

The Illustrated Weekly of India



Today is the 5th of December 1975 and I am undergoing treatment at the Jashik Hospital in Bombay for my kidneys which have been very badly damaged during the 4 1/2 months of solitary confinement in detention from which I have just emerged.

Just in case I am removed from the scene, I would like to state for the information of my friends in India and abroad and the Indian people in general that my views about the situation in India are precisely what they were on 25th June 1975 and when I wrote to the Prime Minister in July 1975. Indeed all the ugly things that have happened since have only confirmed my apprehensions. I am making this clear just in case there should be any attempt to misrepresent the position when I am no longer there to correct any such mis-statements. I hope the people of India will be able before long to liberate themselves non-violently from the present tyranny.

J. P. Masani
57.12.75



Signed before me

NOTARY
MAHARASHTRA STATE
5.12.75

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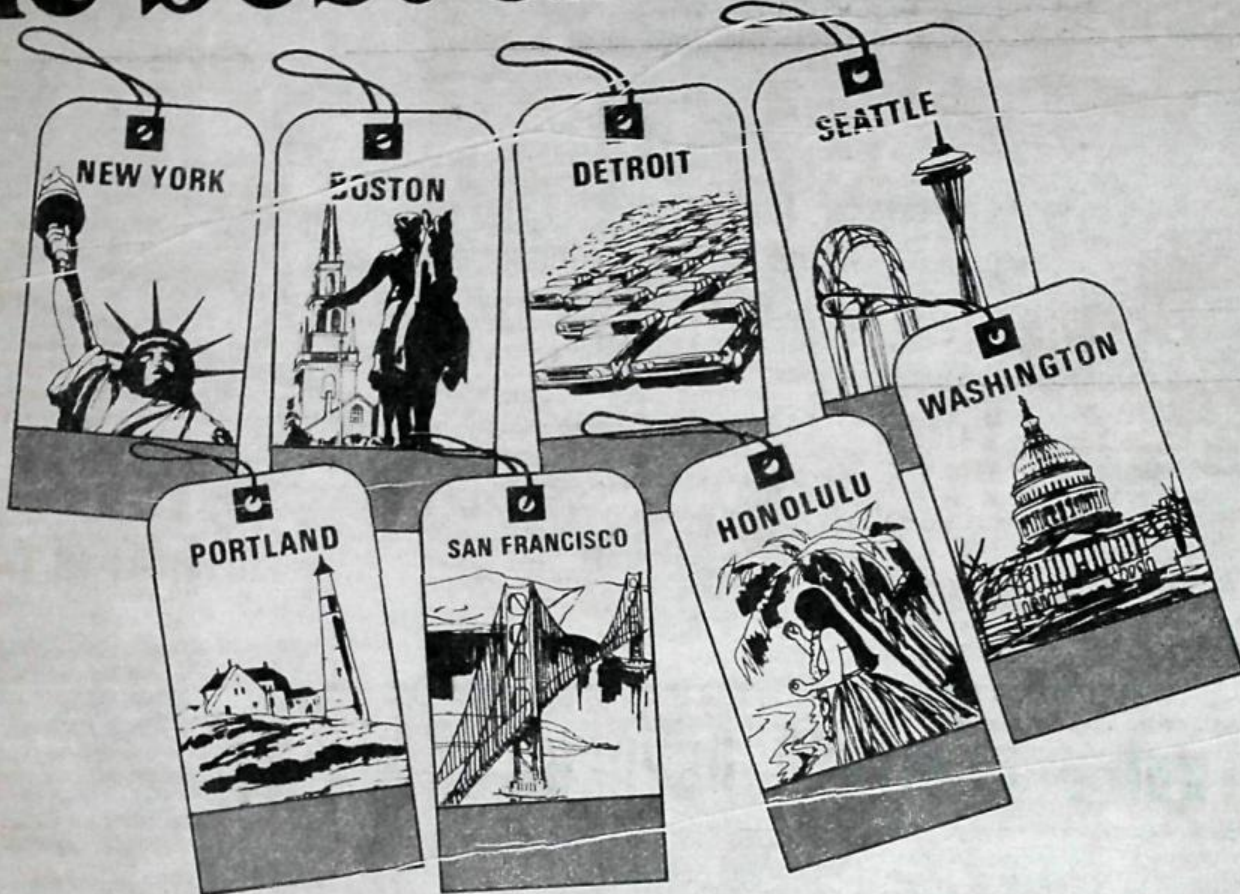
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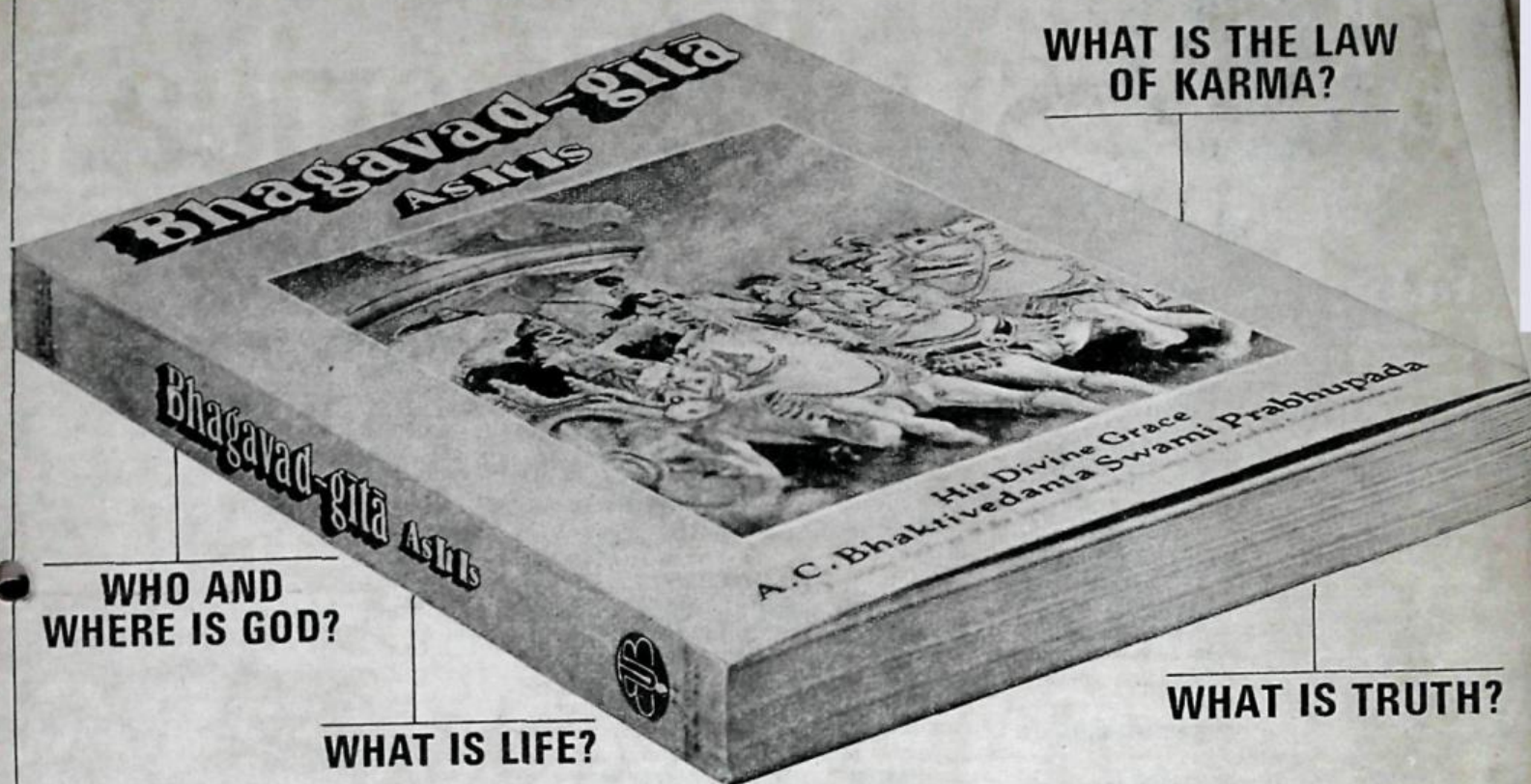
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Feed The People First

