partly explains how and why (West) Bengal drifted away from the Congress—and went leftist.

(K.R.M.)

## Snippets from Nirad Babu

**IN RECOMMENDING** an English translation of the Gita to the East India Company in London, Warren Hastings wrote: "These will survive when the British domination in India shall have long ceased to exist and when the sources it once yielded of wealth and power are lost to remembrance." (P. 56)

**THE GREAT LINGARAJ TEMPLE** of Bhubaneshwar was surrounded by high walls and nobody but a Hindu could pass through its gates. I was shown a high scaffolding with a platform just outside the northern wall, which, I was told, had been built to enable Lord Curzon to see the courtyard of the temple. Of course, Hinduism could say 'No' even to the British Viceroy of India.

(P. 160)

**THE HIGHEST STRUCTURE** in this frontage of Banaras architecture was Aurangzeb's mosque with its two slender and very tall minars. The Great Mogul had built it on a temple of Shiva, so that the Faithful might trample on the heathen god's head. We Hindus, however, never called the mosque, a mosque, but "the Standard of Veni-Madhava". (P. 180)

# "Building Bridges with the People of Pakistan"

A Memorable Symposium in DRI  
on Independence Day, 1988

THE DEENDAYAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE observed Independence Day this year by organising a symposium on "Building Bridges with the People of Pakistan". The participants were Shri Kuldip Nayar, well-known columnist, Dr. J.D. Sethi, leading economist, Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, Director, The Islamic Centre, New Delhi and Shri Shafaqat Kakakhel, Charge d' Affaires and Acting Ambassador of Pakistan in India.

Shri Nana Deshmukh, Chairman, DRI, presided.

Shri Malkani, Vice-Chairman, DRI, introduced the distinguished guests.

Here is an English rendering of the proceedings conducted in Hindi-Hindustani.

—Ed.

K.R. MALKANI: Mananiya Nanaji, Kuldipji, Sethiji, Kakakhel ji, Maulana Sahib, brothers and sisters, a hearty welcome to you all on this auspicious Independence Day. This day, every year, we meet and discuss Indian Independence and Partition—how it happened, why it happened; how the people of India and Pakistan can be brought together. During the last 30-40-50 years the clashes that occurred, the riots that took place and the bitterness that ensued—can we end it? Can we bridge the gulf? We have to think over it, discuss it—and this would be our topic of the day.

What happened in India and Pakistan is not something minor. After 1921, the turn of events was such that it led inevitably to partition. The painful fact is that the Hindu looks upon the Muslim as enemy, and the Muslim looks upon the Hindu as enemy. And they both look upon the British, who divided the two to this extent, as good!

There is nothing final about anything—even about partition or hostility. We could still retain cordial relations, maintain brotherly relations. That is what we should consider and discuss. Just as winds blow, men move, situations change. There are quarrels of politicians, clashes of governments. Why can't we live in peace and amity, have an honest dialogue. There are people who say, you talk of building bridges with Pakistani people, but there is no government of the people there; they have

a military government. But even military governments change. If there is a military government today, it may not be there tomorrow or the day-after. In Iran, some years ago, the Shah ruled; but, where is the Shah today? Our object should be that the people of Pakistan should feel that the people of India are friends, brothers. We may live separately, but there is no reason to quarrel or fight. It is essential that public opinion is educated and it asserts itself. If there is informed public opinion, governments shall have to bow to it before long. Today's papers carried the news that Shri Morarji Desai has been honoured with "Nishan-e-Pakistan". One may view it in a variety of ways. But if Pakistan says that they hold Morarji in respect, that is good. It builds bridges. Now if Morarji Bhai says something, it will carry some weight in Pakistan.

I need not say more. It is a joy that all of you have come here. Kuldip ji, leading columnist, needs no introduction. Dr. Sethi is well-known thinker, writer, former member of Planning Commission. Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, President of the Islamic Centre is a distinguished scholar and writer. And Mr. Kakakhel is Charge d'Affaires and Acting Ambassador of Pakistan. We are grateful to all of them for accepting our invitation.

I would now request Kuldip to initiate the discussion. Being a frequent visitor to Pakistan, I'm sure he knows more about the Pakistani mind than most of us. With these words, I would request Kuldipji to express his views on the subject.

**SHRI KULDIP NAYAR:** Brothers and sisters, I was born in Sialkot, Pakistan Punjab. I got my school and college education there. I have been a frequent visitor to Pakistan since its inception. I do not claim to know it thoroughly, but I have been writing voluminously about it. My articles are widely published and read there. I know the thinking of people to some extent, so whatever I say is from first-hand experience.

Many of us wonder why Pakistan was formed. If we try to undo it, or speak anything against it, it shall be of no avail. My personal impression is that if we had accepted Cripps Proposals in 1941, there would have been no partition; we would have remained united. Today when there are riots, whether in Moradabad or Gujarat or anywhere else, it is not that only Muslims are killed, Hindus also are killed. But when these riots are reported in Pakistan, people there are shaken.

Once I asked Mr. Bhutto that often the question is raised that India does not really accept Pakistan. He replied that such people are few. Here nobody, whether he is Hindu, Sikh or Muslim, is unequal or insecure



*Shri Kuldip Nayar initiating the discussion.*

because of his religion. We have provided for this in the Constitution, even though we have not been wholly successful in implementing it. Educated people in Pakistan know that the number of Muslims in India is larger than even that in Pakistan. But every citizen, Hindu, Muslim or Sikh, has the same one vote. Here a Muslim can hold the highest post or position. We should search our hearts whether we can fully realise this equality in letter and in spirit. Do we really believe in a system that is secular in the full sense of the word? I remember an incident of 15 or 20 years ago. There were many people in Pakistan who said that if their life and property were secure, they themselves would like to break down the walls. I think it is true about Pakistan that it is a theocratic state. It is also true that Pakistan has never seen a Democracy in action as we see it here. But it would be wrong to say that we are, for that reason, superior people. In our country there are opportunities. The leadership we had—Mahatma Gandhi, Nehruji, Maulana Azad, Patel—they were all products of the revolution, who believed in Democracy. We have an open society.

A few days back there was a family from Pakistan, an educated family. There was a girl, about 18 or 19 years old. I asked her to tell me frankly what was the dominant impression of her first visit to India. She said, "Uncle, I never knew that you Indians are so poor. I have seen so much poverty here. We thought that there has been so much progress." It is a fact, whether we like it or not. I have never been to the countryside of Pakistan; no journalist goes to a village. But the pressure of population there is much less, and the land is abundant. I also think that Islam believes more in equality. I do not mean to say that there are no rich and poor in Pakistan. I am speaking in a general way. It is also true that they have no caste system. By and large, financially, they are better off than us.

