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15 MAY 1987

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ARMENIAN AFFAIRS

FORMER FRENCH DEFENSE MINISTER ON ARMENIAN COMMUNITY, CAUSE

Paris GAMK in Armenian/French 21 Mar 87 pp 1-2

[Report on press conference given by Charles Hernu, former French defense minister, on 19 March 1987 in his office by Garo Ulubeyan: "Villeurbanne: Point of Convergence"]

[Text] On Thursday, 19 March, at 9 o'clock, Charles Hernu, deputy and mayor of Villeurbanne and former minister of defense, held a press conference before the representatives of the Armenian press in France. Intended to elaborate on an Armenian event currently centered on Villeurbanne, this press conference, or rather this initial contact is supposed to be the first in a series aimed at straightening out relations between the defenders of the Armenian Cause and the community.

Charles Hernu is one of those who has taken up the cudgels for the Armenian Cause. This commitment originates at the local level of the municipality of Villeurbanne, of which he has been the mayor for nearly 10 years, as well as at the level of the Armenian nation as a whole, when it comes to promoting its political claims. When the purely community, local interests happen to coincide with the national interests it is proper to seize the opportunity to elaborate. It is precisely to stress the convergence of quasi simultaneous events, which have turned Villeurbanne, with a community of about 3,000 Armenians, into the focal city of Armenian news this week, that Mr Hernu called the representatives of the Armenian press in France into his office for a press conference. A timely step, given that it concerns not only the coming to this municipality of the Lyon suburbs of the president of the Republic, Mr Francois Mitterrand, who will be the first to walk on the new asphalt of the rue d'Armenie to be inaugurated shortly, but also the twinning with the city of Apovian in the Soviet Socialist Republic of Armenia, achieved after lengthy negotiations, as well as the text of a motion to be submitted on Sunday, 22 March to the Congress of the Socialist Federation of the Rhone, a motion which will require recognition of the Armenian genocide and of the existence of an Armenian question.

Solidarity and Solidity

A combination of facts which strictly concern Villeurbanne but the timeliness of which did not cause Mr Charles Hernu to forget the major stakes of the Armenian Cause at issue in the European Parliament. As a matter of fact, it is with this issue that he chose to start the news conference, which was opened by his counsellor for Armenian Affairs, Mr Jean Krikorian. Charles Hernu recalled that the "Socialists took a stand and voted for the J. Vandemeulebroecke report at the time of the voting in Brussels at the Political Commission of the European Parliament, a position which the French Socialists have never gone back on." This support, this "solidarity and this solidity," he said later on to describe relations between the PS and the Armenians, "will be proven once again by our Socialist friends on 22 March, at the Congress of the Federation of the Rhone, where a text will be submitted concerning the Armenian question."

Next, Charles Hernu recalled his action at the local level, with the upcoming establishment of an Armenian house equipped, among other things, with a class room, and the major event of the week, for which Villeurbanne is ready, the creation of the rue d'Armenie, built on the occasion of the construction of the new post office; small, but extremely busy given that it gives onto the City Hall Plaza, "the first illustrious visitor to walk upon the street will be Mr Mitterrand." That visit was well worth affixing signs to identify the rue d'Armenie before the official ceremony!

As a matter of fact, there are plans to organize a competition this year to appoint the painter who will design a fresco to decorate the empty front which occupies one side of the street: the winner will be the one whose project has best expressed the idea of a reborn Armenia.

Next, Mr Hernu recalled the interest shown by the president of the Republic in the Armenian Cause, mentioning the visit of representatives of the FRA and of the CDCA to the Elysee Palace in March 1986. The text to be submitted to the conference of the Congress of the Socialist Federation of the Rhone should be seen within this framework: as a matter of fact, the motion touches on the designation of 24 April as "national Armenian remembrance day," and assesses the current situation of the Armenian people, which is inseparable from conclusions relative to the genocide. In this respect, Mr Hernu emphasized his support for the verdict pronounced in 1984 in Paris by the Permanent People's Tribunal which established the indefeasibility and the supranational dimension of the crime of genocide; as such, "the Armenian demands force us to take their basic rights into consideration," he added.

Mr Hernu briefly recalled that his personal commitment to the Armenians was also the expression of a deep friendship which binds them to France. "France is very lucky in that it has a very significant Armenian community," he commented, adding: "I have been minister of defense. I cannot forget that since 1915 the Armenians have given numerous heroes to France. We have duties toward them, but this solidarity should not be reduced to fine words... those who are quickest in spouting nice words at them are curiously discreet when it comes to attending certain ceremonies..."

Difficult Twinning

The deputy and mayor of Villeurbanne ended his statement by mentioning the fact that his city has been twinned with a municipality of the suburbs of Erevan, specifically Apovian. This success was achieved only following bitter negotiations, one of the main architects of which was Mr Jean Krikorian. As a matter of fact, relations between the USSR and Villeurbanne, which had been twinned with Mogvilev in Belorussia, had been suspended because of a humanitarian problem: Mr Mikhailov, married to a woman from Villeurbanne, a physician and lover of paintings, had been condemned to death because he had organized an exhibit in his Leningrad apartment. Having been detained for 4 years in a Siberian camp, Mikhailov saw his sentenced quashed following Mr Mitterrand's visit to Moscow last July, and a few days ago he made the acquaintance of the West and of Villeurbanne; at the same time, he broke loose the talks aimed at twinning Villeurbanne with the municipality of Apovian: contacts, by letter for the time being, have resumed with Mr Avakian, mayor of Apovian, and Karen Demirdjian, first secretary of the Communist Party of Soviet Armenia. This is a prelude to the sending of a delegation from Villeurbanne which will confirm a unique fact in relations between the USSR and other states: the twinning of two Soviet cities with a single French city, a bending of the rules which can be explained by the need to put into contact two communities whose mutual knowledge "provides a special dimension to a twinning considered to be richer, more sincere."

Armenian Cause an End in Itself

The reporters' questions generally dealt with the socialist policy toward the Armenian Cause, and specifically within the European Parliament. In this respect, Mr hernu noted the process of the motion to be voted on Sunday, in Lyon, by the Socialist Federation of the Rhone, then studied by the national meeting of the PS Congress in Lille, next 4, 5 and 6 April, which it is hoped will produce a text to be discussed in plenary session at Strasbourg.

To the worrisome question of the hostile attitude of the German Social Democrats to the Vandemeulebroecke report, and thus of the cohesion among parties belonging to the same socialist family, Mr Hernu pointed out that French Socialists and German Social Democrats should not be confused. He admitted that there is "a problem" which must "be resolved within the framework of the International Socialist Movement," specifying that "Lionel Jospin is in charge of negotiations to this effect with his German counterpart Lafontaine." He insisted on the need for a "vast explanatory campaign in the FRG where the Turkish lobby has impressive power at its disposal."

Recalling the relations between France and Turkey, Charles Hernu spoke successively of the defense of human rights and about his experience at the Ministry of Defense. To the arguments that democratization has occurred, he countered with the argument that "democracy is what one aims at and thus what has not yet been achieved." In the case of Turkey, there is no sign at all that would indicate such an orientation. "If the Turkish government were really democratic, its position on the Armenian genocide would evolve," which "would not prevent aid for and participation in a real democratization."

As for the strategic implications of the Armenian Cause, Mr Hernu warned against any attempt to use the Armenian question to cause fear. Even though it is true that Franco-Turkish relations have been somewhat tense, partly because of the Armenian problem, recognition of the Armenian genocide does not threaten at all the integrity of NATO, which as a matter of fact has its hands full with "the Greco-Turkish litigation, which is far more important to the solidity of the Atlantic Alliance." Hence, the attitude of the current government, which claims "to be strengthening its ties with Turkey" to accelerate democratization, and to this end dodges vital humanitarian facts, in the name of strategic interests, is not valid.

In conclusion, Charles Hernu was anxious to dissociate the Armenian Cause from any reopening of the question of Turkish participation in an alliance: "The Armenian Cause is an end in itself, not an element of propaganda," thus withering the strategic argument used by elements hostile to the Armenian Cause. Finally, he emphasized the significant amount of work which remains to be directed toward the Turkish people to make a Turkish-Armenian dialogue possible.

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PRESIDENT CLARIFIES ECONOMIC REFORM MEASURES

Baghdad AL-THAWRAH in Arabic 31 Mar 87 pp 1, 3, 4

[Article: "The Commander Writes: Why We Have Turned the Workers into Employees: The Birth of the Law Is Natural, Healthy and Revolutionary"]

[Text] Our comrade commander President Saddam Husayn has asserted that the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party is not a class party but is the party of all the other social classes in the society, that is, is the party of all the people, whether that is in its long- and near-term goals, its internal organizational structure or its policies expressing that in accordance with time, circumstances and resources.

In an essay titled "Why have we turned the workers into employees?" the president and commander said that revolution, in the platform of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party, was not just an objective.

His excellency added that our party has not emerged and taken form in the well known manner, but rather has been formed through a natural birth out of the womb of the nation, in order to reconstitute the structure of the nation in its social texture, its economic powers, the method of distribution and development of wealth in it and in the construction of its political system in a manner where it will be able to realize happiness for the members of the Arab nation in healthy circumstances.

The president stated that the formation of the party has not been one of peasants or workers only but that it has emerged as a broad formation of the people, although the peasants and workers are the major fabric in it, because their actual state, and the state of their parents, has imbued them with a feeling in advance which has made them quicker and more responsive than others to the goals of the party.

The president and commander said that the principle in the rectification of deviation did not emerge out of revenge against the deviant but through the victory of the people and revenge against the erroneous course and unjust circumstances, by halting everything that caused the evil to endure first of all, replacing the erroneous course by the proper course and changing the circumstances which permitted the appearance of exploitation, debasement,

repression and subjugation, at which point, if anyone insisted on pursuing the road of deviation, the laws of the revolution would be sufficiently decisive to protect the course and protect the people.

Our comrade and commander Saddam Husayn stressed that when the magnitude of the revolution is insufficient, job opportunities are few and unemployment increases, and, at the same time, the government cannot increase the workers' revenues and improve their social lives. Therefore, guaranteeing the unity of the statute of labor among employees and workers on the one hand at the time of work and eliminating everything that will lead to contradictions and the lack of harmony psychologically or in actual conditions is a matter of the utmost importance and, when it is realized, is reflected with comprehensive positive effects on the watchword of the creation and development of the revolution and increases and improvement in production.

The commander stated, "There is an undoubted desire that the step we are taking be understood and convincing, not just to the revolutionaries at higher levels of responsibility but also to the majority of the citizens, at least, or that the majority have grasped the step and believed in it after its declaration and explanation at least, so that we will thereby realize a basic goal, which at the same time is an effective means toward changing society, that is, expanding the base of participation in decisionmaking responsibility."

Why have we turned the workers into employees who are their equals in terms of rights and obligations?

What are the premises and theoretical and practical intellectual bases from which this decision has proceeded?

I have spoken on more than one occasion about this subject, whether in meetings of the party's regional command, in meetings of the Revolutionary Command Council or in the Council of Ministers.

Some of this discussion has been published and some has not. Although the essence, spirit and theoretical and practical intellectual bases may be sufficiently clear to the Iraqis, because they have accepted this decision with a great satisfaction which has not just been confined to the workers, the questions and requests for information from an ambassador of the socialist countries concerning this decision and his request for further clarification from an official body in the government drew my attention to the need to summarize our ideas on this subject and that which is related to it directly or indirectly -- if only in an abbreviated form because comprehending all the details at once in a single article might not be possible.

The Arab Socialist Ba'th Party is not a class party. That is, it is not the party of only a single class or a party of two classes in the society; is not the party of the workers alone, or the party of the class of the peasants alone, or the party of the two together alone; rather, it is their party and the party of all the other social classes in the society. That is, it is the party of all the people, whether that is in terms of its near and long-term goals, its internal organizational structure or its policies expressing that in accordance with the time, circumstances and resources.

In summarizing this, we say that the Ba'th party is the party of the people in terms of intentions and hopes and also in terms of combative policies and application.

On the bases of this beginning which our party made, which it concentrated on in its conception, and without which, I believe, it will not be possible to realize the process of the resurgence of the Arab nation and attainment of its goals, because the process of national resurgence, while it began with the few people who are the vanguard of the nation, will nonetheless not be realized in its comprehensive, deep manner unless it includes the nation and the people from the farthest reaches and unless the light of the new spirit and its encouraging forms extend forward into all the corners of the nation and the people:

Therefore, revolution, in the platform of the Arab Socialist Ba'th party, has not been just an objective and the party has not been formed just to carry out such a duty, that is, a coup against a regime or political regimes which did not realize the goals of the people because they were backward, treasonous or deficient for some reason.

Similarly, our party has not emerged and has not assumed form in the well known manner where societies, from the economic and social standpoint, have been divided into classes, some of which are exploitative and some of which are exploited. Rather, it has taken form through a natural birth from the womb of the nation in order to reconstitute and rebuild the nation in its social fabric and in its social powers, the method of distribution, the development of the revolution in it and the building of its political system in a manner where it would be able to realize happiness for the people of the Arab nation in healthy circumstances and express their national personality and human role in proper circumstances and in a proper course.

From this, it is clear to us that the nation needs all its people for this course, and not one or two classes within it to the exclusion of the others.

However, although, from the realistic standpoint, the feeling for these principles, belief in them, enthusiasm for them and acceptance of sacrifice on their behalf is not restricted to one class to the exclusion of others, as we have said, drawing up the proportion of people who accept them during the stages of struggle and accept the requirements of sacrifice in order to realize them must in one way or another be connected to people who feel the importance of these principles in their public and private lives, that is, their importance in their private family lives and their importance in their lives and futures as citizens within the people and the nation.

Since the goals and the objective are an all-inclusive state, the people who rallied under the banner of the struggle of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party before the July revolution were people who did not just sense the reality of life in its economic aspects but also sensed the considerations which are to be rejected in life in a comprehensive manner in the domestic and national contexts, that is, people who had greater belief and awareness than others in this path, whether that was in the power of vision of the deduction founded on perspicacity and theoretical vision or the ability to make a

connection between the negative social and economic phenomena in the actual condition of the people.

Therefore, the formation of the party was not just one of workers or peasants; rather, it emerged as a broad framework of the people, although the peasants and workers have been the major fabric in it, because their situation, and the situation of their fathers, has imbued them with a feeling in advance which has made them quicker and more responsive than others to the goals of the party.

As soon as our party was understood in its actual state among the workers and peasants, its spread in their circles before the revolution became unparalleled -- indeed, before the revolution the circles of the peasants were approximately closed off in favor of our party.

It is natural that we should say that while it feels and deeply interacts with the actual condition of oppressed groups and classes, and places the priority of changing this actual condition in its program, the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party does not forget that its responsibility is broader and more comprehensive and that it concerns the society as a whole, concerning, as well, members of the society who acted badly or deviated from the smooth road when the chance to reform them has been provided, because the party of the Arab revolution does not succumb to the error of imagining that people who deviate do not lie under its responsibility as far as reforming their deviation is concerned.

Therefore, the principle in the rectification of deviation did not emerge out of revenge against the deviant but through the victory of the people and revenge against the erroneous course and unjust circumstances, by halting everything that caused the evil to endure first of all, replacing the erroneous course by the proper course and changing the circumstances which permitted the appearance of exploitation, oppression, debasement and subjugation by replacing them with new circumstances which would permit people's minds, consciences and spirits to become receptive to another approach and exercise their humanity and national and domestic role within a proper situation.

At that point, if there are people who insist on pursuing the road of deviation, the laws of the revolution will be sufficiently decisive to protect the course and protect the people.

From this, it is plainly clear why our party has not inflamed the class struggle and has concentrated on it intellectually only in the context of making the people concerned perceive the need to change this state of affairs, and its replacement has occurred not through union attempts isolated from the people but rather through comprehensive revolution, in order to realize all the people's goals.

The workers' unions in Iraq were formed as a reflection of their counterparts in various countries of the world and as a sort of practical expression of the solidarity of the class of workers in order to improve those actual conditions in their economic and social life which could be improved

in the relative sense in the context of the tyrannical political, legal, economic and social statutes.

They performed their duties within the stage of the struggle in this context and in the context of broader interaction with the people's national and domestic causes, out of realization, on the part of the fighting men who assumed charge of an aspect of their affairs or were assigned the duty of mobilizing the unions along this road, of the interconnection among goals and methods and the objectives of the workers and the objectives of the people, crowned by a profound, comprehensive awareness of the actual condition of the people, the nation, its hopes and the proper road which would lead to their happy future, namely, that change in the actual condition of the workers cannot be realized without a change in the actual conditions of all the people -- although we do not rule out of our consideration the modest improvement the union struggle at that time managed to realize, which is an achievement one must strive to realize and not neglect while waiting for comprehensive victory to be achieved.

The principle from which the people set forth in building the society of the revolution must be a single one in its human value and in the initial line, that is, the line of the beginning of the course, whether in the theoretical or applied and scientific aspects, or others. Without a feeling that the people are living in the midst of a life without differences, except those that objective criteria and the just process of the society of the revolution dictate, it is not possible for the revolution to build the society we have talked about and it is not possible for the goals we have talked about to be realized.

No one can object to differences in incomes among members of the society that are founded on a difference in academic education or the degree of risk, the degree of skill, the degree of danger or the type of result which makes A's effort distinct from that of B; however, the situation is different when the differences are founded on bases which have been passed on from a circumstance, course or state that preceded the revolution.

Part of this is the presence of two different titles which differ in psychological and social value, indeed even in revenues -- that of the employee and of the worker, although they work together in the context of the socialist system to realize common economic, social, cultural or other results.

This sort of label and the differences that are connected to it were reflected even on the workers' offspring in the form of differences which were not ones of principle or practical -- reflected, for instance, on the allotments given to the son and wife of a worker, making them less than the allotments added to the salary of an employee in the event he fathered a child or was married (1).

Since this sort of difference involves no practical justification, it is natural that we should say that it has no justification in principle, except to fall prey to the influence of the vestiges of the circumstances of the period before the revolution and its divisive class notions of society.

We must say that such jarring circumstances were not remedied even in the labor law issued after the revolution, although that law did impart a

quantum leap to the life of the worker at that time, and there is no scope for comparing it with any law in the third world or in our country before the revolution.

However, while this labor law contained such flaws, and others, which put the worker in a human and psychological position which was lower than that of the employee, it dealt with some matters related to workers in a manner which was founded on the complex and the survival of class differences, the complex of oppression between employers and workers, and the conception of its survival, and it did not enter into its consideration that the worker now lay within in the framework of the society of the revolution and its laws.

The bulk of the workers are now part of the socialist sector and its laws.

Such forms of treatment inflicted extreme harm on production and common collective cohesion and action in order to realize a single objective.

The legislators at the time forgot, or it did not occur to them, that an important measure of the happiness of man which we hope for is realized only by using capacities to their maximum, which will increase production, improve its quality and realize economic returns for the investor. Otherwise, people will appear who will say that the capitalist system is better, because it realizes an economic return for the investor and thus permits the growth of wealth and an increase in job opportunities which are positively reflected in the improvement of the life of the workers from the economic and other standpoints, while the return on investment in the socialist system is mediocre.

When the volume of wealth grows small, job opportunities are fewer and unemployment increases. At the same time, the government cannot increase workers' incomes and improve their social lives in circumstances of this sort.

Therefore, guaranteeing unity in the labor statute with respect to employees and workers in terms of work hours and abrogating everything that will lead to contradiction and a lack of harmony psychologically or in actual conditions is a matter of the utmost importance and when it is achieved reflects comprehensive positive effects on the watchword of the creation and development of the revolution and the increase and improvement of production.

Rather than combining employees and workers under the workers' statute, for example, that is, calling the employees workers and depriving them of the achievement of a title by which and through which they have been treated for decades, and which they considered better from all standpoints than the title of worker (and the actual condition of the laws and daily treatment actually led to that), we took the road which we usually take, which is to avoid as much as possible taking something from anyone in order to give it to someone else when we decide to give someone an achievement.

Thus, all the measures of the revolution took the course of correcting deviation, not by taking rights or achievements away from others but rather by giving to the deprived the achievements they deserved, which could be given in light of the revolution's circumstances and resources.

Therefore, rather than taking away the title, character and designation of employee, we have given it to the workers, all have become employees and all have thus formed ranks along a single line of evaluation and social worth, at a single starting line in terms of the evaluation of work and work output.

It remains for us to say that the title of worker and his main activities have been connected, since they emerged in Europe, have been connected to labor and physical effort and the "other" levels of people have been connected to the responsibility of management and thinking regarding any development and innovation related to it. Now, technology and its uses have evolved to the point where many of the machines being used and some sections of factories are now working only with direct supervision on the part of persons with higher specializations, indeed with specialized manual and intellectual work together, which aligns another factor which is connected to work and work output in a firm manner with the factors we have already referred to that have a connection to the new law, and this has turned workers into employees in the government and has made them equal in terms of rights and obligations.

This law has facilitated the work of all persons with scientific specializations, whatever their rank might be, at machines alongside their employee colleagues who are assigned manual work only, or manual and intellectual work at the same time.

Someone might ask, if this is your conviction in principle and practice with respect to this subject, and you have come up with the measures and laws you have come up with and to which you have referred, why have these measures of yours been postponed for a period of 18 years since the first time of the victory of the revolution, when it succeeded in eliminating the political system and what was connected to it on 17-30 July 1968?

In order that some of the background to the answer may be understood on the practical and intellectual levels, we must remember the statement which holds that eliminating a regime that is rejected might be much easier than building a new one on its ruins, not just because the process of destruction is easier than the process of construction but also because the old regime, and what is connected to it and what it inherited from previous stages, have created erroneous notions and left a heavy legacy in the context of life in its social, economic, political, cultural and legal aspects.

More important than that, the legacy we faced in the form of the accumulation of problems and deviant notions was not totally restricted to a few rulers or beneficiaries connected to their regime, deviates or wayward persons; rather, some of what is to be rejected in accordance with the principles and policies we are striving toward have penetrated into the minds and conduct of good citizens. Some of them might be revolutionaries themselves. Some people might be struck with amazement when they hear that some revolutionaries have been affected by some notions or conduct that was rejected in the form of the legacy of the past. Lest their amazement endure, we can say that revolutionaries were citizens and a living part of the social life of the society before the revolution, and they belong to families which might contain fathers, grandfathers and sons.

Although the son has been a revolutionary, the father and the grandfather and the family in general must have influenced him in respect to some notions and conduct which they had become accustomed to in their social life and their behavioral life in general, which the succession of circumstances of the past had imparted, and he might not look upon such notions as, or it might not occur to the minds of many citizens that they are, a situation that contradicts the notions of the revolution, because understanding of the form the society of the revolution must assume on the ruins of the regime the revolution brought down does not uniformly exist in the minds of all sincere citizens who supported the revolution in the stages of its struggle and its formation in the circumstances of secret action, or after the triumph of the revolution.

In addition, it is not to be assumed or presupposed that such notions exist in the minds of all revolutionaries, if they were in the conceptions or in the applied forms of conceptions. Such phenomena which are transferred from the old society will go on, and indeed did actually go on, after the first years of the revolution. Moreover, it is not to be assumed that comprehensive, profound revolutionary awareness of the outlines and details of the society of the revolution, and the form it must assume in its constitutional, legal, social and cultural structure, actually will take shape before the process of construction is carried out in the society of the revolution, especially in the case of an experiment such as that of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party, which was not based totally or in part on any experience with government prior to the July 1968 revolution.

Therefore, the pursuit of the experience occurred. Part of it was that the proper conceptions should precede the steps required in action in practice, if they were founded on prior conclusions from the results of the presence of the interaction of elements which we could sense in the form of phenomena, expressions, the establishment of subsequent steps on the basis of criteria derived from steps similar to them or similar measures and procedures that would be connected to them, and indeed, even the proper deduction of attempts and errors, and therefore attempts along the proper road. In spite of all that, the general line of the principles of the revolution and the living conscience of revolutionaries, and the theory of action which assumed its proper course as the genuine maturation of the revolution, were our best guide along the upright road which entailed the fewest errors and concomitant sacrifices possible for such a great revolution, which has changed all aspects of life and changed man in the deepest radical proper way possible connected to its stage, its time and its circumstances.

It would not have been sufficient for us to take the proper step in the light of proper previous conceptions. Rather, the undoubted desire was and still is that the step we take should be understood and convincing not to the revolutionaries at the higher levels of responsibility alone but also to most citizens at least, or that the majority should have grasped the step and believed in it after its declaration and explanation at least, and we would thereby realize a basic goal, which at the same time is an effective means along the road to changing society, that is, expanding the base of participation in the responsibility of decisionmaking, even when the initiative in its regard at any of the stages of the formation and maturity of the participation is on the part of a single person.

To summarize everything we have mentioned in this regard, we believe that the course of history, in its formation and the depiction of its course and its tendencies, is not to be judged by a single factor or a single element of life and what is connected to it; rather, it is the product of the action and interaction of material and spiritual aspects in general, regardless of the part a given element might play in it on the basis of preponderant weight within a specific stage or situation.

Man's role in all this is one of leadership and will, not one of capitulation. However, man, for his part, is not a state that is sheltered from being influenced in the negative or positive sense by the overall material or spiritual factors that are connected to him, even when he creates part of them through the action of his imagination or his tangible work.

Therefore, the legal legislation by which man changes an aspect of life is not a state that is abstracted from its circumstances; rather, it is the act of conscious will within its circumstances, although it has by law transcended a given circumstance or changed the elements in it through the action of the influence of the new legislation.

Therefore, in any event, it is not a context or theoretical conception of commitments and rights only but also a social, intellectual and practical product and a maturation of an actual state of life, at a time when it is a leader in it and organizer of the course of vital aspects of it.

Because of all this, the law transforming the workers of the socialist sector into employees, equal to them in terms of rights and obligations, has come at its proper time and its birth has been normal, healthy and revolutionary at the same time.

Moreover, does not the insistence on the part of the command of the revolution on applying these notions now mean that the revolution and revolutionaries are still young people along the road to applying the notions of the revolution and the notions of its great leader, the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party?

Many of the revolutions of the third world resort to talk and media more than to legislation and application, or, when time passes, forget the principles of the initial takeoff as a result of a failure to apply them or for any of the reasons that remove the course of life from the initial declaration or declarations of the revolution and its principles.

The July revolution and its principles are always present in the details of life and the course of our great people, because its principles are genuine and because the revolutionaries who are leading it believe in these principles, not in an emotional or haphazard way but in a comprehensive, deep way which continues indefinitely.

Thus, although 18 years have elapsed since the start of the revolution, and although it is on the verge of completing the 19th year of its life, its self-sacrifice will continue and it will be deeper and more comprehensive than the initial line, now that it has become enriched with the accumulation

of experience and the deepening of vision that the exercise of responsibility and the proficiency of the steps of action in it have entailed. Onward.

(1) These differences were eliminated in accordance with Revolutionary Command Council Decree 652 of 18 May 1981, and workers are on a par with employees in this regard.

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MAPAM MEMBER DISCUSSES MEETINGS WITH PALESTINIANS

Cairo AL-MUSAWWAR in Arabic 13 Mar 87 pp 28-30

[Interview with MAPAM Member Latif Duri, by Busaynah al-Bayli: "Important Interview With MAPAM Member Latif Duri, Who Broke the Knesset Law and Talked With the Palestinians!" date and place not specified]

[Text] This interview is important because it is with MAPAM Member Latif Duri, who is charged with breaking the terrorism law, which considers it the ultimate crime to merely talk with the PLO! For this reason, he has been asked to appear before an Israeli court. However, he will in turn say to his judges, "I accuse the Israeli government of totally denying the Palestinian people, and ignoring the outstretched hand of peace which we grasped in Romania!"

Before starting this interview, we must shed some light on MAPAM Member Latif Duri and on the new political trends which have begun to appear in Israel these days, so that we can recreate our subject's intellectual background in light of the demands, within Israel, for dialog with the PLO.

MAPAM Member Latif Duri was born in Iraq in 1936, and immigrated to Israel when he was 15 years old. He studied Oriental studies, and began his political activity in 1959. At present he works as a journalist for the MAPAM journal AL-MARSAD. In the past he has held several party positions, including secretary of the guidance department, youth section official, and secretary of the Sephardic sects department. Since 1980, he has worked in the party's Arab affairs center. He represented MAPAM at international conferences in Europe and America, until the party suspended his membership because of his contacts with the PLO, charging him with breaking the Israeli terrorism law which prohibits any contacts between Palestinians in the PLO and Israelis.

Today he works as secretary for the Israeli-Palestinian Dialog Committee, which was founded by some Sephardic Jews and which organized the Bucharest meeting, the first meeting between Israelis and members of the PLO.

Therefore, the significance of this interview derives from the importance of the call for a just peace now being raised in Israel by the peace movement, which wants to initiate dialog with the Palestinians in order to arrive at an ideal format for peace and stability.

Why the Dialog Committee Was Established

[Question] You and the delegation which accompanied you to Romania to meet with members of the PLO all belong to the Israeli-Palestinian Dialog Committee. How did the idea of such a committee arise?

[Answer] At the initiative of some Sephardic Jews, we established the Israeli-Palestinian Dialog Committee in mid-1986. There were several reasons for this. First of all, over the past 40 years--ever since the state of Israel was founded--the [Arab] official information media have not desisted from their policy of denigrating members of the Sephardic Jewish sects, describing us as "enemies of the Arabs," "supporters of right-wing elements," and other such falsehoods which we will not repeat here. Secondly, ethnic and sectarian discrimination has become a feature of Israeli society, with the ruling Ashkenazi (Western) majority discriminating between Sephardic Jews and the Arab citizens on the one hand, and between Ashkenazi and Sephardic Jews on the other hand. Third, we have reached a crucial decision--to recognize the Palestinian people's rights to self-determination. Because of all this and more, we feel that we must broadcast a truer picture of the Sephardic Jews, especially since many of them belong to the peace camp. They, in turn, must participate in the ongoing struggle to achieve a just peace between ourselves and our Arab neighbors in general and the Palestinian people in particular.

[Question] How many of you are there?

[Answer] There are 100 founding members, all of them Sephardic Jews, from 52 towns in Israel.

[Question] Do they hold important positions in Israeli society?

[Answer] They include university professors such as Professor Sassoon Sumij, the expert on Najib Mahfuz' writings; Haifa University Professor Sami Samuhah; the well-known author Shimon Balas; and Professor Dr. Firit Harbil, director of the social sciences section of the Social Research Organization. There are doctors, lawyers, officers, housewives, and university students as well.

[Question] Is it a legally registered committee?

[Answer] Yes.

[Question] Have there been any objections to the committee's name?

[Answer] The registry of organizations cannot censor this name or that, except in the case of "blatant racial discrimination." For example, it will refuse to register a group using "anti-Arab" or "expel the Arabs from Israel" in its name. This does not mean that there are no racist societies hiding under acceptable names.

[Question] Could you give us examples of some of these racist societies?

[Answer] There is, for example, the fascist "Kahana" movement, which calls itself Kakh, meaning "Thus", and the fanatic expansionist "Gush Emunin," meaning "Bloc of the Faithful", and the fascist Tehiya party, meaning "Rebirth."

[Question] Are there any other committees calling for peace besides yours?

[Answer] There are other intellectual trends on the Israeli scene besides the Israeli-Palestinian Dialog Committee, such as "the East for Peace" movement, whose members are Moroccan Jews. There is firm cooperation between us in various activities. You may be wondering about the "Black Jews," who have raised their banner against sectarian discrimination. They are scattered and have all joined different parties; one of their leaders now represents the Communist Rakah Party in the Knesset.

[Question] Who makes up the dialog committee?

[Answer] Today, after only one year, we have thousands of supporters attending all our meetings and taking part in our national and local activities everywhere. I might point out that the number of our supporters increased following our Bucharest meeting with the PLO last November.

[Question] Is this a yardstick of Israeli public opinion?

[Answer] When it was announced that we were going to meet with PLO members, the official information media and right-wing parties, and of course the government, launched a large-scale campaign. The reason for this was the law "prohibiting terrorism," passed last 5 August, which can be considered a terrorist law in its own right because it makes such a meeting a crime and is therefore against dialog and peace. It should be noted that this law was passed 2 months after our party was registered. Obviously we were one of the reasons why the government imposed this law. It was afraid of our meeting with the PLO, and rejected it, considering the PLO a terrorist organization.

[Question] How did the Israeli-Palestinian meeting in Bucharest come about?

[Answer] The meeting took place after earlier negotiations between us and the PLO which were arranged by the Organization of Romanian Writers, the honorary president of which is Romania's President Ceaucescu. During these negotiations, agreement was reached on the details of the meeting. This was very difficult because of the threats against us, most importantly the statement by the Israeli government's legal counsel, who said, "Whoever goes to Romania will wind up in prison." In addition, there were threats that we would be fired, and other such pressures, which forced some members of the delegation to withdraw. On the other hand, our brothers, the members of the Palestinian delegation, received death threats from Abu-Nidal's Rejection Front, which bombed the Romanian embassy in Beirut on the day of the meeting. Nonetheless it was a historic meeting in which many people from the Israeli and the Palestinian sides participated. In fact, if it were not for Romania and the part it played, this conference would never have been held. The Romanian government stood firm in the face of all the Israeli pressure to prevent the meeting. Prime Minister Shimon Peres and Foreign Minister Yitzhaq

Shamir met with the Romanian ambassador and asked the Romanian Foreign Ministry to change its mind about hosting the Israeli delegation because it was a violation of the law. But Romania ignored all of this and continued making preparations for the meeting. The Romanian government even issued an official statement, which was published in the Romanian Communist Party paper, praising the meeting and expressing the government's confidence that it was doing its duty to bring peace to the Middle East.

[Question] How many on both sides took part in the meeting? Who were the most important persons who attended?

[Answer] More than 50 persons from both sides took part. The meeting was the first such open meeting since the beginning of the Israeli-Arab conflict, with more than 150 newsmen from various news agencies attending the meeting and giving it broad coverage. On the Israeli side, 22 persons attended, led by Latif Duri, and including the well-known Orientalist Samhah Falaban, Reserve Colonel Dov Barmi, Authoress and EL HAMISHMAR Literary Editor Yael Lutan, Hebrew University Professor Reuben Kamner, and the well-known journalist Odette Lifschitz. The Palestinian delegation was composed of 27 high-level persons, led by Reserve Colonel 'Abd-al-Razzaq al-Yahya, member of the PLO Executive Committee and PLO representative in Jordan, and including Authoress Raymonda al-Tawil, Yasir 'Arafat's Advisor on Israeli Affairs 'Imad Shaqur, PLO Representative in Greece Dr Fu'ad al-Bitar, SAWT AL-BILAD AL-FILASTINI Editor Salih Salam, and others.

[Question] What was the agenda for the meeting?

[Answer] There was a reception, and then a 2-hour official meeting, and then an evening meeting.

[Question] Was there any tension or apprehension at the reception?

[Answer] We could say that there was some difficulty over where we should begin.

[Question] And where did you begin?

[Answer] We began by talking about generalities and reviewing the threats received by both sides. One of the members of the Palestinian delegation commented to me, "When you return to your country, you may be faced with prison. When we return, we may be faced with assassination!"

We all completely avoided digging up the past, and instead looked ahead to opening up a blank new page in direct relations.

[Question] What important questions were brought up?

[Answer] There were some questions as to just how strong the peace camp in Israel is, and how much weight the Sephardic Jews in particular carry. We said, with complete frankness and an open heart, that as far as we are

concerned the peace camp in Israel is still weak, but that there have been some positive signs recently, since new people from the Sephardic Jewish sects have been joining this camp. We also stressed that each new meeting with each new wave from both sides will inevitably impel us strongly towards peace, which in turn will weaken the now-strong Israeli rejection front.

[Question] What kind of discussions took place?

[Answer] There were no discussions, but there was complete agreement on holding the international conference, since it is the best way to resolve the issue.

[Question] What did the Palestinian delegation's speech propose, and what did the Israeli side's speech cover?

[Answer] In his speech, 'Abd-al-Razzaq al-Yahya explained the many steps which the PLO has taken to prove its desire for a just peace, the most recent being the open agreement to hold an international conference for peace in the Middle East. The Israeli government is opposed to this and is demanding that the PLO be excluded from it. 'Abd-al-Razzaq al-Yahya praised the courage of the Israeli delegation's members.

I, as head of the Israeli delegation, outlined the delegation's stand in support of the Palestinian people's right to determine their own destiny, to terminate the hateful occupation, and to establish an independent Palestinian state alongside Israel, led by the PLO in its capacity as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. I also explained our support for the international peace conference.

[Question] What happened in the evening meeting?

[Answer] The real, open dialog occurred during the evening dinner. Not only were political issues discussed, as during the official discussions, but the evening talk extended to our human feelings, our families, our children, and all our everyday matters. We could even say that the common denominator of this meeting was downright humanity. I remember what our Palestinian sister Dr. Rashidah Mihran, an author and member of the Palestinian delegation, wrote: "By the end of the evening, we all said good-bye to one another. Tears shone in the women's eyes as they expressed their hope that the next meeting would be in our independent state, and that we would all attain peace."

As for my colleagues and myself, we felt that we had known our Palestinian brothers for a long time. Our discussions had not been the least bit restrained, which gave to the entire mission an atmosphere of love and friendship.

[Question] What happened after the first meeting and your return to Israel?

[Answer] When we came home from Romania, we found a positive change in Israeli public opinion. The meeting actually proved that it was possible to hold a peaceful discussion with the Palestinian side, and to agree to continue this dialog, on the basis of both sides' true desire for a just peace. To give you an idea of the extent of the transformation in Israeli public

opinion: when we left Lodd Airport on 5 November, there were demonstrations against us by mobs of followers of the fascist Rabbi Kahana. But when we returned 24 hours later, we were met by two demonstrations, one against us and the other for us, in which scores of Sephardic Jews and Arabs took part, carrying bouquets of flowers and placards in support of us. But as soon as we entered the airport arrival lounge, four members of the delegation were arrested, including myself as head of the delegation. We were handed orders to appear before the court for having broken the terrorism law, and we were then released. The trial was to begin on Monday 9 March 1987 (i.e. 3 days before this interview was published.)

[Question] But what do you think of those who say that the PLO agreed to this meeting knowing that you were not an official front, and that this was a waste of effort which might be directed towards a larger, more significant issue?

[Answer] If that had been the case, then the PLO would not have agreed to the meeting or welcomed it.

[Question] So can you--a mere popular committee--exert pressure on the government?

[Answer] Relatively speaking, we can.

The Significance Of the Next Meeting

[Question] What comes after the first meeting? How important can any number of such meetings be as long as you represent only yourselves?

[Answer] There will be a new delegation to hold a new meeting, in order to deepen and expand the dialog to include even more Sephardic Jews. That means that the next delegation, whose departure will coincide with the trial, will include more Sephardic Jews than the first delegation, which consisted mostly of Ashkenazi Jews.

In my opinion, the multitude of delegations and meetings will be one of the most important, fundamental factors in deepening the dialog and assuring the peace process, and will play a large part in influencing Israeli public opinion and therefore the government. In short, we are not conducting official negotiations, for that is the government's affair. But we believe that the dialog we are conducting will prepare the way for such negotiations.

[Question] But in light of what you said about a new delegation's departure for another discussion with the PLO, don't you expect the government to forbid its departure, in accordance with the law?

[Answer] If the government wanted to do so, it could, in accordance with the emergency mandate laws which have been in force since 1948. But I think that the government will not resort to this measure because that would cause a violent upheaval in Israeli society.

