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*2nd draft*

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India entered the Seventies with a new political balance and a new political perspective. The unbroken pre-eminence of the Congress Party, which had led the struggle for Independence, in the country's national life came to an end with the unfortunate events of 1969. The Congress Party and its Government which possessed a middle-of-the-road character had been a factor contributing to stability and continuity of policy. Its splintering has created a vacuum in our political life which has to be constructively filled.

Today, our young democracy is faced with many threats. The biggest of these is the crumbling of law and order and the emergence of violence in several shapes and forms. These threats the Indira Gandhi Government is unable to counter both because it lacks a majority in the Lok Sabha and among the people and also because of its dependence on the Communist Parties with their extra-territorial loyalties and the proclaimed designs to wreck the country's democratic constitution.

A major threat to order and stability comes from the activities of the Communist Parties and notably of the Naxalites who represent this totalitarian threat in its most extreme form. When President's Rule was declared in Bengal, it was welcomed by the people of Bengal and also throughout the country. Unfortunately, the hopes that were thus aroused have been blighted. Not only has there been no improvement in conditions in that unfortunate State, but the threat to the lives, liberties and properties of the people continues.

Indeed, it is possible to claim that Naxalite activities have been on the increase since the proclamation of President's Rule and that the glorification of Mao Tse-Tung on Indian soil is being allowed to proceed with