But our asset, a big asset, is the open society. A Pakistani, when he returns from here, admits that he had open conversations here; he was not watched by anybody. This is our greatest asset. But, unfortunately, when we compare ourselves with Pakistan, we forget that this is a plus point in contrast to the relative prosperity of Pakistan. Whenever anybody comes from Pakistan, we treat him in the same manner as an Indian is treated there. We give him visa for a city or two, that's all. We expect them to report to the Police every day. If you find a friend in Pakistan, the Police ask what you were doing there. If somebody gets a letter from the other side, hell is let loose. This happens on both sides. In this respect we should remember that we are a democratic country; we do not like these restrictions. Why do we impose them on visiting Pakistanis? We have many drawbacks—I know we have not been able to create a really secular state here, we have not been able to create a really democratic state. But in our country, we have at least one thing—we have free expression. We are free to speak. We can change the government—and we have done it. We have this asset of a free society. So, when a Pakistani comes here, we should allow him to go wherever he wants in India. A white man, whoseever he is, maybe a C.I.A. man or a K.G.B. agent, he has a visa for the whole of India. We should unilaterally do the same thing for Pakistanis—and hope that Pakistan follows suit.

I am very happy to bring to your notice that when the Janata government was formed, Shri Atal Behari Vajpayee was Foreign Minister. He is a great friend of mine and he agreed to this proposal of mine. He gave a statement at Jaipur to that effect, but hinted that we might be strict on our borders. I remember how others of the Janata Party reacted. I remember I went to see Shri Morarji Bhai and emphasized this point. Morarji Bhai began talking about increased activity of spies from across the border and a rush of intelligence agents. I told Morarji Bhai that spies never come openly across the border, through regular channels.

They have many other routes open to them. They never enter via the check-posts. But then the Janata Government went out.

I admit there are many short-comings in our system. But, we do have a free society. And, with our free society and all our open avenues, we have been trying to create a secular democratic society. This is a great thing. I do not claim that we have fully succeeded. But we have tried and the people of Pakistan like it. That is why when you go to Pakistan they tell you that the golden period of Indo-Pakistan relationship was during the Janata rule. The Janata government had not given away anything. Only they treated them as equals, as friends. That is all. When an independent state exists, whether it is small or big, it should be treated with equality.

There is a third thing that we have as an asset, which I saw and which has been appreciated by the people of Pakistan and we should strengthen it. There was a judge in the government under Mr. Bhutto. He resigned when there was the question of oath to Zia.

## *Pakistan has more money; India has more Freedom*

He met me here some time back. Whenever I go to Pakistan, I see him. The husband and wife had come from Amritsar and they saw me here before they returned to Lahore. He told me that they had come to India for the first time after partition. He had been a resident of Ludhiana and had escaped with great difficulty, like many other people. He told me they had just visited Mathura; they saw the wall dividing temple and mosque. In the temple, they were offered *Prasad*. When the priests came to know that they were from Pakistan, they were felicitated and treated as special guests. He admitted that in a similar situation in Pakistan, the temple would have been razed to the ground. "But here there was so much tolerance and accommodation, that we Pakistanis cannot equal it," he said. Well, it is a matter of pride that we belong to such a society. That there is so much tolerance and accommodation in Hinduism, that is our best point. If we maintain that we have so many mosques and that we should convert them to temples, then we will lose our *Maryada*. They don't have this thing in Pakistan. It is our strong point that we treat everyone as equal, whether one is Hindu, Sikh or Muslim. Everyone has his own religion, one may worship according to one's faith. This is the third characteristic I have described—this spirit of tolerance, of accommodation of another's faith. This is the

beauty of Hindu religion. You may believe in *Khuda* or be an Arya Samajist or a *Sanatani*; but we are all one, under the same canopy. If we change this, our image of accommodation would be tarnished, we will be false to ourselves.

The fourth thing which should have taken place, but has not, is cultural contacts. It has been suggested why the two Punjabs should not be united. This has been said seriously—not in jest. I replied that if the two Punjabs could be united, the whole of India and Pakistan can be united. I mentioned this at the Pindi Club in 1972. When I went to see Bhutto, he complained that I was talking about reunion, at least of the two Punjabs. I replied that what I was speaking was right, whether it would be practical or not, that was another matter.

There is another incident of two years ago. A member of the Railway Board, had organised a gathering in Lahore consisting of some elders, but mostly of young people in their early twenties. When I had a private chat with them, they asked me two questions: one, why the two Punjabs have not united; and the other, why Pakistan was formed. I replied the second question first and told them that it was no use discussing it, but it means that there is a cultural contact. There is one more problem in Punjab. All our folk-lore—Heer-Ranjha, Sohni-Mahiwal, etc.—revolve round the Chenab river in West Punjab. All these stories are still sung in Punjabi villages. Our children still sing them. So this cultural contact is important. When I told Gen. Zia that there was a troupe accompanying me, which wanted to give some programmes, he agreed, but he warned that the role of 'Heer' should be played by a boy and not by a woman. When I asked how that would be possible, he said that it was prohibited in Islam to bring women on the stage. I reminded him that Turkish women had only recently had a dance programme in knickers. He said that, that was an entirely different matter. Sindhis, he said, had many cultural contacts.

When I am in Pakistan, the Punjabis there regard me as a fellow-Punjabi, nearer to them than the Sindhi or Baluch Muslims. Our language is common, our eating habits are same, our jokes—many of them at the cost of Sikhs—are exchanged with gusto.

A journalist from U.P. had gone to West Punjab. He suggested that Urdu-wallahs should be repatriated to India, from where they came, because they refused to learn any other language; nobody tried to learn and understand Punjabi.

What I am trying to say is that when there are cultural contacts, they draw the people together. There even now people speak Punjabi. All the police people, or Airport people, as soon as they know that we are from India, their behaviour undergoes a big change. When some poor Muslim goes there from here, speaks Urdu, these people do not care much for him. That is why I say cultural contacts are a must. That is why I say we in India should take some steps even unilaterally. Pakistan rulers would, of-course, try to keep us apart because, through cultural contacts, people get integrated, and the Government there does not want it.

I want to mention one other thing. We live under a great misapprehension that all women in Pakistan observe strict *Purdah*. Actually we do not see a woman on the road there. But once there was a big Punjabi marriage at Hilton Hotel. Just like here, they celebrated the marriage at a Five-Star Hotel, very ostentatiously. There was so much fashion that many of them did not have even a *dupatta* on their head. I asked my friend what had happened to Ummat (religious community of Muslims). He laughed and said that "Kafirs" had gone and only 'Ummat' remained.