Sir—Prof V. M. Dandekar's article ("What's Right and Wrong With Our Economy?", July 17) was extremely lucid and informative. However, the following statement needs further clarification: "...A popular notion is to ban the export of commodities needed by the poor, such as oilseeds, oil, onions, mangoes, etc. In doing this, we do not see that in the name of the poor we are discriminating against the agricultural producer-exporter..." The author could have furnished a few figures to support his statement which has come right on the heels of the Government's avowed intention of taking, if deemed necessary, the very step he has cautioned against.

Bangalore P. VENKATAKRISHNAN

Sir—Supply one copy each of the article to every MP of the Janata Party, its apologists and the conscience-keepers of the country. People are more interested in getting their daily bread than in freedom. With a comfortable foreign exchange reserve and plenty of foodgrains left by the previous regime, let the present rulers "buy the excess and feed the people".

No quibbling or distortion can change the facts. It is ridiculous to give a gloomy picture of the Indian economy in the context of what Prof Dandekar has written.

Hyderabad MANJU SHAH

Sir—The article is eminently readable. But are the suggestions practicable?

Two suggestions are noteworthy. One, that Government should buy up all stocks of foodgrains in excess of the reasonable requirements and let the hungry school-children eat for a while. The other, that distribution of food and cloth should be undertaken as a relief measure—apparently by those who have money to spare—and that this expenditure should be treated as a part of the approved programme of rural development for which the Finance Minister has announced concessions. Is this proposal practicable and how will it reduce the volume of money circulating in the economy?

Yet another suggestion of Professor Dandekar is to revalue the rupee, to curb exports and encourage imports. It is a dangerous suggestion to tinker with the value of the rupee only because, in one year, we had a marginal trade balance.

Strict curbs on Government's non-developmental and administrative expendi-

ture; full capacity utilisation in industry; and speeding up the rate of growth in both agriculture and industry are the only remedies.

New Delhi

G. L. BANSAL

Sir—The suggestion to utilise the surplus foodgrain to feed poor children is attractive. But it will not ease the "money in circulation" problem and will impose a budgetary liability on the Government which will take years to liquidate. Secondly, ameliorative measures should be sustainable. Otherwise, they are apt to end in greater frustration, when they have to be curtailed or withdrawn.

New Delhi

K. B. MATHUR

Sir—Prof Dandekar refers to industries with unsold stocks and concludes that "there is no alternative to financing growing inventories". This is erroneous in that this only leads to greater accumulation of unsold stocks and therefore to further credit on the extra stocks. In fact, our policy in financing industries is basically wrong. It is not the industry but the consumer who needs finance. It is pointless to produce what cannot be purchased for consumption.

Nagpur

V. P. DIVECHA

Sir—The author has not taken into account a pernicious factor which has contributed to price increases in the midst of plenty. A weekly of Bombay recently reported that notes worth crores of rupees which are soiled, declared dead and replaced by newly printed notes are back in circulation due to the fraudulent practice of the officers concerned who do not burn the dead notes as required by the Reserve Bank. This amounts to dishonest deficit financing.

Bangalore

K. N. NAGARKATTI

Annie Besant Defended

Sir—Shock and sadness was what I felt when I read "Annie Besant Devalued?" (July 10).

Who can forget that for four decades Dr Besant gave her life to India and the Theosophical Society? It is very easy to misquote a person of her eminence who has many published works to her credit. Several people may not agree with her views on politics or with all that she said about the Masters and the Occult hierarchy. All the same, none would question her candour.