[Question] What do you think about the debate which the Israeli-Palestinian Dialog Committee stirred up in the Knesset, which held several sessions to discuss the terrorism law which forbids any Israeli from meeting with any member of the PLO? And what do you think of the harsh stand MAPAM took against you, even though it is against this law?

[Answer] MAPAM's objections—which I do not agree to—are based on the pretext of its obligation not to break any Israeli law, no matter what it is or how objectionable it is. I don't agree with this, especially since all the leftists in the Knesset have described this law as a sheer disgrace, a despicable, cowardly law. Therefore, the party leadership has decided to relieve me of my position in the Arab affairs center.

[Question] What do you think of the MAPAM secretary general's statement that those who went to the Bucharest meeting did not know with whom they would be meeting, and did not know what would happen when they returned? Does this mean that you acted without any purpose, or that you are now operating with the wisdom of hindsight?

[Answer] The MAPAM secretary general's remark was made during the session held the day we left Israel. I believe that this opinion became secondary and baseless following our accomplishment, which the writer Najib Mahfuz has described as "the first legitimate meeting."

[Question] Could we say that the Israeli citizens have begun re-examining the Palestinian issue?

[Answer] No doubt something like that happened during the first stage of the peace initiative, but afterwards the policy of the Israeli government—which invaded Lebanon--reneged on this principle. Even so, we must not forget the demonstrations and mass protests against this war which spread across the country, particularly after the Sabra and Shatila massacre. We believe that broad segments of the population, especially the young people, understand that a just peace is inevitable. Here I might refer to the mission of the Romanian meeting and the hardships it faced. In spite of everything, it carried on, which in itself is a partly positive development.

[Question] What is the role of the Israeli-Palestinian Dialog Committee, which brings together an intellectual and literary elite?

[Answer] Its role is reflected in several joint cultural activities which we have undertaken with Palestinian writers and professors in the occupied territories. In recent weeks, after the Israeli government expelled Akram Haniyah, my friend and editor of the Palestinian paper AL-SHA'B, there were widespread protests in which scores of Jewish and Arab writers rejected the unjust expulsion order. We know very well that they suspected him of being a leader of the FATAH movement within the occupied territories, but I still believe that the expulsion order was intended to intimidate other Palestinian personages. Two weeks ago in Jerusalem, we held a joint meeting with tens of Palestinians under the auspices of the Arab Studies Society, the chairman of which is Faysal al-Husayni, the son of the well-known hero 'Abd-al-Qadir al-Husayni. We talked about the importance of dialog following our trip to Romania, and it was generally agreed to continue meeting with the Palestinians.

[Question] What books have been written recently about Arab-Israeli issues?

[Answer] A few days ago a book entitled ANNIHILATION was published by Reserve Colonel Dov Barmi, a member of the dialog committee. He was kicked out of the army after publishing this book, written in Arabic, which disclosed the scandals of the Israeli invasion of Lebanon. At the same time Ashkenazi Reserve Major Jehosaphat Harkabi published a book entitled COMMON DESTINIES, which stirred up a great outcry in Israeli society because it demanded negotiations with the PLO and recognition of the Palestinian people's right to self-determination. The book cautioned against continuing the current policy, because that would lead to the collapse of the Israeli state and Israeli society, particularly because of the past 20 years' of occupation.

Is It All a Big Act?

[Question] What do you think of Peres' recent visit to Egypt, which took place because of his desire for an international peace conference?

[Answer] We know very well that Peres' recent initiative, and what happened before and after it, was all a big act, because no one who really wants a just peace can say yes to an international conference and then lay down ten preconditions, the foremost being a demand to exclude the PLO.

[Question] Since your group feels so strongly about this, how do you think the conflict can be resolved?

[Answer] We have openly declared that peace must rest on three basic principles: recognition of the Palestinian people's right to self-determination, establishment of an independent Palestinian state alongside Israel, and recognition of the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. Shimon Peres and his party meet none of these principles.

[Question] What is your opinion of Peres' and Shamir's stands?

[Answer] Peres appears to categorically disagree with Prime Minister Shamir, who has declared his total rejection of the international conference. However, in leftist circles the prevailing belief is that there is no fundamental difference between the two, because if Peres were serious about his stand, he would have to ask Shamir to agree to go to the international conference. If Shamir refused, Peres would have to call an election in which the Israeli people would decide between the two sides. Unless Peres takes this step, the whole situation will remain a big act.

[Question] Why do the Likud and Labor parties insist on not having the PLO represented?

[Answer] The reason is clear; they are not ready to pay the price for peace, which consists of returning all the occupied territories.

[Question] What do you think of the Israeli parties' prejudice against the PLO?

[Answer] It has been proven, and will be proven in the future, that all attempts by the Israeli occupation authorities to weaken the PLO's influence among the residents of the occupied areas and create an alternative to it are doomed to failure. The overwhelming majority supports the PLO. We see this day after day in the demonstrations, strikes, and other forms of resistance.

[Question] But the Israeli parties are ignoring this, and are trying to jump over the Palestinian issue. What do you think?

[Answer] The Israeli parties are not ignoring the Palestinian issue. Even if they wanted to, they cannot jump over it. The problem is how to solve the Palestinian issue, since the parties have different views about this.

[Question] You have said that there have been ongoing attempts to discriminate against the various sects. Have the Sephardic Jews suffered from this?

[Answer] The Sephardic sects are suffering from sectarian discrimination. Even though they make up 60 percent of the Jewish population, you can see that they do not hold any significant political or social positions. For example, only 20 percent of all university students are Sephardic; this is because these students cannot complete their secondary studies because their schools are inferior and lack skilled teachers, except in the big cities. The "new development towns," where a large percentage of the Sephardic Jews live, are even worse off. Therefore we find that job opportunities are not adequate, because 90 percent of the unemployed are Sephardim. Those who are working in industry or agriculture are paid very low wages which are not enough for a decent standard of living. Therefore poverty is widespread and the poorer quarters are overcrowded. No more than 10 percent of Sephardic Jews are middle class. The situation is the same in politics. For example, Sephardic Jews account for only 20 percent of all Knesset members, because the Israeli parties are dominated by Ashkenazis, as is also the case in the ministries and the official organizations. It is my opinion that if this situation continues, Israeli society will explode.

[Question] So what do you think is the solution?

[Answer] To join the existing parties. Very few Sephardic Jews belong to the various parties. If their numbers increased, they could more strongly influence the party leaders.

[Question] While this is the situation for the Sephardic Jews, what is the situation of the Arabs who have lived in Israel since 1948?

[Answer] The picture is even worse, for they are at the bottom of the social and political scale. Even though they account for 17 percent of the Israeli population, they have only six seats in the Knesset, which means that they represent only one half of one percent.

[Question] Where are their legal rights?

[Answer] There is a difference between the law and how it is applied. For example, compulsory education is the law, but even so we find that thousands of Arab children don't know how to go to school because there is a shortage of schools amounting to hundreds of schools as well as classes. It is also a fact that in Israel the land belongs to the state, but even so the Arabs suffer a severe land shortage. If one of them wants to build a house, he can't do it. And, if he builds it, it is torn down the next day. It may be that the state prefers not to give land in Jewish areas like Tel Aviv to Arabs, since there is no Arab-owned land there. They may be permitted to buy apartments, but the Jewish citizens always prefer to sell to Jews like themselves.

What About the Population of the Occupied Territories?

[Question] Under what conditions do the inhabitants of the occupied areas live?

[Answer] There is no doubt that the inhabitants of the occupied areas suffer from the occupation and the repressive measures directed against them in all areas, particularly with the growth of the iron fist policy, which in recent months has led to more and more expulsions of individuals and demolition or sequestration of their homes on the pretext that one of them might have been involved in sabotage. Their universities are closed from one day to the next as punishment for having demonstrated or gone on strike, and this affects the course of academic life. In fact, we find that today, for example, all the universities in the occupied territories are closed.

On the economic scene, more than 100,000 workers from the occupied territories work inside Israel for very low wages, without receiving any social benefits (social security, health insurance and the like). We find that 50 percent of the workers from the occupied areas are not regularly employed, by agreement with the employer, who exploits them shamelessly. Political action is absolutely forbidden.

[Question] To what extent are the Jewish settlements expanding?

[Answer] In the occupied territories there are more than 200 Israeli settlements, in which tens of thousands of Jews are living. As I see it, each one of those settlements is a stumbling block on the road to lasting peace. These settlements are constantly expanding, even to this day. The Israeli government spends hundreds of millions of dollars to beef up existing settlements and build new ones.

[Question] You have said that each settlement is a stumbling block on the road to peace. What is the easiest way to remove these stumbling blocks?

[Answer] There are two solutions. First, return the Jewish settlers to where they lived before, inside Israel, and offer them suitable compensation. The second solution is for the Israeli settlers to stay in their settlements within and under Palestinian sovereignty. This is totally dependent on Palestinian approval. I doubt if this solution can ever be implemented, especially since most of the settlers are members of the fanatical Gush Emunin.

The Progress of the Trial

[Question] When this issue of AL-MUSAWWAR is printed, you and your colleagues will already have been tried. What do you anticipate?

[Answer] I will be tried along with Writer Yael Lutan, Hebrew University Professor Reuben Kamner, and Yad Hanna Kibbutznik Eliezer Fayler. No doubt the court will convict us all of having broken the terrorism law. But we will change the trial into a political trial, and we will change ourselves from accused persons into accusers of the Israeli government, charging it with completely denying the rights of the Palestinian people, ignoring the outstretched hand of peace which we clasped in Romania, continuing the iron fist policy against the population of the occupied territories, and placing obstacles in the way of the peace process. We will destroy this terrorism law, the likes of which does not exist even in racist South Africa. We also hope to stir up a popular protest campaign in which thousands of citizens will take part, demanding repeal of the terrorism law. Finally, I would like to say that we are ready to go to prison for 3 years, which is the maximum sentence for breaking this law. Two Palestinians, Sa'id Hamami and Dr 'Isam al-Sartawi, have been assassinated and thrown on the altar of peace for having talked with us, and our Israeli colleague, Amil Jarin Safayik, was killed by a fanatical Israeli because he talked with the Palestinians.

[Question] In light of your visit to Egypt and your meeting with literary and political figures there, what did you notice about Egypt's stand vis-a-vis that meeting?

[Answer] I found full support for this step from all the Egyptians I met with. This is not so strange, because Egypt is doing its share to help promote peace. Therefore, I would like to take this opportunity to recall the statement made at the time by Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Dr Butrus Ghali, on behalf of the Egyptian government, supporting the Romania meeting. I would like to thank my colleagues in the Egyptian government for their continual efforts to further peace.

8559

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FAYSAL IBN FAHD DISCUSSES PHYSICAL, MORAL TRAINING OF YOUTH

London AL-HAWADITH in Arabic 13 Mar 87 pp 20,21

[Text] Observant, with a lively intellect, fastidious, well-read, keeping pace with Arab and international ideas with a rare diligence, books the ink of which is not yet dry are on his desk before they reach the market, widely cultured, vigilant, ever broad minded and alert... that is Prince Faysal Ibn Fahd, President of Saudi Arabian Youth Welfare Agency and eldest son of the Custodian of the Two Holy Places, King Fahd Ibn 'Abd-al-'Azia. When he talks his speech sparkles and shines, his elocution is brilliant and his intellect vibrant. He is patient, open hearted, never prone to anger or resentment, impetuosity or excitement the banes afflicting some of today's young people.

He is happy with the responsibility assigned to him and has become an expert practitioner and pioneer in securing new gains and opening new vistas for his task. He believes in the young and, in their glowing visages, sees the future of his nation and people and gives to them sincerely and without limit at the expense of tremendous sacrifice and an even greater obduracy in truth.

It is a very pleasant and satisfying experience to converse with Prince Faysal ibn Fahd, besides being intellectually and artistically gratifying. Youth welfare is not confined solely to physical exercise but has much wider cultural connotations that, with their constructive touches enrich the prince responsible for the young.

The interview took place in his office in Riyadh and revealed much new material, as is always characteristic of Prince Faysal Ibn Fahd who, by his very nature, rejects monotony and repetition.

[Question] For what assignment and role are young Arab people being prepared and how can we assure them the future they deserve?

[Answer] Preparing Arab youth must be established on foundations and structures necessary to enable assumption of responsibility in its general term. The future requires a generation that can shoulder responsibility and this cannot be achieved unless the present, pioneering generation attaches importance to cultivating people able to perform

such a task. Among the most important of those foundations is the emphasis on cultivating principles and ideals based on the truth, all of which abound in our heritage and values, without having to go very far in our search.

[Question] Compared with young people in the West what are the standards and scope of Arab youth and how do young people in the Gulf compare?

[Answer] Some young people in the West are living in limbo as a direct result of disparity in assessing, and concerning themselves with, values and concepts. Consequently perceptions over there are turning towards authenticity in inculcating values. Our Arab youth is still able to differentiate and discriminate and it is the duty of educators, or the leaders and authorities acting on their behalf, when cultivating young Arabs, to make use of the scientific atmosphere in which young people in Europe and elsewhere in the West find themselves. They should, at the same time, pay particular attention to principles and values so that our youth does not fall victim to the kind of intellectual confusion and behavioral perplexity that might affect the Arab nation's social structure. The young people of the Gulf are going through exactly the same experiences as their brethren in any non-Gulf Arab state. The Arabs are bound by the same history and heritage, it being impossible to differentiate between them on the basis of being Gulf or non-Gulf Arabs.

[Question] Prince Faysal Ibn Fahd is known to be very well read. Who are the Arab and western writers whose works you read?

[Answer] Reading is a hobby embracing all that is new and aesthetic. It is unreasonable to assume that one writer can take full possession of a reader. Readers select such writings as appeal to them and satisfy their needs. That is why--even though I may prefer one writer to others--I consider that this should not prevent reading outstanding work by others. This applies equally to both oriental and western writers in particular. I enjoy reading history and autobiographies.

[Question] A common mistake that many people make is to think that youth welfare is only a matter of sports, whereas in reality it covers all matters concerning Saudi And Arab youth. What celebrations or literary activities is the youth welfare presidency arranging and what sporting events is it organizing and attending?

[Answer] A careful examination of the agency's name would reveal that its responsibilities far exceed sports. The General Directorate of the Youth Welfare Agency was established to evolve and develop the abilities of young Saudis in social, cultural and sports activities. As a matter of fact we look upon the club as a sociocultural and sporting establishment giving young people the chance to practice their hobbies, whatever they may be and to use all facilities available to develop that hobby. People may be excused for thinking that the Directorate's sole task is limited to sports. The reason is that certain sports, particularly 'soccer', because of their popularity, attracts a great deal of media attention.

This is not exclusive to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, but seems to be the case everywhere else. In the Kingdom, youth welfare is concerned with organizing cultural activity programs including competitions, seminars, art exhibitions, drama, youth camps and folklore as well as adult literature and the formation of literary clubs. The agency is also responsible for awarding the State Merit Award for literature under the patronage of H.M. King Fahd Ibn 'Abd-al-'Aziz.

[Question] Is "Gulf youth" isolated from Arab society, or is it impossible to differentiate between them?

[Answer] As I have already mentioned, in my view there is no, and there should not be any, difference between those called Gulf youth and Arab youth. They are all brothers and as one. Indeed it is quite impossible to differentiate between them. This is something that I believe has never occurred to anybody in authority, whether in the Gulf region or any other part of the Arab World.

[Question] Now that young Saudis have made their mark in all kinds of sports, what kind of sporting responsibility are you readying young Saudi women for? What are their literary and cultural standards?

[Answer] At present and for the next decade, young Saudi women are being prepared to play an extremely important role in building up Saudi society and undertaking other tasks far more important than sports. The fact that so many young women are enrolling in our schools and universities bears witness to the importance of the role for which they are being prepared.

[Question] It is reported that Prince Faysal Ibn Fahd has a fully integrated project to improve the status of Saudis. What are the salient points of that project?

[Answer] The principles and foundations of the development plan are based essentially on developing the Saudis. What I have in mind, and am carrying out at present as part of my being responsible for youth, differs in no way from the principles and foundations of the development plan and is being executed in society in accordance with an integrated program in which all sectors are participating.

[Question] Is one of the agency's tasks to familiarize Gulf, Kingdom and Arab State youngsters with the perils and harm of drugs, alcohol and the like? How is this being done?

[Answer] This matter is one of the primary concerns of the directorate of the youth welfare movement and comparable agencies in the Gulf Cooperation Council countries. The dangers and harmful effects are unlimited, indeed they are the worst things Arab youth in general and in the Gulf in particular have to face. There can be little doubt that the feverish campaign being waged at present conceals some hidden motive designed to destroy this nation's people at a time when plans are being formulated for their development. We are at present, in collaboration

with other competent bodies, running a promotional campaign about the harm that can be inflicted by these dangers on young people. Other plans are also being studied by our brothers in the GCC countries, which will be revealed at the appropriate time. The security authorities are doubtlessly doing everything to combat this danger.

[Question] There are very few sporting events, especially soccer matches, between Saudi and European teams. Why?

[Answer] Because we are located in a continent other than the one in which they are, annual tournaments usually being confined to the countries of each continent. As far as soccer is concerned we do meet in friendly matches and formal international meetings.

[Question] How is H.M. the King promoting general welfare to ensure that it plays its full part?

[Answer] H.M. the King has paid, and continues to pay considerable attention to youth. This goes back to the time when he was minister of education. Currently the General Directorate of the Youth Welfare agency, its programs, plans and projects enjoy H.M.'s full support and reinforcement. Thanks to this support and interest the agency has been able to achieve many of its goals. Our programs are continuing since what we have achieved is part of what we have planned for, and part of our ambitions that will be of benefit to the Kingdom's youth and people.

[Question] You are known for your cherishment of Saudi youth, a love which is returned. Does it pain you to see a Saudi team lose a match against a Gulf or Arab team, or have you trained yourself to be an impartial referee, divested of any reactions in order to merit the position of unbiased leader?

[Answer] A person responsible for youth and sports always likes to interpret success or signs of success as a positive return for planned activity. In any encounter between a Saudi, a Gulf or any other teams, there being no particular bias since all are brothers and kin, I expect each team to do its duty according to the training program drawn up for it. In the sporting world, it is quite normal for a team to do its best, but still lose. What affects me is that the team perform as expected.

[Question] Where responsibilities are concerned, it is sometime very difficult to separate political and administrative action. Your visits to France, Egypt and Tunisia were largely political, since you conveyed messages to and from H.M. the King. How do you view Saudi relations with the three countries and what was the outcome in terms of cementing bilateral relations with those and other countries?

[Answer] My functions are in the field of youth and sports. Usually my visits to those or other countries are related to my functions. The messages I had the honor of conveying between H.M. the King and the heads of countries I visit constitute an assignment of which I am very proud.

The outcome of those visits are numerous bilateral agreements such as those with our sister-state Tunisia and with France.

[Question] You are a cultured Arab who speaks, converses and improvises well while maintaining a distinctive literary style. Have you compiled, written or published any works?

[Answer], No, but I do read a great deal and I believe that careful reading is an art in itself as well as a form of gratification.

[Question] Let us talk a little about Lebanon which you are known to care about deeply. What about its ordeal and the suffering the Kingdom shares with the Lebanese; can an end to this ordeal be expected soon?

[Answer] Lebanon's ordeal is a excruciatingly painful to me. It is a wound that has persisted too long. The pain will not cease nor the wound heal until this ordeal is lifted from the country that I love. Only the Lebanese can alleviate the trial. They have the ability, and people of sagacity and capacity, to bring to an end this tragedy that everybody finds so oppressive.

[Question] On one occasion youth and sports were used by the U.S. for political gain. A table tennis tournament was behind establishment of Sino-American relations. Will the Kingdom make use of your visit to the USSR, and receiving a sports mission from Peoples China, for similar political or other purposes?

[Answer] The Kingdom has its own clear policy based on sound foundations. It always opts for attitudes that are beneficial, not only to its people, but also to Arabs and Muslims. Our policy is unambiguous. If we find it in our interests and in the interests of our nation to establish relations with any country it will be done. The USSR has its international standing. I have visited it and spent about 16 days there. I was met with all hospitality and attention. I would like to thank them once again through the medium of this interview. The PRC mission that visited the Kingdom had a number of sports encounters with Saudi teams, and I have an invitation to visit the PRC which I shall be doing at the appropriate time. We are a nation open to all that is of benefit to our country, the Arabs and the Muslims and it goes without saying that sports offers one of the best ways for people to get to know each other.

13291/9190

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WASHINGTON CORRESPONDENT REPORTS CUT IN U.S. AID

Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 4 Apr 87 p 1

[Article by J.N. Parimoo]

[Text]

WASHINGTON, April 3.

AS a token of resentment over the Indian Prime Minister, Mr. Rajiv Gandhi's independent foreign policy, the United States House of Representatives foreign affairs committee today cut U.S. aid to India by 30 per cent.

It proposed that instead of the \$ 50 million suggested by the Reagan administration, India should get only \$ 35 million in economic aid next year. The vote was 18 to 14.

Significantly, the committee also decided to increase aid to Pakistan by 50 per cent. Also, in the case of India, the drastic cut was not made for any budgetary reasons but was meant as a signal to India that the U.S. Congress did not like its foreign policy.

Of the 18 committee members who wanted aid to India cut, four were Democrats and the rest Republicans. Of the 14 members who opposed any cut two were Republicans and 12 Democrats.

The main argument of those who wanted the cut was that India was pursuing policies that were not in line with U.S. foreign policy objectives.

It gave aid to Nicaragua, its voting pattern at the United Nations conflicted with U.S. interests, it continued to buy Soviet weapons and pursue pro-Soviet policies. Therefore, a signal should be sent to the government of India that the U.S. did not like these policies.

Those who opposed any cut in the aid argued that any reduction in the already modest figure of \$ 50 million

would cause a setback in Indo-U.S. relations at a time when the U.S. was seeking closer friendship with India. They said the \$ 50 million figure ought to be compared with the more than \$ 4,000 million economic and military aid the U.S. administration proposed to give to Pakistan in the next six years.

Senior administration officials who attended the committee meeting pleaded that aid to India had already been reduced year after year and that a further cut was not called for. But the pleas of the administration went unheeded and the cut was made.

A SIGNAL: The committee's proposal will now go before the House of Representatives, which is expected to support its decision. It is a moot point if the Senate foreign relations committee will also want to send a "signal" to India. If the Senate follows the same logic, India will get next year much less U.S. bilateral aid than ever before.

Bilateral U.S. aid to India can be divided into two categories, namely: development assistance and title two commodity grants. Title two PL 480 assistance is mostly charitable. It comprises non-repayable assistance in the form of commodities like vegetable oil dairy products like cheese and other agricultural products.

The U.S. generally sends the title two PL 480 aid through church organisations or other social welfare organisations like "CARE". A major part of title two commodities are channelled to India through the National Dairy Development Board.

There has been a steady decline in

U.S. aid to India over the past decade and a half. In the early '70s, U.S. development assistance was as high as \$ 170 million. In the last U.S. fiscal year (1986), it was only \$ 85 million. During the current fiscal year (1987), the aid came down to only \$ 53 million and the administration had recommended to Congress that, for the next year, assistance to India be kept at almost the same level as in the current year. But the house foreign affairs committee today made a drastic cut even in the \$ 50 million figure of the administration.

LOW AID: It is strange that the committee should have chosen to cut the aid to India because the aid level is already so low that there has been for the past several years now a reverse transfer of net resources.

Every year now, India is giving to the U.S. much more in the form of repayment of past loans and interest on past loans than it is getting in the shape of fresh aid. For instance, in the Indian financial year 1982-83, India paid the U.S. \$ 64.5 million more (by way of repayments and interest for past loans) than it got in the form of fresh aid. Similarly, the net transfer of resources to the U.S. from India in 1984-85 was \$ 42.9 million.

An Indian diplomat, commenting on the drastic cut made by the house committee, today said: "It is not the \$ 15 million cut that hurts. We pay them more every year than they give us in fresh aid. It is the rhetoric that is being used to justify the cut that hurts us. The U.S. policy is getting more and more militarised and cynical."

/9317

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WRITER ASSESSES INDO-SOVIET RELATIONS IN GORBACHEV ERA

Calcutta THE TELEGRAPH in English 4, 5 Apr 87

[Article by U.S. Bajpai]

[4 Apr 87 p 8]

[Text]

Sufficient time has now elapsed since Mr Mikhail Gorbachyov's visit to New Delhi last November to make a realistic assessment of it. This is opportune and necessary. In both the Soviet Union and India there are new and younger leaders trying to bring about radical changes in every sphere of life, though given the different conditions and levels of development in the two countries, their scale and form cannot be the same.

It is now generally accepted all over the world that there are startling changes in Soviet policies, both domestic and foreign. The new era dawned with Andropov; Chernenko was a hiatus but Mr Gorbachyov seems to have taken the bit between his teeth, and launched upon a course of which no one can predict the end, though the 27th Congress of the CPSU has provided a comprehensive outline of what can be expected. In India too, there are new trends with unpredictable consequences without, however, any clear design apparent so far.

In Moscow and New Delhi it was rightly recognised that it was important to make a reassessment of Indo-Soviet relations: Mrs Indira Gandhi and Leonid Brezhnev had known each other for years and the same familiarity obtained at lower levels. Now, not only the top leaders but other personnel dealing with each other have changed.

Mr Gorbachyov's pronouncements during his visit to Delhi have to be seen in the light of the Soviet Union's worldwide interests. It is a global and Asian power threatened at various points. It also has serious domestic problems. While India is high on the list of its priorities and the Soviet Union has reiterated its fidelity to the Indo-Soviet treaty, it would not like to get involved in conflict situations which do not directly affect its security.

While he did not say so Mr Gorbachyov implied that India would have to pull the chestnuts out of the fire itself which, at least in the Soviet perception, were carelessly thrown in. This seems to be a plausible interpretation of Mr Gorbachyov's various statements and fits in with the overall concept behind the new domestic and foreign policies drawn up by him.

The new leadership in the Soviet Union recognises that the many promises offered by past leaders, such as Khrushchev, that communism would overtake capitalism in the economic sphere have not been fulfilled. In a speech at Khabarovsk in 1986 Mr Gorbachyov declared: "There will be no move forward if we seek answers to the new questions in the economy and in technology by looking to the experience of the 30s, the 40s, the 50s or even the 60s and 70s. This is a different time, with different demands and different requirements."

The new catchwords are "restructuring" and "openness." There is recognition of economic and technological backwardness, compared not only to the other superpower, the US, but also to western and even some Pacific countries. Soviet deficiencies in these areas jeopardise not only its economic modernisation but its international position, and hence new foreign policy approaches are needed. If there is no sentimentality with regard to the domestic past, there is none in foreign affairs.

While the 27th party confer-

ence referred to the need for "firmness in upholding principles and positions," it stressed the necessity of "tactical flexibility and readiness for mutual acceptable compromises—the aim being not confrontation but dialogue and understanding." It was also stressed that the "security of one cannot be at the expense of another state." Indeed, the new concept is of mutual and universal security. Out of this flowed the proposals for Asian-Pacific security which were fully set out at Vladivostok, but first publicly aired during Mr Rajiv Gandhi's visit to Moscow in May 1986. If the Soviets feel the need for flexibility and compromise in the conduct of their own foreign affairs they naturally advise the same to other countries, including India.

It is worth noting some of the major changes in, or, even somersaults of Soviet foreign policy. A very major change has been the recognition that the Soviets had been too western oriented and did not really have an Asian policy. This was the result of a gradual process over the last few years made easier by Mr Gromyko's elevation. The fallout of this new orientation outlined at Vladivostok, has affected India. While the latter looms large in the Soviet's eastern horizon, other countries have come in.

The second equally, if not more vital, change in Soviet foreign policy can be seen in the field of nuclear disarmament, which really means its approach to the US. Mr Gorbachyov made proposals at the Reykjavik summit which astonished everyone. And now, he has made a radical departure from the line he adopted there and offered to negotiate on the isolated issue of the withdrawal of medium range missiles from Europe. This shows both flexibility and a desire for a dialogue in keeping with the concepts brought out at the 27th Congress.

There have been less spectacular moves: Mr Gromyko's hardline attitude towards West Germany has undergone a change and foreign minister

Hans-Dietrich Genscher was well received in Moscow; the Soviets have talked on the prospects of recognising the EEC and even having formal ties between that body and its socialist counterpart, the CMEA (Council for Mutual Economic Assistance); the offer to negotiate reduction of nuclear weapons directly with Britain and France; far-reaching concessions to China such as over the Amur River issue and the offer to enlarge the zone for conventional arms control "from the Atlantic to the Urals."

Indo-Soviet relations are of long-standing and based upon immutable geopolitical factors and a commonality of interests. True, in terms of power the relationship is an unequal one: even if it does not like the nomenclature, the Soviet Union is one of the world's two superpowers; India is neither a great military power, nor an economic factor in the international spectrum, and is in no position to play a decisive role in international issues of vital interest to the Soviet Union. Nevertheless, the latter is the only superpower which has accorded a very high priority to its relations with this country and continues to do so.

There are a number of reasons for this. The foremost is India's strategic location which is of undeniable and perhaps inestimable value to a global power in mainland Asia. The Soviets also recognise this country's potential and in private have frequently deplored the fact that India does not develop this adequately and seems to lack a will for power. China, the only comparable Asian power in terms of size and geopolitical importance and with which the Soviets are keen to normalise relations is in a different category; it is a real rival ideologically, and a potential one politically and militarily. In some ways it constitutes a threat to the Soviets second only to that posed by the US.

Whatever its weaknesses and drawbacks, the non-aligned movement is a factor in international affairs and

being almost conterminous with the Third World, is not a constituency to be neglected. Firstly the Soviet Union and subsequently the US have sought an influence in it. India is one of the founder members of the movement and continues to play a major role in it. Both superpowers seek to build lobbies in it and the Soviets have been worried ever since Mrs Indira Gandhi's second tenure as Prime Minister about Indian moves towards the US. India has also played a leading role in international forums for disarmament, particularly in the nuclear sphere, and both the superpowers have tried to influence it. Unlike the US, the Soviets have welcomed the initiatives taken by the non-aligned movement.

These factors which account for Soviet interest in India have been operative for many years, but Mr Gorbachyov has made it clear, as have several leading Soviet experts such as Mr Arbatov and Mr Primakov, that they hope and expect India to play a major and perhaps pioneering role in the context of the new Soviet concepts of Asian and Pacific security by which they lay great store.

Neither the domestic nor the international conjuncture for India is particularly encouraging. Apart from regional, linguistic and communal problems, prospects in the economic sphere are not rosy. Aid from international agencies will either diminish or remain static and world trade prospects for developing countries are likely to be hampered by protectionist measures starting with the US. The repayment of loans looms large on the horizon; exports alone do not hold the answer and commercial loans have led many countries into the debt quagmire.

India's international environment is probably more threatening now than for many years. Neither Mrs Indira Gandhi nor her son has succeeded in deflecting the US from its determination to make Pakistan the eastern anchor of the

"arc of crisis." The US has continued to rearm that country with weapons it knows cannot be used against Afghanistan, and is virtually certain to provide Pakistan with AWACS to see far into India. Contrary to all its pretensions of preventing the spread of nuclear weapons, it has winked at Pakistan's progress in its preparations to acquire these in the very near future—if that country has not already done so. Thus India remains of

peripheral interest to the US and this situation is unlikely to change unless India were to fall in with the requirements of the US which only sees things in black and white—you are either pro or anti-American. Above all, India's relations with the Soviet Union would have to undergo a fundamental change.

Pakistan's latest moves have hopefully convinced Indian policy-makers that it is naive to expect it to see its long-term interests in a durable peace with India. China, our largest neighbour and Pakistan's most steadfast friend, has clearly warned that it is in no mood to play games or to let India make a good boundary bargain. Given its past record it is unlikely that China would intervene in any Indo-Pak conflict, but in security planning the worst scenario has to be considered, and unlike in 1965 or 1971, China's relations with the US are good and improving with the Soviet Union. Nepal ignores our desire not to see thousands of Chinese in areas sensitive for India. China also has rebuilt good relations with Sri Lanka, becoming one of its major arms suppliers. Our own problems with our southern neighbour continue to fester. We still have unresolved problems with Bangladesh, both riverine and demographic. It is not intended to apportion blame for this overall situation but merely to describe it; the

threats to India's security today are as great as in 1971 when the country was last involved in a war. This is not to suggest that there will be an explosion now but to emphasise that India needs reliable friends.

Both India and the Soviet Union attached considerable importance to the Delhi summit. No recent visit by the head of a foreign state or government has been preceded by such careful preparation by the visiting side as that of Mr Mikhail Gorbachyov. The Indian side too was not lacking in either planning, or, thoughtful moves, to ensure that optimum results—political, economic, strategic and cultural—were achieved. Before the summit from the Soviet side there was a stream of ministers, deputy ministers from various fields, the chairman of Gosplan, CPSU officials and advisors and leading intellectuals such as Mr Arbatov, Mr Primakov and others. Moscow saw many Indian ministers, journalists and writers and there was an important seminar organised by the Indian Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses and the Institute of Oriental Studies in Moscow, which enabled a free and frank discussion on the Soviet and Indian perceptions of the international situation and, in particular, the Soviet proposals for security in the Asian and Pacific regions. The Soviet delegation led by the General Secretary of the CPSU included, inter alia, the minister for foreign affairs, the secretary of the CPSU responsible for foreign affairs, and the chief of staff of the Soviet armed forces. It is also to be noted that this was Mr Gorbachyov's first official visit to an Asian country and only his second visit abroad as General Secretary, the first having been to France.

The author is a former member of the Indian Foreign Service

[Text]

What then were the achievements of the Gorbachyov visit to India last year? Evidently each side sought something, apart from making an overall appraisal, and, therefore, if the Indo-Soviet relationship is to continue to be fruitful, each side should have gained some of its objectives. Since charity begins at home, one may examine what India was able to achieve.

Security was India's primary concern and the Indian side attached greater importance to the Indo-Soviet treaty than on previous occasions. On this subject, Mr Gorbachyov was reassuring. Speaking to Indian journalists in Moscow on the eve of his visit to New Delhi he said: "The treaty is not past history. It is the present and a living practice of our time."

In the Indian Parliament he elaborated: "Its supreme meaning lies in the reciprocal commitment to act, should a difficult situation arise for one of the sides, or, for both sides. There have been such situations. Both the Soviet Union and India have remained faithful to their commitments and acted in accordance with the spirit and the letter of the treaty." It will be recalled that the draft of the treaty gathered dust in South Block from 1969 and was hastily pulled out of the drawers in 1971 and signed: it played an important if not decisive role in the fateful events of that year.

However, Mr Gorbachyov was not to be drawn into specific commitments on contingent situations between India on the one hand, and Pakistan and China on the other. In reply to a question at his press conference on the militarisation of Pakistan he said: "The Soviet Union, India and Pakistan are neighbours and I think that neighbours must always live in peace. I think when I say this I am also reflecting India's position. We stand for good friendly relations with the people of Pakistan and

approaches to achieving such relations should be worked out. Other ways lead to unpredictable consequences and we should all remember this. I think that this fully applies to the government of Pakistan."

And again: "We are known to have always cooperated with Pakistan and to have made our contribution to the lessening of tension in that area of Asia, even in difficult times. We are prepared to act in this manner today as well." Clearly Mr Gorbachyov was recalling Tashkent (1966) when the Soviets intervened to end the Indo-Pak stalemate following the 1965 war. It may be noted here that the Soviets are reported to have warned Pakistan against adventures during the recent movement of its troops. At the same time the Pakistanis seem to have been relieved at the Soviet tone and statements at the Delhi summit which was almost immediately followed by a series of exchanges between Pakistan and the Soviet Union. During these, apart from Afghanistan, important economic and other political issues are understood to have been discussed: again the Pakistan side appears to have been satisfied with these. The timing, if nothing else, of these moves is not without significance.

China is of major concern and priority for the Soviets. This has always been so, but in recent years the Soviets have made successful efforts to redress the balance which has tilted towards the US. From the CPSU meeting in January 1986, through the Vladivostok speech to the Delhi visit they have made no secret of this: China is seen not only as a great and independent power, but also a stabilising force for world peace. At the same time they have been at pains to emphasise that normalisation of relations with China will not be at the expense of their ties with this country.

Despite many pointed questions on various occasions, Mr

Gorbachyov refused to make any commitments as to the line he would adopt in case of an India-China conflict. He said: "If there is continued improvement in the relations throughout the Asian region and between the region's great powers, which I consider to be primarily China, India and the Soviet Union, a very different situation will emerge and your forecasts will never come true. This is my conviction. And no one will have to take anyone's side." More significantly he said: "I hope, I think, that India of course, will act very responsibly in this situation by great experience and, in relations with India, I hope, I think I have no doubt that the Chinese government will also act responsibly." Clearly "experience" if not exclusively referring to the 1962 debacle for India, would certainly include that.

Neither publicly nor privately did the Indian side make any request for commitments from the Soviets with regard to Pakistan or China, though an expose was made of how we saw the policies and actions of these countries, particularly the implications of US military aid to Pakistan, both for India and for the region surrounding that country. India was not a suppliant, though there is undoubtedly disappointment in many circles at what they see as Soviet reticence or, even-handedness.

On its part, India maintained the cautious attitude it has adopted since the Soviets first broached the idea of Asian-Pacific security during the Indian Prime Minister's visit to Moscow. Although the Soviets have been making every effort, both officially and unofficially to persuade India to buy the idea, the Indian side avoided any commitments.

The joint statement issued in November says: "The Soviet side drew attention to the proposals put forward by the Soviet Union concerning the

establishment of a comprehensive system of international security. The Indian side noted that this proposal is an expression of the need for new political thinking in the nuclear era." And, again: "The Soviet side explained in detail the Soviet Union's concrete programme for maintaining peace and establishing cooperation and interaction in the Asian Pacific region. The Indian side elaborated on its consistent policy of reducing tensions, promoting good neighbourliness with all countries of the region" and its efforts to build up the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (Saarc).

India did not accept the Soviet drawn parallel between European conditions that led to the Helsinki process and the various agreements that have flowed from it, though in general it welcomed the Vladivostok proposals. The Indian side had also made the point that nuclear free zones would be mere facades unless the major nuclear powers first undertook nuclear disarmament. Clearly in deference to the Indian point of view the Soviets did not press for reference to this in the joint statement, even as a purely Soviet proposal.

The Soviets also responded to Indian security anxieties relating to the Indian Ocean as well as reservations about the Soviet proposals on Asian-Pacific security. One Indian criticism, made both officially and unofficially was that the Soviet proposals limited Asia to the region east of Afghanistan and the emphasis was on the Pacific area. In his speech to Parliament, Mr Gorbachyov recalled Soviet support to the UN resolution for a conference to implement the UN Declaration on the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace and made specific proposals: these included not only negotiations with the US and other non-littoral powers for substantial reduction in the size and activities of their naval forces, but other confidence building measures such as notification of transfers and exercises by the armies, navies, and air forces of Asian

and non-Asian countries, measures guaranteeing safety of sea lanes in the Indian Ocean and the Gulf, as well as the Straits of Hormuz and Malacca; a multilateral agreement on the safety of air traffic over the Indian Ocean and help to prepare and sign an international convention to combat terrorism on the seas and in the air.

Two of the most important elements in Indo-Soviet bilateral relations have been the economic and the defence. The Soviets continue to be our most important trading partner as well as the mainstay of defence equipment. Substantial gains were recorded in these fields during the visit. India's Seventh Plan lays great emphasis on the development of energy and in this sector the Soviets not only have the latest technology but also have considerable experience of Indian condition.