## *We can, and must, have more cultural contacts*

There is lot of 'Purdah' in some sections. But when there was a Bill on the subject in the assembly, in every city women organised demonstrations. They faced lathi-charges, whippings and jail. This aspect of women's liberation movement is also there.

Whatever the propaganda, governments, on this side and that, they fight for their own dominance. It is a political cold-war. In olden days kings used to fight. Now, too, it is a struggle for power. There is lot of misinformation. If we in our country think that Pakistan is our enemy, they think that India is their enemy. Well, that is going to lead us nowhere. The unfortunate thing is that we don't have access to the other side's literature—books and newspapers. So we don't quite know what is happening on the other side—and why.

But we can do one thing—ask ourselves whether we are a truly secular society. Do I have faith in a democratic society? Do I think that my country is bigger or smaller—or do I regard all countries as equally sovereign? I think that if we remember this, we will come very close to Pakistan.

We all suffered by Partition. I think Muslims suffered more. They were badly divided into three—India, Pakistan and Bangladesh. Had all Muslims been together in India, this 30% population would have had a big voice. In 1947, when I started from Sialkot, I saw the whole drama, that side and this. Non-Muslims were victims on that side and Muslims on this side. Nobody can quantify who suffered more. But people retain their identity. One day they will demolish these walls so that we can come together. A Common Market may not be envisaged immediately. That is because, comparatively, India is a developed country, Pakistan is less developed. But just as there is a Common European Market, so there will some day be a Common Sub-continental Market. Some people have already made a guess. If there is such a market, they say, in one year, people would earn Rs. 4,000 crores more. Well, this is a thing for the future. But, I want to emphasize one thought. Pakistani people also have complaints against us. They have everything but they don't have democracy. I have no doubt that Pakistan would some day be a Democracy. And when it is democratic, it will also be secular; it cannot be otherwise. Well, many many thanks to you for giving me this opportunity to meet you.

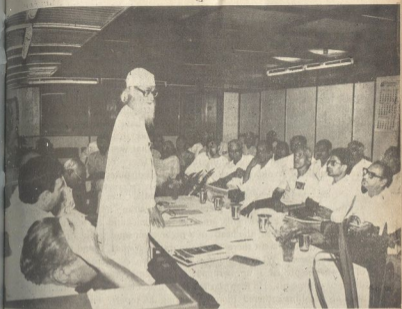
**K.R. MALKANI :** We have just had a most enlightening talk. Our grateful thanks to Kuldip.

I will now call upon Maulana Saheb to address us on this important subject. He is a man of light and learning, of utter sincerity and great originality. I have no doubt that we will all profit by his views.

**MAULANA WAHIDUDDIN KHAN :** Kuldip has already said whatever I thought needed to be said on the subject. I would, therefore, make only a few points.

I was in Pakistan in 1971. My host had a big house in Lahore. We were sitting on the terrace at night. The full moon was shining bright. Here the family members said something which was very touching. They said: "The same moon must be shining in India too." The tone and the mood were very meaningful—the same moon, the same sun, the same clouds and yet, what a difference! What a hell we have been through! What a painful separation!

I often say that had we followed the path envisaged by Mahatma Gandhi, there is no doubt India would have become a great power, it would have become a super-power. The Japanese solved their problem by adopting the strategy of 'Reverse Course'. You know the Japanese had been great fighters during and before the Second World War. When they were defeated, they at first hoped to start a guerilla war. They were



*Maulana Wahiduddin Khan addressing the distinguished gathering.*

thinking of initiating a propaganda war against the U.S.A. But on second thoughts, they adopted 'Reverse Course'. They stopped criticising U.S.A. and other countries that had bombarded them. They went in the opposite direction. They accepted their defeat and U.S. supremacy and then they devoted themselves to development of Science and Industry. This 'Reverse Course' has done them a world of good. Today they dominate even America in the economic field. Mahatma Gandhi also wanted us to adopt this 'Reverse Course'. Unfortunately we did not follow where he wanted to lead us, and the whole thing failed.

I am running a mission. Many people are engaged in the task. You know you have to struggle a lot, if you choose the path of constructive work. I have aged more than my years. But I thank God that I have been quite successful in my mission.

The people of India and Pakistan are one thing but their Governments are quite another thing. I have imbibed the teachings of Islam. For forty years I have been studying the Koran and Islamic literature. In

that literature the thing that is relevant here is 'Iras', which means 'Principle of Avoidance'. The suggestion that we want to give to the people of India and Pakistan, the affection we have to show, the thing that we want to convey, is the 'Principle of Avoidance'. The reason is that it is quite impossible that in life there will be no problem, no disputes, no confrontation, no quarrels no complainings. These are inevitable. Even Adam, the first man, had to face it. Two brothers fought. All this has been happening and it will continue to happen. It is said in the Koran that people may compete and struggle. The faithful have to follow what God has ordained. You might have read that in Karachi a Mussalman tore off the picture of a leader and they fought each other. Such a thing happens here in India too. What was happening among Muslims, is now spreading among the Hindus too. We preach action on the 'Principle of Avoidance', which can end all disputes and conflicts.

I have my colleagues spread all over India. Let me tell you what we do. An incident took place at Champaran in Bihar. There are mischief-mongers everywhere, amongst Muslims and amongst Hindus. Somebody had placed the head of a pig in a mosque. One of my companions, when he went there for the morning *Namaz*, found the head of a pig lying there. What he did was that as soon as there was some light of dawn, he picked it up, wrapped it in a cloth, ran away with it and dropped it in a pit. He then washed the place clean. After that, thousands of Muslims gathered there on hearing the report. They were besides themselves with rage at the man. They said he had been cowardly. My friend replied calmly that they could kill him if they liked, for doing what he had done. This is the 'Principle of Avoidance'. If one person makes a mistake, you have to avoid retaliation. You are not to react in anger. If you react, there will be a riot, locally and elsewhere. This is not something peculiar to Pakistan or India. I tell my people that they should not take these as Hindu-Muslim riots. This is a problem of life. Clashes do not occur because of Hindu-Muslim differences but because of lack of avoidance. These incidents will occur even in Mecca and Medina, Karachi and Lahore. God has ordained, and the holy Koran has encouraged, the spirit of struggle and competition so that we may progress and develop. Struggles lead to progress, competitions lead to progress. God wants that we may run after one another. But God has prescribed a scheme to avoid clashes, and that is the 'Principle of Avoidance'. If anything amiss happens at the hand of someone, 'avoid' reacting to it.

I can cite many more examples of how my friends are working on this mission all over India. Wherever something happens they apply this 'Principle of Avoidance' rule, and clashes are avoided. If this had not been done, Champaran would have been on fire. I wish to emphasise

that this principle must be observed by the peoples of Pakistan and India. Confrontations are inevitable but clashes can be avoided.