Tellicherry

V. SRINIVASA PRABHU

Sir—Unless you wished to encourage yellow journalism and provocative statements, the comments of Prabha Dixit on Dr Annie Besant would be, to say the least, ill-informed and prejudiced.

Bombay

BEPIN BEHARI

Sir—The article makes an enlightening revelation about the popular theosophist who earned the confidence of the general public during pre-Independence days. There is no denying the fact that Indians are prone to get schizophrenic in their adulation of public figures. Even the educated forget that the so-called leaders also have feet of clay. Even now people would pay any price to touch the feet and have *darshan* of a

leader. India can never hope for prosperity as long as they cling to the habit of "feet-touching" adulation.

New Delhi

D. DAS GUPTA

Sir—Mahatma Gandhi said that "as long as India lives, the memory of the magnificent services rendered by Dr Besant will also live. She has endeared herself to India by making it her country of adoption and dedicating her all to it." Lokamanya Tilak told Dr Besant once: "You have adopted India to be your motherland. If India is nearer the goal, it is due to your strenuous efforts." Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru said in a tribute to her that "she will be remembered all over the world for her many activities and enterprises; but in India her memory will endure specially for the part she took in our freedom struggle in the dark days of the Great War and afterwards".

I have personal knowledge of the devotion and dedication of Dr Besant to the cause of Indian freedom, having worked under her as a journalist on her newspaper, *New India*, in the twenties. To come into contact with her was to be greatly inspired for the service of India and for the service of all causes good and true.

Madras

K. N. RAMANATHAN

Sir—While it does not need anybody to come to Dr Besant's defence in respect of the services that she has rendered to India, since these are a matter of recorded history, it is strange that a journal of the standing and objectivity of *The Illustrated Weekly* should publish an article like this. I cannot understand how your contributor comes to her conclusions on the basis of certain statements twisted out of their context and given a significance by her which those statements do not bear.

Denigration is a modern sport and the author seems to exhibit a well-developed Lytton Strachey syndrome unrelieved, however, by any of the Lytton Strachey charm and magic.

Madras

K. SANKARA MENON

Worse Than Just Unfunny?

Sir—I thought "Emergency Humour and Worse" (July 10) would be a hilarious and ravishing article but its jokes made me weep.

Patiala

PRADEEP KAUSHAL

Sir—After a long time, I could have a good laugh at something in your magazine. Especially since your HA page jokes have really deteriorated.

Gauhati

R. B. BHAVINANI

"The Case That Shook India"

Raj Narain challenged Indira Gandhi's 1971 election from Rae Bareilly—and changed the course of our history. Prashant Bhushan has just written a book (Vikas) giving an account of this historic case. Being the son of Shanti Bhushan—who was Raj Narain's counsel—the author had access to never-before disclosed details.

The "Weekly" will publish the highlights of the book beginning with its issue of September 25.

Sir—The jokes about the Emergency are in extremely poor taste and an absolutely vulgar literary afterthought. Their publication has not enhanced your prestige or the author's.

Pune S. Y. BHAGWAT

Sir—Satindra Singh has not mentioned the most popular joke which was on everybody's lips during the elections.

Indira Gandhi and Sanjay Gandhi were flying in a plane piloted by Rajiv Gandhi. To judge the politician in Sanjay, Mrs Gandhi asked him: "What will you do if I give you a hundred-rupee note?"

"I will throw it out of the window. The man who gets it will be thankful to me," Sanjay replied.

"If I were you, I would have thought it better to take a hundred one-rupee notes and throw them out. In that case, one hundred people would be thankful to me," Mrs Gandhi advised him.

Then she asked Rajiv the same question. He answered: "I would put the hundred-rupee note in my pocket and throw both of you out of the window. Millions of people will be thankful to me."

tna A. C. MISHRA

Sir—The author did not mention two very important slogans of the Janata Party during the elections.

