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INDIAN EXPRESS.

6 TUESDAY, JANUARY 5, 1971

5 JAN 1971

# THE INDIAN EXPRESS

Think it over.....

He is not only dull himself, but the cause of dullness in others.

—SAMUEL JOHNSON

## Not united enough

SUNDAY'S dramatic developments in New Delhi show that the democratic parties ranged against Mrs Gandhi's New Congress are simply not united enough. The talks which were meant to seal the agreement between the Old Congress, the Jana Sangh and the Swatantra Party resulted instead in an electoral agreement between the Old Congress, the Jana Sangh and the SSP. Mr Masani insisted on a full-fledged alliance with a common programme, and he claimed that Mr Nijalingappa and Mr Atal Bihari Vajpayee had agreed to this last Saturday. The situation changed swiftly on the following day when Mr Nijalingappa tried to bring the SSP into the united front. The leaders of the SSP refused to join the front except on a basis confined to adjustment of parliamentary seats. They would not agree to the formulation of a common minimum programme. In these circumstances, the Old Congress and the Jana Sangh had to choose between the SSP and the Swatantra Party. It is perhaps not surprising that they preferred the former as an electoral ally.

The considerations which proved decisive are fairly clear. The SSP is altogether more influential than the Swatantra Party in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, and it is in these two States that the electoral calculations of the New Congress can be upset badly by a united front of democratic parties. Moreover, Mr Nijalingappa seems to have calculated that while the SSP would not modify its stand, the Swatantra Party would finally agree to join the front without a common programme. Mr C. Rajagopalachari has already said that he looks upon the coming parliamentary election as "a referendum on the single question whether the country approves of Mrs

Indira Gandhi's plan to tear up the Constitution and annul the liberties of the people and replace democracy by totalitarianism." He has also expressed the hope that the democratic parties will forget "all matters irrelevant to the greater menace posed by Mrs Gandhi's assault on the Constitution." There is fine irony in this in view of the stand adopted by Mr Masani.

Though Mr Rajagopalachari's advice might induce the National Executive of the Swatantra Party to reverse the stand adopted by Mr Masani, this will not reduce the validity of Mr Masani's reasoning. The joint announcement made by the Old Congress, the Jana Sangh, and the Samyukta Socialist Party on the formation of an electoral front says that these parties have agreed to come together to fight the elections "in order to offer the country an alternative which it urgently needs." The crucial question is whether the electorate will repose its confidence in a united front which does not have a clearly spelt out alternative programme.

The absence of an agreed programme gives the front a negativist look. Most voters want something positive to vote for; and they will expect concrete pledges on a variety of economic and other issues, even though the ruling party itself might not have kept most of the pledges made in the past. If Mrs Gandhi cannot afford to underestimate the intelligence of the electorate, the parties ranged against her can afford even less to do so. Instead of waiting for Mr Masani to have second thoughts on the common programme issue, the leaders of the Old Congress, the Jana Sangh and the Samyukta Socialist Party would do well to have second thoughts themselves.

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## THE DEMOCRATIC FRONT

THE three-party electoral front formed by the Congress (O), Jana Sangh and Samyukta Socialist Party on Sunday night represented a welcome advance towards the consolidation of national democratic forces. But the step forward was accompanied by at least half a step back. The Swatantra Party's last-minute withdrawal from the front frittered away some of its impact. This could have been welcome only to those in power whose policies and actions have made the unification of all democratic parties so necessary. Mr M. R. Masani would seem to have some justification for his precipitate decision; what was intended to be a full-fledged electoral alliance, based on a common minimum programme, was suddenly diluted to a mere adjustment of seats, reportedly at the SSP's insistence. A bold alliance, offering itself as a credible alternative to the present Government and clearly spelling out its policies, would of course have been preferable. But if, in spite of a common minimum programme, the Congress (O), Swatantra and Jana Sangh were going to retain separate election symbols and manifestos, the difference between what was originally proposed and what has been eventually agreed to may be one of form rather than substance.

While regretting Swatantra's unexpected withdrawal from the democratic front and hoping that it would change its mind, Mr Nijalingappa and Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee seem to have given the impression that between Swatantra and the SSP they would prefer the latter. This is unfortunate, because the fight against a ruling party not averse to using the official machinery or other dubious

tactics to maintain itself in power requires the mobilization of every party and group willing to undertake this fight. Disunity in the democratic camp cannot but be disastrous. It is therefore to be hoped that before January 13, when the Swatantra national executive meets, both sides will have found a mutually acceptable basis for Swatantra's participation in the democratic front. Mr Rajagopalachari put his finger on the heart of the matter when he described the mid-term poll as a "referendum to decide once for all whether the country approves of Mrs Gandhi's plans to tear up the Constitution", and advised all those opposed to this dismal prospect to "unite, unite".