I want to add one thing for governmental level. What has recently happened between America and Russia is something without a parallel. You remember there was a Revolution in 1917 in Russia and America. This rivalry has been going on for seventy years. Countless billions of dollars and roubles have been spent on condemning each other through the press, pitting military forces against each other, taking this step and that. The entire history of America and Soviet Russia has been one of condemning each other. But today, in 1988, they have realised the futility of it all. Russian officials have used a very fine expression to describe the present attitude and efforts of the two sides—"solution-oriented". The war efforts of the two had weakened the economies of both. So now they have made an agreement that they would, of their own accord, destroy many of their nuclear arms. The first instalment of arms-destroying has already taken place, before the observers of the other country.

## *We must 'Reverse Course' and adopt the 'Principle of Avoidance'*

As far as the people of India and Pakistan are concerned, I appeal to both to adopt the 'Principle of Avoidance'. I am going to Pakistan shortly. I will make this appeal to them. I am not a man of double-standards. I do not indulge in double-talk. I have been to several countries—Arab countries, United States. Wherever I have gone, I have said the same thing that I am speaking here and I will say it in Pakistan also, viz. that the only solution lies in "The Principle of Avoidance".

On the Government level, Masha Allah (God willing), I have only to submit that even the super-powers cannot afford rivalry and confrontation. Ultimately they also had to make efforts that are 'solution-oriented'. How can India and Pakistan afford it? A miracle has materialised between Russia and America. The New York Times has called it the "Grand Compromise". When these super-powers cannot afford the policy of arms race and clashes, where do we stand? That is all I have to say.

K.R. MALKANI: Thank you Maulana Sahab, thank you very much, for your talk from the core of your heart. We are all grateful to you.

Now I would request Dr. Sethi to throw some light on this vital issue of Indo-Pak relations.

**DR. J.D. Sethi :** Friends, so much has been said that there is very little scope for adding anything. But I would like to make a few points which have remained untouched.

One is the view of the world takes of this big land mass of India and Pakistan and their enmity. For 40 years, we have determined not to settle our differences by ourselves but to depend upon others to solve our problems. There is a new report on behalf of economic experts who formulate world economic strategy and advise the World Bank and the I.M.F. and decide about their aid. They state that South Asia—Hindustan, Pakistan, Bangladesh and other smaller countries, where poverty and famines abound—should be called the Fourth World. They should be called the Fourth World because they have no prospect of development. The way they are going on, they might differ a bit, but their incomes range between 250-350 dollars. The people who decide about the fate of the world have come to the conclusion among themselves that these people of South Asia, for 50 or 100 years, they have no hope. They will give you money, they will give you aeroplanes, ships. They may invite you, may organise cultural festivals for you. But the entire picture is that just as there was previously the First World, the Second World, the Third World, we now also have the Fourth World. The First World was of the Western capitalist countries, the Second World is the Communist countries and the Third World is the rest undeveloped countries. But some of them had a great leap forward and went to the top. South Korea, Taiwan etc.—three or four countries, made spectacular progress and from the Third World moved to the First World.

But, they have decided that you have no hope, that you have to starve, that the peoples of half the world will remain poor. They say, your rulers, your ruling leaders, do not have the character and the commitment to do something for you. Even if we give you money, you will not be able to make any development. We are just like Jhuggi-Jhonpuri Colony of the world and our leaders are like the ring-leaders of a J.J. Colony. Our leaders, whether here or in Pakistan, are leaders of that type.

Well, I am not saying these things by myself. This is the report recently published by the World Bank, which is prepared by leading economists. It is emphasized that these countries cannot be developed. We can provide them with weapons, we can give them some money, we will send them food, if they starve. But there is no more chance for them.



*Dr. J.D. Sethi addressing the gathering.*

The second thing is that there is not a single country in this area which does not look to some outside big country, to provide it a security umbrella. Whether Pakistan looks to China and USA, or we look to Russia, it is the United States which ultimately determines everything. Our security is linked to Russia just as Pakistan's security is linked with China and the United States. It does not look as if even in the coming 10-15 years, we will sit up and ponder—what these countries, to which we have anchored our security, what interest they have got in this exercise? You must have seen that the entire debate on Bofors revolved round whether the gun purchased was appropriate or wrong type and whether any kick-backs were paid or not paid. Nobody asked the question why such a gun was not developed in all these forty years in our own country. We were manufacturing 122 mm. guns in 1947, and now we have this imported gun. For all these 40 years, we have not been able to build a gun of this type and we have been importing throughout. Why? Because they will not allow you to build it. That is why the arms-race is on so fast. The colossal Pakistan Defence budget is leading us, God knows where. We

are increasing our own budget—and we are happy ! Our security is planned against Pakistan, against China. But piling up of arms does not guarantee security. If your military power also has an economic power to back it, then that is all-right. But neither of us can fight a war for more than two weeks. If there is intervention, it would be confusion worse confounded.

The third disappointment is that the arms race which is becoming faster and faster, might one day end up in an explosion. Russia and USA both sat together and thought that there was the danger of an accidental war also, hence it was proper to sit down and think. Accidents can be avoided if you are determined *not* to fight. A war can start through a genuine mistake. At each they have sat down and talked about it. But we are not talking to each other at all. There is a gulf, a fissure, between us. Without cultural contact there is no way to bridge this gulf. The rulers will not allow it, because they have a lot to lose by it. Maulana Sahib has given a detailed description of their so-called 'achievements'. I will also give you a story. Kuldip once took me to Pakistan. We attended a seminar, in which we were 15 Indian participants and there were 25 from that country, one or two from Sri Lanka and the seminar was on 'South Asia'. But it also attracted an audience of 200-300 people, many of whom were big shots of Pakistan, both on the ruling side as well as opposition. So much so that one observer, who had been just released from jail, shouted 'Zia Mordabad' before he took his seat. I had never attended a seminar like that in all my life. All Pakistani intellectuals, politicians, opposition-leaders, government members, people from the foreign office, our ambassador and his staff—all of them were there. I had to present a paper on "Economic Co-operation between India and Pakistan". I said to myself that they could read the Paper at leisure; it was better to utilise the opportunity for some real talk. What Maulana Sahib has ably presented, I put forward in a similar analysis. As Kuldip has mentioned at the outset, there are people who have not recognised Pakistan, its *de facto* formation. I asserted that 99.9 per cent people have *not* accepted partition and that I was one of them. For a whole minute, there was pin-drop silence. Then I broke the silence and told them that I was not talking in terms of the territory. I was talking of the ethos of the sub-continent. I was talking about its force, about the indomitable affinity of blood. I was talking about culture, about history. "If you think that through a division of the geographical territory, you have snapped this cultural cohesion, I submit that it is unbreakable. Even if you raise a China Wall, I would not accept this division. The reason is that the ideal for which Mahatma Gandhi laid down his life does not have such cracks or fissures. That man sacrificed himself for you. He offered his life not only for the welfare of the Hindus but also for the interest of the Muslims, for the unity of Hindus and

Muslims. What is our duty ? I am addressing you—leave aside India. I am talking to you, asking you." For some time I was apprehensive that people will speak out emotionally, in great anger. But nothing of the kind happened.