MISA—Maintenance of Indira and Sanjay Act.

Problems there are plenty.

Points there are twenty.

Results are all empty.

Bangalore SATISH RAO H.

Sir—Barring a few, the jokes are sub-standard, unprintable, contain no humour and show not only to us but also to the world at large how uncultured, unmannered and ungrateful we Indians are.

S. Niguri R. K. GULATI

Sir—The WEEKLY should crown the author with the title: Poete Laureate de l'obscenite—la emergencie.

Chandigarh R. K. SURI

Help For the Psychiatrist

Sir—The "analysis" ("Why Did Mrs Gandhi Lose?," July 3) is just an analogy, seasoned with psychiatric jargon. Such puerile attempts do little credit either to the WEEKLY or to the intelligence of your readers.

Tiruchirapalli T. PANCHAPAGESAN

Sir—Dr Shanti Sheth should immediately see a psychiatrist for help.

Salem K. G. KALYANARAMAN

Laxman Is Good For The "Weekly"

Sir—Hats off to R. K. Laxman for his superb caricature of Raj Narain (June 26). I must confess that my interest in the WEEKLY is sustained to a considerable extent by his cartoons.

Bombay V. M. LALKA

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HOW BIG IS INDIA'S BIG BUSINESS?

How have the giant Indian houses continued to profit and expand? How effective have been regulatory measures? A. N. Oza, of Bombay University's Department of Economics, discusses the different concepts of big business, their performance, social responsibilities and political connections.

THE KRISHNA THEME: Exquisite miniatures and other paintings to celebrate the joyous event of Gokulashtami.

WORLD WAR II: Dr Rafiq Zakaria reviews A. J. P. Taylor's two books which provide a rare insight into the most far-reaching event of our times. Illustrated in colour.

WHY ARE PRICES RISING? Arvind Bhandari finds out the reasons and suggests some ways to hold prices in check.

FASCINATION—1: Story by S. Alter.

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Cover Photograph by Amiya Taraifdar



DICKENS AND DHANSAK: Bachi J. Karkaria and Mario capture the special flavour of the venerable Ripon Club.

PRESIDENT'S RULE: R. P. Noronha, who has been adviser to the Governor in two States during such periods, describes the virtues of this uniquely Indian form of Government.

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JP's 'Last' Will And Testament

by Minoo Masani

If JP were to succumb to his failing kidneys—by accident or design—what was there to stop the then Government from claiming that, during his last days, the Lok Neta had begun to appreciate the "virtues" of Emergency? To make sure that this did not happen, JP would have to leave written evidence that his stand was unchanged. The author tells the story of the "Last Will". A facsimile of the testament is reproduced below.

Today is the 5th of December 1975 and I am undergoing treatment at the Jaslok Hospital in Bombay for my kidneys which have been very badly damaged during the 4½ months of solitary confinement in detention from which I have just emerged.

Just in case I am removed from the scene, I would like to state for the information of my friends in India and abroad and the Indian people in general that my views about the situation in India are precisely what they were on 25th June 1975 and when I wrote to the Prime Minister in July 1975. Indeed all the ugly things that have happened since have only confirmed my apprehensions. I am making this clear just in case there should be any attempt to misrepresent the position when I am no longer there to correct any such mis-statements. I hope the people of India will be able before long to liberate themselves non-violently from the present tyranny.