Against this background the attitude of the Bharatiya Kranti Dal cannot but be regretted. Although Mr Prakash Vir Shastri and some others see the wisdom of joining hands with other democratic parties, Mr Charan Singh apparently thinks otherwise. Initially he talked of the advantage to the BKD of going it alone, especially in U.P. But latterly he has been saying that he must keep all his options open, which is little short of a polite euphemism for opportunism. According to reports he still expects some overtures from the Congress (R), which means that he has apparently learnt nothing from his experience in U.P. only three months ago; at the same time, despite denials for the record, he seems to have asked the democratic front to name him shadow Prime Minister before he can lead his party into the front. This would be a case of not only putting the cart before the horse but also of chasing a shadow while ignoring the substance.

THE HINDU 6/1/71

NDR



WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 6, 1971.

## Politics of Alliances

1 THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF the three-party alliance comprising the Congress (O), the Jan Sangh and the Samyukta Socialist Party to fight the mid-term elections to the Lok Sabha no doubt ran contrary to expectations. The surprise was that the Swatantra Party, one of the prime movers of the "grand alliance", was not in it. But subsequent pronouncements of the leading lights of this party make it clear that the "walk-out" of Mr. Masani from the New Delhi meeting is not the end of the efforts of these parties to forge a broad-based electoral front. The hitch at this meeting was over the question of a common programme to be placed by the alliance before the people, over and above the call "to defeat the present Government which is taking the country in an authoritarian and anti-democratic direction". The argument that a common programme would be necessary only for forming an alternative government and that it could be considered when the time comes is certainly not wholly convincing. After all, the voter would like to know in clear enough terms what to expect from an alliance of this sort if he backs it as against a rival faction ready to promise anything that he wants. But the rather smooth inclusion of the S.S.P. obviously threw out of gear the earlier plans of the others for such a common programme. The limited and strategic purpose of the alliance now seems to be to set up "one agreed candidate for each Lok Sabha constituency throughout the country, who will be supported by all our parties" and each of these parties will present the electorate a manifesto of its own, detailing its programme and objectives. The Swatantra leader had enough grounds for being bitterly disappointed at the dramatic turn of events. But faced with a formidable opponent in the person of Mrs. Indira Gandhi, backed by her own covert and overt battle allies and vast resources, it was not at all surprising that the hard-headed Congress (O) and Jan Sangh leaders were prompt to accept a windfall in the form of co-operation of the S.S.P. and were ready to make inevitable adjustments to hold that gain.

2 What must have swayed the Congress (O) and Jan Sangh leaders to prefer the S.S.P. to the Swatantra, in the cold calculations of electoral advantage, is of course not hard to guess. For one thing, the inclusion of the radical S.S.P. will help the front take the edge out of the charge that it is a combination of rightist parties. Secondly, the S.S.P. has sizable influence in the two key States of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar that account together for one-fourth the seats of the Lok Sabha. There may be marginal advantages to be gained in other States too. But the prolonged birth-pangs of what was once talked of as "the grand alliance" and the somewhat attenuated size of the off-

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spring cannot but give an impression of a lack of single-mindedness among the allies in the pursuit of their objective. It may well undermine to an extent the confidence of the electorate, however frozen, and therefore reliable, the caste and group based loyalties of the collaborating parties may be.

The Bharatiya Kranti Dal's decision to go it alone, contrary to earlier indications that its leader, Mr. Charan Singh, had given, would seem to foul the situation for the anti-Congress (R) front still further, though many believe that even this stand is but a tough bargaining device on the part of the ambitious Mr. Charan Singh to get the lion's share of the seats in U.P. for his partymen, if and when he does join the democratic front. Nor can the B.K.D. leader be unaware of the consequences of his going it alone, in terms of dividing the anti-Congress (R) votes and paving the victory of the candidates of the party of the Prime Minister against whose authoritarian and undemocratic ways he was so vocal only the other day. If the B.K.D. and the Swatantra expect to be among the partners in power at the Centre, they may have to subordinate minor advantages of bargaining over details of programmes and the number of seats to the gains that an early forging of a broader front of five parties geared to win the elections will provide. The longer they dither the less would be the public confidence in them. The advancing of the dates of the meeting of the Swatantra National Executive suggests that this party is anxious not to produce such an impression. It is clear that the multiplicity of political parties in the country, many of them small, has made the politics of alliances inescapable.