Under a new agreement on economic and technical cooperation they have promised to assist in: the Tehri hydro-power complex; modernisation of the Bokaro steel plant; the setting up of four underground coking coal mines and on-shore exploration of hydrocarbons in West Bengal. It may be noted that the Soviets are the only ones to show any interest in on-shore exploration for hydrocarbons. Substantial credits for these projects will be provided and for the first time the Soviets have agreed to provide funds for financing local expenses upto 300 million roubles for the Tehri project. There has been unjustified and carping criticism over this, given that we have agreed to such assistance from other countries and had no qualms in accepting the equivalent of this from the US in the early stages of the PL480 help.

On defence supplies the Soviets were very forthcoming and have offered the most attractive terms available. While Soviet aid may not be great in comparison with that which comes from other sources in the West, because of the rupee-rouble arrangements the saving in hard currencies is substantial. This is

particularly true of defence transactions where the amount spread over 12 years, 1970-71 to 1981-82, is estimated conservatively by Sontosh Mehrotra to have been 7909 million roubles. Given India's growing defence needs this is of vital importance in the difficult foreign exchange situation of India and other developing countries.

In the field of science, research and technology Mr Gorbachyov made a very interesting offer to set up in India "with the help of leading space powers, an international centre to carry out joint research and develop space technologies, at the request of developing countries, for example satellites, to explore natural resources. This centre would also include a school for training of specialists from developing countries, including cosmonauts, and it would also have a facility for launching spacecraft." This proposal was put forward by the Soviet leader in his speech in Parliament and the Indian government had no prior inkling of it. At the joint press conference by the two leaders, Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi said it was a very interesting idea but the details would have to be examined.

Indian scientists were extremely enthusiastic about the proposal as they felt that such a centre would not only supplement India's own space programme, but would also be of immense benefit to research and development programmes in a variety of scientific and technological fields as it would provide outlets for all kinds of products from India. However, doubts were raised by some about the feasibility of the offer since it called for joint efforts by other space powers who might not be willing to cooperate with the Soviets. Whether even the Soviets would provide the latest know-how and technology was doubtful. We should not look this gift horse in the mouth until we have examined its potential and utility in its entirety.

Last, but not the least was the Delhi declaration on prin-

ciples for a nuclear weapon free and non-violent world. When the Panchsheel declaration was signed by India and China in 1954 the world, including many Indians, scoffed at it as a bundle of pious platitudes of no practical value in the game of realpolitik. Today most of its principles are widely accepted. The Delhi declaration is an important document, not only because it sets moral guidelines for the conduct of international and national affairs which will find wide popular appeal in a world threatened by the spectre of nuclear annihilation and terrorism, though it may find little echo in the chancelleries of governments.

Secondly, it points to a fundamental philosophical or even spiritual development of the world's first communist state. This new approach is evident in the rapid succession of both domestic and foreign policy actions of the Soviet leadership which have literally hit an unbelieving world audience. It is worth noting that Mr Gorbachyov was personally responsible for the references to the sanctity and supreme importance of humanity and the

human being, and non-violence as the principle for the policies and actions of states. In India at least we should recognise the significance of this fundamental ideological modification in view of the close and important ties between us and the Soviet Union.

In conclusion the Gorbachyov-Gandhi meeting in Delhi seems to me to have been a most important one. Both sides have understood the other's point of view on bilateral and international issues and the limitations on the actions of each side. This must be to their mutual interest and lead to more realistic policies. For India the message is that while the Soviets will not leave it in the lurch should the occasion for help arise, India must rely mainly on itself and recognise that this is a hard world with no soft options. For the Soviets the message from India is that while it is not a super or a great power, it is nobody's satellite or stooge, and fully capable of maintaining its independent foreign policies.

/9317

CSO: 4600/1587

INDIA, UK RESOLVE DIFFERENCES ON EXTRADITION PACT

Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 30 Mar 87 p 1

[Text]

LONDON, March 29 (PTI). DIFFERENCES between India and Britain on the sensitive clauses of the proposed extradition treaty are reported to have been resolved, clearing the way for signing the treaty soon.

The external affairs minister, Mr. N. D. Tiwari, is likely to visit Britain soon to sign the treaty. It is reported that all preparations for the signing of the extradition treaty have been completed.

According to reliable sources, the treaty would pave the way for the extradition of some 50 Sikh extremists to India, alleged to be involved in terrorist crimes.

New Delhi is keen to have the 50 Sikh militants back in the country so that they could be tried before taking asylum in the U.K., considered by the extremists a safe haven. Most of them are reported to be involved in murders and bank robberies.

India is reported to have accepted the British proposal relating to the crucial question of jurisdiction of trial of the offenders. Initially New Delhi was opposed to it but subsequently South Block agreed to the British proposal that a prima facie case should be established before a person was extradited.

The differences between India and Britain were mainly on the wording and incorporation of three sensitive clauses — retrospective implementation, definition of incitement and human safeguards.

New Delhi is now reported to be

satisfied with the new clause on retrospectivity. The British government appears to be satisfied on Indian assurances that there will be no persecution.

The treaty was expected to be signed last month during the visit of the minister of state for external affairs. But it is now reported that Whitehall was keen to have a senior minister for the signing.

Observers feel that the agreement was reached between India and Britain during the recent visit of a British official team. In fact a lot of ground was covered in New Delhi when the British minister of state in the foreign office, Mr. Timothy Renton, had discussions with his counterpart, Mr. Natwar Singh.

The treaty is bound to control the activities of the Sikh extremists in Britain. There has been a discernible change in the attitude of the British government which at one stage was considered to be soft towards the extremists. Replying to various queries by New Delhi, the British government always gave a stock reply that they would be dealt "in accordance with the law of the land."

The arrest and conviction of the Leicestershire Sikhs responsible for the conspiracy to assassinate the Prime Minister, Mr. Rajiv Gandhi, the deportation of the JKLF leader, Amanullah Khan, and other curbs on the activities of the extremists indicate a positive change in the British attitude.

/9317

CSO: 4600/1577

PAKISTAN MILITARY APPOINTMENT REVEALS NUCLEAR POLICY

Madras THE HINDU in English 19 Mar 87 p 9

[Article by G. K. Reddy]

[Text] The appointment of Gen. Akhtar Abdul Rahman Khan, Chief of Military Intelligence, as the next Chairman of the Pakistan Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee, is viewed with some concern in Delhi because he is known to be a strong protagonist of that country's bid to acquire nuclear weapons.

As Chief of Military Intelligence, he has been exercising the overall responsibility for the security of Kahuta and other nuclear establishments in Pakistan, which meant that he had to work in close concert with Dr. Abdul Qader Khan and others engaged in the bomb project.

Though Gen. Zia-ul-Haq retains his dual position as President and Chief of Army Staff, the elevation of Gen. Akhtar Abdul Rahman Khan could not have been done except with the intention of associating him more closely with Pakistan's bomb project and providing effective liaison between the Army and the nuclear establishment.

Sharp differences: According to well-informed diplomatic sources there have been sharp differences between the Prime Minister of Pakistan, Mr. Mohammed Khan Junejo, who sees no harm in keeping up the pretence that his Government remains committed to using nuclear power only for peaceful purposes and the hardheaded Army Generals who have set their heart on acquiring the nuclear capability as early as possible.

The outgoing Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Gen. Rahimuddin Khan, is not only a Zia loyalist but also related to him since his son is married to the daughter of Gen. Zia. In spite of this close relationship, Gen. Zia has not given him an extension, because he presumably wanted a tougher one like Gen. Akhtar Abdul Rahman Khan in this key position.

man Khan in this key position.

The operative head of the Pakistan Army, Gen. K. M. Arif, the Vice-Chief of Staff, is also retiring from the Army, but he is probably earmarked for a more important post in a civilian garb after shedding his military uniform. He would continue to remain as one of Gen. Zia's closest confidants performing such tasks that are assigned to him to sustain the army grip on the country and the Government.

It is against this general background that many in senior positions in the Government of India who are otherwise well disposed towards Pakistan have been wondering whether Gen. Zia is really interested in better Indo-Pakistan relations. During his recent visit to Delhi, he talked once again of his desire for improved political, economic and social contacts between the two countries and their peoples.

Rigid postures: But on his return to Islamabad, Gen. Zia's Government has reverted to the old rigid postures with no signs of any flexibility whether it is on trade, reopening of a southern land route, encouragement of more travel and tourism, or even exchange of newspapers, films and other items of cultural relations. The much talked of spirit of bilateralism is totally absent in the policies and actions of the Pakistan Government, not only in relation to its nuclear pursuits but also in such small matters as observance of nominal good neighbourly relations.

The Indian experts on Pakistan have been taken aback by the revival of the virulent anti-Indian propaganda in some sections of the Pakistani Press accusing India of a formidable expansion of its military strength posing a grave threat to Pakistan. And the increase in the Indian defence budget is being used as an excuse to malign India as a war-mongering nation with hostile intentions.

/13104

CSO: 5150/0121

PAPERS REPORT VISIT OF ANGOLAN PRESIDENT DOS SANTOS

2 Apr Talks

New Delhi PATRIOT in English 3 Apr 87 p 1

[Text]

India and Angola on Thursday called for building a strong world public opinion for an "early and peaceful" transition to the majority rule in South Africa in place of its present white minority regime, reports UNI.

Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi and visiting Angolan President Jose Eduardo Dos Santos at their two-hour long wide-ranging talks in New Delhi felt that any delay in the restoration of the majority rule would unnecessarily lead to largescale bloodshed and suffering with its consequences in the rest of the world.

Besides reviewing the international situation, the two leaders also stressed the need for developing a long-term economic cooperation between India and Angola, specially in the field of agriculture, industry consultancy and training of personnel.

Later, an official spokesman said the thrust of their economic cooperation was to make it a part of the developing process in the two countries instead of confining it to mere trade and commerce.

Earlier, at the official level discussions, in which several Indian ministers participated, the two sides discussed specific areas of cooperation.

The Angolan side showed interest in buying light engineering items from India and also discussed the possibility of export credit facilities.

They also discussed the possibility of cooperation in diamond mining and diamond trade. Angola is one of the leading producers of diamond and India is known the world over for its delicate craftsmanship in cutting and polishing it.

They also exchanged views on the likely cooperation in the field of petroleum.

Indian ministers who participated in the discussion were: Mr Shiv Shanker (commerce), Mr Vengal Rao (industry), Mr G S Dhillon (agriculture), Mr Rajesh Pilot (surface transport), Mr Brahm Dutt (petroleum) and Mr Eduardo Faleiro (external affairs).

The Angolan side was represented by its Foreign Minister Afonso Van Dunem M'Blinda, Economic Minister Maria Mambo Cafe and Commerce Minister Ismael Gaspar.

Earlier, President Santos had a 45-minute meeting with President Zail Singh during which Minister for External Affairs N D Tiwari was also present.

Cooperation Pact, Press Conference

New Delhi PATRIOT in English 4 Apr 87 p 1

[Text]

India and Angola on Friday concluded a bilateral agreement on cooperation in communications, and signed a protocol on delegation of Indian experts to Angola and training of Angolan personnel in India.

The two documents, which flow from the talks Angolan President Jose Eduardo Dos Santos held in the Capital with Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi and other leaders, supplement the bilateral agreement on economic, scientific-technical and cultural cooperation signed between the two countries in October last year.

Under the agreement, India is to send technical missions of specialists and experts in telecommunications, postal services, industrial and technological developments and documentation. India will also train technical personnel in the related fields from Angola. The agreement, valid for three years, is renewable. The protocol is valid for five years.

Addressing a press conference later in the evening, President Santos said the two sides had also discussed cooperation in other diverse fields, including agriculture, industry, mining of precious stones and diamonds and oil exploration. The proposal for cooperation in oil exploration was tabled by India and Angola would examine it.

President Santos also told newsmen that Angola had submitted a list of commodities in which India had shown interest, and agreed to buy more products from India. The effort was to increase bilateral trade. The two sides had also discussed possibilities of credit facilities by India to Angola.

The main aim of his four-day official visit to the country, however, was to strengthen friendship and cooperation between the two countries, President Santos said, adding that the two sides aimed at cooperation not only bilaterally, but also on key in-

ternational issues like peace and disarmament.

Stressing the need for "reinforcing" cooperation among developing countries in economic sphere and among nonaligned countries to secure freedom and peace from apartheid, President Santos lauded India's contribution on both fronts. Developing countries like Angola had much to learn from India's experience in efforts at development, and India had contributed substantially to the anti-apartheid struggle, the Angolan President said.

Welcoming the establishment of the Africa Fund and calling for significant contributions to it by all countries, Mr Santos said it was imperative that economic and diplomatic isolation of South Africa was increased and the racist regime forced to pave way for the majority rule. In this context, he pressed for comprehensive, mandatory sanctions against Pretoria.

The Southern African States "are ready for sacrifices and bear the burden" of retaliatory economic and military measures by South Africa, he declared.

Giving a graphic account of the situation in Angola and of the S African incursions through UNITA guerillas, President Santos said Angolan forces were increasingly gearing themselves up to meet the South African challenge and "weaken the UNITA elements".

Defending the Cuban armed contingent's presence on the Angolan soil, President Santos said it was only assisting Angola to repel S African incursions, and had never crossed the Angolan borders. "The Cuban troops pose no threat to S Africa or to any other country".

President Santos accused the US and its NATO allies of rendering military and economic aid to S Africa, and said the US would like to substitute the racist regime in Pretoria with puppet elements like UNITA.

Credit Grant, Joint Statement

Calcutta THE TELEGRAPH in English 5 Apr 87 p 5

[Text]

New Delhi, April 4 (UNI): Indo-Angolan economic relations entered a new phase today with India agreeing to grant a credit of Rs 10 crores to enable Angola to buy consumer durables and capital goods from here.

The agreement on two suppliers credit of Rs five crores each marked the three-day state visit of the Angolan President, Mr Jose Eduardo Dos Santos, which ended today.

Before Mr Santos left for Luanda, India and Angola issued a joint statement highlighting the failure of the US policy of "constructive engagement," in ending apartheid in South Africa. The statement called for vigorous implementation of comprehensive mandatory sanctions against the racist regime.

The President, Mr Zail Singh, the Prime Minister, Mr Rajiv Gandhi, and his ministerial colleagues were present at the airport to see off Mr Santos.

The two sides expressed satisfaction at the setting up of "Africa Fund," under the stewardship of India, to support Frontline states and southern African liberation movements.

They put on record their admiration for the "heroic struggle" of South African patriots, led by the African National Congress (ANC) and other forces representing the Black majority.

Both sides found it "illogical and untenable," the western Europe argument of linking Namibian independence with the withdrawal of Cuban troupes from Angola.

The Angolan delegation identified items of imports from India. These included, engineering goods, transport equipment, agricultural implements, pharmaceuticals and textiles. India expressed interest in import of rough diamond and petroleum.

Two protocols were also signed relating to deputation of Indian technical personnel to Angola and cooperation in the field of communication.

The two Rs five-crore credits are to be extended by the Exim bank. The first credit would have a repayment period of two years and the second three to five years. The minutes were signed by the minister of state for external affairs, Mr Eduardo Faleiro, and the Angolan minister for external commerce, Mr Ismael Gaspar Martins.

/9317

CSO: 4600/1586

OBJECTIONS TO SIGNING NONPROLIFERATION PACT REITERATED

Calcutta THE STATESMAN in English 25 Mar 87 p 9

[Text]

NEW DELHI, March 24.—Despite various statements from diverse sources in the USA pleading, in effect, for a condonation of Pakistan's nuclear-weapon programmes, and hinting at a changed scenario if only India were to sign the nuclear non-proliferation treaty, India is understood to have again made it clear through diplomatic channels that it had no intention of joining the NPT club right now.

The suggestion for international inspection of its nuclear facilities (on a reciprocal basis with Pakistan) is unacceptable to India. For, apart from other objections, while India's nuclear programme is handled by the Atomic Energy Commission, Pakistan's has a heavy military imprint on it.

India's objection to signing the treaty, it is pointed out, is not born of regional considerations but is based on the argument that the treaty, with its component of haves and have-nots, is patently discriminatory.

Thus, India, according to informed sources, is not going to be "hustled" into signing the treaty merely because of reports about

Pakistan having a nuclear bomb or having the capability of producing one.

Recent reports about Pakistan's nuclear weapons programme are seen here as part of a pattern woven over the last several months calculated to prepare the U.S. public opinion of a nuclear Pakistan. Seen in this light, according to the sources, it comes as no surprise that there should now be a move in certain quarters in the USA to paint Israel and Pakistan with the same brush.

The argument is: If the USA can turn a blind eye to the nuclear intentions of its ally on the western flank, Israel, how can it view the programme of its eastern ally, Pakistan, differently?

It is felt that some of the U.S. Congressmen are trying to impose impossible conditions on India. Nobody in the U.S. Congress has talked of India carrying on a nuclear-weapons programme but the fingers are pointed at Pakistan. Even so, an effort is seriously being made to equate the two on the aid plan for Pakistan, if carried eventually.

/13104

CSO: 5150/0123

CONTINUING REPORTAGE ON GANDHI, SINGH CONFRONTATION

Lok Sabha Speaker's Ruling

Madras THE HINDU in English 20 Mar 87 p 6

[Text]

NEW DELHI, March 19.

The following is the text of the Lok Sabha Speaker, Mr. Balram Jakhar's ruling on the Opposition notices of breach of privilege motions against the Prime Minister, Mr. Rajiv Gandhi, on allegedly misleading Parliament over his constitutional obligations to the President under Article 74.

"On 13 March, 1987, Prof. Madhu Dandavate, Messrs. Dinesh Goswami and C. Madhav Reddy gave notices of question of privilege against the Prime Minister for allegedly misleading the House on 2 March 1987 during the discussion on the motion of thanks on the President's Address. Prof. Dandavate also enclosed the text of what was allegedly a letter from the President to the Prime Minister. It was published in the *Indian Express* dated 13 March 1987. I refused my consent to the matter being raised in the House as I found that it was not in order as per Rules in this regard. The same day, when, after the Question Hour, the Members sought to raise the matter in the House, I ruled that the President's name could not be dragged in any way on the floor of the House for influencing any debate.

2. Again, on 18 March, I received other notices from Messrs. Saifuddin Chowdhury, Dinesh Goswami and C. Madhav Reddy, seeking my permission to raise the matter in the House. I have since further examined the matter very carefully in all its aspects and in accordance with the constitutional provisions, Rules of Procedure, precedents and earlier rulings. All these reinforce the correctness of the ruling given by me on 13 March 1987.

Speaker's consent

3. A Member can raise a question of privilege on the floor of the House 'with the consent of the Speaker' (Rule 222). The Speaker 'shall call the Member concerned' only if he has accorded his consent and holds that the matter 'proposed to be discussed is in order' (Rule 225). Thus, unless specifically allowed and called by the Speaker, a Member cannot raise any privilege issue on the floor of the House. Mere giving of a notice of a privilege motion does not entitle a Member to raise it on the floor of the House. Also, the Speaker's decision refusing consent to the raising of the matter cannot be questioned on the floor of the House. If a Member is dissatisfied and

wants to seek any clarification, he can at best see the Speaker in his chamber.

4. Both on 13 March and on 18 March I refused my consent to the matter given notice of, being raised on the floor of the House as a privilege issue or otherwise as I found that it was not in order. So far as the Rules go, that should have ended the matter, but since some Members persisted in pressing the subject matter of their notices, I gave my observations on the merits of the notices and ruled that the name of the President could not be allowed to be used in any manner to influence discussions on the floor of the House. This was strictly in accordance with the Rules, inasmuch as Rule 352 (vi) expressly prohibited 'use of the President's name for the purpose of influencing the debate.' Since the whole matter centred round a letter alleged to have been written by the President, any discussion on the matter either by way of a privilege issue or otherwise was bound to bring in the name of the President and as such it could not be allowed.

5. Earlier, on 2 March 1987, while speaking on the Motion of Thanks on the President's Address, Mr. Amal Dutta had raised the issue of the convention of the Prime Minister calling on the President and discussing matters of State with him. The Chair had at that time also immediately drawn attention, inter alia, to Rule 352 (vi) and objected to the President's name being used to influence the debate. On Mr. Dutta alleging that Article 74 of the Constitution had been brought to a nullity, the Prime Minister had intervened, to deny the allegation and stated that he and other Ministers had been meeting the President. The Prime Minister had further said: "We like to keep the President above our politics and we will not involve the President in our daily politics and I would request the Members to honour the institutions of this country and not drag them down into politics."

While replying to Mr. Dutta, the Chair had observed: "I have already made it very, very clear that you cannot, as per the Rule, drag the office of the President. The Prime Minister has also made it very, very clear."

6. When on 9 March, 1987, Mr. Madhu Dandavate sought to raise the question on the basis of the proceedings of the House on 2 March, I did not allow him and nothing was allowed to go on record be-

cause he did not have my permission to raise the issue on the floor of the House, I categorically ruled: "Use of the President's name for the purpose of influencing the debate in any way whatsoever is not allowed..... Even in the first place it was wrong, it should not have been done..... I am not going to allow any wrong to be repeated..... I say that I do not approve of the mention of the President's name by anybody in this House....."

Consistent stand

Thus the stand taken by the Chair on 2 March, 9 March, 13 March and 18 March was substantially the same and very consistent. On another occasion, as early as on 8 April 1985, I had ruled that the name of the President could not be dragged in the debate. All the observations and the rulings from the Chair have been categorical to the effect that the President's name could not be used on the floor of the House in order to influence the debate.

7. Various notices received on the subject raise the question of the relationship between the President and his Ministers and that of the discharge of their constitutional functions. Under Article 53 of the Constitution, the executive power of the Union is vested in the President and all executive action is taken in his name. The executive power has to be exercised in accordance with the Constitution which, inter alia, ordains vide Article 74 that President has to discharge all his functions in accordance with the advice of the Council of Ministers. The Council of Ministers, under Article 75, has been made collectively responsible to Lok Sabha. Thus, for the exercise of all the executive power in the name of the President and for the discharge of all his functions, it is the Council of Ministers alone that is responsible to Lok Sabha.

8. The question whether any, and if so, what advice was tendered by Ministers to the President cannot be enquired into in any Court of Law (vide Article 74).

The relationship between the President and his Council of Ministers is a matter entirely between them and cannot under any circumstances be a fit subject for discussion on the floor of the House.

9. It has been held by earlier Speakers that Members cannot read even letters received by them from the President unless the President's specific permission to do so has been obtained by them. Also, members are not allowed to refer to any private talks which they may have had with the President. So far

as any talks between the Prime Minister or the Council of Ministers and the President or any letters exchanged between them are concerned they are entirely between them and not the concern of the House. Also, such official correspondence and discussions at the highest level—between the President and his advisers (the Ministers)—are in their very nature, confidential, privileged and protected.

10. I may also add that Rule 352 (v) provides that the conduct of persons in high authority cannot be discussed except on a substantive motion drawn in proper terms. Thus, in the case of Ministers, their conduct can be discussed only on a motion of censure or no confidence. It should, however, be stressed that even during the discussion on a motion of censure or no confidence in the Ministers, the name of the President, the relationship between the President and the Prime Minister or the Council of Ministers including the advice tendered or received or correspondence, if any, exchanged between them, cannot be allowed to be brought in to influence the debate.

No case made out

11. In view of the expressed provisions of the Constitution, the Rules, the precedents and the earlier rulings, I do not consider that any case has been made out requiring me to reconsider the matter. Accordingly, I reiterate my ruling and withhold my consent to the matter being raised as a question of privilege or otherwise. No Member has my consent to raise this issue again on the floor of the House in any form.

12. The high institutions created by the Constitution including those of the President and the Council of Ministers with the Prime Minister at its head are embodiments of our national aspirations. I am absolutely clear in my mind that any debate on the floor of the House which brings in the name of the President into any controversy or which tends to discuss the relationship between the President and his Council of Ministers, must be avoided at all costs in the wider interests of the nation. We are still in the process of developing sound conventions and traditions. Let us not, in the heat of the moment, do something which might hamper this process. While confirming my earlier rulings, I would, therefore, again appeal to all sections of the House to desist from making it a political or party issue to be debated or a matter for points to be scored against each other."

Rajya Sabha Chairman's Ruling

Madras THE HINDU in English 21 Mar 87 pp 8, 9

[Text]

THE following is the text of the Rajya Sabha Chairman, Mr. R. Venkataraman's ruling on the correspondence between the President and the Prime Minister given today:

On the morning of March 13, 1987, a certain Delhi-based newspaper published what purported to be the text of a letter written by the President of India to the Prime Minister of India.

Mr. Jaswant Singh obtained the permission of the Chair to read in the House a communication addressed by him to the Chairman which inter alia sought a clarification on issues which, according to him, arose as follows:

- (a) The veracity of this purported letter;
- (b) The manner in which the newspaper gained access to such correspondence between high officers of State;
- (c) Vital questions relating to the security of information and confidentiality of governance;
- (d) The question arising from the Prime Minister having made a statement in Parliament, which the text of the purported letter appeared to refute.

'Not merely a privilege issue'

Describing the issue as 'not merely a privilege issue', but one that had constitutional aspects to it, Mr. Jaswant Singh appropriately concluded his remarks with the statement that Parliament should do nothing that might bring it in conflict with the office of the Head of State. Mr. Gopalsamy and Mr. Nirmal Chatterjee were permitted to associate themselves with the observations of Mr. Jaswant Singh.

Mr. Gopalsamy had earlier sought to raise this matter as an issue of privilege. On being apprised of the relevant rules in this regard, he, however, withdrew his notice reserving his right, if any, to raise it again.

I also received later notices of breach of privilege against the Prime Minister from Mr. Jaswant Singh, Mr. Upendra and Mr. Lakshman. Mr. Jaswant Singh supplied me his viewpoint in regard to the interpretation of Articles 74 and 78. Mr. Upendra again raised the matter on March 17, urging upon me to expedite my ruling.

After hearing their explanations, I informed them that I would go into the matter in depth. I also received on March 19, 1987, a letter signed by Mr. Samar Mukherjee and eight other leaders of the Opposition seeking to discuss various issues relating to the matter.

The issue is one in which two of the highest offices under the Constitution are involved. What is more, it concerns a nexus which is at the very heart of governance under the

Cabinet system which we have given to ourselves. I have, therefore, felt it essential that such consideration be given in my study to the issues involved as this constitutionally pivotal matter calls for. Having done so, I now proceed to give my ruling.

The first and essential question that arises for consideration is whether any matter communicated or purported to be communicated by the Head of State to the Head of Government and vice versa may be raised in the Houses of Parliament. The answer to this question rests on the nature of the relationship that governs the President and the Prime Minister under our Constitution. I shall attempt such an answer by means of (i) reference to the discussions on the subject in the Constituent Assembly; (ii) by reference to the relevant conventions in Britain; and (iii) by a discussion on the scope of Articles 74 and 78 of our Constitution.

II: While introducing the Draft Constitution as settled by the Drafting Committee in accordance with the decisions of the Constituent Assembly and on the basis of reports of various Committees appointed by it, the Chairman of the Drafting Committee, who is rightly regarded as the architect of our Constitution, Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, made certain important observations on the role of the future Head of the Indian Republic: Dr. Ambedkar said, "Under the draft Constitution, the President occupies the same position as the King under the English Constitution. He is the Head of the State, but not of the executive. He represents the nation, but does not rule the nation. He is the symbol of the nation. His place in the administration is that of a ceremonial device on a seal by which the nation's decisions are made known."

It was clear that the office of the President of India was to enjoy a unique and special relationship with the Council of Ministers headed by the Prime Minister, a relationship based on inviolable trust. Other eminent jurists like Sir Alladi Krishnaswami Aiyar, who were in the Constituent Assembly, also opined that under the Constitution, the President of India had to go by the advice of the Cabinet.

The decision embodied in the Constitution provided for a Cabinet form of Government of the Westminster type with a President as Head of the State and the Prime Minister as Head of the Government, based on conventions as well as the provisions of the Constitution. Herein lay the pith and substance of parliamentary democracy. The people's will is embodied in Parliament, the Parliament expresses itself through the Cabinet and the Cabinet transacts its business

In the name of the Head, namely the President. One preserves and protects the other. Articles 53 and 74 of our Constitution enshrine this living principle of democratic articulation. Article 53 of our Constitution states that the executive power of the Union is vested in the President, all executive action being taken in his name. The scope of this executive power has been defined in Article 74 which states that the President has to discharge all his functions in accordance with the advice of the Council of Ministers, which is responsible to the Lok Sabha.

III: The fact that the Cabinet system of Government has been introduced into the Indian Constitution is universally acknowledged. Another distinguished member of the Drafting Committee of the Constituent Assembly, Dr. K. M. Munshi, said in that Assembly: We must not forget a very important fact that during the last one hundred years Indian public life has largely drawn upon the traditions of the British constitutional law. Most of us, and during the last several generations before us, public men in India, have looked up to the British model as the best. For the last thirty or forty years, some kind of responsibility has been introduced in the governance of this country. Our constitutional traditions have become Parliamentary.....

The Supreme Court of India in its judgment in *Ram Jawaya versus the State of Punjab* upheld the principle of the President-Cabinet relationship and Mr. Justice Mukherjea clarified therein as follows: The President has thus been made a formal or constitutional head of the executive and the real executive powers are vested in the Ministers of the Cabinet.

Commons practice

IV: In this context, I turned to the practice in the House of Commons to see if the conventions of that Parliament made room for a discussion on issues such as the one at hand. A set of relevant queries was posed to Sir Kenneth Bradshaw, Clerk of the House of Commons, on the subject. The answers are revealing. To a question as to whether correspondence between the Queen and the Prime Minister is confidential and whether it is ever debated in the House,

the Clerk of the House of Commons has replied that the correspondence "is confidential and never debated." The position as obtains in the House of Commons showed that the only occasion in this century when the discussions between the Monarch and the Prime Minister were shared with the British Parliament was during the course of a substantive debate of a legislative nature, namely, on the Abdication Bill, 1936.

Again, in the recent matter of the reported 'leaking' of the Queen's private opinions on the subject of sanctions against the Pretoria regime, the Clerk of the House of Commons was asked if any discussion took place in the House of Commons. He has replied that "no debate took place in the House of Commons and no questions were tabled." The British Prime Minister, Mrs. Margaret Thatcher, refused to answer supplementary questions relating directly or indirectly to the Monarchy.

It has been feebly suggested that under Article 74(2) only questions relating to the advice tendered by the Council of Ministers to the President shall not be enquired into by any court and that since the Parliament is not a court of law, Parliament is entitled to enquire into it. Such a contention will lead to illogical conclusions as follows: Firstly, the confidentiality between the President and the Prime Minister cannot be looked into by courts, but can be looked into by Parliament and other institutions. This conclusion would negate the very principles of confidentiality of communication between the President and the Prime Minister. Secondly, a literal construction of this kind would mean only advice tendered by the Council of Ministers to the President shall not be enquired into, but that the reverse process, namely, advice tendered by the President can be made public by the Council of Ministers. Under the conventions of our Constitution, the President is in the same position as the Monarch of England and has the same right to encourage, to warn and offer counsel to the Ministers, even though he is bound to accept the advice of the Council of Ministers. It would be absurd to suggest that the Council of Ministers can disclose such advice. Occasions may arise when the President's advice is publicised and the office of the President will get discredited.

It is, therefore, of the utmost importance that the confidentiality of communication between the President and the Prime Minister is maintained in the larger interest of democracy and the nation.

It was suggested that under Article 10 of the Constitution the freedom of speech in Parliament entitled Honourable Members to discuss any matter regardless of confidentiality. But the Article itself states "subject to the provisions of this Constitution and to the rules and standing orders regulating the procedure of Parliament, there shall be freedom of speech in Parliament."

Rule 238 of the Rules of Conduct of Business of the Rajya Sabha prohibits the use of President's name for the purpose of influencing the debate. There are several precedents in our Parliament where reference to the President's personal opinion or even letters from the President to the Members have been barred from discussion in the House.

Prasad-Nehru differences

This House is also aware of the well known difference of opinion between the first President of India, Rajendra Prasad, and the first Prime Minister of India, Jawaharlal Nehru, on the subject of the Hindu Code Bill. It may be of interest to Honourable Members to know that a certain 'leak' of correspondence occurred then also. Dr. Prasad noted in his diary which has since been published:-

I received two letters from the Prime Minister in reply to my letter and the note on the Bill. In one, he had expressed pain and surprise over the fact that even though he received the letter at 3 p.m., he had heard that newspapers had been talking about it at 1 p.m. to the Members of Parliament, saying that the President had written a strong letter to the PM on the question of the Hindu Code Bill. My letter was marked 'Top Secret' and the information might have probably leaked out from my Secretariat. In the second letter he referred to the fact that "I had indicated my views on the Bill and also that I intended to send a message to Parliament that even after the Bill was passed, I would have to see whether it would be proper for me to give my assent to it. This was an important constitutional matter on which the President, on the one hand, and the Government and the Parliament, on the other, may become involved in a serious controversy. The PM was of the view that the President does not have the power to send such a message to Parliament, nor does he have the right to reconsider the principles of a Bill submitted to him for assent. He also wrote that the Government had decided that only that part of the Bill be passed which concerns marriage and divorce. He has given his views also on the other clause of the Bill. I was surprised at the first letter and I have started making enquiries about it....."

Inviolability

I have quoted this record in some length only to show the degree of importance that the very first incumbents of these two high offices in our country attached to the inviolability of their mutual communications. The pain and surprise of the then Prime Minister was matched by the anguish of the then President as the violation of the inviolable communications.

In view of the express provisions, background, philosophy and provisions of the Constitution, the corroborative position in the House of Commons, and the evolution of conventions in this regard, I do not consider that any case has been made, requiring me to permit the charge of breach of privilege being laid against the Prime Minister or permitting any discussion on the issue on the floor of the House. Moreover, I am conscious of the fact that our decisions today will shape the future of constitutional governments in India. This Chair will only be fulfilling its sacred trust if, in disregarding the heat of the passing moment, it adheres to the path charted for it by the framers of our Constitution. I, therefore, disallow the requests for any discussion in any manner on the subject.

Opposition Divided

Madras THE HINDU in English 22 Mar 87 p 1

[Article by G.K. Reddy]

[Text]

NEW DELHI, March 22.

As most of the Congress (I) and Opposition leaders engaged in the election campaign returned to Delhi, there was intense activity in both the camps today with a series of informal consultations on how the two sides should play the poker game if the President-Prime Minister controversy were to erupt in a different form in Parliament.

The Prime Minister, Mr. Rajiv Gandhi, who spent the day relaxing at his residence did not meet any political personalities even from his own party other than some Ministers and senior civil servants who had to see him on important official business since he had been away for the last one week from Delhi.

But other Congress (I) leaders met in small groups to discuss how they should go about mobilising support for the Prime Minister in the event of a confrontation with the President. It cannot be said that all such confabulations were directed at rallying the whole party behind Mr. Rajiv Gandhi, since some of them who are known to be nursing personal grievances and would not be averse to the idea of letting this controversy erupt into a major showdown.

Several courses: The Opposition leaders continue to talk of several courses open to them to raise this issue in Parliament or even take the controversy to the streets. But there are no signs of unanimity among them on how to narrow down their campaign to any single course of action.

So they continue to toy with many alternative ideas ranging from a no-confidence motion against the Government to a collective appeal to the President to send a message to Parliament under Article 86(2) of the Constitution. But the legal experts of the Congress (I) have been maintaining that such a message can be sent by the President to Parliament on any issue only on the advice of the Cabinet and not independently in exercise of his own discretion.

The right of the President to address or send messages to Parliament as provided for in Article 86 has to be read, in their view, in conjunction with the amended Article 74 which states quite clearly that the President shall act in all matters on the advice of the Cabinet. Though Article 74(1) states that there shall be a Council of Ministers with the Prime Minister at the head

to aid and advise in the exercise of the functions, the 42nd Amendment enacted during the Emergency makes it abundantly clear that the President "shall in the exercise of his functions act in accordance with such advice".

The 44th Amendment brought forward by the Janata Government empowered the President to ask the Council to reconsider its advice if he had some reservations about it, but retained the mandatory obligation as provided for under the 42nd Amendment to abide by such advice if the Cabinet still persisted in it. So far the question has not arisen whether the President can exercise his right to address or send a message to Parliament on his own without seeking the advice of the Cabinet.

Real issue: According to the Opposition leaders the real issue at the moment is not the interpretation of Articles 74 and 86 of the Constitution relating to the President's right to send a message to Parliament against the wishes of the Cabinet, but the Prime Minister's duties and obligations under Article 78 to communicate to the President all decisions of the Government, furnish such information relating to the administration or proposed legislation that the President might call for, and submit for consideration of the Cabinet any issue raised by the President. In the present case Mr. Zail Singh has maintained that the Prime Minister had violated the established conventions in not keeping him informed of important events, besides denying him access to reports of commissions which he is entitled to receive as President.

But in the ultimate analysis a debate in Parliament on such contentious issues is conducted on party lines on the basis of political considerations. After all Parliament is not a Supreme Court which goes deeper into the constitutional aspects cutting across party lines.

It is in this context that the Congress (I) with its three-fourths majority in the Lok Sabha appears reasonably confident of riding the storm. But the Opposition parties are planning to transform this controversy into a major political battle outside Parliament, if the President is prepared to oblige them with some follow-up move on his part. And in this narrow sense the initiative rests with Mr. Zail Singh and not Mr. Rajiv Gandhi for keeping this controversy alive till the presidential election.

New Delhi PATRIOT in English 19 Mar 87 p 1

[Article by R.K. Mishra]

[Text]

Differences of opinion, attitude, approach and temperament between the head of State and the head of Government are not without precedent in our country. In the past both the President and the Prime Minister kept such differences, when they did arise even on substantial issues, within the bounds of confidentiality which should govern all communications between persons holding these august offices. This respect for confidentiality needs to be adhered to in all circumstances; more so in the present situation when the country is facing grave threats to its unity, integrity and stability. Only those who gave primacy to their vested interests, commercial, personal or political, over the interests of the nation and therefore have no qualms of conscience in exacerbating misunderstanding and tension will view with glee the recent events which have brought into the open the differences between the President and the Prime Minister. Those who regard national interests as paramount would like the present unsavoury chapter to end before irreparable damage is done to the democratic polity.

It is unfortunate that the contents of a letter purported to have been written by the President to the Prime Minister should have been leaked to the press. Political circles in the Capital knew of the impending 'event' in advance. It is, thus, obvious that the publication of the contents of the letter is a part of a carefully-scripted political drama which is being enacted with a view to damaging the democratic institutions. Some opposition parties, particularly the BJP and the Janata, have seized this opportunity to subserve their narrow partisan interests. They hope to ride on the President's back and embarrass the Government, particularly the Prime Minister. Unfortunately, these political parties, unable as they are to build and retain an enduring mass base, tend to live from moment to moment. Those who were the most vociferous in assailing Mr N Sanjiva Reddy when he acted in a manner which was not to their liking pretend to have become great defenders of the dignity of the office of the President. Giani Zail Singh cannot have such a short memory as to forget the ridicule and scorn which was heaped upon him by some of these parties and a section of the so-called free press when he was chosen for this office by Indira Gandhi. Hopefully, he has not forgotten the accusations and insinuations directed against him throughout the last four years, particularly in the context of his role in Punjab affairs. As a prudent person he should be wary of the new crop of friends and well-wishers who have surfaced during the last few weeks and are offering to take up cudgels on his behalf.

Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi, who is currently on an election tour, has sent a reply to the President. It is wise on his part not to have released its contents. On his return he is bound to face considerable pressure to make public his reply. He will be well-advised to resist these pressures. Silence on his part is likely to cost him politically, at least in the short run. But in the national interest, when the stability of the Indian state is at stake, it may be necessary to pay this price. Firstly, the office of the President must not be allowed to be made a subject of public controversy. Even if the Prime Minister has reasons to be unhappy with what he perceives as Giani Zail Singh's acts of omission and commission, no useful purpose would be served by bringing them out into the open at this stage. It could provide ammunition to those who are engaged in implementing a diabolical game of destabilisation. Unless he is left with no other option, the Prime Minister must continue to act with great restraint.

Giani Zail Singh may have a grievance against the Prime Minister. Now that his term is coming to an end and there is no likelihood of his renomination by the Congress, self-seekers may advise him that he has nothing to lose and that by creating embarrassment for the Prime Minister he would be able to settle accounts.

But is it too much to expect that a person who has risen from humble beginnings to the highest office the Republic has to offer and held responsible positions in his State and at the Centre would act with a circumspection and refrain from doing anything which would harm the country?

Unfortunately, the decline in the quality of public life has left us with hardly anyone who is high enough in stature and unselfish enough in motivation as to play a constructive role in the present situation and prevent an already uneasy situation from becoming murkier. Acutely aware of this great void, we can only pray and plead that both the President and the Prime Minister rise to the occasion, forget the past in order to frustrate the game of the destabilisers by acting with supreme sense of responsibility to their offices and to the country and bring the present unsavoury controversy to a close with dignity.

Prime Minister, President Meet

Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 29 Mar 87 p 1

[Text]

NEW DELHI, March 28.

ATWO-HOUR meeting between the Prime Minister, Mr. Rajiv Gandhi, and the President, Mr. Zail Singh, today is understood to have eased tension that had developed in their relations as a result of serious differences over some issues.

The differences were highlighted by the letter written by the President to Mr. Gandhi, which was leaked to the press.

The letter had questioned Mr. Gandhi's statement in Parliament that he had been keeping the President briefed on important issues of national importance.

The talks were held in a cordial atmosphere, according to official sources. Considering the duration of the crucial discussions, it is understood that all those issues which had caused misunderstanding between the two leaders were covered in depth.

The President's letter was followed by a reply by the Prime Minister which

was kept confidential. Mr. Gandhi stated that the Prime Minister's relations with the President were confidential.

The Prime Minister had earlier said he would meet the President when necessary. The ground for the meeting was prepared by some Congress leaders. The defence minister, Mr. V. P. Singh, called on the President and explained the Prime Minister's point of view.

The veteran Congress leader, Mr. Kamalapati Tripathi, met the President and urged him not to precipitate the matter. Mr. Tripathi also wrote to the Prime Minister and met him this morning just before the Prime Minister was scheduled to call on the President.

The Prime Minister's office as well as Rashtrapati Bhavan had nothing to say on the talks and only vague indications were available about the positive direction that the two leaders had taken today.

If indeed a substantial progress was achieved today, it will be obvious in the next few days. Without any fresh move by the President, the opposition would have to strive hard to sustain its

campaign against the Prime Minister and the Lok Sabha speaker, Mr. Balram Jakhar, over this issue.

Even in the absence of a genuine rapprochement, the two sides may consider it prudent to let the controversy subside for the time being.

If the President feels that he has made a point effectively and that there is no need to further embarrass Mr. Gandhi, the Prime Minister may be willing to pay due attention to the sentiments of the President.

UNI & PTI add: It is understood that Mr. Gandhi took the initiative to have a meeting with Mr. Zail Singh at the Padma awards investiture ceremony.

Mr. Gandhi drove to the Rashtrapati Bhavan at 12.15 p.m. and was closeted with the President in his study room.

The two leaders came out together after the meeting, both wearing smiles on their faces. Mr. Gandhi then left for his residence.

Several intermediaries were also trying to bring about a rapprochement between the Prime Minister and the President.

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PAPERS REPORT DEVELOPMENTS IN FAIRFAX CASE

Role of Gurumurthy

Calcutta THE TELEGRAPH in English 29 Mar 87 p 9

[Article by Chidanand Rajghatta]

[Text]

The case, if anything, was mind-boggling. It included a dash of espionage, mention of Swiss bank accounts, and the leakage of top secret documents. Its ramifications extended to government security, freedom of the press, victimisation of "honest cops," and political scandal.

The cast of characters was sensational: President Zail Singh, Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi, defence (and formerly, finance) minister, V.P. Singh, press baron Ramnath Goenka, a chartered accountant, S. Gurumurthy, former enforcement director, Bhure Lal, revenue secretary Vinod Pande, industrial magnate Dhirubhai Ambani, and superstar-MP Amitabh Bachchan and his brother, Ajitabh.

Numerous questions remain: what was the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) after when it arrested Mr Gurumurthy? Where did Fairfax Inc and Mr Bachchan come in? What was the role of Reliance Industries? Why was Mr Bhure Lal transferred? Who was trying to "frame" whom?

The only thing that did make itself very clear was that the government fell flat on its face. The evidence cited by the

CBI only turned against the finance ministry; the court found no reason to continue to detain Mr Gurumurthy; "incriminating" letters proved to be embarrassing forgeries; the press and intelligentsia were alienated; and the Opposition was given a new stick to beat the government with.

The drama began on the morning of March 13, when the 11-edition, mass-circulated *Indian Express* published an explosive letter from Mr Zail Singh, to Mr Rajiv Gandhi, accusing him, in effect, of being untruthful, misleading Parliament and violating the Constitution. It was, by far, the most stunning expose relating to politics at the highest level.

Twelve hours later when 14 officials of the CBI swooped down on 130, Sunder Nagar, the guest house of *Indian Express* in New Delhi, the inference was inevitable. The government, it seemed, was furious with *Indian Express* for the embarrassing story.

Although the CBI officials raided the guest house and turned the place upside down for what they later claimed to be violations of the Official Secrets Act in the Reliance case, it seemed that they were out to trace the leak of the President's letter. Almost as

an afterthought, the CBI arrested Mr Gurumurthy, a chartered accountant and financial adviser to *Indian Express*, who had authored a series of hard-hitting articles on Reliance Industries Limited.

The story then, has its origins in the bitter enmity between Mr Ramnath Goenka, the proprietor of the *Indian Express* group, and Mr Dhirubhai Ambani, promoter of Reliance, a blue chip company that in terms of growth, is a phenomenon in Indian business. Why the giants of industry and the media have squared up against each other is a matter of conjecture since they are said to have got on famously till about two years ago. But one source very close to Mr Goenka indicated that Mr Ambani, who has been trying to break into the newspaper world, attempted to buy off a few editions of *Indian Express* and, in fact, had begun negotiations with Mr Goenka's daughter-in-law, Mrs Saroj Goenka, who is the managing director of the group.

This riled Mr Goenka, who, despite his considerable business interests, is passionate

about his newspaper group, which he has nurtured from scratch since 1948. It was enough provocation for him to start a blistering campaign against Mr Ambani.

Mr Gurumurthy's articles that began to appear in *Indian Express* last year against Reliance must rank as one of the most complete, well-documented exposes in Indian journalism. In each case, the article was meticulously researched and drew on information from the files of the ministry with which Reliance dealt. Each expose by Mr Gurumurthy in *Indian Express* forced the government to look into the deals and in cases, retract its decisions.

To examine three specific cases: in April 1986, Mr Gurumurthy revealed there had been non-residential investment worth Rs 108 crores in Reliance relating to the 'E' series debentures, and this was linked with the Reliance move to change non-convertible debentures to convertible ones. As a result, the government, in the first week of June, banned the conversion of non-convertible debentures to convertible debentures.

The next was a brilliant expose of how 45 investment and trading companies associated with Reliance were given bank loans amounting to Rs 100 crores to subscribe for Reliance debentures. The articles were based on a routine investigative report of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).

After their publication, the government appointed an inquiry committee headed by Mr C. Rangarajan, deputy governor of the RBI. The committee's report, placed in Parliament, showed that the banks had violated the spirit of the RBI guidelines which said loans could be advanced only for productive purposes. The report clearly said the loans given were used for propping up Reliance shares and for insider trading. The result was that, thanks to the *Indian Express* campaign, the banks were ordered to recall the loans.

A few weeks later, Mr Gurumurthy came up with another Reliance had smuggled in its Rs 100-crore Patalganga plant

without paying customs duty. The reports quoted extensively from the files of the Directorate-General of Technical Development (DGTD). A few weeks later, the Customs department issued a notice to Reliance demanding Rs 45 crores as duties.

Throughout the period the government reacted positively on the *Indian Express* exposes, series of articles proving that the man in charge of the crucial finance ministry was none other than Mr Vishwanath Pratap Singh, who, by then, had established himself as a tough, no-nonsense and upright minister, the likes of which the country has rarely seen.

It was towards August-September last year that *Indian Express* planned a final assault against Reliance. In October, Mr Gurumurthy went to the US with the specific purpose of hiring a detective agency to investigate the deals of Reliance abroad. Mr Gurumurthy's ostensible reason was that he himself lacked the time and resources for such a task. According to him, he contacted six US detective agencies and finally settled on the Virginia-based Fairfax Group Incorporated. But, he says, he soon found that he could not afford the fees and returned to India without hiring them.

Around this time, the finance ministry was moving towards launching investigations into illegal funds deposited abroad by Indians. Its investigations were prompted by an International Monetary Fund (IMF) report last year which indicated that nearly Rs 2000 crores of Indian money was illegally salted away abroad. The chief architect of Mr V.P. Singh's "crackdown" policy was Mr Bhure Lal, director, enforcement. He was a principal secretary in the Uttar Pradesh government when Mr Singh was the chief minister. Mr Singh had brought him to the Centre.

The finance ministry also ended up hiring the services of Fairfax. This fact was not to come to light until much later when the CBI arrested Mr Gurumurthy, who revealed

that it was not he, but the finance ministry which actually engaged Fairfax. Mr Gurumurthy told *The Telegraph* the government was in touch with him throughout his attempt to hire Fairfax. When he found they were too expensive, he provided the name to finance ministry officials who were then planning to engage an agency to probe the illegal funds abroad. Mr Gurumurthy also said he had briefed the Fairfax representative about the information he had about Reliance at the request of the government—meaning finance ministry officials.

The question is, for what purpose did the finance ministry hire Fairfax and what was the brief given to it? And why did the ministry find it necessary to conceal the fact until Fairfax itself confirmed, after the arrest of Mr Gurumurthy, that it had been hired by the government and not by a private company? Did the brief given to Fairfax specifically direct an investigation against Mr Ajitabh Bachchan, brother of the Indian movie star and Congress(I) MP, Amitabh Bachchan, who is known to be close to the Prime Minister?

It is pertinent to note that only weeks after the finance ministry hired the services of Fairfax, Mr Singh was shifted from the finance portfolio. Following this, Mr Bhure Lal, who liaised with Fairfax, was transferred to the obscure post of joint director of the currency, coins and mints division. The revenue secretary, Mr Vinod Pande, another trusted aide of Mr Singh, who was overseeing the raids and investigation, was divested of the charge of the Enforcement Directorate. The vital wing has now been put directly under the finance secretary.

All this points to only one thing: someone very high up was rattled by the very scope of the investigation entrusted to Fairfax.

The Bachchan name would never have been drawn into the controversy had it not been for the arrest and interrogation of Mr Gurumurthy. The dead giveaway came from the CBI itself, which repeatedly

asked Mr Gurumurthy what he had found on the Bachchans. Said Mr Gurumurthy, "They also tried to get at Bhure Lal and Vinod Pande by asking me what I discussed with them." Mr Ram Jethmalani, counsel for Mr Gurumurthy contends that the finance ministry had directed Fairfax to probe the Bachchan assets abroad, and Reliance, taking advantage of the proximity of the Bachchans to the powers-that-be used it to try and "fix" Mr Gurumurthy and *Indian Express*.

This thesis gains credence because of the letter with which the CBI confronted Mr Gurumurthy during his interrogation and which formed part of the documents for the case diary. The letter, purportedly written by Mr G.A. McKay, vice-president of Fairfax, and addressed to Mr Gurumurthy, referred to a conversation a Fairfax representative had had with Mr Gurumurthy, Mr Bhure Lal, Mr Pande and Mr Goenka. It also spoke of the "progress made on the source of funds for purchase of Swiss properties of Mr Bachchan."

That the letter was a forgery became apparent soon after. Mr Gurumurthy himself denied that he had ever received such a letter. But an even more vehement denial came from Fairfax which unequivocally denounced it as a fraud. Fairfax also dropped the bombshell: it had been hired by the finance ministry of the Government of India and not by Mr Gurumurthy, *Indian Express* or any other private company.

The *Statesman's* Washington correspondent quoted the Fairfax president, Mr Michael Herschman, as saying: "The New Delhi meeting never took place. We never met the revenue secretary ever. We were retained by the Indian government. We reported directly to Mr Bhure Lal. Our mission was given to us by the government through Mr Bhure Lal and I understand, was cleared at the highest level in the finance ministry. It never included looking for this person in

Switzerland, Bachchan. I completely deny that the Indian government ever asked us to look at this guy. It is simply not true, that was not part of the portfolio." Interestingly, the Fairfax chief did not comment on the exact reasons for his agency being hired but said there was more than one investigation.

It is clear that the government panicked not only at the indication that Bachchan assets abroad were being probed but also at the scope of the investigations entrusted to Fairfax. Interested parties made use of the Bachchan name to trigger off alarm bells in the government. According to Fairfax, the letter could have been fabricated by duplicating a genuine letterhead and incorporating the rest of the matter. Mr Jethmalani told the additional chief metropolitan magistrate, Mr R.L. Chugh, who was hearing Mr Gurumurthy's remand petition, that this could have been done by the Reliance group to set off investigations against his client.

Once it was established that the Fairfax letter was a hoax, the government had a hard time pinning Mr Gurumurthy. It was on the basis of the letter that investigating officials wanted to move against Mr Gurumurthy and probe how he paid such a huge sum of money—US \$500,000 was the amount mentioned—in foreign exchange to the US-based company. But now, instead, the government will have to look at how much and in what form the finance ministry paid Fairfax.

One of the most glaring discrepancies in the CBI case is that it grandly announced that 10 incriminating documents were recovered during the raids on the *Indian Express* guest house, but according to Mr Jethmalani, the seizure memo shows that only five documents were recovered. However, the contents of these five documents are not known. The subsequent questioning of Mr Bhure Lal and Mr Pande by

the CBI also raises questions about what exactly the government is after.

Though the CBI's questioning of Mr Gurumurthy centered around his alleged hiring of Fairfax and reported investigation into the foreign assets of the Bachchans, he has been arrested for violating the Official Secrets Act. The case pertains to Mr Gurumurthy's expose of Reliance having smuggled in the Patalganga plant in which he had quoted extensively from the official files of the DGTD.

In Indian officialdom, it does not seem to matter that even though he quoted from "secret" official files, Mr Gurumurthy succeeded in making the Reliance group pay what they owed the government. The government is intent on booking Mr Gurumurthy for the "wrong" he has done even though it resulted in the government gaining crores of rupees.

But even in trying to pin Mr Gurumurthy, the government seems to have erred.

As his lawyers pointed out in court, the files which Mr Gurumurthy quoted from were the same used by Mr S. Mulgaonkar, editorial adviser of *Indian Express* for his write-up on the subject in the paper long before Mr Gurumurthy's articles appeared. Mr Mulgaonkar himself was in court and ready to say that he was in possession of the same files but the government would not take the bait. The same DGTD files were also quoted extensively last December by the Rajya Sabha member, Mr A.G. Kulkarni, when he raised the matter in the House.

The hearings of the remand petition itself showed how weak the government case was. While releasing Mr Gurumurthy on bail, the additional chief metropolitan magistrate, Mr Chugh, observed that the official file used by the accused related to the business activity of Reliance Industries and not to any defence or other sensitive matter. The government was clearly using an anti-

quoted law to harass a citizen on dubious grounds.

Mr Gurumurthy himself was stoic about the whole affair and, while speaking to The Telegraph, made it clear that he would be on the offensive in the case instead of merely defending himself. "The case that I contravened the official Secrets Act has no basis. The case and the raid is on a matter which, at best, involves private, commercial interests. It cannot be upgraded to the level of a matter of state," he asserted.

For the moment, it is the accuser who stands accused.

The government has put itself in a position where it will have to do a lot of explaining. In Parliament, the Opposition, which had been concentrating solely on the controversy relating to the President's letter to the Prime Minister woke up last week to demand a discussion on the government hiring a foreign detective agency to probe illegal foreign assets of Indians. The government has so far not denied that it had appointed Fairfax for such an investigation.

But the drama has only just opened to the public. The worms have begun to wriggle.

Letter Called Forgery

Calcutta THE STATESMAN in English 20 Mar 87 pp 1, 9

[Text]

A LETTER dated November 20, 1986, stated to have been written by the vice-president of a U.S. based investigation agency to Mr. S. Gurumurthy, adviser to the Express Group of Newspapers, has been cited as evidence by the Central Bureau of Investigation, which is investigating a case under the Official Secrets Act against Mr Gurumurthy, and described by the Express counsel, Mr Ram Jethmalani, as a forgery.

The text of the letter is as follows:

"Dear Mr Gurumurthy,
"Dr Harris apprised me of his useful meeting in New Delhi last week with Mr J. Goenka, Mr N. Wadia, Mr V. Pande, Mr B. Lal and yourself. Now that the group has been retained to assist Government of India we hope to expedite end result.

"We received only U.S. \$300,000 arranged by Mr N. Wadia. As considerable efforts have already been made and expenditure incurred, it is advisable Mr Goenka arranges during his forthcoming visit to Geneva an additional U.S. \$200,000. We shall refund both amounts on receipt from Government of India to

F. Briner,
Attorney 31,
Cheminchapeau-Rogue,
1231, Conches,
Geneva.

"We shall apprise Mr Goenka in Geneva about the progress made on source of funds for purchase of Swiss properties of Mr Bachchan. We shall contact Mr Goenka at

Casa Trola, ch-0922, Morcote (Ticino) during his visit."

The letter is signed by Mr Gordon Andreau McKay, vice-president of the Fairfax Group Ltd., 7369, McWharter Place, Suite 420, Annandale, Virginia 22003. Efforts were made to contact Mr McKay in the USA to inquire if he had written

the letter but he was not available for comment.

A spokesman of the Express Group, when contacted, said that the letter had never been received by Mr Gurumurthy and was a "complete fabrication". He felt that the letter had been passed on to people at the "very top" by an industrial house in Bombay and that the name of Mr Bachchan had been cleverly introduced to panic the Government into action. The spokesman said that this letter had not been found during last week's searches, a point which was not contested by the CBI.

However, the spokesman admitted that Mr Gurumurthy was in touch with the Fairfax Group and, during a visit to the USA, examined the possibility of engaging the agency for an investigation into the Reliance Group of Bombay. He also admitted that the then Director, Enforcement, Mr Bhure Lal,

had been in touch with the agency after Mr Gurumurthy found them too expensive to hire. The spokesman confirmed that a meeting between Messrs Goenka, Pande (Secretary, Revenue), Bhure Lal, Gurumurthy and a representative of Fairfax had taken place in New Delhi to see whether the agency

could be hired by the Government. The spokesman said that "Dr Harris" was a code name known only to two or three people in India and was not in the knowledge of Mr McKay. Thus, the letter must have been a forgery, it was alleged.

The sequence of events in the matter reveal a peculiar series of developments. On December 2, 1986, the Home Minister, Mr Buta Singh, announced in the Rajya Sabha that a CBI inquiry had been ordered into the leakage of official documents and files with regard to licences given to Reliance Industries Limited. In the third week of December, the CBI searched the house of Mr Gurumurthy in Madras. Also, in the third week of December, Mr Bhure Lal, Director, Enforcement, visited the USA and met representatives of Fairfax. On January 24, 1987, Mr V. P. Singh was shifted from the Finance Ministry. In the first week of February, Mr Bhure Lal was asked by the Finance Secretary, Mr S. Venkataraman, if a foreign agency had been hired to investigate the affairs of Mr Amitabh Bachchan, M.P., and his brother, Mr Ajitabh Bachchan, who is now settled in Switzerland.

Mr Bhure Lal then sought an appointment with the Prime Minister where he was again asked if such an investigation had been

ordered but told to go ahead if any evidence was found.

At 10 p.m. on March 11, Mr Bhure Lal was given his transfer orders and he handed over charge at 8 a.m. the following day. On March 14, the CBI searched the house of Mr R. N. Goenka, arrested Mr Gurumurthy in Madras and his partner, Mr Janakiraman in Bombay. On March 17 Mr Bhure Lal was questioned by the CBI.

What, then, is the CBI looking for? According to Mr Buta Singh's statement, a case had been registered under the Official Secrets Act in connexion with files and documents of the Directorate-General of Technical Development relating to licences issued to Reliance. Searches were conducted in Madras in December.

For three months, routine inquiries continued. All of a sudden, on March 14, the CBI seemed to have woken up to the possibility of incriminating documents being available in Mr Goenka's house. Accordingly, a search was conducted, and,

simultaneously, Mr Gurumurthy was arrested. The articles under scrutiny were published in the Indian Express several months ago. Thus, was the CBI searching for evidence pertaining to the Reliance case alone?

The timing of the search at Mr Goenka's house would seem of greater relevance in the context

of the abrupt transfer of Mr Bhure Lal three days earlier.

Mr Bhure Lal had visited the USA in December with the approval of the then Finance Minister, Mr V. P. Singh. He had met representatives of Fairfax to follow up inquiries into Reliance and the source of funds of Mr Ajitabh Bachchan in Switzerland. Investigations reveal that the Enforcement Directorate was trying to establish whether Mr Bachchan and some Italian nationals had, as alleged, jointly participated in setting up a company in Switzerland.

The spokesman of the Express Group has affirmed that the letter allegedly written by Fairfax to Mr Gurumurthy and cited as evidence by the CBI was not recovered during the searches. This has not been contested by the CBI and suggests that the Government had possession of the letter before the searches were ordered. Was this letter the reason for the CBI to step up its inquiries? Was it also the reason for the abrupt transfer of Mr Bhure Lal?

The transfer of the Director, Enforcement, would have to be decided by the Finance Minister. Similarly, the decision to search the house of an eminent newspaper owner like Mr R. N. Goenka would require the clearance of the Cabinet Minister in charge of the CBI. Both portfolios are, at present, held by the Prime Minister.

Fairfax Denial

Calcutta THE SUNDAY STATESMAN in English 22 Mar 87 p 1

[Article by Warren Unna]

[Text]

WASHINGTON, March 21. —Michael J. Hershman, president of the Fairfax Group, Ltd. of Annandale, Virginia, the detective management consultant firm hired by the Indian Finance Ministry, had this to say upon being read the text of The Statesman Insight team's story in Friday's edition:

"Obviously, the letter is unequivocally a forgery. The New Delhi meeting never took place. We never met with the Secretary of Revenue, ever. We were retained by the Indian Government. We reported directly to Mr Bhure Lal. Our mission was given to us by the Government through Mr Bhure Lal, and I understand was cleared at the highest level in the Finance Ministry. It never included looking for this person in Switzerland, Bachchan. I completely deny that the Indian Government ever asked us to look at this guy. It is simply not true. That was not

part of the portfolio. I can't comment on the exact reasons for our being hired, but there was more than one investigation.

"A terrible injustice seems to have been done, not only to Mr Gurumurthy, but to Mr Goenka and also to Mr Bhure Lal. I believe Mr Bhure Lal to be an extremely honest and dedicated law enforcement official and, in this country, it would be inconceivable that a senior law enforcement official would be removed from his post for doing his job.

"Now, more than ever, the Prime Minister has a responsibility to root out the corruption within the Government and within the industry and to take appropriate action against those who have committed this fraud. It would be a tragedy if it turned out that the Prime Minister himself was involved in this scheme which led to the improper jailing of an investigative reporter (Gu-

rumurthy). Here, you would have a Congressional committee, a special prosecutor. You might have another "Watergate".

The Fairfax group's Hershman came to Washington in December 1975 to work on the Senate Ervin Committee's 'Watergate' investigation of the Nixon Administration and became its senior staff investigator. In all, he has spent 20 years as a top-level investigator. He has visited India on several occasions. Apart

from Watergate, he has worked as an investigator for the U.S. Attorney's office in New York, the wire-tap investigation, the House Foreign Affairs Committee Korean probe and as Deputy Auditor-General of the U.S. Aid Program. McKay was both an investigator and prosecutor with the U.S. Attorney's office here in Washington. He has never been to India. Hershman founded the company and then hired McKay.

Discussion in Lok Sabha

Calcutta THE STATESMAN in English 1 Apr 87 pp 1, 7

[Text]

NEW DELHI, March 31.—The Government today flatly denied in the Lok Sabha that an American intelligence agency, the Fairfax group, had been entrusted with any investigation, or that it had been paid any money, or that anybody had been authorized to make any payment to it. The Minister of State for Finance, Mr Brahm Dutt, made that statement while replying to the four-hour special discussion on "the engaging of the U.S. economic intelligence agency, the Fairfax group, by the Ministry of Finance for investigation of cases of Indians having huge illegal funds abroad".

Mr Dutt described the agency's working as little more than that of an informer—"unlike agencies like the CBI—with payment made to it on the same basis as that for informers, "if its information is accepted". But Fairfax had not given any information deserving of payment. The Minister seemed to say, at one point, that it had not supplied even any inauthentic information, let alone authentic information.

He began by noting that the entire discussion was based on "a big misunderstanding" and went on to deny every charge that had been hurled at the Government by Opposition members.

Mr Brahm Dutt also told the House that the Government was trying to verify a statement on March 21 attributed to the president of Fairfax, Mr Michael J. Hershman, in which he had made wide-ranging comments, including one of the Prime Minister. "If that statement is found to be true, we will put the Fairfax president in his right place," Mr Dutt said. "We have taken strong exception to that statement, for he is trying to interfere in our internal affairs".

That Fairfax had been entrusted with some work was, however, not denied by the Minister. In fact, the former

Finance Minister, Mr Vishwanath Pratap Singh, who happened to arrive in the chamber two hours and 50 minutes after the discussion began, confirmed that Fairfax had been hired, when answering a query by Mr Dinesh Goswami (AGP). He said: "I do share full responsibility for engaging the services of Fairfax".

A second point Mr Singh made, in yet another impromptu intervention, was to affirm that the Prime Minister never refused consent for raids to unearth black money. He made that point while Mr Brahm Dutt was replying to a specific charge by Mr Madhu Dandavate (J), initiator of the discussion, that on January 22, Mr Singh had gone to see the Prime Minister with a file containing the preliminary findings of an investigation to unearth black money and had sought permission to conduct some raids, but that permission had been refused.

Mr Brahm Dutt's reply to that charge was to refute it as "entirely fake". Neither had the former Finance Minister gone to meet the Prime Minister that day nor had the Prime Minister re-

fused permission for any raids being conducted. "I say this with all responsibility".

As he said that, Mr V. P. Singh was on his feet with a request to the Speaker, Mr Balram Jakhar: "May I say something on this?" Then he added: "The Prime Minister has never refused any investigation I wanted to make."

Mr Singh was not the only one to thus intervene. Another who had prominently figured in this matter and Press reports relating to whom were quoted by Mr Dandavate also intervened. This was Mr Amitabh Bachchan, who entered the chamber five minutes after Mr V. P. Singh and was seen in the House after an absence of some weeks. As the member who was speaking at that time finished his speech, Mr Bachchan was on his feet with a request that he be allowed to make a personal explanation since his name had been mentioned by Mr Dandavate.

Some Opposition members opposed that request, saying that while he could participate in the discussion, he could not offer a per-

sonal explanation. The Chair, however, allowed Mr Bachchan to go ahead.

Mr Bachchan told the House that the Press reports cited by Mr Dandavate were "totally false" and that the charges against his brother were false too. "I know my brother". He said that the reported statement by a Bombay actor, Mr Mithun Chakraborty, that his expenses on a certain foreign trip had been borne by Mr Bachchan were similarly false. "These reports are malicious, and printed to defame me", he added.

Mr Bachchan stayed in his seat for about half-an-hour thereafter, then left without waiting for the conclusion of the discussion which, in a sense, centred round him.

Mr Brahm Dutt, in his reply to the discussion, also touched on the charges against Mr Bachchan but dismissed them offhand, then added: "We never asked Fairfax to get any information about that member".

Towards the close of his reply, Mr Dutt referred to the raids on the houses belonging to a newspaper magnate, although without mentioning him or his newspaper. He said that the CBI raids on those premises were because "information continue to be collected and sent". He referred also to a particular house here where activities were going on which were not good for the country, and said that house had been raided "when we heard that papers were being burnt". He also seemed to suggest that "the full facts of this matter" would be known soon.

Mr Brahm Dutt's reply ended with a chit to the former Finance Minister: "He was right in giving permission (to Fairfax) to collect some information".

The Prime Minister and Finance

Minister, Mr Rajiv Gandhi, who was widely expected to reply to the discussion, was not present even for a few minutes during the slightly more than four-hour debate. More than one Opposition member had pointedly regretted that Mr Gandhi had not chosen to be present.

The House itself, including the treasury benches, was almost full. The distinguished visitors' gallery was full. So was the Speaker's gallery, in a front row seat in which Mrs V. P. Singh sat listening keenly throughout. The public gallery had only a handful of people. Perhaps security officials had decided not to issue passes for the discussion. The jam-packed Press gallery, however, more than made up for the yawningly empty public gallery.

The discussion was initially stormy, especially as Mr Dandavate began reading out extracts from periodicals mentioning the name "Bachchan". A number of Congress (I) members and several Ministers, including Mr H. K. L. Bhagat, Mr Buta Singh and Mr Vasant Sathe, protested that he was casting aspersions on an honourable member. Mr Dandavate had, however, obtained the Chair's prior permission to reading those extracts, and went ahead.

There was, again, a near-uproar as Mr Dandavate referred to Mr Brahm Dutt's "secret visit" abroad towards the end of January and the latter clarified that he had only visited Italy at the invitation of that country's government. Mr H. K. L. Bhagat and others asked that Mr Dandavate apologize to the Minister for having made that reference. The Speaker asked that the expression "secret visit" be withdrawn. Mr Dandavate, however, told them all that he "accepted" the Minister's explanation and had nothing to apologize for or withdraw. The Minister's visit

was secret in that it had not been announced earlier, he added.

Mr Dandavate's principal theme was that there clearly had been a conflict between the former Finance Minister and the Prime Minister over the matter of raids, especially in respect of those who had stashed away large funds in Switzerland illegally. He mentioned in that context a file taken along by Mr Singh when he called on Mr Gandhi on January 22, and suggested that, as had been done in 1975 in the Tulmohan Ram issue, the file might be brought to the Speaker's chamber for examination by Opposition leaders. It contained, according to him, "important inferences".

Other Opposition speakers who followed asked why Fairfax had been chosen to collect information in this matter, whether its antecedents had been checked before it was hired, how much money had been paid to it and by whom. Somewhat surprisingly, several Congress (I) Speakers also raised those same queries. Mr Dinesh Singh being, perhaps, the most prominent among them.

It was, he said, extremely strange that a foreign agency had been appointed for the collection of information on this sensitive and "delicate" matter, and "without going through an Indian agency". It was, he added, a dangerous step. "The Minister must explain why this was done". More interestingly, he asked whether Fairfax was making an economic investigation "or was it making a political case against the Government or the Prime Minister?"

That line of argument from the principal speaker from the ruling party did make many in the galleries sit up and wonder whether it had been decided to dump the former Finance Minister (who incidentally was not present in the House during Mr Dinesh Singh's speech).

Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 3 Apr 87 p 1

[Text]

NEW DELHI, April 2.

THE Fairfax affair burst into the Lok Sabha again today causing turmoil that lasted nearly 20 minutes until most opposition members walked out.

The return of the issue shaking the house barely 48 hours after it had been talked out was prompted by a statement by the Fairfax chairman, Mr. Michael J. Hershman, that the U.S. detective agency was still working for the government.

According to the statement, reported by the Washington correspondent of the "Statesman" this morning, Fairfax was retained specifically to conduct investigation to turn over some facts to the government of India.

The Fairfax statement said, "We have turned many facts to the government of India that are both relevant and crucial to the investigation we were hired to conduct. Why they have not acted on those facts is a question only they can answer."

"We have conducted our investigation in an open manner. That is, we have identified ourselves as being retained by the government of India to conduct an investigation. We have presented letters provided to us by the Indian government granting us this authority to individual corporations and government agencies who we have sought the co-operation of during our probe."

"I would finally point out that we have not been relieved of our responsibilities to continue the conduct of the investigation and it is going forward."

The opposition members were on their feet contending that the agency's chairman, Mr. Hershman, had virtually disclaimed what Mr. Brahma Dutt, minister of state had stated.

Congress members particularly Mrs. Mamta Banerjee, Mr. R. Kumaramangalam, and Mr. Ajay Mishra, began shouting down those on the opposite side. None of this could be heard in the sound and fury of the verbal slanging match.

From the speaker's observations, one could only make out that notices of privilege and adjournment motion had been tabled.

Mr. Madhav Reddy (TDP) was heard saying that he had sought to table

a privilege notice. Similar notice had been given by Mr. Jaipal Reddy (J). Mr. Saifuddin Chaudhury (CPM) spoke of an adjournment motion. Mr. Dinesh Goswami (AGP) was heard saying that the papers relating to the work entrusted to the Fairfax be tabled.

The speaker rose to say he had disallowed the adjournment motion but would study the privilege issue. He suggested to those who were seeking a privilege issue to see if they could raise it under directive 115. This obviously did not satisfy the opposition.

DIRECTIVE 115

This directive stipulates a member wishing to point out any inaccuracy in a minister's statement, shall before referring to the matter in the house, may write to the speaker pointing out the particulars of the inaccuracy and seek his permission to raise the matter in the house.

(2) The member may place before the speaker such evidence as he may have in support of his allegation.

(3) The speaker may, if he thinks fit, bring the matter to the notice of the minister or the member concerned for the purpose of ascertaining the factual position in regard to the allegation.

(4) The speaker may then, if he thinks it necessary, permit the member who made the allegation to raise the matter in the house and the member so permitted shall, before making the statement, inform the minister or the member concerned.

(5) The minister or the member concerned may make a statement in reply with the permission of the speaker and after having informed the other member concerned.

NEWSPAPER REPORTS

The speaker said he could look into the members' contention if they gave him some facts. He could not go by newspaper reports. "I believe members more than reports."

At this stage, most of the opposition members collected and walked out to cries of "shame, shame", from the Congress benches and to the retort "shame of whom."

With the opposition benches nearly empty, the home minister, Mr. Buta Singh, and some other Congress members successively made caustic comments on those who had walked out.

Later, Mr. Brahm Dutt got up to remark that he would act as per the directive of the speaker.

Mr. Baliram Bhagat, a former speaker, went on to add what the minister had stated should have been accepted as final.

Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 4 Apr 87 p 1

[Text]

NEW DELHI, April 3.

A SITTING judge of the supreme court will inquire into the Fairfax affair, the Prime Minister, Mr. Rajiv Gandhi, has informed the Lok Sabha today.

The short announcement in effect amounted to acknowledging that the government's explanation on the affair given to the house on Tuesday had failed to bury the issue.

"Questions continue to be raised," Mr. Gandhi said in his cryptic announcement. "In view of the importance of the matter, all controversies must be set at rest."

The announcement took the house by storm. It was made known during zero hour that the government would come out with a statement in the afternoon. When the announcement came it failed to satisfy the opposition which stridently demanded the acceptance of its motion for the appointment of a house committee to go into the whole affair. It refused to relent till the speaker adjourned the house after a tumultuous hour of furore and heated exchanges.

Only a few words could be picked up in the galleries above the din created by the exchanges. The opposition members apparently wanted to know the terms of reference of the inquiry and whether the judge was being appointed under the Commissions of Inquiry Act.

The speaker, Mr. Balam Jakkhar, however, disallowed the questions quoting the relevant rules, but offered to consider any demand for a discussion under the rules later. This, however, failed to pacify the irate MPs.

A tense house, with the treasury benches full, heard Mr. Gandhi read out his four-sentence statement.

It read: "On March 31st, 1987, this hon'ble house had a comprehensive discussion on the question of utilising the Fairfax group of the United States of America."

"The government placed before the house the information that was available."

"Nevertheless, questions continue to be raised. In view of the importance of the matter, all controversies must be set at rest."

"The government has, therefore, de-

cided to appoint a sitting judge of the supreme court in consultation with the hon'ble chief justice of India to inquire into the issues connected with the above matter."

Instantly, all the opposition members stood up and drew the speaker's attention to the notice of a motion given by them for the appointment of a house committee to go into the whole affair.

Mr. Madhu Dandavate (Janata) wanted to know whether the speaker considered the statement "comprehensive." Mr. Indrajit Gupta (CPI) sought to point out that under the rules only questions were barred but one could express an opinion. What the other members said was drowned in the furore.

The speaker stood his ground, saying he could not allow anything which was not provided in the rules. Nor could members raise points of order.

"Making a statement in the garb of a point of order is not proper. If any member is not satisfied with a statement, he may give notice for a discussion under rule 115 or 184 or 193."

Almost the entire council of ministers and Mr. Gandhi sat through the tumult silently. Watching the furore was also Mr. V. P. Singh, former finance minister.

The speaker repeatedly asked the opposition members to calm down, assuring them that there would be "no barring of discussion nor closure of the issue. I will do justice to you. I will give you full advantage according to rules."

Mr. H.K.L. Bhagat, minister for parliamentary affairs, stood up to raise a point of order under rule 350 and proceeded to read out the text. When the opposition members protested, the speaker said: "I have not allowed him."

He, however, allowed the Congress member, Mr. P. Namgyal, to speak but his peroration on the economic achievements of the government only added to the cacophony. Clapping and desk thumping and shouts and counter-shouts reverberated in the house.

At the stroke of 6 p.m., the speaker adjourned the house, assuring the members once again: "We will discuss the matter in proper form. I have not barred any discussion. I will not bar any discussion."

UNI adds: Immediately after question hour, several opposition mem-

bers, notably Prof. Dandavate, Mr. Basudev Acharya and Mr. Indrajit Gupta were on their feet and asked the speaker what he had decided about their substantive motions on the issue.

Mr. Gupta in particular observed that there was nothing in the rules to prevent the speaker from asking the government to make a detailed statement on the subject in view of the new revelations in the press.

However, when the minister of state for finance, Mr. Brahm Dutt, announced that he would make a statement today, Mr. Gupta questioned the speaker about the admissibility of a unilateral statement by Mr. Dutt when a privilege motion against him still remained to be disposed of.

Mr. Jaipal Reddy, rising on a point of order, asked the chair under what rule Mr. Dutt announced that he would make a statement.

That Mr. Dutt's announcement did not have the effect of pre-empting yet another concerted bid of the opposition to raise the issue became clear with several of their members raising the point that the minister's announcement was not in order. They also pointed out that Mr. Dutt had not indicated any time for the promised statement.

Sensing the mood of the opposition, Mr. Bhagat rose to say: "The government will make a statement at 5 p.m. today."

DESAM CRITICISM (PTI): The Telugu Desam parliamentary party today characterised the Prime Minister's announcement as "a desperate attempt on the part of the government to conceal facts and deny Parliament and the people an opportunity to know the truth."

In a statement, the TDP parliamentary party leader, Mr. P. Upendra, said this was a "panicky reaction" of the government to the situation as more and more facts were coming to light.