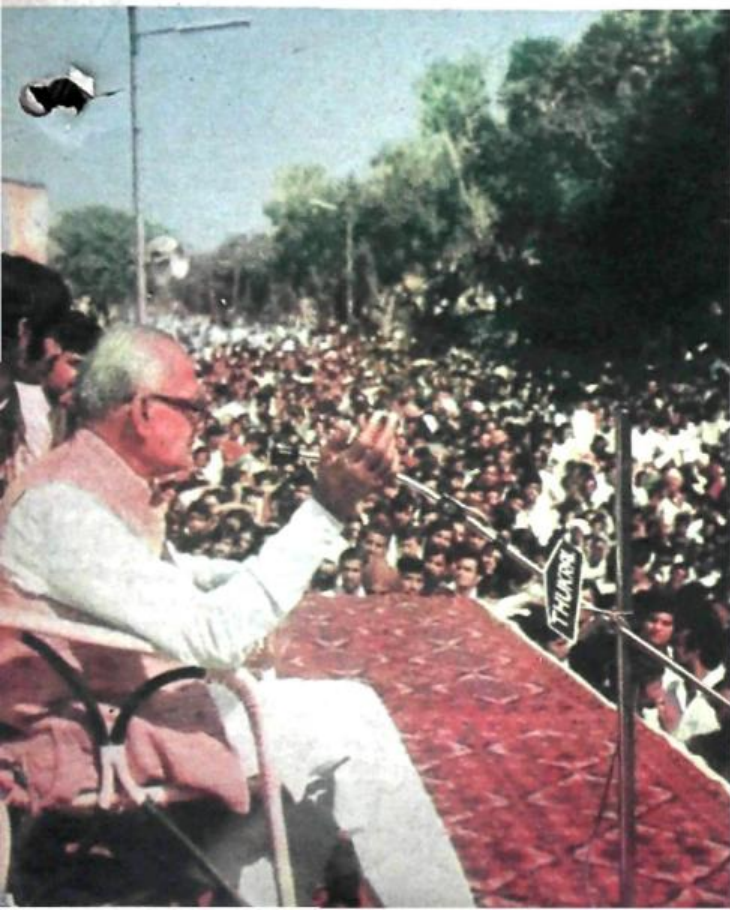
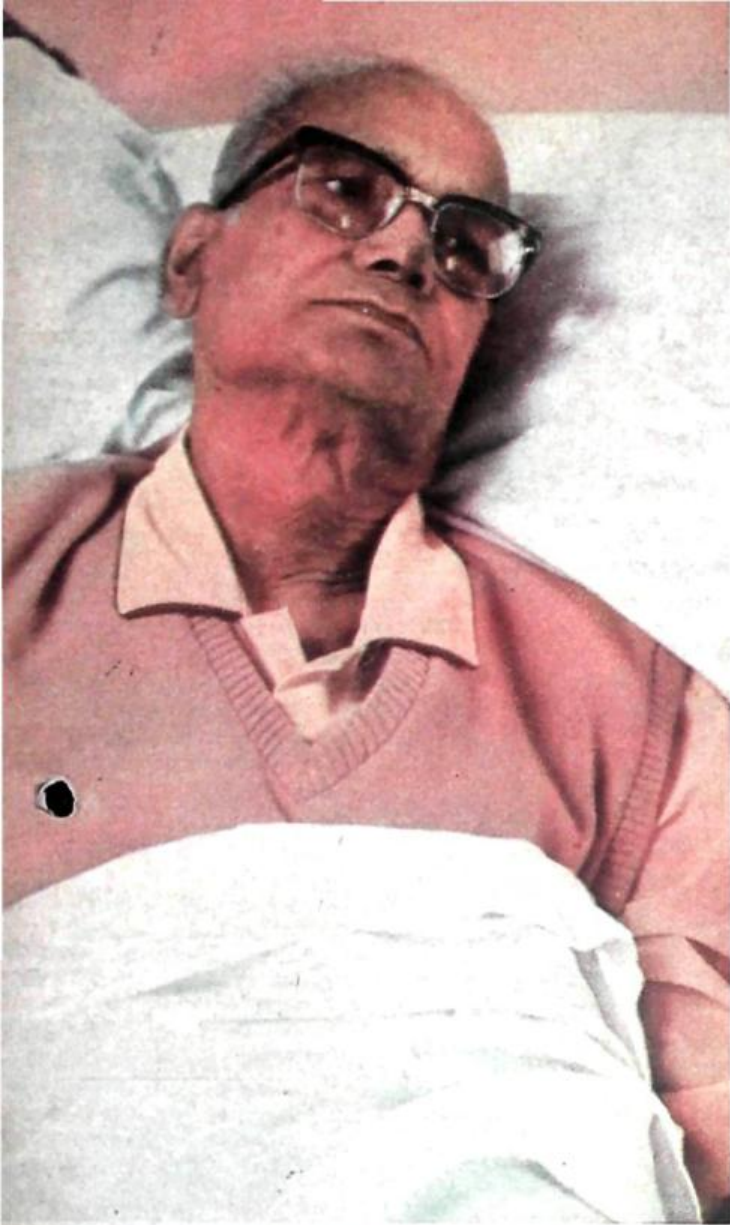
J. P. Masani
5.12.75