New Delhi Letter

# Drama Over Alliance Without Soul

ON Sunday night, the Opposition offered the Prime Ministership on a platter to Mrs. Indira Gandhi, perhaps inadvertently. They agreed to disagree on a common programme.

Still they went ahead with an announcement on the formation of something—whether it is an alliance or front, they themselves do not know. This was totally unexpected turn of events.

Things on the thrashing out a common programme had gone too far. In fact, cyclostyled copies of the common programme were ready for the distribution to the press. Newsmen were asked to come to Mr. Nijalingappa's residence to collect the copies of the common programme. Mr. M. R. Masani and Mr. A. B. Vajpayee had signed the original copy of the common programme on Saturday. Mr. Nijalingappa approved the programme in principle, but wanted time to study it further. He promised to put his signature on Sunday.

## Political Coup

But instead of getting copies of common programme, newsmen saw an interesting drama—Mr. Masani walking out of the summit talks in a huff. Newsmen rushed after him and Mr. Masani obliged them with a stiffly worded statement. He accused Congress (O) with "indecision and vacillation." As the newsmen returned to Mr. Nijalingappa's residence, the Congress (O) President told them that the final decision on the formation of the alliance has been put off. But hardly had newsmen reached their offices, telephone bell rang. It was a call from Mr. Nijalingappa's residence, informing newsmen of the birth of the alliance. They showed so much impatience that they did not wait for the return of the prodigal—Mr. Masani—to the fold.

What happened on the Sunday night was, in a sense, a political coup. Who staged it? How did it succeed? In pursuance of Sonepur and Poonam resolutions, SSP cannot compromise on programme for the sake of an electoral alliance. If it does, it will break. Thus, the first thing which the SSP signed, led by the formidable Mr. Raj Narain, did was to demolish the common programme. In this, they received valuable help from

Dr. Ram Subhag Singh. He had never reconciled himself with the idea of an ideologically-based alliance. Within the party, he had been fighting a losing battle. But he was quick to exploit to his advantage the emergence of the SSP on the scene.

Why did Mr. Nijalingappa and Mr. Vajpayee accept this position? Mr. Nijalingappa has hardly any mind of his own. When sandwiched between the SSP on the one side and Dr. Ram Subhag Singh on the other, he got confused. Mr. Vajpayee's position is somewhat different. Personally, he had some reservation on any

could not be happy. Their efforts to evolve a clearcut common ideological base has received a set-back. In fact, it is not a set-back, but a slide-back. By dropping even the word "democratic" from the joint statement issued on Sunday night, the SSP has successfully kept a loophole to make way for the CPI(M) to join the alliance. In fact, according to interpretation of the SSP leaders, the CPI (M) cannot be kept out of the alliance in terms of the statement. The CPI (M) will also certainly plump for their opportunity as it is terribly isolated and facing the possibility of a

that hotch-potch parties came together after the election and formed Governments. This experiment failed miserably. These Governments fell like a house of cards, without anybody shedding tears for them. There is hardly any reason to believe that the present SVD Governments in both U.P. and Bihar would meet any other fate than that met by their predecessors. If no other party, atleast the SSP will certainly live up to its repetition.

Having undergone this experience, will the electorate again vote on the basis of one-point programme?

## From Our Special Representative

ideologically-based alliance which keep out the SSP. Mr. Vajpayee was one of the architects of the SVD Governments in U.P., Bihar and the Punjab, immediately after the 1967 elections. He played a significant role in making the Jana Sangh sit with Communists in these Governments. Later, he reluctantly agreed to end this honeymoon. However, his heart is still in SVD.

Apart from ideological predilections, other considerations which weighed with Mr. Vajpayee is purely pragmatic. If the choice is to be made between the SSP and the Swatantra, Mr. Vajpayee would choose the former. The SSP could deliver more goods than the Swatantra in the Hindi region where the Jan Sangh has the highest political stake. Without the SSP, both the U.P. and Bihar Governments would collapse.

However, the theoreticians of the Big Three, namely, Congress (O), Swatantra and Jana Sangh are unhappy with their leaders. In the case of Mr. Masani, his partymen are unhappy because, in the situation, the Swatantra Party cannot afford to go it alone unless it is prepared to face extinction for the sake of principle. After the heroic walk-out by Mr. Masani, the party will have to come back, perhaps on its bended knees, to the alliance, whatever its form is. Mr. Masani will not get support either from Rajaji or from Prof. N. G. Ranga, the two pillars of the Swatantra Party.

Nevertheless, the theoreticians

most serious setback in the mid-term poll.