I said that we had a leader like Nehru and many other leaders of education and vision. On your side was Janab Mohammed Ali Jinnah, leading the Muslim League, who was very much a modern man. Gandhiji represented the world conscience for this country. If you want friendship between Hindustan and Pakistan, it will have to be on the principles as propounded by the Mahatma and today by Maulana Sahib, viz. Hindu-Muslim unity and ahimsa.

When Partition was being demanded, Mahatma Gandhi had warned that it would be on his dead body. But these people made him acquiesce in it. Gandhiji had warned that confrontation between Hindus and Muslims would get worse after partition; it will be magnified into such proportions that the danger he had been fighting against throughout his life, would come about; only those Indians and Pakistanis would be in

### *Political partition cannot destroy the cultural unity of the People*

power who have no commitment to their country, their culture, their civilization, and who would always be looking outside.

Here they study English. Mr. Kakakhel will tell you, there also they study English. The other day I was reading an article in Narendra's 'Partap', reproduced from a foreign journal. They do not have our kind of language problem. Here people in the South do not agree, Tamils don't; only a few do. But, there everyone had agreed to Urdu as the National Language. But today they have demonstrations in Pakistan against Urdu. The entire picture is that English is riding us like the 'Old Man of the Sea', choking us and overpowering our land. Just as we have our children of Modern School, they also have children of their Modern School; just as we have our Public Schools, they have their Public Schools. The Colleges there are similar to those here. The people of Bharat and Pakistan have the same mind, the same blood, the same culture and they also have the same ailments—with the same consequences. Urdu in Pakistan has the same tragic tale. It went from here, and now it has its clashes with Punjabi, Baluchi, Pashto and Sindhi.

I asked freedom-fighters there to tell me some principles of Indian and Pakistani co-existence. I told them Gandhiji had envisaged these



principles and it can be done in no other way, do what you will. "That is why I do not accept the partition of India. If you want me to give up these principles, well, I am not prepared. If this stand is acceptable, then and only then, further dialogue can be meaningful and there will be no quarrels, no confrontation. There are, of course, two or three points of dispute".

For a couple of minutes, I thought that I would have a *gherao*. Kuldipji was there. I told him that I had spoken something quite controversial, and that for a whole hour. But the outcome was that that evening, Gen. Akram, who was the bitterest critic of India, invited me for dinner. He confessed that he was dead opposed to India; "the world knows it". But he wanted to know how the two could be brought together, the practical steps. He said he was willing to publicly plead for reunion if he was convinced of its practicality. In the evening, young men and women also wanted me to tell them what to do. But, speech-making is one thing, policy-implementation is another. The latter depends upon the government of the day, the various institutions. We can only preach like missionaries. But only government can act. Those in-charge did too little too late. And so no substantial progress could be made.

I only want to tell you that the world thinks that for at least 10-15 years, there is no future for Hindustan, Pakistan and Bangladesh. If you want arms, you may have them. If you want to fight, you may do so. If you are fools to imagine that China can save you or that USSR will save you or that U.S.A. would come to your rescue, you are at liberty to live in that fool's paradise. The greatest thing is that neither Pakistan nor India understands this; but economists do. If trade is made free, India is more developed and there are many things which will sell in Pakistan; but they are manufacturing better cloth and some other articles. But just as many people in India do not understand things, so also in Pakistan many people do not understand anything.

We have over ten thousand big factories, which are run with foreign collaboration. None of them is independent. We might have a few but Pakistan has none. The same multi-nationals—English, American etc., which collaborate here, collaborate there. But collaboration agreements always lay down that we cannot start that line of production in Pakistan—and Pakistanis cannot start it in India! We can have an enterprise anywhere in the world, but no bilateral collaboration between India and Pakistan! We cannot financially aid each other!

All Europe competes, but they have the bulk of the trade between themselves. Europe itself is having brisk international trade. The

entire world trade is between the capitalist countries or between them and the communist countries. Only the remaining 10 percent trade is between the rest of the 120 countries. We in India and Pakistan do not have a proper dialogue. We do not study this thing at the university level. Our legislatures don't discuss it either. They only repeat propaganda and mouth clichés. The strategy we have planned is entirely misconceived and wrong-headed.

It was once decided that the Planning Commissions of the two countries would meet and evolve a joint economic strategy. If we do not meet even now, later there would be a catastrophe, when the entire world decides to put you in Category IV. You will be fed, if you starve. Leaders never starve, but they should feel the responsibility. I am not clear how we should begin. The principles I know; but it is for the governments to act. Or there should be mass action and initiatives by institutions. The danger-bell is sounding ominously. Pakistan, Hindustan and Bangladesh between them may be destroyed irrevocably. They build

### *Pak diplomat's bitter-sweet experiences in India*

China walls like these, run arms races and go on looking up to other countries for their security. New ways must be found on the lines laid down by the Mahatma and today recapitulated by Maulana Sahib. There-in alone lies hope for us all.

K.R.M. : Many, many thanks, Dr. Sethi, for your masterly presentation. I will now request Hon. Kakakhel Saheb to place his views before us.

SHAFAT KAKAKHEL : Respected brothers and sisters, first of all I want to congratulate you on the Independence Day of India. I also thank you for inviting me to meet you all and have a talk with you and discuss a matter which is of supreme importance viz. how to build bridges of love and fellow-feeling between the peoples of Pakistan and Hindustan. This morning when I went to listen to the Independence Day speech of your PM and took my seat amongst dignitaries, I saw a strange thing. Your PM wore the same style of clothing as I. But I was wondering if he would say something adverse about Pakistan. Would he blame Pakistan for the various problems of India, so that I will have to go after the speech to my office, instead of going home. I had asked my office staff to be in their seats, for we may have to report the speech to our government immediately. I am happy that I went home instead of having to go to office. I also hope my presence here has not inhibited the freedom of your discussion.