Signed before me

[Signature]
NOTARY
MAHARASHTRA STATE
5.12.75







THOSE DAYS WERE FAR FROM IDYLIC. During the Emergency, the well-known lawyer Soli J. Sorabjee was battling for the rights of editors whose papers were being arbitrarily censored or shut down, including Minoo Masani's *Freedom First*. On Mr Masani's request, he brought a Notary Public to JP's bedside to duly authenticate his political testament. Soli Sorabjee, now Additional Solicitor-General, is seen here with his wife Zena.

YES, YOU HEARD RIGHT, RAJAJI. The author, with the late C. Rajagopalachari. Mr Masani was a founder and Joint Secretary of the Congress Socialist Party (1934-39), Ambassador to Brazil (1948-49), Chairman of the UN Sub-Commission on Discrimination and Minorities (1950-52), General Secretary of the Swatantra Party (1960-67) and its President in 1970-71.



JAYAPRAKASH NARAYAN has now become one of the best publicised and most written about Indians of the day. His prison diary has been published in book form and every morning the newspaper reader in India is told of the state of his health.

Quite rightly he is given a greater share of the credit for the end of Mrs Indira Gandhi's authoritarian regime in March 1977 than any other individual. Millions in India pray for his health as they believe he alone can keep the country and its new Government on the strait and narrow path of adherence to the values which he embodies.

And, yet, not long ago, this was not so. From the time of his release from solitary confinement in November 1975 till the elections were announced, JP was a man most people feared to visit and the censored Indian Press dared not quote him. His isolation from his friends abroad and the people of India was almost complete even after his solitary detention had ended.

There is a dramatic incident, the story of which can now be told, regarding JP in the dark days of December 1975 when he was still fighting desperately for his life, which has remained known only to him and two or three of his intimates and which reveals the climate of those dark days.

Matter Of Life And Death

I visited JP in the Post-Graduate Institute of Medicine in Chandigarh immediately after the news of his release on November 13 and returned to Bombay ahead of him to await his arrival in Jaslok Hospital for treatment.

When JP entered Jaslok Hospital on November 22, he did so as a dying man. His kidneys, it was discovered, had stopped functioning altogether, and his condition was precarious.

I called on him on the morning of the following day, November 23, and made the entry which I reproduce below from the "Emergency Diary" I had been maintaining from June 26, 1975:

I may be wrong but I definitely have the feeling that he was a much weaker and frailer man than he was when I had seen him a few days earlier in Chandigarh. That, I suppose, is the contribution of the Prime Minister's Secretariat in delaying him in Delhi.

When I was chatting with JP, Dr Shantilal Mehta, the head of Jaslok Hospital, turned up. He told JP that he and I had been in school together. He mentioned that he had already been attacked by the Janmabhoomi newspaper for not having issued a health bulletin about JP at the Government's instance. Dr Shantilal was quite justifiably angry at this slur. When he asked JP what he should do, JP said he would leave things in the doctor's hands. When Dr Shantilal turned to me inquiringly, I suggested he might put out a tentative and not very communicative bulletin saying it would take a few days for JP's kidneys

Colour photographs by Mona Chowdhry, Satyadev Narayan Sinha, Balkrishan and S. N. Kulkarni.

to be investigated and only then could any form of prognosis or diagnosis be made, but that JP's life was not in danger.