The prospects of an alliance with CPI (M) are something very difficult for the hard core theoreticians to swallow. Leaders like Mr. Morarji Desai and Mr. Asoka Mehta in the Congress (O), Mr. Balraj Madhok and Nanaji Deshmukh in Jana Sangh are not happy even with the statement signed by their leaders. However, faced with a fait accompli they have not come out openly against what happened on Sunday night.

What pained them most is that all the time and labour for the last six months to chart out a common ideological base has lost. The common programme which had been agreed upon by the three parties was based on the June resolution of the AICC of the Congress (O). The resolution itself was based on a working paper which was prepared jointly by three M's. Mehta, Masani and Madhok.

But the ten-point programme, thrashed out after a series of meetings, was reduced by Sunday night with one stroke to a one-point programme of defeating Mrs. Gandhi. But the question is whether this will establish credibility with the electorate. It is true that in 1967, voters gave a thrashing to the Congress on negative consideration. But can 1967 be repeated in 1971? Have the electorate in the last four years learnt nothing and forgotten nothing? In 1967, the electorate voted almost recklessly. The result was

Moreover, politically the fashion of anti-Congressism was dead with the split in the Congress. The party remained no more a monolith which it was when undivided. Neither the Congress (R) nor Congress (O) is in a position to rule the country single-handedly. In other words, other parties have to seek realignment with one Congress or the other. This would mean that anti-Congressism can no more provide a rallying point of all the erstwhile non-Congress voters. It would mean that a large chunk of those who voted against the Congress in 1967 are bound to make a reassessment. This would largely be on the basis of performance and programme.

## Handicap

If the "alliance" only gives a call to throw out Mrs. Gandhi and does not present an alternative programme, it would certainly face the handicap of rallying all those who voted against Congress in 1967. Last time the voters were in a mood to teach lesson to the Congress. It was, thus, badly mauled. This is to a great extent the cause of its split also. On the other hand, those who were electoral allies against the Congress failed the people. Voters, in all probability, will not vote this time on negative considerations alone. Without a positive programme, they will not feel enthused. The question is: how long this soulless "alliance" will remain intact? Without agreeing on a common programme, it has become doubly difficult to sort out the problems of adjustments. Moreover, the adjustments are more difficult among equals, since every party would be

(Continued in Col. 7)

# In 1970

## Prospects Of Silver For New Year

By A Staff Reporter

under consideration by the Board. It was understood that the return to the grower worked out by him was far below the Board's calculation. Various fallacies in the cost accountant's reasoning had been pointed out by the growers who were hoping that the Government would study the report in the proper perspective and make such modifications as were necessary to provide a fair return to the grower.

The coffee growers had been pleading for a replanting subsidy as in the case of tea and rubber. Although the Board had increased the cost of replanting loan from Rs. 2,000 to Rs. 3,000, a decision on the subsidy was still awaited.

### Coffee Consumers

Sweden has the highest per capita consumption of coffee at 13.15 kg. per annum, followed by Netherlands, Belgium and the U.S.A. with 7.30 kg., 6.89 kg. and 6.71 kg. respectively.

India's own per capita consumption is estimated at 0.08 kg. per annum. India has vast scope for increasing the domestic consumption of coffee. But this calls for, in the first place, increasing the production of coffee in the country.

The consumption of natural rubber has been expanding at a rapid rate. The 1969-70 production is estimated at 82,000 tonnes and that of 1970-71 at 92,000 tonnes.

The consumption of raw rubber under the Fourth Plan ranges from 1.18 lakh tonnes in 1969-70 to 1.80 lakh tonnes by 1973-74. By 1973-74 the natural rubber production is expected to meet 1.25 lakh tonnes of the total requirement.

The State Trading Corporation entered the rubber trade in 1970. Although STC's entry was to ensure the price fixed by the Tariff Commission—Rs. 520 per 100 kg. for the small growers—reports indicate that they were unable to secure this price. The reason was attributed to the fact that STC made most of its purchases through the co-operatives. This had resulted in the ruling selling prices to fall below Rs. 470 per 100 kg. This was causing concern to the growers.

### Prospects

The prospects for plantations cannot be said to be gloomy. But the industry should be given the confidence which it badly requires. For instance, the proposal to nationalise a section of the industry, the likelihood of a take-over of the tea trade by the Government and their possible entry into packaging field, is hardly conducive to the progress and development of the

BOMBAY, Jan. 5.—The new year is an opportune time to look once again at the prospects of silver. There is still no real evidence that further liquidation will not take place, counteracting any substantial price rise, though a few minor notes of encouragement have been struck of late according to the latest issue of the London Metal Bulletin dated January 1.