"Instead of making a full statement of facts in Parliament as promised this morning, the government resorted to this crude attempt of suppressing facts and taking away the matter from the purview of Parliament."

The statement said the government, through this "subterfuge manoeuvre," was scuttling a much-needed debate on a vital issue and is trying to "shield" some persons who indulged in "illegal activities."

/9317

CSO: 4600/1590

GANDHI, OTHERS DISCUSS ELECTION OUTCOME

Gandhi to Party's MP's

Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 26 Mar 87 pp 1, 9

[Text]

NEW DELHI, March 25.

THE Prime Minister today attributed the Congress Party's defeat in Kerala to the "undercurrent" ("which we were not able to get through") projecting the Congress as a "communal" party and in West Bengal to the "very strong cadres" of the CPM.

Addressing the general body of the Congress parliamentary party today in the Central Hall of parliament, Mr. Gandhi referred to the controversy with the President, but gave no indication to party members on how he intended to resolve the issue. All that he said was that the institution should be kept above partisan politics and controversy and that he had all the respect for the President, "not only because of Gianiji but because of the office." He did not mention anything about the leakage of the letter from the President of March 9.

News men were given a five-page note on what the Prime Minister said at the CPP meeting but the party spokesman expressed his inability to reply to questions on some of the observations made by Mr. Gandhi such as "we have to prepare from now for the coming battles." While stressing the need for "solidarity" in the party, Mr. Gandhi also observed that all "peripheral issues" should be subordinated to the task of building the party. But he did not elaborate on what these "peripheral issues" were.

"We have now to be on guard against misleading propaganda. Allegations have been made that our government is trying to suppress the freedom of the press. This is wholly baseless," Mr. Gandhi told the CPP meeting.

Hailing the victory of the forces of nationalism and secularism in Kashmir, he said the rout of the forces of religious fundamentalism and separatism had made the border state a bastion of India's unity and integrity

and this would help in the fight against communalism in Punjab.

While discussing the Congress debacle in Kerala, Mr. Gandhi said that there were two issues which the party was not able to tackle properly. One was the education system which had created serious problem and over which the majority community felt strongly. "We were not able to convince them that it would not happen in future," he said. The party spokesman said that though the Prime Minister did not pinpoint the problem in the education system, he was apparently referring to the system of reservation in academic institutions.

Noting that there would be a certain amount of unhappiness over not doing well in elections, which he described as important events in the life of the party, Mr. Gandhi urged partymen not to lose their sense of direction or faith in the party policies or their confidence to overcome obstacles. "The results should not dishearten us. They should not dampen our spirits. They should spur us to fresh effort to fulfil our mandate to the people. We have to prepare from now for the coming battles," the Prime Minister said.

On the controversy with the President, Mr. Gandhi said, "In the last two weeks, a lot has been said and written about the relationship between the President and the Prime Minister. The fundamental thing is the central importance of institutions. We have to respect them and strengthen them."

have refrained from making any comment because I consider that it is the duty of all right-thinking people to keep the presidency above partisan politics and controversy. It has been the tradition of the Congress to accord the highest respect to the office of the President. We say this salutary principle must never be forgotten. We have to continue to function according to this principle."

Warning against "anti-national forces" trying to destabilise the system, Mr. Gandhi said that they knew "that they cannot break up this country without breaking up the Congress Party." That was why their "first target was the Congress Party — the party of freedom, unity, progress and socialism."

These forces, he said, were exploiting all manner of issues to create disunity, division and fragmentation. Their aims were sinister. In their objective of breaking up the unity of the country they were indulging in all kinds of

machinations like "manipulating opinion, spreading disinformation and indulging in character assassination." Their game and tactics were familiar.

Posing the question "who these ladies and gentlemen were," he answered it himself saying that they were the "champions of status quo, friends of multinationals who owed allegiance to their masters abroad." "I do not want to name any country or any individual. But the whole post-Second World War history is witness to the crude and blatant methods of destabilisation," he observed.

Again posing the question why this danger had come today, Mr. Gandhi said it was because India had refused to abandon its independent foreign policy and had emerged as a defender of peace and disarmament and because of many achievements. Declaring that he would resist pressures to deviate from these policies and that he would vanquish the forces of destabilisation, he said this could be done with the active

support of the party and the broadest mobilisation of the masses against their exploiters and oppressors. "It is the vested interests in India and their supporters outside who want to cheat the people of their hard-won gains," he said.

"The coming weeks in parliament will test us because we shall have to fight every battle keeping this large picture in mind. Parliament is the supreme democratic forum. We have to demonstrate in an unqualified manner our strength, solidarity, resolution and singleness of purpose. Our mandate is strong and we have to reflect it in whatever we do and say," he said.

The party spokesman said that only the Prime Minister addressed the CPP meeting which lasted 50 minutes. The meeting was largely attended and among those present were Mr. V. P. Singh, leader of the house in the Rajya Sabha, and most members of the council of ministers.

Analyst: Gandhi Misjudged

Madras THE HINDU in English 26 Mar 87 p 9

[Article by G.K. Reddy]

[Text]

NEW DELHI, March 25.

After its poor performance in Kerala and West Bengal, the Congress (I)'s sway is now confined to the Hindi States—not even the whole of northern India, since practically the whole of north-east region has come under Opposition rule.

The Prime Minister, Mr. Rajiv Gandhi, clearly misjudged the mood of the volatile Kerala electorate not only by allowing Mr. K. Karunakaran to continue in power for too long but also entering into cynical alliances with avowedly communal organisations.

In West Bengal he made the big mistake by stirring up Bengali sub-nationalism with his tolerant attitude towards the Gorkhaland agitation. It was a bigger blunder on his part in assailing the Marxist-led United Front Government and attempting to cast it in a villainous role while the corrupt Congress (I) Governments in some northern States were sought to be portrayed as paragons of virtue committed to Nehru-Indira socialism.

The outcome of the poll in Jammu and Kashmir has more or less followed the pattern set in Punjab, Assam and Mizoram where the people generally welcomed the accords and voted for the local parties which in their view had struggled hard to extract these concessions from the Centre. But in Jammu and Kashmir, the Congress (I) entered the fray as an ally of the

National Conference (Farooq) hoping to inherit the popularity of the late Sheikh Mohammed Abdullah who is still regarded widely by Muslims of all persuasions as a heroic figure who fought for the State's interests.

In the process, the Congress has, no doubt, performed well in these elections in Jammu and Kashmir, but only as a camp follower of Dr. Farooq Abdullah who had inherited his father's mantle. The party leaders in Delhi can comfort themselves with the thought the Congress (I) has forged the right alliance and reaped more than its normal share of seats, but it cannot shut its eyes to the ugly reality that the Muslim fundamentalist elements which have fared badly in these elections have polled a sizable percentage of votes.

Cleansing operation: A positive outcome of the debacle in Kerala and West Bengal is going to be a better awareness in Congress (I) circles that the party's strength in the Hindi belt is bound to get eroded unless strong steps are taken by the central leadership to replace the more odious Chief Ministers who have been either thoroughly incompetent or guilty of many malpractices. The Prime Minister had hinted to some of his senior colleagues even before the latest Assembly polls that he intended to carry out a cleansing operation in these States after the Presidential elections, coinciding with the proposed changes at the Centre.

But it would be rash to jump to the conclusion that after the latest reverse in Kerala the Congress (I) has lost its foothold in the southern States. It is true that in Tamil Nadu the Congress (I) can never hope to be voted back to power in its own right, since it can survive even marginally only as an appendage of the AIADMK benefiting from its patronage.

In Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka the position is entirely different although opposition parties are presently in power there. The recent Mandal, Zilla Parishad and Municipal elections have shown that the Telugu Desam has retained its hold on the rural electorate. But the Congress (I) had succeeded in making a dent by capturing one-third of the mandals and a majority of the municipalities, although it lost badly in the Zilla Parishad elections.

So it is not as inconceivable as in Tamil Nadu that at some point in the not too distant future the Congress (I) can hope to be voted to power in Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka. However, this can materialise only if it has the capacity to improve the quality of its leadership and project a clean image by living down its odious past in both these States. Hence it would be wrong to imagine that the Congress (I) has

been reduced overnight into a party of the Hindi belt in the wake of its defeat in Kerala, since it still has a good chance of rehabilitating itself in the south by improving its performance at the Centre.

Necessary jolt: This badly needed jolt should help to dispel the many illusions of infallibility and help create a better awareness of the hazards ahead in the Prime Minister's inner circles which tends to dismiss every challenge as an incipient attempt to whistle in the dark by those of Mr. Rajiv Gandhi's detractors who have lost all their credibility with the people, because of their own dismal record and soiled reputations. This is too facile a view that is not only highly misleading but also harmful to the Prime Minister's own interests.

And what is needed now is a readiness on the part of Mr. Rajiv Gandhi and his advisers to take a critical view of their own performance during the last two and a quarter years and benefit from past mistakes, as the Prime Minister reaches the midway point of his five-year term. If the latest election reverses can serve as a sobering experience, it would indeed be a national gain.

Vote Distribution Noted

Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 26 Mar 87 p 8

[Text]

In the first major test of its popularity since its landslide victories in December 1984 and March 1985, the Congress under Mr. Rajiv Gandhi's leadership has fared poorly. This has inevitably caused deep concern in the corridors of power in New Delhi and elsewhere in the country. Jammu and Kashmir has provided Mr. Gandhi and his party a face saver. Without it the adverse electoral verdict in Kerala and West Bengal would have assumed ominous proportions for both. The party's performance in the Jammu area is particularly significant for it since it may provide a clue to what is going on in the minds of voters in the Hindi-speaking heartland. This performance has not been as impressive as the one in 1983 when the Congress under Mrs. Indira Gandhi's leadership had wiped out the Bharatiya Janata Party in Jammu. And the party then had contested the election in opposition to Dr. Farooq Abdullah's National Conference as well. This time the two major parties have fought the electoral battle as allies. So it would be legitimate to infer that the Congress owes its victories in the Jammu region also partly to Dr. Abdullah. Even so, its achievement is commendable. The triumph of the alliance in the state as a whole is heartening from a non-partisan national point of view too, involving as it does the rout of Muslim fundamentalists who had sought to convert the poll into a religious crusade. If they had fared as well as some reports during the election campaign had predicted, the country's security in the border state could have been put into jeopardy. In the context of what is happening in Punjab it would be difficult to exaggerate the dangerous consequences of a notable drift towards fundamentalism

among the people in the Kashmir valley. Dr. Abdullah has successfully fought this menace. This fact deserves to be duly acknowledged.

Jammu and Kashmir cannot, however, help cover up the Congress party's loss of power in Kerala and its lacklustre performance in West Bengal. In Kerala it has been a closely-contested battle; the vote has swung by less than two per cent. But this cannot provide much comfort to the Congress and its allies there. For the Left Democratic Front (LDF) headed by the CPM has increased its strength from 53 in the outgoing house to 76 and thereby gained an overall majority; the strength of the United Democratic Front (UDF) led by the Congress has shrunk from 83 to 60. The outgoing chief minister, Mr. Karunakaran, has blamed the debacle to bickerings among the front's partners. This is not wholly the case. The state government's poor record marred by a series of scandals must account for the UDF's defeat. The verdict in Kerala is significant for another reason. The UDF had become a captive in the hands of the two major communal parties in it — the Indian Union Muslim League and the Kerala Congress. In sharp contrast the CPM-led LDF fought the election on a nationalist platform. The shrewd CPM leader, Mr. E. M. S. Namboodiripad, sensed the growing disillusionment with the communalist stance of the UDF as early as the summer of 1985 and steered his party to a stand which could claim to be secular and yet be seen as a pro-Hindu by the state's majority Hindu population. In the wake of the Shah Bano case he opposed the Muslim women's bill and broke the alliance with one faction of the Muslim League. The policy has paid rich dividends.

To no one's surprise voting in Kerala has been greatly influenced by communal considerations. While the UDF has suffered only a few reverses in the Muslim-dominated Malabar region (53 seats), it has fared badly in the Travancore-Cochin region (87 seats), traditionally considered a Congress stronghold. The UDF has won only eight seats out of 38 seats in the three districts of Trivandrum, Quilon and Ernakulam. Significantly, candidates of the third front of the Bharatiya Janata Party and the Hindu Munnani have polled many more votes in the Muslim-dominated constituencies of the Malabar region where their vote would not have influenced the outcome than in the southern districts where a significant split in the Hindu vote could have made a difference. The UDF was originally a front to rally all non-Marxist and non-left vote. But it later degenerated into a front pandering to the interests of parties which represented the minority communities. This, coupled with the less than clean track record of its government, was bound to bring down the carefully constructed caste and community-based house of cards built by Mr. Karunakaran. No wonder, it has.

In West Bengal the Congress has been worsted, invalidating optimistic forecasts by it and its supporters. And this is not just a defeat for the state unit of the party but also a personal one for the Prime Minister who spearheaded its campaign and asked voters to look beyond the state Congress unit, which is in a shambles, to his leadership, promising that he would take a personal interest in the administration of the state (if the Congress came to power) and that money for development would not be a problem. Incidentally, the issue of finance became a key one

towards the end of the campaign with Mr. Gandhi asking what had happened to the Rs. 1,000-odd crores that the Centre had given to the state and the Left Front accusing him of deception by talking on non-existent funds.

The magnitude of the setback the Congress has suffered in the state can be judged if we compare the results of the present election with those of the parliamentary poll in December 1984 when the party polled a majority of votes in 117 of 294 assembly segments. One explanation for it, of course, is that in 1984 in the wake of the assassination of Mrs. Indira Gandhi, Mr. Rajiv Gandhi was seen in West Bengal, as in the rest of India, as a bulwark against forces of disruption and disintegration. This time the Left Front headed by the CPM could point out that the nation's unity was being endangered by the Congress misrule as in Punjab in the early eighties and its communal politics as exemplified by its alliance with the Indian Union Muslim League in Kerala.

The pattern of voting, however, is not particularly surprising. While the Congress has retained its hold on Greater Calcutta, the Left Front has forged way ahead in the districts, particularly in the rural areas. The Left Front government, it may be recalled, has concentrated its efforts in the rural areas. A couple of other points may be made. While Congress nominees have won by small margins, LF candidates have won by huge margins. Gorkhaland has not been a major issue in the present election in West Bengal. The Left Front tried to make it one but failed to do so in view of the Prime Minister's categorical statement that he was opposed to the division of West Bengal. The low turnout of 60 per cent against the usual 70 per cent plus in the state would suggest that the Congress party apparatus broke down and failed to mobilise its potential supporters and bring them to the polling booths. Finally, the Left Front's performance is truly remarkable in view of its government's rather poor performance, particularly in recent years. This can be only explained mainly in terms of the regard in which Mr. Jyoti Basu continues to be held. Clearly despite all his efforts Mr. Rajiv Gandhi has failed to make a dent in his popular appeal.

Since Kerala was the only southern state where the Congress has been in power since its rout in Andhra and Karnataka in 1983, it is tempting to rush to the conclusion that with its defeat there, it has become a party of the Hindi-speaking belt and thus ceased to be a truly national party. This temptation should be resisted. For all its faults and weaknesses, the Congress retains a substantial following in almost all parts of the country. Its recent victories in the urban civic polls in Andhra illustrate this point. But it is also clear that it will need to review and revise its electoral strategy. The one devised by Mrs. Indira Gandhi has begun to fail.

/9317

CSO: 4600/1572

CALCUTTA RALLY CELEBRATES LEFT FRONT VICTORY

Report on Basu Speech

Calcutta THE STATESMAN in English 30 Mar 87 pp 1, 3

[Excerpt]

THE victory of the Left and democratic forces in West Bengal and Kerala would have a far-reaching impact on national politics, Mr Joyti Basu said in Calcutta on Sunday. Addressing a mammoth rally at the Brigade Parade Ground to mark the Left Front's victory in the Assembly elections, he hoped that the results would inspire the people in other States to strengthen unity among "progressive" forces. The Prime Minister had given the call to "smash the red fort" in West Bengal because, Mr Basu said, he knew that the victory of the Leftists would further weaken the Congress(I)'s position in national politics. The Congress(I) was already out of power in nine States.

Mr Basu said the letters of congratulations he had been receiving on the Front's victory indicated that the people in other States were eager to have a united democratic force as an alternative to the Congress (I) at the Centre. Unity had become imperative because Mr Rajiv Gandhi had failed to formulate policies to contain secessionist and other disruptive forces and to put the economy back on the rails.

Making a scathing attack on the Prime Minister for his "campaign of lies" in West Bengal before the polls, the Chief Minister remarked, "He is following the thesis propounded by Hitler and Goebbels." Mr Gandhi "taught our young men" that one could tell "all kinds of lies" to win an election. Is that "becoming of our Prime Minister"? he wondered.

Mr Gandhi had "quickly acquired the Congress culture", Mr Basu remarked. As general secretary of the Congress (I), he had engineered the fall of the Rama Rao Minis-

try in Andhra Pradesh and that of Farooq Abdullah in Jammu and Kashmir — in the latter case by "openly indulging in horse-trading". But the Congress (I) had returned to power in the State by "playing the small brother to Farooq Abdullah".

Mr Basu also accused the Prime Minister of inciting communal and separatist forces during his election campaign in West Bengal. In north Bengal, he sought to "incite the Rajbansis" but the results had proved that 80% of them were "with us". Mr Gandhi told the people, Mr Basu alleged, that the Marxists did not "abide by religion". In Kerala, he not only formed an alliance with the Muslim League but also sought the favour of Christian missionaries.

The Chief Minister also alleged that Mr Gandhi had met the editor of an Urdu daily in Calcutta to influence the Muslim vote. He was harsh on the news-

papers and the official media for their role during the poll campaign. "I've never seen such blatant and concerted propaganda against us in the media in my whole political career." With Mr Gandhi, the people had also "rejected these newspapers", he remarked.

Even now, in the name of poll analysis, the papers are trying to "undermine the magnitude of our victory".

According to him, the Prime Minister had not told the people why no new industries were set up in the State for 20 years. Although the refugees in Punjab were rehabilitated nothing was done for their 700,000 counterparts in West Bengal. Now, with the people's support, he announced, "we will lift the blockade they have set up on our industrial ventures". He appealed to Front supporters to be "humble" because "our enemies are regrouping themselves".

More Details Given

Calcutta THE TELEGRAPH in English 30 Mar 87 p 1

[Text]

Calcutta, March 29: The unprecedented victory of Left forces in West Bengal and Kerala has raised hopes of replacing the Congress(I) government at the Centre, the chief minister, Mr Jyoti Basu, said here today. He was addressing a mammoth rally, organised to celebrate the Left Front's success, at the Brigade Parade Ground this afternoon.

Mr Basu called upon the people to highlight the Left Front government's achievements in other parts of the country in order to overthrow the discredited Congress(I) government. He said the Prime Minister, Mr Rajiv Gandhi, had realised that the people of other states would be influenced by Leftist forces "if we win and in desperation the Congress(I) coined the slogan 'lal durge aaghat haano' (Storm the red fort)."

Lambasting the Prime Minister for telling lies, distorting facts and using religion to woo voters", Mr Basu said, "By this Rajiv has not only violated electoral norms or the Constitution but he also insulted the intelligent and politically-conscious people of West Bengal." He congratulated the people for giving a fitting rebuff to the Congress(I).

Describing Mr Gandhi as the

"sole campaigner" of his party, Mr Basu said he had indulged in "unlimited lies and slander not only against the Left Front government but also against the people of West Bengal. Did not he for a moment think how all these will affect his image?"

"He is still young and today what image does he have before the whole world? During the poll campaign I had warned him not to indulge in lies, but he did not restrain himself," Mr Basu said. "Till the last day he indulged in false propaganda and today the results are there for him and the entire world to see," The chief minister added.

Mr Basu thanked the people of the state for returning the Front to power by a massive mandate and for defeating an "unprincipled group of antisocials who call themselves Congressmen." The Congress(I) only believed in winning elections and in short-term political gains, he added.

Criticising Mr Gandhi for having a poor knowledge of history, Mr Basu said, "Rajiv was making use of policies and strategies which were rejected even before he was born." Referring to Hitler and Goebbels' strategy of false propaganda that failed, Mr Basu said: "Mr Gandhi, who did not learn a lesson from history,

might have to learn it from the people of West Bengal now."

Commenting on Mr Gandhi's slogan of building a "nutan Bangla" (new Bengal), Mr Basu said, "It was nothing but a hoax. Why all this nonsense about building a new Bengal. They are in power in 11 states. Are they building a new Bihar, a new Maharashtra, a new Uttar Pradesh?"

He said, "We were confident of our victory because we knew the politically-conscious people of this state will not surrender to Rajiv's slanders. We only wanted to win with a greater mandate and defeat the Congress(I)."

He recalled Mr Gandhi's earlier description of Dr Farooq Abdullah, Jammu and Kashmir chief minister, as an "anti-national," and said, "Today Rajiv is sitting at the feet of Farooq and the Congress(I), like a younger brother of the National Conference, is toddling behind."

Mr Basu said, "Soon after joining politics Mr Gandhi organised defections in Andhra Pradesh in order to oust Mr N.T. Rama Rao from power. Then after becoming the Prime Minister, he called Calcutta a dead city and today he is joining hands with Christian and Muslim fundamentalists in Kerala to woo voters."

/9317

CSO: 4600/1579

LAW MINISTER RESIGNS BECAUSE OF BENGAL ELECTION OUTCOME

Calcutta THE STATESMAN in English 28 Mar 897 p 1

[Text] Mr Ashoke Sen, Union Law Minister, has resigned his Cabinet post. He sent his resignation letter to the Prime Minister on Thursday while he was in Delhi, asking Mr Rajiv Gandhi to relieve him of his office immediately so that "I can be with the workers and the people at this hour of need". Mr Sen told reporters in Calcutta on Friday that as "the chairman of the State Election Propaganda Committee", he bore "at least some moral responsibility for the inglorious defeat" of the Congress(I) in the West Bengal Assembly elections.

Many Pradesh Congress (I) leaders believe that Mr Sen's decision was an expression of his displeasure with the PCC (I) leadership headed by Mr Priya Ranjan Das Munshi. Mr Somen Mitra, PCC (I) general secretary, however made no bones about the need for replacing Mr Das Munshi by a person like Mr Abdus Sattar who, he felt, enjoyed the confidence and respectability of the rank and file.

Mr Mitra, who made no secret of his feelings against Mr Das Munshi, said on Friday that the party's debacle was nothing but a protest against Mr Das Munshi's "autocracy in the organization and his style of functioning". He alleged that Mr Das Munshi had encouraged factional interests and had also failed to involve all sections of Congressmen in election work. Mr Mitra's utterances against the PCC (I) chief are interpreted in party circles as an open revolt against Mr Das Munshi. Mr Mitra made fun of the party's election manifesto which made "incredible promises".

'FINEST HOUR'

Mr Sen told reporters that the "stunning defeat" of the Congress (I) had given the party workers an opportunity to continue their work with dedication and prepare themselves for the future. He said that "our finest hour" had now come. In a democracy, defeat in one election meant nothing. It

only marked the beginning of another battle. "We shall fight in every village, in every park, in every street till we are victorious again", he said.

Replying to a volley of questions on his sudden decision to quit his office, Mr Sen said that it was a well-thought out decision arrived at after consultations with some of his colleagues. Asked whether three other Central Ministers from West Bengal would follow suit, Mr Sen remarked, "it is their business".

Without naming anyone, Mr Sen charged "those persons" who were entrusted with the responsibility of conducting the election campaign for the party with incompetence and said they had "failed to prove themselves equal to the task". He also felt that his party had miserably failed in the preparation of the electoral rolls, whereas the Left Front saw to it that the voters' lists were prepared "according to their lines".

As far as the nomination of party candidates were concerned, Mr Sen said that the norms laid down by the AICC (I) were violated. The AICC (I) had given a specific directive that no person who had lost in the municipal or panchayat elections or those who had lost in the previous elections by a margin of over 10,000 votes should be given nominations. This had not been adhered to, resulting in "dissensions everywhere".

The internecine quarrels "had sapped the strength of the party's electoral organization at every level," he felt.

'LEADERS IGNORED'

According to Mr Sen, another reason for the party's poll debacle was that senior leaders had been "ignored and relegated to the background". No meetings were fixed for them. They worked on their own or at the request of the candidates. "Even the manifesto was not shown to them before printing or publication though I was the chairman of the Propaganda Committee", he complained.

Mr Sen also criticized the manner in which posters, banners, hoardings and money were distributed among the candidates. This "unequal" distribution had caused great dissatisfaction among the party workers and prevented the Congress (I) from fighting as a cohesive force. Finally, the attempt to project Mr Rajiv Gandhi as the only alternative to Mr Jyoti Basu "proved fatal". This had created an impression that there was no leader in West Bengal to match Mr Basu.

Referring to the post-poll assaults and intimidation of Congress (I) workers on a large scale in Calcutta and elsewhere in the State, Mr Sen hoped that Mr Jyoti Basu would deal with the situation with a heavy hand. If he failed to do so, his image that had brightened by the massive mandate given by the people would be tarnished. He said that he would call on the Chief Minister soon.

Asked whether his resignation would have an adverse effect on the sagging morale of the PCC (I)

leadership, he said he was neither resigning from the party nor from the membership of the Lok Sabha. "What shall I do in Delhi, when my party workers are being beaten up here? I am extremely pained by their tales of woe and sufferings".

An agitated Dr Zainal Abedin said that he had been forced to flee from his residence in West Dinajpur following "attacks by CPI(M) hooligans". Complaining of harassment since March 21, the defeated Congress (I) MLA said attempts were made to set his house on fire. "The next day they tried to break open my front door" and, on the day of counting, a mob tried to "kill me". The SDPO and a posse of policemen "saved me", he added.

Dr Abedin, arrived in Calcutta on Thursday night, said he had written to the president of the AICC (I), Mr Rajiv Gandhi, explaining the circumstances of his defeat and "what he had to go through before, during and after the poll". Meanwhile, he said he had consulted the leader of the Opposition in the State Assembly, Mr Abdus Sattar, on his future course of action.

'BOLD DECISION'

On the resignation of the Union Law Minister, Mr Ashoke Sen, Dr Abedin said he had rung up the Central Minister and told him that though he did not receive his well wishes and his blessings prior to the election, his "bold and sensible decision had endeared him to me".

The PCC (I) office in Calcutta was shut for most of the day. When it was opened in the evening, for a brief period, no leader was there to receive complaints from workers who had allegedly been intimidated by CPI(M) workers.

/13104

CSO: 4600/1574

PAPERS REPORT COMPOSITION OF NEW BENGAL MINISTRY

Maximum Strength of 30

Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 30 Mar 87 p 1

[Text]

CALCUTTA, March 29 (UNI).

THE new left front ministry in West Bengal will have a maximum strength of 30 members.

Twenty of the two-tier council of ministers will belong to the CPM, leading partner in the newly-elected left-front legislature party, a spokesman of the CPM state committee announced today, while releasing the list of their names.

The spokesman said the decision on the small size of the ministry was taken in the interest of effectiveness.

The spokesman said the CPM could soon begin bipartite discussions with the major front partners like the FP, RSP and CPI, to help them restrict the number of their representatives on the ministry in line with the CPM's own decision and to ease the ministry-making process by redistribution of portfolios.

In the March 23 poll, the left front emerged victorious on the third time in a row, bagging 251 of the total 294 seats for the assembly. The CPM alone obtained an absolute majority.

The list, finalised at the CPM's state committee meeting here yesterday, includes the name of the chief minister, Mr. Jyoti basu, who will be sworn in at the head of a five-member skeleton ministry on March 31, in accordance

with a decision taken by the left front committee. The committee had decided that a full complement of the council of ministers would be sworn in sometime in April.

The CPM list of 20 comprises 15 ministers of cabinet rank and the remaining five minister-of-state rank.

The cabinet ministers are:

Mr. Jyoti Basu, Mr. Binoy Choudhury, Mr. Buddhadev Bhattacharjee, Mr. Prasanta Sur, Mr. Ashim Dasgupta, Mr. Prabir Sengupta, Mr. Kanti Biswas, Mr. Abdul Kayum Mollah, Mr. Subhas Chakravarty, Mr. Shyamal Chakravarty, Mr. Achintya Krishna Roy, Mr. Mohammed Abdul Bari, Mr. Dinesh Dakua, Mr. Ambarish Mukherjee, and Ms. Chhaya Bera.

The ministers of state are: Mr. Provosh Phadikar, Mr. Tamang Dawa Lama, Mr. Abdul Razzak Mollah, Mr. Maheswar Murmu and Mr. Banamali Roy.

WOMEN IN ASSEMBLY (PTI):

Eleven members of the fair sex will adorn the tenth West Bengal assembly.

The notable winners are Ms. Nirupama Chatterjee, minister for relief and social welfare, Ms. Chhaya Bera, minister for non-formal education and a new entrant, Ms. Arati Dasgupta.

Two Additional Posts

Calcutta THE STATESMAN in English 2 Apr 87 p 1

[Text]

THE third Left Front Ministry will have 32 Ministers with the induction of Mr Shanti Ghatak and Mr Ramani Kanta Deb Sharma of the CPI (M) as against a total strength of 30 decided earlier. The 16 Ministers, who are yet to be sworn in, will take their oath of office on April 3 at Raj Bhavan, according to Mr Sallen Das Gupta, a CPI (M) leader in Calcutta on Wednesday.

The Left Front, which met during the day, was unanimous in its decision on the allotment of portfolios to the CPI (M), Forward Bloc, RSP, CPI and the West Bengal Socialist Party. Mr Das Gupta said that the Front's decision had been communicated to the Chief Minister, who would make a formal announcement soon.

Once the swearing-in of the Ministers is over, the Left Front will go into the question of accommodating the other smaller constituents of the Front like the R.C.P.I., DSP and the Biplabi Bangla Congress in different Front committees. Asked about the representation of the Forward Bloc (Marxist) either in the Ministry or in the committee, Mr Das Gupta pointed out that the party, plagued by factionalism, was yet to throw up a leader.

The Forward Bloc (Marxist) party had not been attending the meetings of the Left Front. Neither had its representatives been present at the victory rally of the Front on Sunday, Mr Das Gupta said.

The constituents of the Left Front will review the Assembly election results and submit their

reports to the Left Front which will discuss the issue at a date to be fixed later.

The Left Front also intends to intensify its campaign against Doordarshan and All India Radio for their "bias" against the Left Front before and after the polls. The 10-point programme against the Centre by the Left Front mentioned in the Front manifesto will also be discussed at a meeting of the Left Front.

Asked about the change in its earlier stance of not having more

than 30 Ministers in the third Left Front Ministry, Mr Das Gupta said: "It was felt necessary to expand the Council of Ministers. It isn't easy to bring down the number of Ministers from 44 in the second Left Front Ministry to 32 this time." Of the last two entrants, Mr Ghatak will be a Cabinet Minister while Mr Deb Sharma will be a Minister of State. The four districts that are not being represented in the Ministry are Birbhum, Howrah, Nadia and Malda.

The 16 Ministers to be sworn in on April 3 are: Mr Shyamal Chakraborty, Mr Subhas Chakraborty, Mr Abdul Rezak Molla, Mr Abdul Karim Molla, Mr Provas Phodikar, Mrs Chaya Bera, Mr Achintya Roy, Mohammad Abdul Bari, Mr Bonomali Roy, Mr Shanti Ghatak, Mr Ramani Kanta Deb Sharma, Mr Anbarish Mukherjee, Mr Dinesh Dakua, Mr Saral Deb, Mr Moheswar Murmu and Mr Kanti Biswas.

Of the 32 Ministers 22 belong to the CPI (M), three to the RSP and four to the Forward Bloc, two to the CPI and one to the WBSP.

/9317

CSO: 4600/1577

CORRESPONDENT ON MIZORAM POLITICAL SITUATION

Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 22 Mar 87 p 8

[Article by Seema Guha]

[Text]

THE Mizoram elections have vindicated the off-repeated claim by the Mizo National Front leader, Mr. Laldenga, before the poll that the result was a foregone conclusion.

The poll has also indicated that capturing power was but the first step in the direction of bringing about a total transformation of the Mizo society and stemming the rot and corruption which had crept into Mizoram over the last few years of Congress and People's Conference rule.

With the change of guard in Aizawl, the political situation in Mizoram is today very different from what it was during Congress rule. With all its faults, the Congress as a national party stood for certain ideals based on the concept of integration and unity of the country. Ostensibly, there was little distinction between the Mizo or the "Vai" (outsider), living in the state.

Though in practice a subtle difference has always been maintained, the "outsiders" living in Mizoram as well as minority groups, like the Chakmas and the Nepalis, felt secure with a national party in power. Though earlier Mizoram has had a stint of regional party rule, under Brig. Sailo, the MNF which till the signing of the June accord was a clandestine and illegal organisation, has overnight changed its complexion and become a legitimate ruling party.

ABSOLUTE MAJORITY

Despite its best intentions, the fact that the MNF is not just a regional party but formerly an underground organisation has unnerved a large number of non-Mizos and various minorities living in the state. For the average Mizo there is hope that a party like the MNF, which is regarded as a symbol of Mizo nationalism, will be better equipped to look after the interests of the state.

A section of the Mizos, who are opposed to the MNF and those who are

against Mr. Laldenga, are however afraid that political scores might be settled now that the party is in power.

How did the various parties fare in the districts? In Chhimtuipui district, four seats were captured by the Congress and one by the People's Conference, with the MNF drawing a blank. In Lunglei district, once a bastion of the MNF, the MNF won four of the seven seats while the Congress triumphed in three constituencies. Aizawl district has 28 constituencies. Of these the MNF was able to make a clean sweep of 20 states. The Congress obtained six seats and the People's Conference just two.

While the MNF could secure an absolute majority in the 40-members assembly, unlike in Punjab and Assam where the opposition, mainly the Congress, had been completely routed in the elections, in Mizoram it has managed to retain 13 seats with three going to the People's Conference.

CONG. SUPPORT

The MNF contested 37 seats and won 24 with a vote percentage of 36.54. The Congress contested 39 constituencies and was able to capture 13 by polling 33 per cent of the votes cast. The People's Conference contested 36 seats and won just three with a poll percentage of around 23.7. The Mizo National Union and independents, who accounted for around three per cent of the votes each, drew a blank.

Notwithstanding its poor showing in the elections, the Congress continues to be an important force in Mizoram and has considerable support among a cross-section of people in the three districts of the state.

One of the main tasks of the new MNF government, indeed for any regional party which captures power in a state, is to assure the minorities — in this case the Chakmas and "vais", that the ruling party is committed to

protecting the lives and property of all sections of the people.

Since the victory of the MNF "outsiders" in Mizoram have been feeling insecure. During the election campaign, the MNF had made it evident that it had little sympathy for the "Vais". Recent events in which nine "Vais" labourers, working in Satual, were attacked by a mob after an altercation with some local youths, has further disheartened the minorities. Delayed reports say that some of the nine victims were allegedly burnt alive in their huts.

SKILLED MIGRANTS

The chief minister is stated to have acted firmly and ordered the arrest of the culprits, irrespective of their party affiliations. Incidentally, most labourers engaged in earth-cutting, construction work and other skilled tasks are "Vais" from Orissa and Bihar. They have to be required as most local people refuse to undertake such jobs. Evidently, till such time as the local people are willing to take up such tasks, Mizoram can hardly afford to terrorise "outsiders" into leaving the

state without affecting badly-needed development works.

Mr. Laldenga, who considers himself not just the leader of a political party but also as a crusader is bent upon bringing about not only a political and economic revival of Mizoram but a total transformation of Mizo society.

FUNDS SIPHONED OFF

A class of contractors and suppliers has grown rich overnight and developed lavish lifestyles. The contractor/supplier-bureaucrat-politician axis is firmly entrenched. So, part of the money poured into the state by the Centre is siphoned off and does not reach the people for whom the allocations are meant.

No wonder, Mr. Laldenga would like to take his people back to the old values of hard work, honesty and self-reliance. Mr. Laldenga has clearly told his people not to merely rely on New Delhi to bring about progress and development.

On his part, Mr. Laldenga will initiate such projects as will enable the people to make maximum use of the resources of the land.

/13104

CSO: 4600/1567

FURTHER REPORTAGE ON MARCH ELECTION RESULTS

Jammu, Kashmir Cabinet

Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 27 Mar 87 p 1

[Text]

JAMMU, March 26.

AN eight-member two-tier ministry headed by Dr. Farooq Abdullah was sworn in this evening at the Raj Bhavan here.

The ministry comprises five cabinet ministers, including Dr. Abdullah, and three ministers of state. A further expansion of the ministry will take place in a couple of days.

All the ministers sworn in today, barring Dr. Abdullah, belong to the Congress. The cabinet rank ministers are Mr. Mohammed Aslam, Mr. Beli Ram, Mr. Mularam and Mir Lasjan. The ministers of state are Peerzada Mohammed Syed, Mr. Suram Singh and Mr. Yashpal Khajuria. Their portfolios will be announced later.

Mr. Aslam, Mr. Beli Ram, Mr. Mularam and Mir Lasjan were in the interim cabinet formed after Dr. Abdullah assumed power on November 7.

Two of the posts have gone to members of the state Youth Congress. While Peerzada Mohammed Syed is the Youth Congress president, Mr. Khajuria is its general secretary.

Dr. Abdullah also said the budget session of the assembly will start from March 28.

NC(F) SCORING: The Congress-

National Conference (F) alliance further consolidated their position today winning four of the six seats whose results were announced.

The alliance partners, closing their account last night with 54 seats, raised their combined tally to 58.

The remaining two results were shared between a Muslim United Front candidate, Haji Abdul Razak Mir from Kulgam constituency, and an independent, Mr. Ghulam Mustafa Mir from the Chadura constituency.

Both Mr. Razak and Mr. Mustafa were members of the state assembly over a decade ago.

Mr. A. G. Lone, pro-autonomy Peoples' Conference chairman, lost to Choudhry Mohammad Ramzan of the NC(F) in Handwara (2) constituency of border district of Kupwara.

Mr. Choudhry retained the seat for his party by defeating Mr. Lone by a margin of 1,313 votes.

In Gulgulabgarh in Jammu division, Haji Buland Khan of NC(F) retained his seat.

With Mr. Khan's success, the counting for all the 31 constituencies, which went to poll in Jammu division on Monday, had closed, leaving Bhaderwah constituency unaccounted. Election had been countermanded in this constituency because of the death of a BJP candidate.

Left Front Bengal Winner

Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 27 Mar 87 p 1

[Text]

CALCUTTA, March 26
(PTI).

THE CPM-led Left Front, which was swept back to power with an unprecedented majority, claiming more than three-fourths of the 294 seats, will form the new ministry, headed by Mr. Jyoti Basu, on Tuesday.

The 73-year-old Mr. Basu, who successfully steered the state's administration as the chief minister for past two successive terms of office, was today elected by the Left Front as its leader.

The front has bagged a total of 251 seats when all the results were declared. The Congress suffered a debacle with the reduction of its strength to 40 seats in the new house while one seat went to Muslim League and two of the SUCI.

The swearing-in of the new ministry will be held on Tuesday morning. Initially, the cabinet will consist of five ministers — one each from the front partners — CPM, RSP, Forward Bloc, and CPI, besides Mr. Basu.

The Left Front chairman, Mr. Saroj Mukherjee, told newsmen today that his party would induct new blood in the ministry and added that age would not be a factor.

The Bharatiya Janata Party, the Janata Party, the Lok Dal, the Indian Congress Socialist led by Mr. Sarat Achandra Sinha and the newly formed Rashtriya Samajwadi Congress of the former Union finance minister, Mr. Pranab Mukherjee, have all drawn blank.