To my surprise Dr Shantilal said that he was not in a position to say that JP's life was not in danger. I must confess I thought it was an unusual remark to make in the presence of the patient. It was obviously intended to make JP realise his condition. But Dr Shantilal did agree to my suggestion that he could tell the press that there was no immediate threat to his life and that they would put JP on an artificial kidney the next day.

The next two weeks were anxious ones, with the boat rocking quite dangerously every two or three days. Despite the dedicated attention of an entire battery of doctors, there did not appear to be much progress worth recording.

WILL I SURVIVE THE ORDEAL? "Such was the grim atmosphere in which we then functioned that we arranged for photostats of the Testament to be got out of the country to The Times and The Daily Telegraph of London and to suitable quarters in New York."

The anxiety JP's friends experienced was heightened in my own mind by an awful thought. Suppose JP were suddenly to collapse, what was there to stop the Prime Minister and her colleagues rushing down to Bombay, becoming the principal mourners at the funeral and claiming that JP had realised his errors and had intended to give the regime in Delhi his cooperation?

This was, let me hasten to say, not the result of a fevered imagination. That was what had in fact already happened to Mr Kamraj Nadar a couple of months earlier when he had passed away without leaving any written evidence of his attitude to public affairs and developments.

Quite apart from the macabre nature of such a development, what bothered me was the way in which this could endanger JP's reputation for posterity and in history and mar an entire lifetime's devoted service to human freedom.

After two or three days of perplexity, I decided to take JP into confidence. On the morning of December 4, greatly daring, I ventured to share my fears with JP and suggested he put a few lines on paper in order to guard against his being misrepresented in case the worst were to happen. To my relief, JP nodded and said it was a sensible idea. He then went on to ask if I would prepare a draft for him. JP's habit of asking me to draft statements and resolutions for him was one I had known from the thirties when we were co-secretaries of the Congress Socialist Party. In fact, anticipating such a request, I had brought along a draft—and showed it to JP.

"Just like you!" said JP happily. He found it fine. When I asked if he would sign it right then as a "holding operation" until we could get the document better authenticated, JP did so but only after making a change which showed that he was by no means signing it without applying his mind.

I did not then tell JP that I had decided we should move rather fast because that afternoon JP was going in for a biopsy of his kidneys and, according to some people, a kidney biopsy could, once in a while, be fatal by giving a shock to the kidneys. Though the biopsy was not a success, mercifully JP came out of it uninjured.

Signed, Sealed...

It was necessary that JP's political testament should be properly attested and authenticated in order to withstand any challenge as would an ordinary Will made by any patient in hospital. I took the problem to my eminent lawyer friend, Soli Sorabjee, now Additional Solicitor-General to the Government of India. Soli was distinguishing himself by his advocacy of editors including myself who were then refusing to bow to the whims of Mrs Gandhi's censors. He promised to bring a Notary Public with him to JP's bedside.

On Friday, December 5, at the appointed hour of 6.30 p.m., Soli Sorabjee turned up with a Notary Public, his clerk, his register and his seal, and we went through the formal signing and notarising.

On getting home I wrote in my diary: "I sincerely hope we won't have to use this document and that JP will be able to speak for himself in the coming months and years."

Such was the grim atmosphere and sense of insecurity in which we then functioned that we arranged for photostats of the Testament to be got out of the country to The Times and The Daily Telegraph in London and suitable quarters in New York to be used only in the event that it became necessary to do so.

Fortunately, there was no occasion for the Testament to be used and, from January 1977 onwards, JP was able to give his call for liberation to the people of India from public platforms and the Press.

Recently, I read his Testament of December 5, 1975, back to JP and told him I thought it should now be published. He agreed.

The document is now only of historical value, but it bears evidence to the unswerving determination and tenacity with which JP adhered to his objectives even when he was at the lowest ebb of his physical resources.



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