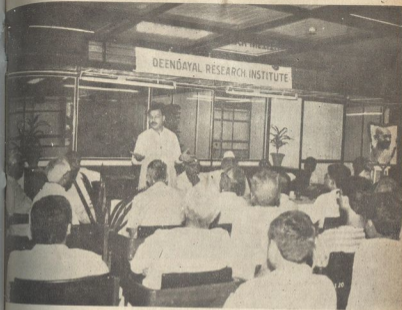
As far as misunderstandings of the common man are concerned, I will tell you about my family experience. I have come here after having served different countries of the world, including some Muslim countries. When I was ordered posted here, I called my wife and children—my daughter is 17 and my son, 15—and told them that the country we were now going to was a difficult one, an enemy country. If in the classroom, the market or the streets, they happened to hear something unfriendly, they should patiently tolerate it, or, as the Maulana said, observe the 'Principle of Avoidance'.

When we arrived here, immediately a chain of social activity started and we forgot all our forebodings and precautions. One day the children came and told me that two months earlier I had given them a warning that we were going to a difficult country, but how was it that they were not finding any difficulty whatsoever? We had lived in three Muslim countries, but my children were not invited to friends' homes as frequently as here. This is the only country visited by me during the last twenty years of my diplomatic service where, for four months, I did not need to go in for identity cards. The sense of security and the feeling of kinship that we find here, is unique. But with all this kinship, we are kind of strangers to each other.

There are some points which Kuldipji finds necessary to work on, and which he has mentioned in his books also. In my opinion it is of primary importance that due to different reasons in Hindustan, in the text books, in newspapers and magazines, it is said time and again that the two-nation theory is unacceptable and that we do not accept it. Shri Sethi Sahib asserted the same thing. But, look at it from the point of view of the general public, the fear that haunts them. Pakistan has been separated; it is there on the world map. It must have separated because of some acute differences. What does Pakistan think about Hindustan—or Hindustan think about Pakistan? Being bigger, that is India's basic responsibility. If we accept it, matters will be set right; if we shirk it, that won't do.

As far as culture is concerned, howsoever high a wall one may build, man will always be able to top it. We have now got Information Revolution, because of which 'walls' have become redundant. At government level our Radio and TV networks may not arrange it, but the scale on which Pakistani games are seen here, on that scale people do not see them even in Pakistan.

Kuldip has mentioned a very fine thing, and that is secularism. Therein lies the solution. Therein lies not only the welfare of the general



*Shri Kakakhel, Charge d'Affaires Pakistan addressing DRI.*

people of Hindustan but also of the relationship between Hindustan and Pakistan. I have only to mention that the conditions under which Pakistan was formed will take it several years to move towards secularism, because the history of India, which you represent, is thousands of years old; whereas we represent only history after 1921. Hence you shall have to give us some more time.

As far as 'openness' is concerned, Hindustan has us 'Open Society', and free expression and free opinion have greater scope here than in Pakistan. I agree with this. Unfortunately, we do not have political parties. Now you see the map, how big India is, and how small is Pakistan. You must be 600 or 800 million. But this uniquely open society, a democratic society, a secular society, you do not have a single political party, which stands openly and firmly for friendship with Pakistan. In your entire Lok Sabha, amongst all the 400 or 500 members, there is not a single person who would stand up and say that you are complaining about Punjab, but look to the other side. Four or five

people like Kuldip, Sethi or Khushwant may be there, but in the Lok Sabha there is no one who may say so.

I will give you an example. There was a debate here on Punjab on August 2, when participating MPs urged snapping of ties with Pakistan and even waging war against Pakistan. Our "undemocratic" government, the democracy of which you do not recognise, has members like Mirza who said, "what do you talk? Hindustan has no plans to destroy Pakistan in collaboration with Russia. We should have better relations with India, with the people of India, and find solutions for our problems." But in your Lok Sabha there is not one MP to talk like this. There is not a single party in Hindustan, no platform, to speak like this. We have the National Party. We have (GM) Syed group. We have several other persons who say loudly that we are not interested in having a confrontation, or one thousand year war, against India. You should give this matter a thought, that you have an open society, yet when there is some matter relating to Pakistan, everybody becomes mute.

As far as cultural relations are concerned, during the last few years, cultural cooperation has increased. You might have seen yourself, several Pakistani artistes arrived here—the matchless Farida Khan was here, and many others. But our people are reluctant about cultural exchanges, just to maintain and assert our separate identity. I assure you, after these 40 years, there is no fear. People have come to know through tourists and visitors that there should be no apprehensions about India.

I now come to the point which has been dealt with by all the preceding speakers. There are two alternative courses for Hindustan and Pakistan. One is directed towards improvement—through sports, cultural activities and journalists. Every year some two or three hundred people come from Pakistan for SAARC meetings and same number go from India. Probably the general public does not know this.

The other course is that both countries blame their internal problems, and their failures, on the other country. The biggest charge against us is that we want to break up this country and strengthen divisive forces here. I see a very strange thing. People so often talk about and against the government, but they believe governmental reports and versions. Your Parliament has been in session. Five letters in Gurmukhi were placed on the table, with the grave charge that we were planning to murder the leaders of this country. Dear sir, this is a very grave matter, a very very serious charge against a country, that they want to murder your leaders. Using this grave charge for internal politics, is a matter of shame. The second point is that in our culture, honour (izzat) of the neighbour is our own honour. Whichever country you visit, you accuse

Pakistan of helping terrorists, or doing this and that. But, why don't you sit with us and discuss matters? Why are you sending us messages through Jordan or Turkey or America, when the flight time between India and Pakistan is only 32 minutes? And now we even have direct phone! Moreover, we have a common language and, if you think you can speak very good English, we can talk in English. You should always speak directly. There have been four or five proposals. We said there is the old No-War Pact proposal of India. What was wrong with it? But it was now objected that we should first give in writing that we shall not give any bases to any third country. You want us to commit that Pakistan undertakes not to provide bases to any foreign power. What is more important—this, or the safeguard and the commitment, of not repeating the outbreak of another war after the previous three wars, in which lacs of people lost their lives or were ruined? You get stuck to one thing. If we are in danger, what to say of America, we will take help even from Shaitan (Devil). You will also do the same thing. When a nation is in trouble and its very existence is in danger, it will take whatever course is open to it. But, why don't you look to the full significance of that

### *We are blaming each other for internal political reasons*

treaty? Both the provisions are covered by it. There is an agreement about Atomic installations, that these should not be attacked. In this connection the observation is made that "Simla Agreement is best". Our people say that the "United Nations Charter is best". As the saying goes, it is like pulling at the donkey's tail.