The results showed that the front was making a clean sweep in north Bengal districts and retained its supremacy in Burdwan, Bankura and Purulia districts of central Bengal in the process making deep inroads into the Congress strongholds.

However, in Calcutta metropolis and its suburbs — Howrah, Serampore, the Barrackpore belt and Bally and in the industrial belt of Asansol and Kulti, the Congress put up a good show.

In Darjeeling district, where the Gorkha National Liberation Front had

boycotted the poll and polling was negligible, the CPM won all the five seats it contested.

TOINS adds: The front constituents have begun discussions on ministry-making, a task which like in the past, may prove to be a little tricky.

The collective decision of the party would be influenced to a large extent by Mr. Basu's preferences. According to reports available so far he would like to have a smaller council of ministers.

The front is likely to face a problem with the RSP which is divided on the issue of joining the ministry. One section wants to keep out the present PWD minister and party leader, Mr. Jatin Chakravorti, from the cabinet and is insisting therefore that the party as a whole should stay out and provide the front ministry with constructive support.

The CPM leaders are not very happy with such a situation as they are unsure of the future implications of such a stand.

Then there is the CPI, which, having won 11 seats is demanding two portfolios.

Kerala Elections Analyzed

Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 27 Mar 87 p 9

[Article by K.T.R. Menon]

[Text]

TRIVANDRUM.

THE outcome of the Kerala Assembly poll is significant in many ways. At the national level, the Congress lost the only southern state where it was in power, although as the main partner in a coalition. And, for the first time since 1970, the state has a government not propped up by any section of the Muslim League, the Kerala Congress or the Congress.

The results proved that despite the deep inroads made into the state politics by parties based on regional, communal and other parochial considerations, it was still possible to establish a regime free from their stranglehold.

Indeed, this was the main plank of the poll campaign of the Marxist-led Left Democratic Front (LDF). Its

leaders sought to impress on the voters that for the first time in many years they had a clear choice between the Left Front comprising "truly secular" parties and the Congress-led United Democratic Front (UDF) consisting of regional and communal parties.

SMALL MARGIN

The LDF leaders were able to evoke a positive response from a large section of the people, including a number of traditional UDF supporters, who were fed up with the pressure tactics of the smaller partners.

However, the Left Front cannot afford to be complacent. It was just a little over 65,000 votes overall that tilted the balance in its favour and enabled it to capture 76 seats out of the 138 at stake — 16 more than the UDF.

Ironically, the "third front", comprising the Bharatiya Janata Party and the Hindu Munnani, which was described by the LDF as representing "majority communalism," seemed to have contributed indirectly to the Left Front's success.

Though the "third front" failed to secure any seat, it did make some gains in selected areas in different parts of the state. A preliminary investigation of the results indicates that its advance is one of the factors responsible for the poor performance of the UDF in the southern region, especially Trivandrum and Quilon districts, where it lost all but two of the 25 seats.

As underscored by the former chief minister, Mr. K. Karunakaran, the wrangles among the UDF partners were also responsible for the coalition's debacle. Combined with dissensions within the parties themselves, these struck at the very root of the alliance's credibility.

Among the UDF partners, the Congress more or less maintained its position, securing 34 seats. The Indian Union Muslim League (IUM), which had 18 seats in the previous assembly, bagged 15. But it should be noted that the IUM had only 14 seats before the All-Indian Muslim League quit the Left Front and merged in it.

The Kerala Congress which split into two groups, led by Mr. K. M. Mani and Mr. P. J. Joseph, even as the seat allocation was being finalised, suffered heavily in the Central Travancore region where it once wielded much influence. They could secure only nine of the 23 seats they contested, mainly because of mutual sabotage or, to say the least, lack of co-operation.

The National Democratic Party (NDP) led by Mr. Narayana Panikker, which left the coalition over the economic reservation issue but returned at the last minute, did succeed in getting nine seats allotted to it. But the party, representing the Nairs, was able to win only one seat against four in the previous assembly.

Apart from opposition from the rival NDP group, led by Mr. Kidangoor Gopalakrishna Pillai, the Panikker group, confined mainly to the southern region, had to contend with the BJP-Hindu Munnani combine.

The Socialist Republican Party led by Mr. R. Prakasam, which had three seats in the previous assembly, drew a blank. The economic reservation decision had alienated a section of the backward Ezhavas, from whom it derives its support. It had also to face opposition from the rival faction, led by Mr. T. V. Vijayarajan, MLA, which quit the coalition just before the seat allocation.

The lone nominee of the Revolutionary Socialist Party (Sivadasan), Mr. K. Sivadasan, labour minister, suffered a humiliating defeat at the hands of a young RSP trade unionist, Mr. Babu Divakaran, in Quilon.

Corruption charges seemed to have marred the prospects of quite a few UDF candidates, including those of Mr. Sivadasan. The former excise minister, Mr. N. Srinivasan, the SRP candidate in Varkala, and Mr. P. C. George, the Kerala Congress (Joseph) nominee in Poonjar, have been held prima facie guilty by the anti-corruption commission and proceedings are still pending against them.

The muddle on the education front, especially the aftermath of the agitation over the degree board issue, also seemed to have affected the UDF.

The so-called CMP (Communist Marxist Party) factor turned out to be a damp squib, with the party's 80-odd nominees securing only a few hundred votes in most places. Mr. M. V. Raghavan, the CMP leader, was elected from Azhikode by a margin of 1,400 votes, but with the solid backing of the UDF, especially the Muslim League. His was the lone CMP success.

IUM's TRIUMPH

In fact, the IUM appears to have helped the UDF considerably in improving its performance in many constituencies in the five northern districts of Kasargod, Cannanore, Kozhikode, Wynad and Malappuram, where it captured 24 of the 42 seats.

The coalition, which won 11 of the 12 seats in the Muslim-majority Malappuram district, made a clean

sweep this time. The IUM bagged nine seats and the Congress three.

In Kozhikode district, the two fronts shared 12 seats at the time of the poll, with the Left Front having lost three through the exit of the All-India Union Muslim League. But the LDF made good the loss, securing nine seats this time.

In Cannanore district, the Left Front had in 1982 won seven of the ten seats, including one secured by erstwhile AIML. Later, two MLAs of the district, Mr. Raghavan (Azhikode) and Mr. C. P. Moosakutty (Taliparamb), became Communist Marxist Party leaders. The Left Front bagged six seats this time, while the UDF retained three.

The UDF did well in Palghat district where it won seven seats as against two in 1982. The LDF got only four seats.

In Kasargod district, the UDF secured four of the five seats, leaving only one, Trikkaripur, which returned the chief minister, Mr. E. K. Nayanar, for the Left Front. The BJP secured a substantial number of votes in all constituencies except Trikkaripur, contributing indirectly to the UDF's victory.

BJP GROWING

In Manjeswaram and Kasargod, both won by Muslim League nominees, the BJP pushed the Left Front to the third position. In Uduma, the BJP nominee got nearly 13,000 votes, while the party candidate mopped up 8,000 votes in Hosdurg.

By and large, the BJP's growth seems to have affected the Left Front in the northern region and the Congress-led coalition in the south.

The poll outcome has led to the renewed debate on the need for a rethinking on the part of the Congress on continuing its links with parties like the IUM and the Kerala Congress.

A section of Congressmen feels that the party should be revamped and strengthened during its spell on the opposition benches so that it can aspire for one-party rule. But many others feel that given the situation in Kerala, the Congress will have to wait for a long time to achieve this goal, if at all.

CPI-M Leader's Statement

Madras THE HINDU in English 27 Mar 87 p 4

[Text]

TRIVANDRUM, March 26.

The general secretary of the CPI (M), Mr. E. M. S. Nambuthiripad, today described the election results in Kerala as a definite indication that a united front of secular parties based on left-of-centre programmes could win the fight against communalism whether of the minorities or the majority.

The result also was an endorsement of the restructuring, as approved by the 12th congress of the CPI (M), of the Left Democratic Front, dropping the Kerala Congress and the All-India Muslim League, he said here while addressing a press conference.

In a statement issued by Mr. Nambuthiripad on the occasion, the marxist leader said what fertilised Hindu communalism was the Congress policy of appeasing the Muslim-Christian communal lobby. "If today the Congress decides to snap its relationship with the Muslim League and the Kerala Congress it will occasion the collapse of the political base of the BJP and the Hindu Munnani. All that Congressmen in Kerala and at the Centre have to do is, as Mr. Rajiv Gandhi repeatedly stresses at the National Integration Council and in Parliament, to stop mixing politics with religion. The question now is whether Mr. K. Karunakaran and his party will be prepared to do so," Mr. Nambuthiripad said.

The statement said: In the elections to three State Assemblies held on March 23, Kerala gave the LDF a creditable gain while in West Bengal the Left Front recorded success with greater vigour. In Jammu and Kashmir, the Congress is only a junior partner of the National Conference.

"This result is the last in the series of setbacks to Mr. Rajiv Gandhi's Congress which had scored an unprecedented victory in the Lok Sabha election over two years ago. During his period, elections were held to several State Assemblies but the Congress could not in any of these elections wrest even one State ruled by opposition parties. States such as Sikkim, Assam, Punjab, and Mizoram slipped out of Congress hands.

"Now with the loss of Kerala, only 13 out of 24 States have Congress Chief Ministers. In other words, Congress is out of power in nearly 50 per cent of the States. The question now is how the leftists and other opposition parties should utilise the Congress discomfiture. Two answers are being given to them:

"One is for all the opposition parties to unite and build up a strong alternative to the Congress. The CPI (M) considers that this will not be in the best interests of the country. Second is the success of the CPI (M) policy. The 11th congress of the party held at Vijayawada had put forward the idea of a democratic front excluding communal and divisive forces and this idea was endorsed at the Calcutta congress. It is this policy that has been endorsed by the March 23 elections.

"The former Chief Minister, Mr. Karunakaran's view that the LDF won the election by fuelling majority communalism is, to put it mildly, ridiculous. Without opposing minority communalism, it is not possible to fight majority communalism. The history of Kerala from 1959 proves it. Even today, the Congress (I) is following the same policy and so long as it remains on the same plank, communalism will have to be fought, irrespective of its hue and texture," Mr. Nambuthiripad stated.

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CSO: 4600/1573

JAMMU, KASHMIR CABINET EXPANDED, PORTFOLIOS ANNOUNCED

Calcutta THE STATESMAN in English 28 Mar 87 p 1

[Text]

JAMMU, March 27.—The strength of the National Conference (F)-Congress (I) Ministry headed by Dr Farooq Abdullah in Jammu and Kashmir was raised to 19 with the induction of 11 more ministers here today, report PTI and UNI.

All those who were administered the oath of office and secrecy by the Governor, Mr Jagmohan, at an impressive function at Raj Bhavan belonged to the National Conference (F) which has entered into an alliance with the Congress (I). Six of those inducted today were Cabinet Ministers and the remaining were Ministers of State.

The Cabinet Ministers who were sworn in today were Sheikh Mohammad Maqbool, Mr Mohammad Shafi, Mr Abdul Rahim Rather, Mr P. L. Handoo, Mr Bashir Ahmad Kichloo and Mr R. S. Chib.

The Ministers of State, who were sworn in today, were Dr Mustajid Kamal, Choudhri Mohammad Ramzan, Mohammad Akbar Ganai, Mr Ghulam Hasan Geelani and Mr Aga Sayeed Mehmood.

The Chief Minister Dr Farooq Abdullah, and seven Congress (I) Ministers were sworn in yesterday.

Dr Abdullah has retained the portfolios of Home, General Administration, Tourism and Planning.

Mr Beli Ram has been allocated Industries and Commerce, Mr Abdul Rahim Rather: Finance and Excise, Ghulam Mohammad Mir Lasjan: Transport and Food and Supplies, Mr Mula Ram: Power and Development, Mr Mohammad Aslam: Education and Social Welfare, Mr Mohammad Shafi: Agriculture and Rural Development, Mr Bashir Ahmed Kichloo: Forest and Wild Life, Mr R. S. Chib: Health and Family Planning, Mr P. L. Handoo: Revenue and Urban Development, and Sheikh Maqbool Ahmed: Law and Parliamentary Affairs.

The portfolios of the Ministers of State will be announced later.

JANATA NATIONAL EXECUTIVE MEETS 28, 29 MAR

29 Mar Press Briefing

Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 30 Mar 87 p 9

[Text]

NEW DELHI, March 29
(UNI).

THE national executive of the Janata Party today resolved to work for the consolidation of opposition forces to meet the grave "political crisis" resulting from the "all round failure" of the Rajiv Gandhi government.

Briefing newsmen, the Party's general secretary, Mr. Yashwant Sinha, said the meeting took the decision in the light of the appeals made by the West Bengal chief minister, Mr. Jyoti Basu, and the Bahuguna faction of the Lok Dal.

Asked if the BJP could also be included in the list, Mr. Sinha replied, "We do not consider any political party as untouchable."

He said the three-day meeting which began yesterday made a detailed review of the recent assembly results in Kerala, West Bengal and Jammu and Kashmir and some by-elections. It also discussed the Prime Minister-President relationship and the conduct of the Prime Minister.

BABRI ISSUE

The killings in Punjab and Bihar were also discussed. While 400 people were killed in Punjab in one year the number of those killed in Bihar was 3,600, the meeting noted.

He said the meeting also discussed the Babri Masjid issue and felt the government had done nothing to reach an amicable settlement of the problem. The matter could be resolved if the government took the slightest interest in this regard, the meeting felt.

It wanted the government to adopt the policy of reconciliation to defuse the crisis. The policy of confrontation

would only further confuse the situation.

Mr. Sinha said the meeting expressed serious concern over the emergence of the Muslim United Front in Jammu and Kashmir and maintained that communal forces were getting encouragement from the policies of the government. If this new development was not tackled properly there might be serious trouble in the state, the meeting warned.

The Janata Party chief, Mr. Chandra Shekhar, who addressed the meeting, expressed satisfaction over the local bodies elections in Karnataka and Gujarat. He said the party had put 30 candidates in the West Bengal assembly elections and 11 in Jammu and Kashmir but all candidates were unsuccessful. In Kerala, however, seven of the 12 candidates had won the assembly elections with the support of the Left Democratic Front, he said.

The Karnataka chief minister, Mr. Ramakrishna Hegde, while addressing the meeting, felt the performance of the party organisation was strong. Likewise, its nominees performed poorly in places where the party organisation was indifferent.

Mr. Hegde suggested that the issue relating to the Prime Minister and the President be taken to the people by the united opposition.

Others who addressed the meeting included Mr. Biju Patnaik, Mr. George Fernandez, Mr. Hukum Deo Yadav, Mr. Om Prakash Srivastav and Mr. Madhu Dandavte.

Meanwhile, the national council of the Janata Party will meet in Bangalore for three days beginning April 29. The meeting on the third day — May 1 — will be an open session marking the tenth anniversary of the party.

More on Proceedings

Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 31 Mar 87 p 1

[Text]

NEW DELHI, March 30.

THE Janata Party has decided to back President Zail Singh to the hilt in the ongoing political crisis which involves the head of state and the head of government.

The national executive of the party, which ended its two-day deliberations here yesterday, charged the Prime Minister with creating an unprecedented constitutional crisis by treating the President with contempt. It dismissed as irrelevant the Prime Minister's meeting with the President last Saturday.

It is understood that the executive seriously considered admitting Mrs. Maneka Gandhi into its fold. The discussion on the issue remained inconclusive. Mr. Chandra Shekhar, party's president, and Mr. R. K. Hegde are understood to have backed Mrs. Maneka Gandhi's case strongly. However, the socialist group within the executive, which includes Mr. Madhu Dandavate, Mr. George Fernandes, and Mr. Surendra Mohan, felt it might be unwise to take her in as she had been associated so closely with the emergency.

The Janata has decided to opt for the Bahuguna faction of the Lok Dal for partnership. It has been decided to forge a democratic front in U.P. with this Lok Dal faction as also the CPI and the CPM. The executive decided to extend this arrangement to other states as well.

Another decision was to present Mr. Chandra Shekhar with a purse of Rs. 60 lakhs on his sixtieth birthday next month. Different state units have been assigned the task to raise the money.

Eyebrows were raised, it is learnt, at the presence of Mr. Jayant Malhotra, a Bombay-based industrialist, at the meeting of the executive. The industrialist is not a member of the executive. Nor was he brought in formally as a special invitee. But no one voiced explicit objection to his presence. How-

ever, party sources said there were few present who even knew him.

Mr. Chandra Shekhar is understood to have addressed a letter to Mr. Zail Singh last week in which he sought the President's views on the taking on board of some foreigners by the Prime Minister during his visit to Andamans during the Christmas holidays.

This is a part of the opposition move to keep the pot boiling in the President-Prime Minister controversy.

PTI adds: The executive also voiced its concern over the attempts being made by "people in high places to shut out investigations into the concealed foreign exchange holdings of certain individuals in foreign banks."

The party demanded thorough investigation into these cases by an independent agency. "Any attempt to cover up should be stoutly resisted," it said.

On the President-PM controversy, a party resolution said "the Prime Minister has compounded his denigration of the constitution by resorting to untruth in Parliament. And once his true face has been exposed he is trying to evade the real issue. His latest gaffe clearly proves that it was all intended and fits into a larger scheme of things."

It said the veracity of Mr. Gandhi's utterances on two different dates in the two houses of Parliament was in serious doubt because the indictment came from the highest in the land.

"The Prime Minister ought to have resigned in conformity with the high traditions of parliamentary democracy."

The results of the elections to the state assemblies in West Bengal, Kerala and Jammu and Kashmir clearly indicated the people's disenchantment with the Congress, the political resolution said.

In Jammu and Kashmir, the Congress had to depend on Dr. Farooq Abdullah who had earlier been branded as 'anti-national' by the Prime Minister, the resolution said.

/9317

CSO: 4600/1577

NEW MINISTERS INDUCTED INTO KERALA GOVERNMENT

New Delhi PATRIOT in English 3 Apr 87 p 1

[Text]

Trivandrum, April 2 — Fourteen new ministers were inducted into the Left Democratic Front Government led by CPI-M leader E K Nayanar. The new ministers were sworn in at a ceremony on the lawns of the Raj Bhavan here today. Four ministers were sworn in individually and the remaining 10 in a group as it started raining heavily.

A huge crowd that watched the new ministers taking oath of office and secrecy braving the downpour, cheered the new ministers. Governor P Ramachandran who administered the oath of office and secrecy presented the new ministers bouquets and shook hands with them.

Of the 14, seven are from CPI-M including the former Home Minister T K Ramakrishnan who is not a member of the Assembly. He was a candidate from the Kottayam constituency where the election was countermanded following the death of a candidate. The other CPI-M ministers are Mrs K R Gouri, V Viswanatha Menon, V J Thankappan, T K Hamsa, T Sivasdas Menon and Lonappan Nambadan. The three new CPI ministers are V V Raghavan, E Chandrasekharan Nair and P K Raghavan. The other ministers who

took office are M P Veerendra Kumar (Janata), K Sankaranarayana Pillai (Congress-S), K Panikajakshan (RSP) and A Neelalohithadras Nadar (Lok Dal).

Earlier on 26 March besides Chief Minister E K Nayanar four ministers P S Srinivasan (CPI), Baby John (RSP), A C Shanmugha Das (Congress-S), and K Chandrasekharan (Janata) were sworn in.

The allocation of the portfolios party-wise are Home, Finance Industry, Electricity, Public Works, General Administration, Planning, Rural Development, Devaswom, Excise, Culture, Cooperation, Fisheries, Housing and Local Bodies to CPI-M and Revenue, Agriculture, Food and Civil Supplies, Harijan Welfare and Tourism to CPI.

The R S P was given labour and irrigation, the Janata Party education and forests. The Congress-S would hold Health and Transport, the lone Lok Dal representative has been given Sports and Youth Welfare.

Meanwhile, the Kerala Assembly today unanimously elected Mrs Bhargavi Thankappan (CPI) as the Deputy Speaker.

/9317

CSO: 4600/1586

DIXIT ON PLANS FOR CONGRESS-I ORGANIZATIONAL POLLS

New Delhi PATRIOT in English 5 Apr 87 p 6

[Text]

The much-delayed Congress organisational polls will be held after the election of a new President to succeed Mr Zail Singh, due in July this year, according to veteran Congress leader and freshly inducted working committee member Uma Shankar Dixit.

If Mr Dixit's loud thinking is any indication, the polls will be held under new rules, and the Congress will get a largely amended party constitution whose working will be "more practical and less corrupt". The 86-year-old Mr Dixit, sitting upright in a high-back chair in his spartan room at 1, Circular Road, under mandate from party president Rajiv Gandhi, is busy drafting reforms that could bring the century-old organisation more in tune with modern times and needs.

The reforms relate not only to 'khadi' and drinking, members' pledges and membership rules, but envisage resolution of dichotomy of the party president's and Prime Minister's posts and a radically new party structure that could draw the best of the American and the Soviet party set-ups.

The Congress constitution "is a hundred years old" and was perhaps less suited to today's needs and times, Mr Dixit feels and illustrates the point best with khadi. The hand-spun fabric of the Mahatma was to be the poor man's cloth, but had today become the rich man's apparel. The

synthetic wash-n-wear were the common man's cloth today. "You can't afford to wear khadi".

Yet, every Congressman was required to furnish a declaration that he was a "habitual wearer" of khadi. This renders the declaration and the pledge somewhat "bogus", Mr Dixit points out. Similarly, drinking has become a common practice today.

"That does not mean that I want Congressmen not to wear khadi or drink. Please don't misunderstand me. But, times have changed. And that's all I want to point out", the octogenarian hastens to add. He would rather that the constitution and party rules take into account the reality than subscribe to dishonesty.

Mr Dixit is aware of the "attractions" in being a Congressman — attractions of power, money and authority which have drawn disparate elements to the party. All that they were required to do to acquire party membership was to submit declarations and part a rupee. In contrast, aspirants for Communist Party's membership were required to do apprenticeship for the party for five years.

Was he thinking of changing the Congress's character from a mass-based to a cadre-based party? Surely, he was. But not just that. He was also thinking of radicalising the party structure that would "restrict" the Congress to its members of the elective bodies and legislatures, somewhat along the Republican and Democratic Party set-ups in the USA.

According to Mr Dixit, the advantage of such a change would be that it would curb corruption, unnecessary meddling of party "members" in the State administration, and root out the practice of "throwing one's weight around". Essentially, it would delink party membership from elections.

Mr Dixit says he is still examining the ideas in depth, and has not come to any conclusion. But he is trying to work out a formula that would draw the best of party structures in the US and Communist states, and would be acceptable to all in the Congress.

The constitutional amendments that Mr Dixit is considering also envisage to settle the issue of primacy of the Prime Minister or the party president "once for all" in favour of the Government head. In this context, Mr Dixit recalls the "tussle" in which Labour Party chairman Harold Laski had to yield to the then Premier, and Purshottam Dass Tandon had to resign party presidentship in an unsuccessful effort to "fetter" Nehru.

Even Indira Gandhi faced the dilemma when she was unseated by an Allahabad High Court judgment unseating her on 12 June, 1975, Mr Dixit recalls and notes that the move to swap the Prime Ministerial and party chief posts between Mr D K Barooah and Mrs Gandhi was later dropped.

Turning to the issue of organisational elections, which have been repeatedly delayed and put off, and the vexatious prob-

lem of bogus enrolments, Mr Dixit says he has asked the party president to expand the three-member committee he is heading to include eight or nine senior partymen with organisational experience so that the "truth can be unravelled"

The genesis of the problem, Mr Dixit feels, lies in party rules stipulating that anyone who enrolled 25 members qualified as an active member and secured right to vote. Often, persons simply paid Rs 25 instead of actually enrolling 25 new members earned the right to vote.

To put an end to the practice, Mr Dixit suggests that that rules should stipulate that old receipts should be furnished together with renewal forms and payment of arrears. That would make the plea that the new members were not "new" but renewing their membership difficult, and curb bogus enrolment.

The bogus enrolment was resorted to because vested interests sought to retain their seats of authority, Mr Dixit says adding the old adage "I can resist anything, except temptation". as a recaster of the party mould, Mr Dixit would like to remove the temptations.

Turning to the problems facing the party and country today, Mr Dixit observes that as Prime Minister, Mr Rajiv Gandhi had inherited "some intractable problems", chiefly Punjab, Assam and Mizoram, most crucial of them being Punjab.

Reflecting on the events and

with the wisdom of hind-sight, Mr Dixit recalls that Indira Gandhi had given her "award" on Punjab "over 10-12 years ago", but "nobody bothered to implement it then". Had it been, Abohar and Fazilka would have gone to Haryana and Chandigarh to Punjab, and "perhaps there would have been no Operation Blue Star". "The Sikh psyche has been cut to the quick" and chances of restoring it are difficult now, the veteran leader feels. Until the Punjab tangle is solved, the country's leadership, whatever it is, would continue to face a succession of crises since others too would press their claims.

The former West Bengal Governor, in this context, refers to the GNLFF agitation in Darjeeling area. The GNLFF "is asking for moon. They know they will never get it. That's why they are pitching their demands high".

The real problem with the Gorkhas in the Darjeeling area was lack of job opportunities. Young, educated Gorkhas were feeling frustrated. Mr Dixit says he has written a letter to the Prime Minister, suggesting their recruitment in the Army and creation of a separate Gorkha Regiment for them.

Mr Dixit also cites the example of a State Chief Minister, who was encouraging youth to join armed forces and not pursue high-level education as the latter course would only swell the ranks of the jobless youth, and the former serve the national interest, too.

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CSO: 4600/1589

INTERVIEW WITH CPI-M POLITBURO MEMBER SURJEET

Calcutta THE TELEGRAPH in English 29 Mar 87 p 10

[Interview with Harkishan Singh Surjeet, CPI(M) Politburo member, by Kamaljeet Rattan]

[Text]

Q: *Mr Jyoti Basu has recently given a call to all Opposition parties to unite under some workable formula to counter the Congress(I) at the Centre. Will such an initiative succeed?*

A: I do not think that Mr Basu has any immediate plans to build up a United Front as an alternative to the Congress(I). What he means is that more coordination is required between the opposition parties to meet certain situations, which we have already specified. Only secular opposition parties would be approached because we want to carry the struggle for national unity even further. It does not include the BJP, the communal or casteist parties. You see, as of today nine or ten states are out of the control of the Congress(I) and this situation has posed serious questions—questions of Centre-state relations, financial allocations etc. So our approach would be to consider matters from issue to issue and that is what Jyoti Basu means. There is no question yet of forming a front to present an alternative to the Congress(I) at the Centre. But there is no doubt the massive victories in the two states, Bengal and Kerala, are going to help us in projecting an alternative (at the Centre). Be-

cause an alternative means a programme, a common programme.

You see the Janata Party also tried to provide an alternative but it did not succeed because it had no programme. Moreover, building an alternative is not yet on the agenda, because it is not so easy to do so. For this we have to adopt a two-pronged approach. First we have to increase coordination with the other parties on different issues, and second, we have to build up the working class movement and other class organisations, which will defend their interests and through that changing the political process. That is our aim.

Q: *Does that mean that the CPI(M) at the moment is not taking the initiative in building up an opposition front on the lines that Jaya Prakash Narayan did in 1977?*

A: That is not our concept, because as I told you they (the Janata Party) did not present an alternative. That is why even after routing the Congress(I), they were not able to stay in power. We will take the initiative with the aim of providing a real alternative. For the moment we are prepared to have better coordination between opposition parties on different issues. For instance,

the planning process has been dislocated by ad-hoc announcements, such as the so called allocation of some Rs 1,000 crores (to Bengal) and some projects here some there. The entire planning process has been destroyed.

Q: *Could you broadly specify the CPI(M)'s terms and conditions in forming an alliance with parties like the BJP, the Janata or the Akali Dal?*

A: As far as the BJP is concerned we do not want any alliance with them. The Akali Dal, is no doubt a communal party, but now a section of them is playing a positive role by dissociating itself from religious institutions and separating religion from politics. If they adhere to that they get our support. Now it is the CPI(M) which is in the forefront of the struggle against communalism and in organising rallies in Punjab. Our role is the biggest.

Q: *What in your view is the special significance of the Left Front's third consecutive and unprecedented victory in West Bengal? What bearing will it have on the country's future politics?*

A: It has proved that the services we have rendered to the toiling people of Bengal, specially the working class, agricultural labourers, poorer

classes, peasantry, employees and various other sections, have been appreciated. It has proved that as distinct from the Congress(I), there is no difference between our words and deeds. We have tried to implement the pledges we have made to the people, in spite of the limitations imposed by the Constitution. So the confidence which people have in us is a result of the service which we have rendered, which means we have not belied their hopes. People in other states will note this. We have been increasing our strength and now in the Assembly the Left Front has got more than 85 per cent of its members. Earlier this did not happen. So this is going to have a big impact on the country. The consolidation of the Left here has provided a real alternative to the people. This will naturally strengthen the Left and democratic forces outside the state. It has galvanised the atmosphere and, in fact, certain Congressmen are also jubilant about our success because of their suppressed feeling that certain policies and schemes to their liking were not being implemented in Congress(I) states. Something good has happened to them because our success will shake up the Congress(I).

Q: But is the Front's victory due to its good performance or due to the strengthening of the party machinery, the cadres?

A: You see service to the people and strengthening of the party are interrelated. They cannot be separated. The Congress(I) has more power with the Central government being at its disposal. They can distribute many benefits, but that is not the question. Strengthening the party is combined with serving the people. So this is the result of what we have done in implementing the policies we have pursued. For instance, you will not find injustice against and atrocities on the harijans and tribals in Bengal; you will not find an atmosphere of criminal tension.

Q: The Prime Minister, Mr Rajiv Gandhi, has also expressed an inclination to make the Congress(I) a cadre-based par-

ty. Do you think that Indian democracy will flourish more under cadre-based parties or mass based parties?

A: The Congress(I) can never be a cadre-based party today. Let there be a party first. Earlier it was the Congress party guiding the government; now it is the government guiding the party, which is no party. Since the organisation does not exist, its president, its chief ministers are all appointed from above. The MLAs, the committee members have no say. One does not know how long Rajiv Gandhi is going to stay. Tomorrow you do not know what fate Mr Das Munshi is going to face.

Q: Now that the Front has consolidated its position here, what should it do to earn the reputation of being a dynamic government?

A: Let's see. The government has not yet been formed. Comrade Jyoti Basu has himself said that whatever the weaknesses and shortcomings of the government may have been, an attempt will be made to remove them. You wait for the formation of the government and see its performance for some time. We are sure of overcoming the shortcomings which we have been seeing.

Q: But what are your suggestions for making this government dynamic?

A: Our suggestions are discussed in the party's meetings. Even today we have had a discussion in the secretariat about what we have to do, how to overcome our weaknesses, how we can win over even those sections of the people who are not with us today, those who are under the influence of the Congress(I) party.

Q: Could you tell me what the party's suggestions are in this regard?

A: I would not like to say that this government was not a dynamic one, otherwise these results would not have been there. But what I have said is that there have been shortcomings which we would like to overcome. Since this is a coalition government certain weaknesses in the functioning of the different departments have arisen...

Q: What are your party's views on the no-confidence motion which the Opposition plans to bring against the Prime Minister and the Speaker?

A: As far as I know there is no immediate proposal to bring a no-confidence motion against the Prime Minister. But so far as the Speaker is concerned, our party is a party to the decision taken, because the decision of the Speaker is not in consonance with parliamentary practices. The issue (President's letter to Prime Minister) is being debated everywhere by everyone, only Parliament has been deprived of this. The Speaker's decision weakens the role of the parliamentary set-up. Even the Prime Minister has made a comment on the issue stating that he has not leaked the letter.

Q: What is your assessment of our Prime Minister?

A: The results of these elections have proved that he has not risen to the occasion as a leader of this vast country. You see he has to differentiate between his being a party president and the Prime Minister. He has to be more responsible.

The people have no confidence in Rajiv's ability to provide that leadership.

Q: Do you suggest that he resigns?

A: No, I am not asking for that. Why should he, as long as he has the majority in Parliament. We are not that type. Let the people decide on the basis of his performance.

Q: You feel this way even though you have said that he has failed to prove himself as a leader of the nation?

A: I did not use the word failed. He has belied the expectations of the people.

Q: Coming to Punjab, what do you think is the solution to the state's problems, particularly since the accord has failed?

A: You see Punjab's condition continues to be very serious. It requires a three-pronged approach. First, the all-party campaign which has been started against extremists and separatists must be continued since it creates con-

fidence among the people. Nobody is in favour of 'Khalistan,' even among the Sikhs. You will hardly find three to five per cent people supporting it, all others are against it and against extremism. You see, in the last five to six years there has not been even a single riot in Punjab, but unfortunately the people are not actively struggling against separatists. This all-party campaign has galvanised that (struggle against extremists). The hatred that was developing in certain quarters against Sikhs is changing and is being checked. The media coverage is also helping in this. Secondly, the Centre has to help by implementing the accord, which was time bound. The Centre should provide some opportunity and strengthen Barnala's hands by implementing the accord.

The detainees of Jodhpur jail, who are there for over two-and-a-half years, must be released. Why is the government not putting them on trial or punishing them? These irritants have to be removed. Merely words and statements won't do. Barnala is getting weak, his base has been eroded. They (Centre) should not try to erode it further and make him solely dependent on the Centre without any support base among the Sikh masses. So the main issue in Punjab is to activate the Sikh masses. Thirdly, Akalis have also to derive a proper lesson. You see they started by mixing up religion with politics and now they are in a fix. Today they are trying to demarcate one from the other and Barnala has taken up the cudgels by stating that as a chief minister he is bound by the Constitution and not the Akal Takht. Political responsibilities have to be de-linked from religious institutions by the Akali leaders.

Q: Is it possible to separate religion from politics in Punjab? What are your views about such a legislation?

A: Why not? Now they are being forced to do it. The Akali

Dal has officially stated (this) in a resolution at the meeting in Longowal. The problem is that once you mix (religion with politics), religious interpretation does not lie with you. It will be someone who will be interpreting religion in his own way. That is why the Akali Dal is changing its stand on religion and politics. Moreover, sarbat khalsas were only dividing the people, it has not united them. Then this Akal Takht is not the property of the Akalis alone. And all the Sikhs are not in the Akali party. It belongs to the whole Sikh community.

Coming over to legislation, I am sure it does not serve any purpose. We have been carrying on this campaign for long in a class-based society. Pakistan's legislation which makes it an Islamic state has been a failure. The Sindhis, the Baluchis and the Pathans are protesting for their rights every day. The lesson is that nothing can be achieved by legislation. A political, ideological campaign is necessary.

Q: Why has the CPI(M) failed to be a major party in Punjab which has produced an important leader like you?

A: On that I have written a pamphlet, you can read it. Anyway, once we were a major force, we carried the best traditions of the national liberation movement. The Gadar party was with us, all the leaders of the working class, the colleagues of Shaheed Bhagat Singh were with us. Today we are lagging behind and the Akali party, a communal organisation, has come to the forefront. This question I have tried to answer as a historical development. It has a long history because the Congress leadership in Punjab was in the hands of the trading classes, which along with those with commercial interests made no appeal to the peasantry because they were exploiting the peasantry. So they did not have access to the people which helped communalism to spread. They got the upper

hand and the party also could not make proper assessment of the Akali strength. The Punjab Congress was glorifying the positive role that they were playing against the British and at the same time the idea of the Sikhs being separate grew. This idea was not countered in time because at that time you required them in the national movement.

Q: Mr Chandra Shekhar has criticised the all-party campaign in Punjab and has suggested that talks be initiated with the extremists as Jaya Prakash did with the Naxalites in 1977.

A: I have issued a statement. Chandra Shekhar should not compare the situation in Punjab with JP's movement. Instead of providing a solution to the problem, he is encouraging the extremist elements... He does not see the rule of imperialists who are trying to destabilise the country. He does not see that it is Pakistan which is training and sending the extremists to Punjab. All these dangers are being overlooked. Perhaps because of his opposition to the Congress he is blind to the reality that the threat to this national unity has to be met and on such questions, an all party consensus and understanding is required.

Q: But what is the difference between JP's stance vis-a-vis Naxalites and Mr Chandra Shekhar's suggestion that talks be initiated with the extremists?

A: It is different because in a limited movement you are misled, you think that with a gun you can have a revolution, but they were not a divisive force. Don't you see that a section of Akalis are trying to create a wedge between one community and another? The Naxalite movement was different.

Q: What is your party's stand on the presidential elections due in July?

A: Let us see. It is very premature to comment on it now. It is not yet on the agenda.

ASSAM GURKHAS ANNOUNCE THEY WILL WORK WITH GNLF

Calcutta THE TELEGRAPH in English 5 Apr 87 p 3

[Article by Wasbir Hussain]

[Text]

Guwahati, April 4: The Assam Gorkha Sammelan, supported by a majority of the state's over 12 lakh Nepalis, has announced that it will work in tandem with the Gorkha National Liberation Front (GNLF) "since we are interested in a permanent solution to the problems of the Indian Gorkhas." The Sammelan's announcement comes less than a week after the GNLF chief, Mr Subhas Ghising's return to Darjeeling after a six-day tour of Assam's Nepali-dominated areas.

Talking to THE TELEGRAPH the Sammelan president and former Congress(I) minister, Mr Padam Bahadur Chauhan, said there was no harm in granting a separate state to the "Gorkhas of our country" who are concentrated in and around the Darjeeling hills, "If so many states could have been carved out of Assam why not one from West Bengal," he asked.

Mr Chauhan, who is the convenor of the three-day All-India Gorkha Sabha to be held in New Delhi from April 15 said "We are looking forward to have Mr Ghising in our midst during the conference." The Sikkim chief minister, Mr Nar Bahadur Bhandari, is also expected to attend the meeting. But Mr Chauhan said there is "No point in inviting the Darjeeling Parishad (also advocating the need for a separate state for the Gorkhas) or the Gorkha League since they have become irrelevant with the emergence of the GNLF."

On the citizenship question, the Sammelan's present stand is that all those Nepali-speaking people "from outside" who had entered and settled down in India prior to July 30, 1976, should be conferred Indian citizenship. It was on this date that the Centre had issued a notification requiring the Gorkhas of Nepal to possess a Restricted Area Permit (RAP) before entering the northeastern region and certain other parts of the country." By this the Centre has violated the Indo-Nepal treaty since the Nepalis (from Nepal) were required to possess RAPs to enter even unstrategic areas," Mr Chauhan said.

"I think the gravity of the nationality problem facing the Gorkhas has led Mr Ghising to first attempt at solving the citizenship issue," Mr Chauhan said adding that the Sammelan was still not clear on the GNLF's stand on the citizenship issue. He, however, made it clear that his organisation would accept whatever consensus is arrived at the New Delhi conference on the question of citizenship.

The Sammelan will also "throw light on the deplorable condition of the Nepalis in Assam," at the conference. Mr Chauhan said after the Assam Gana Parishad (AGP) assumed power in the state, the Nepalis here had been subjected to harassment "in the name of foreigners" and are being "ruthlessly evicted from their homesteads."