We have a cordial relationship all-right, but in spite of this we also have skirmishes, which are usual between neighbours. It was you who created Bangladesh. But don't you have differences even with that country? The water problem that was there previously, still persists. Other questions also crop up. The solution therefore is, bilateral negotiations, instead of your sending us a telegram through America or, for that matter, from Yugoslavia. We should have direct talks. Even if you have to abuse us, it is better to abuse us in Urdu or Punjabi. That is why I appeal to you, you who are so well-informed and such well-known writers dealing with Indo-Pak relations. We ask you to try and have a dialogue with us. If we have bilateral talks, we will know whether it is a call of love or whether we are speaking lies. But if you just produce half a dozen letters in Punjabi as proof of the grave charge of assassination of leaders of a neighbouring country, well, that is a very serious matter. You cannot use this kind of thing for your internal problems. For example,

one of your problems is Panjab. It was there before 1947, it is still there after 1947. It is not of recent origin. There were riots in 1984. Did we inspire them? What happened in Jodhpur? Did we instigate it? What hand can we have in this?

There are two dimensions of the problem, internal and external. Why are you committing the mistake that we committed in Bangladesh?

I am not speaking here in the capacity of a government representative. On governmental level, it could be said that we are trying to make the relations cordial and it is hoped in the coming years, matters will improve. But in an informal capacity, and in the spirit of this meeting, I would emphasise what the Maulana has also said, namely, to take things in that spirit. Once again I thank you and want to be excused if I have said anything unpalatable. If you want to ask anything, I am at your disposal.

K.R.M. : Thank you Mr. Kakakhel. You came here and spoke to us, with in open mind. We are so happy. Our hearty thanks and congratulations to you.

Now any questions?

SHRI CHOPRA : You are all highly educated people. I am only a retired Electrical Engineer. Now when any management expert wants to solve a problem, he goes to the root of the problem and wants to thrash it out. Whatever you are doing, why don't you all try to expose the 700-800 politicians in both countries who are creating these problems? Why can't you crush them?

K.R.M. : We will not destroy them or crush them; we will try to enlighten them.

J.P. MATHUR : I want to tell the Pakistan representative and Sethi Ji that whenever we find somebody from Pakistan, it is a joy to speak Urdu to them. We are moved. I do not know why that is so. But, you did not throw light on one thing: Why there is tension even now? What is the root cause of this tension and suspicion.

KULDIP NAYAR : Your question is something like reading the Ramayana the whole night and then asking who was Rama and who, Sita. What we have said already answers your question.

J.P. MATHUR : You mean to say we should forgive and forget whatever has happened?

KULDIP NAYAR : I have enumerated the many causes of suspicion and also the steps that we can take. I emphasized that there was lack of information, lack of contact. These are all basic things.

J.P. MATHUR : Mr. Kakakhel seems to think that Pakistan is suspicious that India has not mentally accepted partition. Well, this suspicion can be understood. But I would like to know the basic causes of suspicions underlying the tensions on the Indian side.

KULDIP NAYAR : I think now in India nobody talks of Akhand Bharat. There are no cheers if somebody mentions it. But I had given the example of how Pakistan has a basic fear that Hindustan is a big country and it would swallow up Pakistan. Another feeling in Pakistan is that it is not treated on equal footing. Pakistan is a small country. The third thing is that they feel that there is no system or arrangement in India by which their identity as Muslims may be preserved and their life and property be secure, if there were no Pakistan or if at some time in the future there is reunion. This is the basic suspicion and the basic fear that still persists. Some move, some steps, are required to banish it. "No War Pact" is a good move, as was the Simla Pact.

*UN Charter is good; Simla Pact is good;  
'No War Pact' will also be good.*

SHRI GOPAL MITTAL : I would say in Punjabi : "*Dadiya De Ganiya Chalte*". It means that the same thing when it is spoken in friendliness, it sounds like songs of marriage celebrations; but when it is said in anger, it becomes gross abuse.

S. KAKAKHEL : I would like to mention one thing. During the last 40 years, we have tried to wage war several times, but no problem was solved. If you think that Pakistan should be divided into two, and then your troubles will be over, then that won't do. Hence we should agree upon one thing, namely that "War should be ruled out as a means of resolving problems".

We have fought three wars, and if again there is war, inevitably we will be defeated and you will be victor. But of what avail will that victory be to you? If you just consider this that you cannot keep even a single village of Pakistan for 3 months, 6 months or one year, against the will of the people; for internal reasons and for external reasons also, you will have to give it up. Siachin is not a sore because nobody lives there. Even

if 25-30 people had lived there, it could have been a festering sore. Hence we also should forget about war and find out a solution, wherever it is possible. As Sethi Sahib has pointed out, 33% of your resources and 55% of our resources are spent on preparing for war against each other, which is quite meaningless.

Another thing. I have been looking into your textbooks. Attempts are being made to rewrite Indian history. Instead of this, let us shelve these books. The more corpses you dig out, the more foul smell they will give. Things that are antagonistic, are best forgotten. We should learn to respect each other, to understand each other's problems.

**QUESTION :** I would like to say in Punjabi : *Jera taskara karde hain, unde kande tut jaye; apni maan mar jaye.*

**SHRI PRABHAKAR :** Two small questions. Mr. Kuldip Nayar said that the division of India is a historic fact and we should not try to resurrect that issue. Does it apply to all nations, to Germany and Korea? And secondly, Melkaniji said that until 1921. Hindus and Muslims lived here as brothers and there was not much quarrelling. Could we not bring back the same brotherliness, and have Akhand Bharat, a United India, once again?

**KULDIP NAYAR :** I am answering my part of the question. So far as the reunion of Korea and Germany are concerned, people on the two sides are volunteering that kind of unification. Here Pakistan does not want that kind of unification. You may be wanting it, some of you, but the movement should be from the other side. And that, I tell you, can happen only if you make this country a really secular and democratic country.

**B. R. GROVER :** I will put my question very briefly. Mr. Kakakhel, you have delivered a very good speech. You made a reference to cultural exchanges. I have also been connected with it. During the last two or three years some agreements were arrived at between top leaders regarding books, scholars, seminars. But for some reason, it has not materialised. I have tried my level best for these exchanges but I don't know where impediment comes from, so that nothing comes out of it. How to solve this problem?

The other point is about rewriting of history. In the first place it is difficult to get any books from Pakistan. We might get some books at the Islamic Institute. But we do not have that access of exchange which we used to have previously.

My submission is that the official institutions here, when they try to rewrite history, they try to observe the principle that we should avoid things that create tension between Hindus and Muslims. We stress ways and means of improving relations between communities here and between the people of India and Pakistan. I am not against the 'progressive' or leftist writers. But they do not give importance to these matters. They give importance to economic matters. In our country the trend of history is to promote friendly relations. If by some process we can get access to books, particularly history books in Pakistan, this can help exchanges.