CORRESPONDENT WRITES ON PROBLEMS IN TIN BIGHA

Calcutta THE STATESMAN in English 24 Mar 87 p 11

[Article by Diptosh Majumdar]

[Text] TIN BIGHA (Cooch Behar), March 23.—This vacant stretch of land where cowherds from Bangladesh and India lead their cattle out, is hemmed in the distance by bamboo groves. Running down the middle is a narrow strip of asphalt where village children scamper about and an occasional car honking its way ahead drowns the children's shouts. About 100 yards down the road is a newly-painted outpost of the Border Security Force. To the east an outpost of the Bangladesh Rifles stands silhouetted against the sky. Nothing apparently happens here. But the idyllic calm hides the tension that seepers under the surface. This strip of land, 178 metres long 85 metres wide, has been the focus of controversy ever since the Indira-Mujib agreement of 1974. The agreement had specified that the two enclaves, Dahagram and Angarpota, beyond this disputed territory would be governed by Bangladesh. As these enclaves fall within Indian territory there would have been difficulties for the Bangladesh officials to maintain regular contact with the population residing there. The hitch was overcome as the agreement further stipulated that the connecting strip, Tin Bigha, would be leased to Bangladesh in perpetuity.

But this plot also connect the 30,000 Indian citizens, living further down the road in Kuchlebari, with the Mekhaliganj sub-division of Cooch Behar district. Their fate was completely forgotten by those who drafted the treaty. Eight years later, the two countries signed a fresh agreement that gave India partial control over Tin Bigha. This agreement, finalized in 1982, mentioned that while Bangladesh would exercise its rights over Tin Bigha, India would have the right to construct either an overbridge or a subway across the strip.

Those staying in Kuchlebari have not accepted this modifica-

tion. "What would happen if a war broke out?" they ask. "We shall be living in another enclave cut off from our own people and they shall hold us as hostages," they fear. "Even if a war with Bangladesh is impossible in the near future what about the daily crimes we would have to live with?" Residents of Kuchlebari claim that they are more prosperous than the Bangladeshis living a few furlongs away and would become easy targets of petty crimes like dacoity and theft which, even BSF sources admit, is rampant across the border.

A BSF officer stationed at the outpost felt that the strategic aspect of the problem was not as significant as the aspect of crime. There are several other areas along this border where the Indian mainland shrinks to an alley with Bangladesh territory on both sides. "It will be more difficult to defend those places during a war," the BSF officer added. He thought that crimes would increase and what might worsen matters is a clause in the agreement of 1982 which indicated that those apprehended for crimes committed on Tin Bigha would be handed over to the law-enforcing agencies in their respective countries.

Near the concrete pillars that demarcate the boundaries of the two countries at Tin Bigha, a small semi-circular platform has been erected. On the platform is an etched marble slab that provides information about the inhabitants of both Kuchlebari and Dahagram. Of about 10,000 people staying in Dahagram, 80% are Muslims and the rest Hindus. While Kuchlebari has 22 primary schools and two high schools, Dahagram has only one primary school. Mr Sukumar Sengupta, leader of the Kuchlebari Sangram Committee, said that those staying in Dahagram enjoy all the facilities provided to Indian citizens. Several of their children attend high school in Mekhaliganj and

quite a few are employed in the Teesta Barrage Project.

The Tin Bigha controversy would not have arisen at all had the Cooch Behar State been acceded to the Union of India before 1947. As Cooch Behar's borders with erstwhile East Pakistan was settled long after the lines separating the two countries were agreed upon, some peculiar problems came to the fore. The erstwhile Cooch Behar State had 130 enclaves measuring nearly 32 square miles that fell in East Pakistan territory. Similarly, East Pakistan had 95 enclaves spread over approximately 19 square miles which were located in Cooch Behar. The Nehru-Noon agreement of 1958 decided on the exchange of enclaves to solve the situation even if it meant territorial loss for India. The actual exchange was deferred and those living in these enclaves are yet to be enrolled as voters in their respective countries even if 29 years have elapsed since the agreement was signed.

Mr Sukumar Sengupta argues that the Tin Bigha problem resulted from the concession made to the Berubari movement that continued for a long time in the fifties and sixties. The movement was spearheaded by Mr Nirmal Bose, the Forward Bloc leader and presently a Minister in the Left

Front Cabinet. He pointed out that the controversial area in Berubari ceded to Pakistan in the 1958 agreement was re-included in the Indian territory in 1974 and in return the Dahagram and Angarpota enclaves were handed over to Bangladesh together with Tin Bigha. The Kuchlebari Sangram Committee, headed by Mr Sukumar Sengupta, is said to be affiliated to the Baratiya Janata Party and Mr Sengupta lashed out at Mr Nirmal Bose for "his hand in the transfer of Tin Bigha".

The Forward Bloc had fought for Berubari. Ironically, the Forward Bloc is fighting again for Tin Bigha. The Mekhaliganj constituency under which Tin Bigha falls has been returning a Forward Bloc MIA to the State Assembly for the past 10 years and the party cannot dare ignore the feelings of the electorate. Mr Kamal Guha, the West Bengal Agriculture Minister and the district's prominent Forward Bloc leader said that "Tin Bigha should not go to Bangladesh". The Chief Minister, Mr Jyoti Basu, had reportedly said during his last visit to Dhaka that Tin Bigha would be ceded to Bangladesh. The situation is slightly embarrassing for the Forward Bloc but even then it has set up the Tin Bigha Raksha Samity that claims to have voiced the anxiety of the people of Kuchlebari over the sensitive issue.

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NAXALITE LEADER TELLS PLANS FOR 'NEW ORDER'

Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 25 Mar 87 p 1

[Article by Mahmood Raza]

[Text] Girdhar, the dreaded Naxalite of Gadchiroli district, says his movement is determined to establish a new order in the country under proletarian leadership as had been done by Mao Zedong in China.

"The Central and state governments have failed to abolish the semi-feudalism and semi-colonialism. The exploitation of the masses by a handful of persons continues even after 40 years of independence. That is why a mass movement under the CPI-ML banner was founded in 1977 in Andhra Pradesh."

Girdhar was talking to this correspondent in his jungle hideout in Sironcha last week. It was the first interview to have been given by him to a newsman and the invitation came suddenly and dramatically during a tour of the district.

A stranger approached and asked if I was interested in the meeting. A venue was arranged. Early next morning two men came to fetch me. I was blindfolded. After a long trek, they removed the bandages from my eyes and I found myself facing seven armed men and two women in a dense thicket.

The men were standing guard with cocked muskets. Soon Girdhar emerged from the bushes, shook my hands and introduced me to the others. Some villagers were also present.

Sitting under the shadow of a tree, Girdhar spoke about the Naxalite movement. He said he had launched the "struggle" in 1978 from Hagtiala village in Karimnagar district of Andhra Pradesh and it had now spread to 12 districts in Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra including Adilabad, Bastar, Chandrapur and Gadchiroli. All these districts are densely forested and that gave them ample cover.

"Our strategy is to liberate villages first and then towns. We believe in revolution through bullet and not through ballot," he said. Asked what had attracted him to the area, Girdhar said the main reason was the increasing

atrocities and exploitation of the Adivasis in Chandrapur and Gadchiroli districts by two landlords, Madhav Rao of Aniksa village and Govind Rao of Regunta village.

"We started our struggle and united the people against beaucracy and feudalism by holding secret meetings and by distributing our literature printed in many languages. We have succeeded now after six years in awakening the suppressed adivasis for fighting for their rights.

"To fight for the grievances of farm labourers, an Adivasi Kisan Shet Mazdoor Sanghatana has been recently formed under the presidentship of Sedam Lachhamanna, the former sarpanch of Marpalli village," Girdhar confided.

He said adivasi labourers were being paid low wages and there was great disparity in the rates paid by various government departments. For instance, under the employment guarantee scheme (EGS) only Rs. 7.40 per day was paid on register but actually the foodgrains given to them were worth only Rs. 4.90.

The PWD rates were Rs. 12.40 while the paper mill paid Rs. 12.50 for bamboo cutting and the forest department Rs. 9.50 only. The private contractors had started by paying Rs. 17 for 100 bundles of beedi leaves but since the government banned the auctions the payment had fallen to Rs. 10 only. Girdhar said labourers should get a minimum of Rs. 20 a day.

On local economy, the Naxalite chief said the Forest Conservation Act of the Central government had become a big hurdle in the path of development of this area and most of the adivasis did not have legal rights to their huts nor graves after death. About 100,000 hectares of land was being cultivated for the last 35 years by village farmers but pucca pattas had not been allotted to them so far.

Girdhar said the children of the adivasis lacked educational facilities as there were no proper schools and where they existed teachers without the knowledge of the local language were posted. Proper food was not given to the students in ashram schools.

Similarly hospitals were ill-equipped and there was not a single ambulance in three tehsils to carry a patient to a city hospital in an emergency.

Girdhar said he was amazed that government could spend about Rs. 5 crores on posting state reserve police to curb his movement but could not spare money for bettering the lot of adivasis. An increase in the number of policemen to "curb us will not help the government as we have succeeded in gaining the confidence of the masses," he claimed adding that "now we are the indirect rulers of this Dandakaranya."

Girdhar said he felt the country was ripe for revolution "and that is why the agreements in Punjab, Mizoram and Assam have failed".

Towards the end of the 90-minute interview, he said the Naxalites had formed squads in three tehsils of Gadchiroli district and their number would be increased during the summer.

Asked whether some of his followers were paid servants, he denied it: "All of us are doing this work voluntarily. We eat whatever poor food is sent by villagers and live in jungles. We don't drink nor have illegal relations with the girls. Where necessary, we get married with full consent".

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CSO: 5650/0108

HOME MINISTRY REPORTS EXTREMISM UNDER CONTROL

Calcutta THE TELEGRAPH in English 27 Mar 87 p 1

[Text]

New Delhi, March 26: The Union home ministry has claimed a "grand measure of success" in curbing extremist and secessionist activities and restoring peace and communal harmony.

In its annual report for 1986-87, the home ministry said the situation created by continued terrorist activities in Punjab, extremist activities in the north-east and student unrest and communal violence were a cause for concern. However, the ministry had initiated a number of successful measures to counter them.

Among these measures were the implementation of the Punjab, Assam and Mizoram accords, curbing extremist activities in Punjab and the north-east, promotion of communal harmony and national integration and rendering assistance to states for maintaining peace and law and order.

The report said the number of agitations arising out of labour unrest in the last year had shown a decline as also had violent

incidents. However, there was a slight increase in the number of incidents of student unrest but the number of violent incidents came down from 4,672 in 1985 to 2,607 last year. There were 408 incidents where left wing extremists were involved, the majority being in Andhra Pradesh and Bihar.

In Punjab, the report said, the activities of terrorists and secessionists had continuously been engaging the attention of government. The Centre was providing necessary help to the state government to curb terrorist activities and security arrangements had been strengthened to check infiltration and movement of terrorists across the border.

In the northeastern region, the activities of various insurgent groups like the NSCN of Nagaland, TNV in Tripura, PLA and ULFA in Manipur and Assam continued unabated in the year under review. The focal point of coordinated insurgency in the hill region was spearheaded by the NSCN, the report added.

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CSO: 5650/0109

NEWSMAN INTERVIEWS ASSAM LIBERATION FRONT LEADERS

Madras THE HINDU in English 5 Apr 87 p 4

[Text] **T**HE United Liberation Front of Asom (ULFA), an organisation which has till now been known for some daring political murders and bank robberies it claims to have committed in the Brahmaputra valley, has apparently chosen to lift at least partially the thick veil of secrecy that has surrounded its activities. This became evident during a two-hour conversation that this correspondent was able to have with two members of the central executive committee of the ULFA recently at an elaborately arranged rendezvous away from Guwahati.

The contact was made by the ULFA leaders themselves. Prudence and discretion were necessary for even though the ULFA is not a banned organisation it certainly functions clandestinely and most of its activities are certainly illegal under the Indian Penal Code and Criminal Procedure Codes. Moreover the Assam police would love to lay their hands on the top leadership of the ULFA and have been on the look out for them especially since the spate of political assassinations began with the assumption of office by the AGP Ministry.

Answering a question in the Assam Assembly the Home Minister, Mr. Bhrigu Kumar Phukan recently admitted that since January 1, 1986, twelve persons had been killed for "political or similar reasons" in Assam in 10 separate incidents. The ULFA has claimed credit for all but two of these killings (the mob lynching of two Congress (I) workers, a mother and daughter, at Mechagarh near Nazira on January 21 last year), though during the conversation ULFA spokesmen denied, after some deliberation, any responsibility for the killing of Saurabh Bora, a CPI (ML) activist, in the Dibrugarh University campus on May 27 last year.

The ULFA leaders also claimed responsibility for the bank robbery at Namrup State Bank on March 1 last year and indeed cheerfully admitted that the banks were their chief source of finance. "The money in these banks after all belongs to the people", they explained and promised to continue to attack banks, especially those in urban and semi urban areas while sparing the rural banks which they said mainly carried the accounts of the weaker sections.

Such being the case, caution was dictated (on both sides) and the arrangements for the rendezvous were quite elaborate.

Elaborate organisation

What struck this correspondent during the two hour conversation was the elaborateness of the organisation, its ability to set up a rendezvous at a most unlikely location, in conditions of relative security and secrecy. Clearly the organisation has some following, apart from its committed cadres in 'eastern Nagaland' (the name by which Naga inhabited areas in Burma are identified by the NSCN) and those receiving higher training in 'foreign mission', among sections outside the students and the youth.

According to the ULFA spokesmen the organisation was founded on April 7, 1979, at Rangghar near Sibsagar in upper Assam. During a journey this correspondent had made from Bombay to those areas in April 1980 he came across several instances of open talk of 'some men having gone across', for contact and training with the NSCN (National Socialist Council of Nagaland). That was the height of the Assam agitation as it were, and the AASU and the AAGSP were reigning supreme; but even at that time there were tendencies (then as now within these same organisations) that sought a solution to the foreigners problem in secession from India—however unrealistic such as aim might be. *Jodi Asom swadhin hoi, moribole kihor bhoi* (Why fear death if (we can) make Assam independent?) was one of the many slogans that one heard on April 19, 1980, when the citizens of Guwahati defied the curfew and came out on the streets in their thousands.

The attempt to link up with the NSCN too is not new; it dates back to the very beginning of the Assam agitation, though the ULFA spokesmen would have one believe that its own existence as an organisation even preceded the formal beginning of the agitation. Substantial evidence of these links of elements within the Assam agitation with the NSCN was uncovered during the raid on an NSCN hideout at Mapao village near Imphal on June 23, 1983—which indeed led to the arrest of some well known AASU leaders (who are now legislators).

Note of discord

With the signing of the Assam accord and perhaps even before that these links had become weakened; but while the mainstream

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leadership of the AASU and the AAGSP graduated almost painlessly into leadership positions in the Asom Gana Parishad (AGP), and soon thereafter, with equally practised ease, became legislators and assumed political office, a section of the AASU and indeed of the agitation leadership itself was not entirely sold on the accord. It is a matter of record that an important component of the Assam agitation, the Purbanchaliya Lok Parishad, denounced the accord of August 15, 1985, as indeed did at least three other components of the All Assam Gana Sangram Parishad; equally, some important units of the AASU too made no secret of the reservations they had about the accord.

But while the non-AASU components (like the PLP, or the Asom Jatiatabadi Yuba Chhatra Parishad) apparently made peace and (in the case of the PLP) even merged their identity with the newly floated Asom Gana Parishad, those within the AASU who did not consider the signing of the accord the culmination of the struggle decided to wait and watch how the new party and, later, the new government would function especially in the matter of fulfilling the expectations that had been roused in the mass of the people in the Brahmaputra valley—the core support of the Assam agitation who massively voted the AGP into office.

The ULFA certainly has widespread ramifications and its spokesmen claimed that it had

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CSO: 5650/0111

RAJIV OPENS DEFENSE RESEARCH ESTABLISHMENTS

Madras THE HINDU in English 28 Mar 87 p 4

[Text]

BANGALORE, March 27.

The Prime Minister, Mr. Rajiv Gandhi, today told the defence research establishments to be more open minded and give more freedom to the scientists so as to take the country to the frontline in every field. He was inaugurating the new complex of the Defence Research and Development Organisation and the new campus of the Electronics and Radar Development Establishment which have come up beyond the HAL Third Stage layout.

There was already a change in the basic philosophy of defence research from reverse engineering and "replacement of a component here and there" to development of major systems suited to the country.

There must be a change in the thought process of defence scientists and technologists. They should not think that the country would enter the frontline areas of science and technology, by merely replicating what had already been achieved by others. They must break ahead of the others and take the country into the frontline in every field. A quantum leap forward was needed, he said.

The new ideas should not get bogged down in cumbersome red tape and an overweight organisational set-up. The scientists needed to be given more freedom and elbowroom. The Prime Minister said the results of research had to be injected into the industrial base of the country. The space research organisation had transferred work to private and public sector industries. But the defence establishments had remained hesitant. He remarked that the defence organisations were ready to part with top secret specifications to the private sector of foreign countries but not to the public sector here.

Traditional weakness: Mr. Gandhi said that a traditional weakness of the country was in the transfer of the results of scientific and technological research to the production sector. However, the Defence Research and Development Organisation was exploring novel ways of

bringing about technology transfer.

Defence research had two other directions, according to Mr. Gandhi. The first was the completion of projects on hand like the light combat aircraft, certain guided missiles and the main battle tank. Secondly the country had to enter what he called the absolutely frontline areas.

Mr. Gandhi noted that all these days, the defence research laboratories in Bangalore had been scattered affecting their growth and development. The bringing together of those establishments in one complex should infuse a new dynamism. He was glad that the township of the defence complex had been named after Sir C. V. Raman who symbolised India's pursuit of excellence in science and technology.

Serious commitment: The Defence Minister, Mr. V. P. Singh, said that the proximity of the defence laboratories would help inter-disciplinary research. The first experiment in bringing together the laboratories was done in Hyderabad and it was functioning well. For the first time there was a serious commitment to defence research and development in this year's budget. However, the country's investment in those fields was not large compared with that of other countries. He spoke of the introduction of sophisticated weapons in the neighbourhood. The country had to establish its competence through technological strength.

Welcoming the gathering, Dr. V. S. Arunachalam, Scientific Adviser to the Defence Minister and Secretary, Department of Defence Research and Development, said the complex would provide better working and living conditions to the scientists and others. The Bangalore-based defence laboratories were not without work. They were involved in projects like the development of the light combat aircraft. He was sure that the defence scientists would work towards self-reliance without being demoralised by the occasional ill-informed criticism and lack of encouragement.

Dr. R. P. Shenoy, Director of LRDE, proposed a vote of thanks.—Our Staff Reporter

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CSO: 4600/1575

PAPERS REPORT LAUNCHING, FAILURE OF SATELLITE

Operational Details

Madras THE HINDU in English 23 Mar 87 p 7

[Text] *The Augmented Satellite Launch Vehicle (ASLV) is to be launched between 11-45 a.m. and 2-45 p.m. on Tuesday from Sriharikota.*

MADRAS, March 22.

The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) is on the threshold of a new era in indigenous space technology. The Augmented Satellite Launch Vehicle (ASLV) which is to be launched from Sriharikota (SHAR) will not only enhance the ISRO's capability to launch heavier satellites but also usher in many high-technology areas hitherto unfamiliar to India.

The ASLV is conceived as the ISRO's second generation launch vehicle following the launching of a series of SLV-3 rockets between 1979 and 1983 from SHAR. "When the second experimental SLV-3 lifted off from Sriharikota on July 18, 1980, and deployed a 35 kg satellite called Rohini into orbit, India joined the select space club of six nations comprising the US, the USSR, the UK, France, Japan and China. And when the 40 tonne heavy and 23.5 metre tall ASLV hurls a 150 kg satellite called SROSS (Stretched Rohini Satellite Series), it will firmly underscore India's pre-eminence among the developing nations in the frontier field of space technology.

The questions that naturally arise are: what is the sequence of operations that precedes the launching of an aerial leviathan like the ASLV and what kind of facilities are there at SHAR to accomplish this feat? (SHAR is a scrub-jungle island of 40,000 acres dotted with SHAR complexes and criss-crossed by miles and miles of roads. It is situated 100 km from Madras).

Essentially, the ASLV is an attempt to upgrade the SLV-3 by means of a few technological innovations. The aim, according to the ISRO, is to enhance the payload capability to 150 kg from the 40 kg satellites launched by the SLV-3.

A major innovation in the ASLV is the use of strap-on technology. To put it simply, two solid rocket motors called strap-ons, each of which is identical to the first stage of the SLV-3, flank the rocket. Thus, in effect, aided by these two

strap-ons carrying additional 17 tonnes of propellants (fuel) the ASLV's satellite launching capability is raised more than four times.

Another major achievement is the closed loop guidance system (CLGS) using on-the-spot calculations to determine the speed, direction and position of the rocket and decide what changes in the course should be effected so that the prescribed final orbit of the satellite is secured. (There is the open loop guidance system in the first stage of the ASLV while the CLGS guides the second and third stages).

The ASLV is a five-stage rocket. Its configuration is strap-on motors (which form the zero-stage), the first, second, third and fourth stages. The zero-stage and the subsequent four stages make the five stages of the vehicle. On top of the fourth stage is the satellite, SROSS. The stages are connected by inter-stages, housing instrumentation, control and separation systems. The equipment bay, which is the "brain" of the vehicle, is located between the third and fourth stages. It houses guidance-control electronics, inertial guidance system, telemetry, telecommand, etc. The information gathered by the instruments on board the vehicle is radioed to the ground by telemetry. The communication, in the reverse direction, viz, from the ground to the vehicle is ensured through telecommand.

The vehicle is the "baby" of the Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre (VSSC), Trivandrum. The satellite is fabricated at the ISRO Satellite Centre in Bangalore. The two are brought to SHAR; they are mated and then launched from the SHAR launching station. How is the vehicle assembly achieved?

Fifty-five sub-systems of the vehicle are transported to SHAR from the VSSC. They are unpacked and checked electrically to ensure that they have received no damage. Mechanical checks are also conducted on them. The satellite is independently checked for acceptance.

Then, phase II checks start. All the stage-motors and inter-stages are electrically inter-connected, and they are tested from the Block House before being assembled vertically at the launch complex.

The launch complex consists of a mobile service tower (MST), umbilical tower, vehicle support structure, etc. According to Mr. Rathnaraj Jeyamani, Director of the ISRO Range Complex, the MST is "a big, beautiful, mobile building," standing 40 metres tall and weighing 720 tonnes. As Mr. M. R. Kurup, Director of SHAR, says, unlike the SLV-3 which was integrated horizontally on a transporter and then lifted vertically to the launch pad, the sheer weight of the stage motors of the ASLV demand that they be assembled vertically. Further, the experience of the vertical assemblage of the ASLV would prove invaluable when the ISRO moves on to heavier vehicles like the Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle.

To facilitate vertical building of the ASLV, the MST has lifts, cranes and foldable platforms, where the experts stand and build it vertically. On top of the MST is the cleanroom where the satellite is "mated" with the fourth stage of the ASLV. The air-conditioned cleanroom protects the satellite from fine dust particles.

If the main mechanical structure of the launch vehicle can be compared to its nervous system, the control and guidance systems, with their associated electronics, constitute the "brain." But merely having a body with brain will not take the rocket into space. It needs energy to blast it off from the ground and that energy is provided by propellants (fuel) and certain special types of chemicals.

There are two types of propellants—solid and liquid. According to Mr. M. C. Uttar, Manager, SPROB (Solid Propellant Space Booster Plant), the ASLV employs solid propellants to power itself and the advantage is that the solid propellants give enormous thrust to the vehicle, forcing it to move quickly. The SPROB, where the solid propellants are made, is one of the world's biggest and most sophisticated centres producing of propellants and its 50 buildings lie scattered over a vast area of the island. (A visit to SPROB facilities alone will take nearly two days). The importance that solid propellants play in energising the ASLV can be understood from the fact that out of 40 tonnes of the entire vehicle weight, the propellants alone account for 32 to 33 tonnes.

The Block House is an aesthetic, conical structure from where all the check-out procedures during the integration of the ASLV and its launching are carried out. A network of computers provides data processing support to the launch mission. The Vehicle Director, Mr. V. Manoharan, and the Satellite Director, Mr. Tarsem Singh, operate from the Block House during the launch. The main operations of the Block House start 30 hours before the lift-off of the vehicle. The first operation will be to fill the control systems with fuel and this will take 14 hours. Then the pyro-systems are mated with the vehicle and checked. The rocket is then cleared and energised with fuel.

The electrical checks start T minus 11 hours, viz eleven hours before the lift-off. They last for five hours. Then, the Mobile Service Tower is towed away and the ASLV will be standing erect on the support structure close to the umbilical mast with pneumatic support arms holding it till the vehicle is given the ignition. The final launch operations start T minus one hour and 20 minutes. During the next one hour, exhaus-

tive checks will be conducted from the Block House on the electrical systems—about 10,000 parameters will be monitored for anomalies. From T minus 20 minutes viz 20 minutes before launch, the computerised sequence of operations will start. Major operations will be conducted ten minutes to launch. The command to fire the engines is given from the Block House. Thus, the final decision to "hold" or allow the launch is issued from here.

The Control Centre is the "nerve centre" which controls and directs all the activities during the launch phase. The Range Operations Director, Mr. K. Narayana, gets the inputs from the various agencies involved in the launch complex on whether the range is ready for the launch. When the range, vehicle and satellite are ready, the Mission Director, Mr. M. S. R. Deb, will take all this into consideration and then he authorises the Block House on the launch. The Block House, in turn, authorises the computer which gives the go-ahead for the launch.

The Range Safety Officer has an onerous task. He gets information from telemetry, radars and also from visual display on the trajectory of the vehicle. In case the vehicle deviates from the predicted trajectory and if the deviation is more than the safe limit allowable, he will press the "destruct" button and the vehicle will be destroyed by the explosives wired to it. But the Range Safety Officer should have a lot of presence of mind and "he has a lot of responsibility not to destroy the vehicle."

The ISTRAC (ISRO Tracking and Command Network) supports the ASLV mission for telemetry, tracking and commanding both for the launch vehicle and the satellite, according to Mr. K. V. Venkatchary, Director of ISTRAC. The on board data is collected from the launch vehicle and the satellite by various ISTRAC network stations. They are situated at Sriharikota, Trivandrum, Car Nicobar and Ahmedabad. As some of the important parameters from the satellite cannot be monitored from any of these stations, external support is sought from the Weilheim station in West Germany.

These locations are so chosen that all these stations will be in radio contact with the vehicle and the satellite until the spacecraft is shot into the required orbit. The station at Car Nicobar island enables "seeing" the satellite injection into orbit. The Ahmedabad station serves during the initial phase of the SROSS. The ISTRAC stations are connected to the Satellite Control Centre at SHAR, where the health of the satellite is monitored and decisions are taken to activate or deactivate the various sub-systems.

The ASLV will loft the SROSS into a 400 km near circular orbit. The satellite carries the following payloads: shock, acoustic and vibration experiment (SAVE) to measure the separation shocks, vibration and noise level felt by the stage motors and the satellite, and the velocity determination increment experiment (VIDE) to measure the velocity imparted by the fourth stage of the vehicle to the satellite; optically to range the satellite with the help of retro-reflectors (special mirrors); and to study celestial Gamma ray bursts.

Probe Into Failure

Calcutta THE STATESMAN in English 26 Mar 87 p 13

[Text]

NEW DELHI, March 25.—The Minister of State for Science and Technology, Mr K. R. Narayanan, told the Lok Sabha today that preliminary analyses indicated that the Augmented Satellite Launch Vehicle seemed to have lost control "due to a suspected malfunction of the core-motor, resulting in termination of the flight after 163 seconds."

Mr Narayanan, who was making a suo motu statement in the House, said that, despite yesterday's setback, the programme of ASLV launches would continue as per plans.

He said that the lift-off of the first developmental flight of the Augmented Satellite Launch Vehicle (ASLV-D1), with the cross-1 satellite on board, took place at 12.09 hours yesterday with the ignition of the two strap-on booster motors.

The performance of the vehicle was normal up to 48.5 seconds when the core-motor ignition was initiated. The two strap-on motors also started at 52.4 seconds as per the design. However, the vehicle lost control due to a suspected malfunction of the core-motor.

"Telemetry data was received throughout the flight duration. Data has also been received from the launch vehicle performance monitoring pay-loads of the cross-1 satellite. A detailed analysis of these data is on in order to identify the exact reasons for the failure".

Mr Narayanan said that of the two important new technologies incorporated in ASLV, the strap-on booster technology development had performed quite satisfactorily.

Even though a closed loop guidance system, which operates only from the second state onwards, could not be evaluated fully due to the premature termination of the flight, the available data up to the termination had clearly demonstrated satisfactory performance of the inertial guidance system package.

He added that further analysis of data would continue to understand the complex reasons of the failure in order to incorporate necessary modifications for future vehicles.

Suitability of Launching Site

Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 31 Mar 87 p 6

[Text]

INDORE, March 30 (UNI): The Rohini and SLV missions failed because the Sriharikota range (SHAR) is not suitable for satellite launching, according to space scientist, Dr. Ram S. Shrivastava at the Holkar Science College here.

Dr. Shrivastava is of the opinion that the Sriharikota site in Andhra Pradesh is not suitable because it comes under the zone of the greatest gravitational anomaly of the world. As a result of this anomaly, the satellite launching vehicles are normally deviated and suffer regular setbacks.

He suggested that future satellite launchings be from the Nicobar islands.

He told UNI here that satellite data on sea surface indicated that there was a "big dent" in South India.

The average sea level is depressed more than one hundred metres below the "ideal" surface of the earth. "When we look at the earth from outer space, there appears to be a big hole in the south of India," said Dr. Shrivastava.

He added that this anomalous gravitational zone is spread over several thousand square kilometers. This dent is possibly due to continental drift of the Indian-peninsular plate.

Dr. Shrivastava said the continental drift is taking place at the rate of four to six centimetres a year. As a result of this pressure, the south of India was facing a complex gravitational anomaly. The vertical-gravitational-profile (VGP) in that zone is a complex vector. The Andaman region is free from VGP anomalies.

He said due to this VGP ambiguity, the Indian space research organisation lost its first SLV in 1980. The Rohini satellite could not be beamed into a correct position because it was parked in the wrong orbit. Rohini-II, launched on April 17, 1983, burnt out after its 118th orbit. The recent failure of ASLV-3 is another indication that something other than a mechanical flaw is responsible.

Dr. Shrivastava, who was the chairman of an international conference on physics experiments in space held at Copenhagen (Denmark) in 1976 and closely associated with space science researches, said it was time a check was made on "each and every knob" of ISRO.

Radio Interview With Rao

BK241241 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1545 GMT 23 Mar 87

[Interview with Professor U.R. Rao, chairman of the Indian Space Research Organization, by Professor S.K. Srivastava of the Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore, date and place not given--recorded]

[Excerpts] [Srivastava] Over the past 30 years the world has witnessed extraordinary progress in science and technology. Much of this has resulted from the developments in space science and technology. India joined the space club in 1963 with the launch of a tiny (?sounding) rocket weighing 4.5 kg. Today we are ready to launch the ASLV--the Augmented Satellite Launch Vehicle--weighing 39 tons. In just 2 to 3 years from now we will have a rocket weighing over 200 tons. To tell us more about this spectacular progress, we have with us Prof. U.R. Rao, chairman, Indian Space Research Organization. Professor Rao, could you tell us something about the aim of the Indian space program?

[Rao] The aim of the Indian space program is to establish a very self-reliant base and to utilize the benefits of space science and technology for the common man in the country. Through series of experimental missions, infrastructure building, and finally going into operational mission today, the ISRO has established the services, particularly in communication, meteorology, remote sensing, TV broadcasts, using space technology. The coming decades will see much more utilization of space science and technology for providing these services to country as a whole.

[Srivastava] Coming to the specific objectives of ASLV, could you tell us something about the ASLV?

[Rao] ASLV is a launch vehicle with a modest capability, capable of launching something like 150 kg of SROSS [Stretched Rohini Satellite Series] series of satellites into a near-earth circular orbit. After series of experiments with sounding rockets we successfully launched the first Satellite Launching Vehicle, SLV, in 1980. This had a very small capability of about 40 kg and obviously for meeting various requirements of the space department this was the first step, but not a sufficient step.

However, before proceeding on to this major launch vehicle, it is also necessary to essentially validate many complex technologies which are required and therefore ASLV was taken up as an intermediate vehicle which will not only (?prove) these technologies for the design and development of larger launch vehicles such as PSLV and GSLV, but also will become a workhorse for carrying out meaningful scientific and technological missions. For example, SLV had only an open book guidance system, whereas the ASLV carries with it a rather complicated and sophisticated closed book guidance system using inertial navigation and onboard computers which will enable us to inject the satellite into a predetermined orbit. This is absolutely important when you go to larger launch vehicle.

[Srivastava] You mentioned that this vehicle will provide us with a workhorse for carrying out a number of scientific missions. Could you tell us a little more about the scientific mission?

[Rao] For example, there is a first SROSS satellite which is being launched under ASLV before the end of this month. It is primarily designed to essentially verify the performance of the rocket itself even though it does carry a scientific payload, namely gamma ray burster to look at the gamma ray emission from celestial stars. The second ASLV which will come about a year later is going to carry a joint Indo-West German payload which will take stereoscopic imaging over the country with a resolution of almost 100 meters. In other words, really good remote sensing can be done and with stereoscopic imaging with the second SROSS satellite to be launched under second ASLV [sentence as heard]. The third ASLV and the fourth ASLV are now dedicated to carry out an aeronomic mission with a set of integrated payloads to look at the ionospheric irregularity, the electric potential, and so on and one for carrying out again an integrated measurement of X-ray emission from various celestial stars particularly to look at (?transient) stars.

[Srivastava] This indeed provides a lot of opportunities for scientists in the country. Could you throw some light on what kind of opportunities the teachers from universities, scientific and other laboratories would have using the ASLV?

[Rao] The fact that 150-kg satellite which is designed so well that it can be both spin-stabilized as well as 3-axis stabilized, it can carry approximately 30 kg of scientific payload with something like 25 to 30 watts of power. The total power on the satellite itself is about 100 watts. But this provides a fairly good modest capability to carry out most of the simple missions. And, in fact, all over the world there is an increasing realization that one needs rockets of this class to carry out many of the scientific experiments on a cost effective basis. We have either very large rockets involving large costs and often not needed for carrying out this mission or we have nothing. And therefore, to that extent ASLV and SROSS satellites form an extremely good workhorse for carrying out many meaningful missions.

[Srivastava] You also mentioned in passing that this will be the initial point of the experimental vehicle to build larger vehicles like PSLV and others. Could you throw some light on the next program?

[Rao] PSLV, as you are aware is already going on (?in time) and the first launch of the PSLV is expected by the end of '89. PSLV, for the first time, unlike the SLV and the ASLV, carries not only solid propellant technology but also liquid propellant technology. And with the take-off weight of over 250 tons, PSLV has a capability to launch almost 1,000 kg into a polar orbit from Sriharikota. If a better launch pad is available it can even launch a higher payload. In other words PSLV has a capability to launch IRS class of satellites which today we are going out for launching. And the model and construction of the PSLV itself is such that if we change the last stage which

is a liquid stage to (?cryogenic) stage, that is a stage which is of liquid oxygen and liquid hydrogen, we have the capability of upgrading the PSLV to the geosynchronous launch vehicle which can launch over two tons into a geo-stationary orbit. And thus the lessons learnt and the expertise gained and the technologies developed from ASLV, particularly closed book guidance system and so on, would be of great relevance and importance and they will be a direct feedback into the development of PSLV and GSLV.

[Srivastava] What has been the involvement of industry, educational institutions, and other establishments beside ISRO in the development of ASLV?

[Rao] Over 100 and odd industries are involved in the development of ASLV and also the SROSS launch vehicle. From the very beginning we have involved, even in ASLV program, we have involved the industries in our program, and in the Fifth 5-Year Plan we spent about only 10 crore which went to 100 crores in Sixth 5-Year Plan, and in this Seventh 5-Year Plan we expect at least 700 crores of our money to be spent on the Indian industries. For example, we have in the ASLV large industries, both private and public sector, involved in the fabrication. Similarly, the educational institutions like the IIT, the Institute of Science, and MAL have been utilized and their facilities have been utilized, for example to carry out an extensive number of studies in terms of aerodynamic testing of the [word indistinct] separation, and many other areas, closed book guidance systems, and so on, many of these things have been validated and we have used the expertise available in educational institutions for the development of ASLV.

[Srivastava] In the case of this vehicle, have we had to depend upon any foreign collaboration or efforts at all?

[Rao] No, not in the case of this vehicle. We have not depended upon any foreign collaboration. In fact, most practically everything is indigenous. It is true that we have very often, we have to buy some components, particularly electronic components, from outside, but the design, the validation, the test facilities, fabrication, has been totally indigenous efforts. And it has been an inter-center effort, of course, as far as the rocket itself is concerned, Vikram Sarabhai Space Center at Trivandrum taking the lead with the control elements being essentially dealt out by the liquid propulsion unit, which is our new unit and SHAR [Sriharikota High Attitude Range], as you know is our major launch agency, plus the fact that large castings of the propellants are done at SHAR. The entire satellite design was made at the satellite center at Bangalore and the tracking is carried out by the ISTRACK including the tracking station at Car Nicobar and at Trivandrum and at Bangalore in Shar. The space application center and the NRSA have provided a large number of ground units and thus all the centers of ISRO are involved with this VSSC, taking the lead for the rocket and the satellite center taking the lead for the satellite.

[Srivastava] What would be your estimate of the total cost and time involved and, perhaps, even the personnel?

[Rao] Probably over about 800 people have worked in this peak period for the ASLV, and the cost involved is [word indistinct] probably about 15 to 20 crores, but then this includes the developmental cost and so on. But I think that really the cost one has to compute is when the vehicle becomes operational, and I expect that if one goes in for a fairly decent number of vehicles, the cost of each of the ASLV would not be in an operational amount more than around 8 or 9 crores.

[Srivastava] That is going to be much cheaper than we can get from foreign launches?

[Rao] That is true. This is certainly much, much cheaper, and of course, it is an optimized vehicle for small payloads.

[Srivastava] Would you like to say something in closing, the opportunities provided by this new launch vehicle?

[Rao] The facilities which have become available with the operationalization of ASLV will become extremely meaningful because large number of smaller experiments which have to be carried out in space requiring something like the SROSS capability can be carried out in a cost effective basis. ASLV and SROSS form an ideal combination, and I do hope that this will be utilized fully by the space scientists and space engineers in this country.

[Srivastava] Thank you very much Professor Rao.

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CSO: 4600/1578

GANDHI 25 MAR ADDRESS TO SCIENCE SYMPOSIUM

New Delhi PATRIOT in English 1 Apr 87 p 4

[Article by Rajiv Gandhi]

[Text]

India is full of contradictions, but it is also full of vitality, of the urge to change, to re-make our social life so as to free it from the inequities of the past.

When one speaks of the past, one is inevitably drawn to the immediate past, our experience of colonialism. Colonialism did many things to us. It was destructive in a profound historical sense. But its incalculably harmful impact was to instil the belief that science was European and that India and the East were mystical, spiritual and therefore anti-science. There could not have been a greater distortion of our history. Yet our people were made to believe it. Even our intellectuals came to accept it as an axiom. Thus, the spiritual East stood in contradiction to the dynamic science of the West.

I need not invite the attention of this learned assembly to what that great savant of science, J D Bernal, called the West's "arrogant ignorance of the rest of the world". Nedham's monumental work on China has exposed the hollowness of the claim that science is an essentially European phenomenon. The political purpose behind these theories of colonialism was obvious. It was to instil a deep-seated sense of inadequacy among the colonial people. Our colonial masters seemed to tell us that we were backward because we were incapable of do-

ing science and our only hope lay in imitating what they had done in their own societies.

The scientific heritage of India has thus been deliberately and consciously obscured. The architect of modern India, Jawaharlal Nehru, was often exasperated by this falsification of our consciousness. He knew that behind much of the talk of spiritualism lay the fear of change. He knew that the identification of the Eastern civilisation with mysticism was a weapon in the hands of those who wanted to preserve the status quo. He therefore campaigned all his life to develop what he called the scientific temper.

When India gained independence, we were faced with gigantic problems of poverty, unemployment, social and economic backwardness, vast inequalities. We were also faced with the problem of unifying our nation on the basis of modern concepts of democracy and secularism. Looking back at this distance of time, it seems amazing that we should have attempted to do what we in fact did. We were trying to build a modern society at a time when the country had been divided on the basis of a medieval-theocratic notion that religion was the essence of national identity.

Jawaharlal Nehru saw that forward movement was possible only on the basis of science and

technology. It was not that science was some kind of modern mantra. There is undoubtedly an attitude of this kind. And it is precisely this kind of belief in the omnipotence of science that has led to the crisis of modern civilisation. We have become helpless spectators of the tragic drama of the misuse of science. I shall come to that later.

I was talking about the colossal problems that we faced at the dawn of independence — the problems of hunger, disease and ignorance. It is to these problems that the sensitive mind and spirit of Jawaharlal Nehru sought solutions. And the solutions that he sought were in the domain of science and technology. Science had expanded man's powers to control his own destiny. Now it was possible to feed, clothe and house millions and millions of our people. It was no longer possible to blame Fate, Nature or any other abstract entity for the injustice that one found in the world. It was no longer possible to persuade people that their miserable condition was ordained by cosmic laws which they might not understand but which were designed to bring them everlasting happiness, if not now, then in the hereafter.

In India, then, from the moment of our freedom we linked science with development. For us science was the liberator, not the

destroyer. For us science was the enhancement of life, not its extinction. Therefore, in our vision science was an ally of peace. Here we come across a somewhat agonising question.

We live in the midst of startling paradoxes. We have it within our power to abolish hunger, yet we feel nobler organising charities for starving children. We have the power to banish ignorance, yet we feel virtuous in buttressing ancient prejudices and hatreds. We have the power to heal the sick and bring health to all, yet we feel righteous in devising increasingly complex methods of spreading diseases. We have the power to liberate people from the fear of unexpected death, yet we are busy making people afraid of modern science and industry.

We have the power to let peoples and nations come together in peace to realise the true potential of humankind, yet we are busy spending trillions of dollars on armaments to separate them in fear and hatred. Survival of the human race itself has become a question mark.

Should the revolutionary upheavals of our times, the amazing explosion of human consciousness, have led to this utter helplessness in the face of the human predicament? Should the transformation of life by science have brought us to a situation where, as Marx said, "all that is solid melts into air"? Have we, in other words, lost control?

I do not think so. This impressive gathering of scientists is evidence that thousands upon thousands of people who care about life, who care about the future, who care about humanity, do not think so. We have been taking things apart in order to understand them. It is time to put them together again. The human condition demands no less. It demands that we reintroduce ethics and morality into our consideration of the fundamental questions facing humanity. So far ethics and morality have been side shows in the drama of restless change. They have been mere appendages. Now they have to step on to the centre of the stage. This is what we attempted to do in a

small way in the Delhi Declaration of November 1986.

We need a new vision of humanity, a vision based on truth and non-violence, a vision that will nourish life in all its myriad beautiful forms. That vision can have no place for nuclear weapons. That vision can have no room for the mass human suicide represented by nuclear weapons. In the unfolding of this vision the spiritual experience of humankind must play its part. It is an experience of love, of breaking away from one's own narrow grooves, of reaching out beyond oneself, of exploring the infinite possibilities of self. Science must begin to answer the questions that real men and women pose not only in one country but in all countries. In seeking to do so, it will inevitably assist the yearning of the human spirit for peace, for harmony, and for truth. Then and then alone will science lead us, as our scriptures remind us, from ignorance to knowledge, from darkness to light and from death to immortality.

Is that too utopian? I submit it is not. For me and for millions of my fellow citizens in India problems of poverty are real, problems of illiteracy and disease are real, and the problems of creating a society which gives equal opportunities to all are real. We are battling with them everyday. We are putting all that we have into solving those problems. We are making progress. If you had come to India in 1947, you would have seen an altogether different picture.

We lived at the margins of hunger. The great famine of 1942 had occurred barely forty-five years ago, carrying away three and a half million people. Today we grow enough food to provide at least minimum nourishment. We have to do much more to achieve a healthy and balanced diet for our people, but the famines are a story of the past.

This is a dramatic change which people tend to take for granted because it has become familiar. But only as recently as 1966-67 we knew what lack of food meant. It raised the spectre of starvation. It also meant loss of national pride because we had to import from those who had the

means to give and did not give it without strings.

Whichever field we choose to survey — education, health, industry, transport, communications — we find evidence of unprecedented change. The colonial stagnation has given way to a steady movement for socio-economic transformation. This transformation is taking place through the application of science and technology.

More than anything else, we need peace, peace in the world and peace in our region, to complete the evolutionary tasks we have on our hands. Ever since Independence, we have consistently striven to build a peaceful world. We eschewed the confrontation of the military blocs. We put forward an alternative vision in which the big and the small, the powerful and the weak, the rich and the poor could work together to create a world free from want and fear. At first it appeared to many that we were not sufficiently cognisant of the realities of power. To some, we appeared immoral, refusing to take sides between good and evil. But we persevered because we knew that good can defeat evil only in a world safe from the death and destruction of atomic weapons. In a world devastated by the nuclear bomb, good will perish along with evil.

Our vision has found increasing acceptance. The search of the six nations for peace and for nuclear disarmament is a powerful expression of the deep urges of the entire people of the world for a new human order. The nonaligned movement is striving in the same direction.

It has been worth trying. The Soviet Union, alive to the horrors of war, put forward far-reaching proposals at Reykjavik. Although no agreement was reached, these proposals are a watershed in the history of negotiations on nuclear disarmament. The search for agreed solutions must continue. There is no resting for our generation which carries the awesome burden of nuclear arms. We have to shake off this burden and walk erect without fear.

To help humankind to do so, men and women of knowledge have to come forward to

revolutionise our consciousness. Today, thought processes are being controlled and distorted. People are told that nuclear weapons are necessary for their security and freedom. If they do not have nuclear weapons they would be enslaved and would lose their liberties. A powerful mythology has been built up to ensure that people understand reality not by looking at facts but by imbibing irrational dogma. It is as if we were back in the middle ages. The powerful hold of the theology of the arms race has to be broken.

We can see the stirrings of a new enlightenment. Millions of people are participating in peace movements. They are proclaiming that they want this earth, this life. They are pointing out that more bombs do not mean more security. This process has to be helped by the men and women of science who must ceaselessly educate the people all over the world that what is said in defence of the nuclear weapons race is untenable. It is unacceptable to reason. It is against the dictates of

morality.

I am aware of the difficulties inherent in this enterprise. The structures of power do not respond easily to the promptings of reason and good sense. These structures have created a world of arcane logic which is impervious to the demands of survival of the human race. But the modern age is characterised, above all, by the vast expansion of human consciousness. It is further characterised by the capacity for decisive action on the part of the millions who were formerly objects of history but are now its makers. These two revolutionary trends give us confidence that we can change the course of history. It has been done before and it can be done now. We have the experience of our own freedom struggle where we challenged the mightiest empire on earth. It is this faith in the power of non-violence that has sustained us in India in working for peace, disarmament and development.

I applaud the efforts the World Federation of Scientific

Workers has made to oppose the misuse of science and technology and to bring together scientific workers from all countries to work for a new and better world. I recall the words of a famous French physicist who said: "If I stopped my scientific research it will, sooner or later, be taken up by others; however, if I refuse to fight fascism there may be no science left." The situation today is poignantly similar. Scientists have to fight against the menace of nuclear war, because if they do not, it will be the end of science. The priesthood of mass destruction will take over.

Thank you very much for asking me to be with you this evening. I am in sympathy with the draft Resolutions and the Declaration that you have adopted. Your deliberations here will help the cause of peace. They will also help the developing societies to better understand the role of science and technology in promoting development and human welfare.

/13104

CSO: 4600/1581

PAPERS REPORT PROBLEMS WITH PURCHASE OF SUPERCOMPUTER

'Byzantine Intrigues' of Decision-Making

Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 3 Apr 87 p 8

[Article by A.S. Abraham]

[Text]

THE curious tale of the supercomputer is an object lesson in how not to conduct foreign policy. It is a lesson which the Americans should have learnt by now, but which they have not, and are still unable to. The snafu over the supercomputer sale is important not so much for the deal itself as for what it reveals of the Byzantine intrigues in American decision-making.

In this region, the Americans are pursuing three objectives simultaneously — and contradictorily. One is a south Asia policy, in which India would have to be the key factor. The second is an anti-Soviet containment strategy in Afghanistan, in which Pakistan is crucial. The third is nuclear non-proliferation. To favour the first is, in U.S. eyes, to jeopardise the second. To prefer the second is virtually to write off India as a factor of consequence for the promotion of American interests in south Asia. It is also to embolden Pakistan to perfect its nuclear-weapons capability, secure in the knowledge that the U.S. will be inhibited from restraining it for fear of putting Pakistani support on Afghanistan at risk.

The supercomputer deal affects all three U.S. objectives. According to the *New York Times* story by David E. Sanger (*International Herald Tribune*, March 28-29), a U.S. inter-agency panel, comprising officials from the defence, state and commerce departments as well as from several intelligence agencies, has de-

cided — the decision was formally conveyed to New Delhi last week — to sell "an American-made supercomputer, but only a model of relatively limited power ... (It) would be the first shipped to a nation with strong ties to the Soviet Union".

Indian officials are quoted in the story as having said "in recent months" that the agreement reached late last year, after the U.S. defence secretary, Mr. Caspar Weinberger, had visited India, had "paved the way for a relatively powerful computer such as a Cray X-MP configured with two processors that run in tandem. India applied for an export licence for that machine, made by Cray Research Inc., last fall". Details of the agreement, however, have never been made public.

Type Was Vague

Before that, an "oral understanding" is said to have been reached between Mr. Rajiv Gandhi and President Reagan, during the former's visit to the U.S. in mid-1985, on America providing India with a supercomputer. But the type was not spelt out.

What the inter-agency group has told India, according to the *NYT*, is that "India was free to purchase the Cyber 205, a Cray 1 of approximately the same vintage, a single-processor Cray X-MP or some 'other machine of equivalent capability' ". Two U.S. officials are cited as saying that "from the start of negotiations,

they had made it clear that they would not permit the export of any machine more powerful than a Cyber 205, an early supercomputer made by the Control Data Corp. that is now considered several generations behind the state-of-the-art equipment". Only too evidently, for all the so-called dialogue over some two years between officials of the two countries, they have been talking at cross-purposes.

American inhibitions over giving India a supercomputer arise from the apprehension, especially strong in the defence department and among intelligence agencies, that because the country "obtains much of its military equipment from the Soviet Union... (the latter) could gain access to the supercomputer and use it to decipher American codes. Others feared that the supercomputer could be used to accelerate India's ability to design nuclear weapons, particularly at a time that fears seem to be mounting in New Delhi that Pakistan has obtained nuclear bomb-making capability".

Adhering to an ambivalence that has characterised the American position throughout on the issue, the U.S. embassy in New Delhi last Friday put out a statement saying that India was being offered "a powerful supercomputer relevant to its needs" under an agreement between the two governments. However, an embassy spokesman would not comment when asked whether the supercomputer was less powerful than the one India had requested.

Intriguing messages are also emanating from Washington. On the one hand, an official there is quoted in the *NYT* as saying that there were "very good reasons" not to sell India more advanced supercomputers of the type used in the U.S. to make and break codes, design weapons and analyse satellite pictures. Simultaneously, the model offered to India is portrayed in glowing terms. The same official is quoted as saying: "I hope the Indians realise that this is a precedent-setting milestone step. This would have been impossible two years ago". As against that, an official of the U.S. national security council is quoted as saying: "Nobody told anybody in India that they could order any supercomputer they wanted and that we would deliver it".

Soviet Offer

To make confusion worse confounded, the Soviet ambassador in India, Mr. V. N. Rykov, has said that the Soviet Union could offer India supercomputers without any strings attached and that they are of comparable quality to those made in the U.S. The director of the Moscow institute of precise mechanics and computer technology, Mr. Gennady Ryabov, has also spoken of the Soviets developing a new-generation supercomputer on the "building-block" principle which would be faster than and superior to current American and Japanese models which use the "assembly-line" principle.

Have these news items about the Russian offer appeared coincidentally with the latest snarl-up in the Indo-U.S. supercomputer deal? Or are they a deliberate attempt to ensure that the sale does not go through? And what better way to ensure that than by raising the spectre of the Russians stepping in to fill the breach left by the Americans? Of course, Indo-U.S. cooperation in hi-tech and similar frontier areas will not exactly be applauded by the Soviets since it could signal the beginning of new and more cordial relations between India and the U.S.

But, paradoxically enough, the prospect of such a relationship is also viewed with alarm and suspicion by American hawks, especially in the defence department and among the intelligence agencies. So we have the odd spectacle of a diehard section of Americans, overly suspicious of India because of its strong ties with the Soviet Union, acting unwittingly in concert with sections of the Soviet establishment which, too, may not want to see India and America coming closer. Naturally, the reasons why both groups may want to scuttle the deal are very different, but their objective is not.

The supercomputer sale, as the *NYT* puts it, is "a symbol of American willingness to export high-technology goods to the third world". But for India, it is more than that. It signifies whether America is going to continue to view every transaction or exchange — cultural, economic, political, scientific, technological — as a gauge of how close to or far from

the Soviet Union India is. It has never been easy for American policy-makers to see India in any other perspective right from the beginning of the relationship between the two countries after independence.

But the American unwillingness or inability to see India as a non-aligned, independent entity steering clear of superpower involvement, without being antagonistic to either of them, has been compounded by the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in December 1979. Before that, the Americans had been refashioning their south Asia policy and had been coming round to accepting that India would have to be its cornerstone. This realisation came in the wake of the 1971 Indo-Pakistani war which saw the birth of Bangladesh. But since December 1979, the Americans have been reverting to their pre-1971 policy of depending on Pakistan as their main regional ally in the containment of the Soviet Union in Afghanistan. That policy is being buttressed by an imminent second dollop of arms and economic aid to Pakistan, and by U.S. indulgence towards Islamabad's nuclear ambitions.

Heavy Price

So long as Afghanistan remains on the boil, Pakistan will be central to the achievement of American objectives. Soviet attempts to wind down the war, especially after Mr. Gorbachov took over in Russia, have been treated dismissively by the U.S. largely because it does not want the Russians to get out of the mess quite so easily. It suits America to have the Russians go on paying a heavy price for their occupation of Afghanistan. That is why every time the Soviets make a conciliatory offer, the Americans see it as a justification for stepping up the volume and quality of the arms supplied to the *mujahidin* fighting Soviet and Afghan forces. In other words, since the end of 1979, the Reagan administration has been putting its policy in south Asia (and therefore its relations with India), as well as its nuclear non-proliferation concerns, on the back-burner, while its main Afghanistan pot, in which Pakistan is a vital ingredient, cooks first.

The shabby compromise on the supercomputer deal which the U.S. inter-agency panel has struck suggests that American confusion over which policy to pursue as a priority persists. What the Americans have been attempting to do is to square the circle, to try and maintain a south Asia policy, which would meet legitimate Indian aspirations to regional predominance, while at the same time running an anti-Soviet containment strategy in Afghanistan that gives Pakistan a crucial role, while simultaneously trying to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons in the region.

To the extent the Afghanistan policy is being given primacy over the other two, India must, inevitably, take a lower place in the U.S. scheme of things. That, in turn, means it cannot be strengthened beyond a certain point for fear that it would become all the more difficult for the U.S., with Pakistani help, to bleed the Soviets in Afghanistan. As a consequence of this development, of which the latest twist in the supercomputer deal is a manifestation, Indian policy towards the U.S. will have to harden correspondingly.

Report on NEW YORK TIMES Article

Madras THE HINDU in English 28 Mar 87 p 9

[Text]

NEW YORK, March 27.

The United States has decided to sell a supercomputer of only relatively limited power to India which was expecting a more sophisticated model after last year's agreement between the two countries on the issue.

India was formally notified last week that it would be permitted to buy a supercomputer considered "several generations behind the state-of-the-art equipment", the *New York Times* reported today.

The decision "has apparently dismayed Indian officials who maintained that a far more powerful machine is needed for weather prediction and other scientific uses", the report said, recalling that there had been an oral understanding between the U.S. President, Mr. Reagan and the Prime Minister, Mr. Rajiv Gandhi that the U.S. would provide India with a supercomputer.

So far no official response had been received from the Indian Government on whether it would accept the computer offered, the newspaper said quoting one American official involved in the decision.

"The fact that India obtained much of its military equipment from the Soviet Union had prompted worries at the U.S. Defence Department and the nation's intelligence agencies that Moscow could gain access to the supercomputer and use it to decipher American codes," the report said.

Cyber 205 offered: "India has been told that it was free to purchase a Cyber 205, an early supercomputer made by Control Data Corporation, a Cray 1 of approximately the same vintage, a single-processor Cray X-MP or some "other machine of equivalent capability", the paper said.

Indian officials said in recent months that they believed that the agreement reached between the two countries on safeguards governing the sale, had paved the way for a relatively powerful computer, such as a Cray X-MP configured with two processors that run in tandem, it said, adding that India had applied for an export licence for that machine, made by Cray Research Incorporated.

The Cray X-MP can be configured to use four processors simultaneously, but an inter-agency group of the Reagan administration consisting of officials from the Defence, State and Commerce Departments and several intelligence agencies, decided that "a machine of that speed and capability will not leave the hands of Western allies", it said.

The report quoted officials in Washington who negotiated with India, as saying that they would have little patience with complaints about the capabilities of the computer offered to India. "I hope the Indians realise that this is a precedent-setting, milestone step. This would have been impossible two years ago", one senior American official said.

The official said that there "were very good reasons" not to sell to India more advanced computer models, used extensively in the United States for code making and code breaking, weapons design and the analysis of satellite photographs, among other uses.

American intelligence officials said that the Soviet Union had no supercomputers. The technology is considered a key element in maintaining a military edge over the Soviet bloc.

Safeguards: The newspaper recalled that after a visit by the U.S. Defence Secretary, Mr. Caspar Weinberger, American and Indian of-

officials had resolved a long deadlock and reached an agreement on safeguards governing the use of the computer.

While the details of the agreement between Indian and American officials had never been made public, it reportedly included provisions for some American inspection of the computer installations and a guarantee from India that the computer would not be used for military purposes or made available to the Soviet bloc, the *New York Times* said.

It quoted two American officials as saying that from the start of the negotiations they had made it clear that they would not permit the export of any machine more powerful than a Cyber-205.

"Nobody told anybody in India that they

could order any supercomputer they wanted and that we would deliver it", an official of the National Security Council said.

India has retained the option of purchasing the supercomputer from NEC, a Japanese computer giant, the report said.

However, Japan has also agreed to sell only single processor machines to India, according to American officials quoted in the report.

NEC is already negotiating with Indian scientists in search of a second supercomputer. "We still do not know the Indian response on the computer for the weather agency. But the Japanese are moving. NEC already has a letter of intent for a supercomputer at another site in India," a spokesman for Cray said.—PTI

Soviet Envoy's Remarks

Madras THE HINDU in English 28 Mar 87 p 9

[Text]

MADRAS, March 27.

The Soviet Union is prepared to sell a supercomputer to India with no strings attached, said Mr. V. N. Rykov, Ambassador of the USSR in India.

Addressing a press conference here on Friday, Mr. Rykov said the Soviet supercomputers could perform one million calculations a second, and scientists were working on a machine that could perform one billion calculations a second. "Our supercomputers are as good as the ones in the U.S.," Mr. Rykov said.

The Soviet Ambassador said India was already buying computers from the USSR and the machines were performing well. It was wrong to think that the Soviet Union was lagging behind other countries in the field of electronics, especially computers, he said.

Mr. Rykov, who visited the Visakhapatnam Steel Plant, being constructed with Soviet assistance, said the Rs. 630 crore plant would be completed by October next year. The plant would have the largest blast furnace in any plant in Asia. Much of the equipment was built by India, he said.

Other areas of collaboration were in the fields of oil exploration, space science, power generation and trade, he said.

Answering questions, Mr. Rykov said Soviet scientists were conducting seismic studies in the Cauvery basin, in Cambay, Gujarat and in West Bengal to assess the oil potential.

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CSO: 4600/1575

JUNEJO SAYS DECISION ON FRIGATES AFTER NEGOTIATIONS

Karachi BUSINESS RECORDER in English 9 Apr 87 p 1

[Text]

EDINBURGH, (Scotland), April 8: Prime Minister Mohammad Khan Junejo said on arrival here today from London that a decision on purchase of frigates for the Pakistan Navy would be taken after necessary negotiations and technical examination of the matter.

He was talking to newsmen at the Edinburgh Turnhouse airport.

A Scottish shipyard is vying for a contract to build frigates for Pakistan and local newsmen put a barrage of questions to him on the possibility of frigates purchase.

Junejo told the journalists that his present visit to the United Kingdom was not meant for any business deal. He said in fact he had come here in response to an invitation which was extended to him in April last year by the British Prime Minister. "Purchase of frigates has nothing to do with my trip," the Prime

Minister said. He explained that the government would take the decision when necessary spadework has been completed and technical studies made.

Prime Minister Junejo was greeted by British Minister for Scottish Affairs Lord Glenarthur and other officials.

Prime Minister Junejo will also visit Glasgow and Birmingham before returning to London, where he will preside a conference of Pakistan's envoys posted in Europe.

Last night Prime Minister Junejo attended a dinner given by the British Secretary of State for Defence George Younger in London.

Younger said he considered it a privilege and honour to meet the Prime Minister who is also Defence Minister. The British Defence Minister who hails from Scotland said he was happy with the Prime Minister visit to Edinburgh.-PPI/APP

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CSO: 4600/211

PLANNING MINISTER TALKS ABOUT 7TH PLAN

Karachi BUSINESS RECORDER in English 9 Apr 87 pp 1, 2

[Text]

ISLAMABAD, April 8: Dr. Mahbubul Haq, Minister for Commerce in an exclusive interview said that the Planning Commission had advised the government that before the exercise for formulating the seventh plan could be undertaken a basic policy decision with regard to sharing of water between the provinces, Kala Bagh Dam and basic for sharing of financial resources between the provinces must be settled.

Dr. Haq said Prime Minister Muhammad Khan Junejo has directed the Council of Common Interest to settle the question of sharing of water between the federating units of the country.

"The issue of Kala Bagh Dam in my opinion can only be resolved once the sharing of the existing available water is settled between the provinces."

OILSEEDS

Dr. Haq said during the seventh five-year plan the government

would offer a better deal to the farmers of oil seeds. The package would include earmarking of land zones, inputs, better price fixation and other incentives.

The Federal Minister for Planning and Development and Commerce said the import bill of edible oil was the second highest to that of petroleum. "If we have to minimise our import bill we have no other option but to enhance the domestic production of the oilseeds".

Mahbubul Haq said the next import policy should take this into consideration and also the performance of country's imports during the seventh plan period.

The minister was of the opinion that during the next plan period the government would encourage the farmers to change the cropping pattern. He said in this regard the Agriculture Reforms Committee was already preparing a report and the study was aimed at sorting out the issues like international price posi-

tion of the commodities and domestic production. "Sometimes it is tea and sometimes it is cotton or other case crops. We have to encourage the production of those crops that are either being imported at high price or barter them for local industrial or agricultural products.

Referring to the petroleum and petroleum products, the minister said, "during the seventh plan period efforts would be made to enhance local oil production. Now we are producing about 40,000 to 43,000 barrels per day. Oil production was increased by those oil companies which are operating in the private sector". He said that OGDC needed a complete overhauling. "But at the same time we will introduce uniform price rates for the local oil and also ensure that the employees of the local companies receive equal salaries."

Dr. Haq was of the opinion that OGDC could be made a viable and profit earning company.

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CSO: 4600/211

PROVINCES' COUNCIL TO DECIDE INDUS WATERS, KALABAGH ISSUES

Karachi BUSINESS RECORDER in English 13 Apr 87 p 1

[Article by G.N. Mughul]

[Text]

HYDERABAD, April 12: The issues of the apportionment of Indus water among the provinces and the redesigned project of Kalabagh Dam are being referred to the Council of Common Interests (CCI).

This was disclosed by Kazi Abdul Majid Abid, Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting and Water and Power in an exclusive interview given to BUSINESS RECORDER.

He said the meeting of the council would be attended by all the four provincial chief ministers and the concerned federal ministers. He said these issues would be resolved while taking into consideration the point of views of all the provinces but finally the decision would be taken in larger national interest.

The minister said no one could ignore the fact that there was polarisation on such issues. He assured that it was the effort of the present government to have regard for national interests.

When he was asked as to what was the response of the private sector to the government's call to come forward in the energy sector and set up power houses Abid said: "The private sector is willing to enter the arena of upgrading power genera-

tion potentials in the country". He said: "We have received signals from the private sector to this effect. Now these signals are to be presented to the government in the shape of concrete proposals after which the feasibility of such proposals would be examined by the government."

In reply to a question as to what was the fate of the proposal to bifurcate Wapda's water and power wing, the minister said the proposal has not yet been examined, according to his knowledge. But, he said, before going in this direction it will have to be seen whether bifurcation of Wapda was in national interest or whether it would serve the purpose or not. Because, he said bifurcation of an organisation is not just cutting a cake in two equal halves.

When his attention was drawn to the resolution passed by Sind Assembly some time back, in which it was demanded to handover Karachi Electric Supply Corporation (KESC) to Sind province, Kazi Abid said: "I have yet to come across this proposal. He said such matters can not be decided by the Water and Power Ministry alone. He said these are to be discussed at different forums like Economic Coordination Committee and Ecneec and finally it has be decided at the level of federal cabinet.

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CSO: 4600/212

OFFICIAL TALKS ABOUT 'ONE-WINDOW OPERATION' FOR INDUSTRIES

Karachi BUSINESS RECORDER in English 13 Apr 87 p 1

[Text]

Federal Industries Secretary M.A. Kazi said that the government was examining the possibility of introducing one-window operation for industrial sections in the country.

Speaking at a meeting of the Federation of Pakistan Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Karachi yesterday he said the Prime Minister of Pakistan had directed the industries division to implement the proposed one window operation as soon as possible and he assured the industrialists that the system will be introduced at big cities level first.

He said that a productivity board will be set up in the country on the suggested lines of FPCCI to monitor productivity in the country. He invited industrialists to suggest ways and means to increase the productivity and make industries cost-efficient.

He said the government considered the private sector as the backbone of the country's economy. It was in line with this

policy that the government allocated Rs 62 billion to the private sector in the sixth five year plan and kept only Rs 20 billion for the on going projects in the public sector, he added.

Kazi said this policy had borne fruits as in the 10 years before 1983, sanctions were only worth Rs 16 billion but in the three years of the sixth five-year plan from 1983 onwards, the sanctions totalled Rs 49 billion.

The rate of investment was only Rs 1.4 billion per year during 1972-1977. This rose to Rs 4.5 billion per year in 1977 and onwards and Rs 18 billion per year in 1983 and onwards.

He said that out of the total sanctions of Rs 49 billion in the first three years of the sixth plan period the actual implementation was of the order of Rs 27.3 billion.

He admitted that the country faced power shortage in the recent past but the government was doing its best to remove defects and im-

pediments.

Referring to yarn crisis he said the government would solve this matter in the near future to the satisfaction of all groups concerned.

Earlier welcoming the guest FPCCI president Aziz Zulfikar said infra-structure facilities in cities like Karachi, Hyderabad, Lahore and Faisalabad are under heavy pressure. On the other hand in less developed areas where the government is keen to develop these facilities are largely non-existent or grossly inadequate. To crown this, the cost of infrastructural services is subject to frequent upward revision upsetting all cost estimates, he added.

Giving the example of Nooriabad, he said in this area hardly 10 industrial units could go into operation against heavy odds. Besides matters pertaining to law and order, the deficient infra-structure has forced some of the large units like that of cement to spend millions of rupees to lay pipelines of their own to have access to water.

/9317

CSO: 4600/212

PRIVATE SECTOR TO BE ALLOWED TO EXPORT COTTON

Karachi BUSINESS RECORDER in English 9 Apr 87 pp 1, 2

[Text] Islamabad, April 8--Commerce Minister Dr Mahbubul Haq said here today that the private sector will soon be inducted in the export trade of raw cotton.

Talking to BUSINESS RECORDER he said that the government was considering to allow private parties to export cotton alongside the Cotton Export Corporation.

The minister said that there was need to modernise ginning factories which had become primitive. For this purpose, he said that commercial banks would be asked to provide financial assistance to ginners to modernise their plants. The CEC and the private sector would remain in the field of exports, he added.

The minister, however, made it clear that price check would be maintained and ensured that there was no manipulation in this regard. If the international price went beyond a certain limit, then export duty would be imposed, he added.

To a question, he said that modalities for the induction of the private sector in cotton export trade were now being worked out and the issue would soon be placed before the Economic Committee of the Cabinet.

Trade Policy

He said that a dynamic trade policy was under preparation with special emphasis on export promotion. At present, our exports were meeting about 50 percent of the total cost of imports.

The minister said that efforts would be made to meet larger portion of our import cost from local resources. For this purpose, exports must get a boost, he added.

In this behalf, he said that within the next three to four years, 80 percent cost of the import trade would be made out of our own generated resources.

He expressed satisfaction over the volume of exports and said that during the current year it would surpass the target fixed. The target for the current year was of 3.2 billion dollars which, he said, would go up to about 3.5 billion dollars.

He said a decision had already been taken to allow the private sector to export rice in the packs of 10 kg.

Efforts would be made to improve the quality of rice husking to face competition in the world market. New markets will be explored with special emphasis on the Middle East which has a large potential for Pakistani rice, he added.

The minister said that effort would also be made to increase rice production. He said the rice output would be enhanced to about 13 lakh tons per annum.

To a question, he said that Pakistan had bright prospects for the export of its non-traditional items like leather goods, ready-made garments etc.

Dr. Haq expressed his concern on the slow export of engineering goods from Pakistan. He said that total investment in engineering industry was about Rs 100 billion. The export of these goods amounted to only Rs30 to 40 crore

which comes to 0.3 per cent only. "The return was very poor" he added.

The Commerce Minister said that sales delegations would be sent abroad to explore the possibilities of increasing the export of engineering goods. He mentioned the names of Uganda, Gambia and other African countries, as markets. He said that engineering goods could be exported in exchange for the goods that could be imported into Pakistan.

He said that stress will be laid on the setting up of trading houses to boost exports on the pattern of South Korea and Japan.

At present there are 1,34,000 registered exporters in Pakistan. While none of them would be stopped from exporting various measures would be taken so that they would be encouraged to export through trading houses.

One such way, he said, could be by enhancing the exemption from Income Tax on export earnings from the present level of 55 per cent in case of exports made through trading houses. The country, he added, would still stand to gain as better value added can be obtained because better and aggressive marketing through trading houses.-

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CSO: 4600/211

BLACK MONEY: COMMISSION FAILS TO SUGGEST REMEDIAL MEASURES

Karachi BUSINESS RECORDER in English 9 Apr 87 pp 1, 2

[Article by Azfal Qureshi]

[Text]

LAHORE, April 8: The Pakistan Fiscal Association (PFA), while appreciating the hard work done by the National Tax Reform Commission in analysing the problems, highlighting the reasons for tax evasion, smuggling and corruption and proposing remedial measures, has regretted the NTRC's failure to formulate any suggestion for retrieving revenue losses on account of untaxed money. The losses have been estimated at Rs. 190 billion by the commission itself.

In a letter to Senator KHurshid Ahmed, Chairman of the Senate sub-committee on Finance/Planning/Development, FCA chief executive Saleem Malik expressed his differences over handling of certain issues by the NTRC and certain other matters on which its report is found totally silent.

For example, Saleem Malik said, there was absolutely no mention in the report about problems relating to (a) provincial taxes, (b) users' taxes and (c) integrated taxes.

If the commission had decided not to deal with the above issues, he observed, it should have informed the government well in time enabling it to take appropriate steps so that the report on these subjects might have been ready by now and parliament could have debated all issues relating to taxation system in their totality.

He said the commission has taken pains in identifying the areas where black money finds refuge generally and had also quantified its volume, but it is felt that the report is wanting in respect of mobilisation of untaxed money. The FCA, he added, had some suggestions which, if implemented, would effectively mobilise resources and help channelise economic activities in organised manner and meet the resources gap as well.

Untaxed money has plagued every segment of our society. If it is employed in organised and legalised business it will immensely contribute to the future socio-economic development of the country. Fresh 'declarations of hidden wealth' be demanded by the government on the pattern of "Ayub Khan's declarations" at a fair tax rate. If the authorities agree, FCA can provide a complete scheme for the purpose.

The commission, he said, has estimated the term deposits at Rs. 72,250 million and demand deposits at Rs. 61,091 million and has also estimated the black money at Rs. 50,000 million invested in such deposits, justifying imposition of 'withholding tax' on

PLS profits at the old rate which would not only fetch sizeable revenue immediately, but will further unearth black money invested in

such deposits in due course of time.

The banks should also be required to respect the law strictly and supply information of profits paid to its depositors as laid down under section 141 of the Income Tax Ordinance, 1979, he added.

He also recommended that advisability of continuation of schemes like Prize Bonds, Bearer NIT, Bearer National Fund Bonds etc. be critically examined as they offer tempting attraction for investments for the untaxed money. If the advantages to the government in such schemes are more than the tax evaded, there should be no objection to continuing with them.

He pointed out that immovable properties were being transacted at fantastically lower rates and were proving a haven for untaxed money, a major source of leakage of revenues and an important avenue for the disposal of black money.

It is, therefore, suggested that the government should have the authority to acquire under-reported properties at a price 15 per cent more than declared value.

He said undue delays in the determination and issuance of refunds is causing lot of agitation against the functionaries of the department. All refunds, when determined, should be released forthwith and in case of any doubt indemnity bond may be required from the claimant of the refund.

It is, he added, pertinent to make mention of the fact that after the determination of 'refunds' the relation between the government and the tax payer becomes that of 'debtor' and 'creditor' and by causing

any delay in the issuance of refund vouchers by the functionaries of the Income Tax Department, the position of the government becomes very embarrassing.

The PFA chief executive has pointed out the demand by all quarters that mighty feudal class be brought under the 'tax net'. NTRC has avoided to give its verdict on the subject, leaving the incometax payers i.e. salaried class, industrialists, traders, property owners and professionals to be squeezed further to meet the resources gap. This step, it is feared, will prove counter-productive and may not lead to a happy solution.

He has recommended as an interim arrangement that subsidies and other facilities enjoyed by the agriculturists be stopped so as to save the tax payers from additional burden. If any agriculturists is enjoying income liable to Income Tax, he should not be entitled to any exemption available under the Income Tax Ordinance at all.

He is of the view that if the government does not feel it feasible to re-define the deemed ownership of urban movable and immovable properties and the system of clubbing and A.O.P. continues in Wealth Tax Act for the Income Tax payers, then there is no justification for not applying the same definition in the case of agricultural properties, farm house, cash, jewellery and other taxable items.

He is also of the view that farmers above certain size of holdings should be required to file annual re-

turns for their expenditures, acquisitions, trips abroad, election expenses, marriage expenses etc. along with details of loans and advances and any expenditure found beyond their expected agricultural income should be treated as 'unexplained income' and taxed under the Income Tax Ordinance, 1979.

The PFA chief said it was a matter of common experience that after the promulgation of Income Tax Ordinance, 1979, and introduction of the concept of 'group assessment', the tax payers feel insecure in the hands of the tax administration because of direct involvement of all the three cadres in assessment and collection work. This is widening credibility gap between the tax payers and the tax collector and causing colossal loss of revenues. It is time that necessary steps are taken to restore confidence of the tax payer.

He suggested that the government should examine the possibilities of appointment of an Income Tax Settlement Commission enabling tax payers to refer their tax affairs to this institution at any stage of proceedings. It would eliminate charges like corruption, mal-treatment, coercion and harassment.

The commission should be appointed by the Federal Government comprising persons of integrity and outstanding ability, having special knowledge of and experience in problems relating to direct taxes and business accounts and should be under the administrative control of the Cabinet Division.

/9317

CSO: 4600/211

BLACK MONEY: PLEA MADE TO ALLOW DECLARATION

Karachi BUSINESS RECORDER in English 13 Apr 87 p 3

[Text]

LAHORE, April 12: The Pakistan Fiscal Association has appealed to the Government to announce fresh declaration of hidden wealth on the pattern of Ayub Khan's declaration at a fair tax rate to employ black money in organised and legalized business.

The proposal has been made by the executive committee of the association following the report of the National Taxation Reforms Commission. The commission in its report mentioned that untaxed money had played havoc with the national economy and had plagued every segment of the society.

The commission reported that untaxed money was estimated to Rs. 19,000 crore against Rs. 1600 crore whitened by some 35,000 declarants through refundable National Fund Bonds encashable this summer.

The committee was of the view that it was in the interest of revenue and future socio-economic developments to use hidden money in organised and legalized business. It

also demanded simplified procedure for the taxes, removal of bottlenecks and putting curbson unnecessary discretionary powers vested with the tax collectors.

The association has also recommended that advisability of continuation of schemes like Prize Bonds, Bearer N.I.T., Bearer National Fund Bonds etc., should be critically examined as they offer tempting attraction for investment for the untaxed money.

The association is of the view that after the promulgation of Income Tax Ordinance 1979 and introduction of concept of group assessment, the tax payers feel insecure in the hands of the tax administration. Therefore necessary steps of the tax payers.

The association suggested that the government should examine the possibilities of appointment of "income tax settlement commission" enabling at any stage of proceedings. The time limit for the decision of the appeals by the income tax appellate courts should also be fixed.—APP

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CSO: 4600/212

CONTROL OVER POPULATION INFLUX IN SIND URGED

Karachi BUSINESS RECORDER in English 9 Apr 87 p 7

[Text]

HYDERABAD, April 8: Sind Minister for Labour, Zakat and Ushr Abbas Bawazir stressed upon the need to enact a special law to control the mass migration of population to Sind from outside in order to solve the growing problem of unemployment in the province.

Addressing a Press conference here today at the annexe of Circuit House, the Sind minister suggested that through such law restrictions like the issuance of permits to the outsiders and the registration of unemployed youth in the province can be introduced. However, he said presently this whole issue was being examined threadbare.

He agreed with a questioner that a system needs to be evolved through which, in the first preference services be provided to the local unemployed youth of this province. In case services lay vacant after accommodating local people, then those should be filled from the unemployed persons from outside Sind province.

As far the problems like aboli-

tion of contract system, amendment in Essential Services Act, right of trade unionism and the demand to make dearness allowance as part of basic salary, the minister said these issues related to Federal Government. However, he said according to his information the enactment of law on these issues was in the process and hoped that a bill prepared in the light of the recommendations of Labour Welfare Commission would be presented in the next session of Parliament.

Besides, he said Sind Chief Minister was taking special measures in the light of five-point programme of Prime Minister Mohammad Khan Junejo aimed at creating more job opportunities and setting up industries in the interior.

Abbas Bawazir said a comprehensive programme for providing residential accommodation to the workers was under implementation. He said in the recent past central government has constructed 80,000 economy houses for the labourers out of which 40,000 houses are provided in Sind.

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CSO: 4600/211

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