**DR. SATYAPAL CHUGH :** I want to ask you a question, Mr. Kakakhel. You want more time to become secular one day. This is good. If that happens, what more can we desire? But there are many old Muslim countries, and they have become Islamic; none of them is secular. Even Bangladesh, which once took our help, has turned Islamic, instead of developing into a secular state. This has created many problems for us. One result is that now Chakma refugees also have started coming. In such a situation, what is the basis for your hope of secularism? You said that you date back to only 1921. But your and our bases are common,

## Searching Questions and Candid Answers

our traditions are common and ancient. Our civilization and culture are very old. If you do not accept that base, how can we hope for secularism to materialise?

**S. KAKAKHEL :** I only said what Quaid-e-Azam Mohammed Ali Jinnah had said on 13th of August in our Constituent Assembly. It is no "progressive" speech of mine. This man was once called the "Ambassador of Hindu-Muslim Unity". As far as secularism is concerned, it is a noble ideology in respect of politics. But if you try to dominate the world through its instrumentality, it will meet the same fate as capitalism or communism. Every country has a system according to its needs. I myself believe that it is a noble system, because religion should not become the basis of relationship between man and man. But please do not make secularism itself into another religion. It should not be exported as a new kind of 'fundamentalism', because it is not an exportable commodity.

**QUESTION :** You said that there is a sense of insecurity in Pakistan because of India. What will happen if 'No war Pact' is agreed upon?

**S. KAKAKHEL :** Pakistan is a small country. In a bilateral agreement, there is no mention of any third country. If we provide a base to a third

country, why should it be mentioned in a bilateral treaty? We have proposed a formulation which, instead of this "Bases clause", says: "Neither country will lose its territory for any action that may be hostile to the other." The sense of insecurity felt by a small country, which knows what war is, and which has lost a big chunk of its territory, must become an obsession with it. While negotiating with such a country, you should not be so hard.

**J.P. MATHUR** : This gives the impression that you are having foreign bases against us.

**S. KAKAKHEL** : This is a long story. I was only submitting that when a country is faced with danger to its existence, or it is in danger of war like the three wars it has fought before, surely it will not allow any option to be left out. If, in spite of that, it offers to make a commitment that it will not go to war, then you should not indulge in comparisons. That is why I ask whether there is some advantage in signing such a treaty or in catching the donkey's tail.

**QUESTION** : If India and Pakistan come together, would there be any need for such bases?

**K.R.M.** : The answer to that cannot be a brief one. We in India think that there is danger from Pakistan whereas Pakistan feels that it has danger from us. This is a very big subject, which will need a long discussion. We, therefore, better stop here. I will now request our Chairman, Shri Nanaji, to say a few words.

**NANA DESHMUKH** : Today is Independence Day—and also the Day of Partition. But today here, in this Deendayal Research Institute, we Pakistanis and Hindustanis are together. There cannot be a matter of greater joy than this. I want to say one thing. India has been partitioned and the reason for this partition was religion. Nobody can deny this fact. That is why Deendayal Research Institute is thinking that when the cause of partition has been religion—when religion is blamed for it—it is easy to say that let us be aloof from religion, avoid it and understand or practice it only inside your Mandir or Masjid or Church. But this counsel is difficult, if not impossible, of practice. It could have been done, if religion were a purely personal matter. Religion does not belong to an individual, it belongs to many individuals, whole societies, masses of men. Fact is that religion does not teach us to fight each other. We in the Deendayal Research Institute are of the firm opinion that religion can be effaced; it is not possible to root out religion. When religions are going to prevail, whatsoever movements the secularists may carry on, they will continue to

influence crores of people. This is as it should be because religion teaches us morality and if life is bereft of religion, the under-pinning of morality will be gone. Hence if anybody expects that Pakistan will, or can, do away with its religion, or if anybody stands up in India and tells people not to follow religion, well nobody is going to oblige him. Such people with their pet solutions may come and go, but religions will go on for ever.

I, therefore, want to emphasise another thing. Let us bring people of different religions together and think out ways and means so that each one may contribute towards the common good. Let each one think how to contribute best. Religions build up values, religions foster morality, religions teach us humanity and all religions may be brought together and set to think how they can contribute most to the common weal, for peace and plenty, for the well-being of all mankind. We are not talking about the political field. We have gathered here to talk about the cordial relations between people to have a dialogue between people. The whole world knows that governments say, think and plan. But we want to have a concert of people. Government may not fall in line at once, but if people come together, think together, come to conclusions together, governments

### *Religion can't be wished away; it must become the basis of unity*

will have to follow the people's mandate sooner or later. It may be easy to say that Pakistan has a fear because it is much smaller than Hindustan. But Pakistani people do not have contacts with only a chosen few. They also come and see people like me. They mix with people here, in this country and also outside, and they have heart-to-heart talks and free and frank discussions. I find that fear is there only at government level. The common man, the ordinary citizen, does not suffer from this fear complex. I have met Pakistanis in UK and in the United States. I have lived with some Muslim families and have had cordial and frank talks with them. This has made me feel that the common man who has no political ambitions, has no such fear. That is why we in the DRI are thinking, and Malkaniji is planning, to bring people of all religions here together, particularly people well-versed in their religion, so that we may realise the responsibility of religions for creating an atmosphere of amity and cooperation. It is the responsibility of religions to build up a glorious future for the country. Every religion has a role to play. If religions are not active, morality or what we call spirituality, and humanity, cannot be inculcated. We have to work in this direction and keep it non-political. This does not mean that we are against secularism. Actually, every religion itself can become secular. Everything is possible. Religion is a great potent force.

All our efforts are oriented in that direction. We call people together and have a heart-to-heart discussion. We are so happy that all of you joined us. We invite you to come time and again for the quest to find those ways and strengthen the roots of harmonisation and concord. I am particularly happy that a distinguished representative of Pakistan joined us, not as an official representative but as an enlightened citizen. It is a matter of great joy. We have all been frank in our expression. We are confident that we will have your co-operation in future also.

**MAHESH CHANDRA SHARMA** : I rise to thank you. "Thanks" is only one word. I would like to add another word. We have been arranging this programme on 15th August for the last three years. We should not accept a lie in the name of truth. And, it is a truth that Pakistan exists, according to the political theory of the West. But, the geo-cultural unity, which includes both Hindustan and Pakistan, is a bigger truth. I am a Marwari and I do not enter into deals which are based on incorrect premises. For me and, I believe, for all of us, unity is the truth and separation, the illusion. Thank you all very much. And that makes my total of a couple of words. Thank you all once again. And please join us over a cup of tea before you leave.

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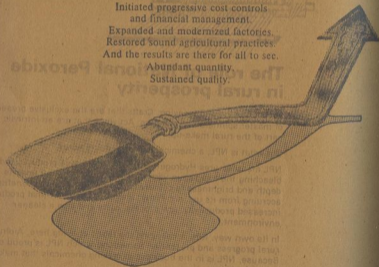
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