Among these was the statement by the Canadian Government that it is now to mint a silver coin to commemorate the entry of British Columbia into the confederation (MB Dec., 8) and the fact that the Eisenhower silver dollar now only awaits the signature of the President for the final go-ahead. More significant, however, was the recent statement from the Swiss Bank Corporation noting some fresh consumer interest from industry and the arts and also from some European governments, which are still minting silver coins, such as West Germany, Austria, France and Italy.

It is still felt too that lack of GSA sales must eventually make its impact on the market. None of this, however, does much to relieve the present weak situation as regards demand, although it does provide a few drops of much-needed confidence, and it still does not appear that January 1971 is likely to see much of an improvement.

On the other hand, Indian silver market seems to continue firm due to poor floating stocks in the markets of India. Here, it was believed that the present stocks are around 800-900 bars in the whole country, which are supposed to be meagre. It was argued that due to a good crop there would not be much inflow from distress sales. Hence stocks could not be replaced soon while seasonal demand was gradually moving up in country.

The main demand still however, comes from smugglers who continue to have faith in earning dollars from silver sales abroad. The contraband dealers have widened their field and now are reported to be operating from all over the country. A seizure of about Rs. 20 lakh silver only yesterday near the Kolhapur area confirms the fact. Not only Daman but other ports of Western India too are being used to smuggle out the white metal.

Prices recorded a new high of 13 months at Rs. 572 per kg today. About 15 days ago it was around Rs. 555.



## Bullion

## Money

# Silver Firm, Gold Steady

From Our Market Staff

BOMBAY, Jan. 5.—Silver ruled firm in the local bullion market today. Gold was steady.

Primary gold was unchanged at Rs. 176 per 10 gm. Standard gold was 50 P lower at Rs. 183.50. Sovereign remained unchanged at Rs. 172.

Silver weekly delivery opened firm at Rs. 572 against the previous close of Rs. 569 per kg on better advices from New York. It receded to Rs. 571 on reports of seizure of 85 bars of silver. However, it rallied and hardened further to Rs. 573.25 on fresh support from bulls and in absence of selling pressure. It closed at Rs. 572.75.

Silver .996 fineness opened Rs. three higher at Rs. 570 and closed at Rs. 571 per kg. Silver .916 fineness gained Rs. four at Rs. 570.

Arrivals of silver were 15 bars of 30 kg each against the offtake of 20 bars.

### CALCUTTA MIXED

The Calcutta bullion market displayed a mixed trend today. Although there was no fresh development, silver was maintained around the overnight level mainly due to shortage of floating stocks and offerings. Following the elimination of week-holders, it opened unchanged at Rs. 650 a 100 tolas and hovered around that level till the close in listless trading.

Pure gold eased moderately on buyers' resistance at the higher levels, combined with reports of scattered arrivals during the session. Jewellers and stockists extended scattered support at the dips without disturbing the price trend. Pure gold opened with a loss of 38 P at Rs. 211.62 a tola and maintained that level till the close on restricted offtake.

Standard gold also softened in line with the trend in pure gold. Bombay gold was quoted rupee one below yesterday's level at Rs. 185.50 a tola. There was no transaction in the Calcutta product due to the paucity of supplies. It was nominally quoted at Rs. 183.50 per 10 gm. Sovereign ruled unchanged at Rs. 170.50 a piece on stray enquiries in the face of acute shortage of supplies.

The turnover was small and the undertone at the close was mixed.

**DELHI:** Despite heavy arrivals of silver from the upcountry centres, the Delhi bullion market presented a firm undertone today as a result of the improvement in the demand in silver from the local dealers and contraband export-

ing centres. The volume of business was moderate.

Prices of standard gold showed a gain of Rs. 1.50 on scarcity of supplies. However, primary gold remained unchanged.

Silver tezabi ended with again of Rs. two at Rs. 556, after starting at Rs. 555.50 and strengthening to Rs. 557.25.

Silver weekly delivery (new) resumed at Rs. 558, advanced to Rs. 559.75 and concluded at Rs. 558.80.

Arrivals and the offtake in silver estimated at around 50 bars and 30 bars respectively.

Rates (in rupees): Silver (per kg): tezabi 556; hansali kada 559; gaddi pakki 551.

Coins: old 591 (per kg); new 278 (per kg).

Gold (per 10 gm): standard 185.50; primary 182.

## New York Silver

NEW YORK, Jan. 4 (Reuter).—New Commission House buying was firming silver futures in early dealings. Values, after opening about 140 points higher partly reflecting the London trend, gained some points on useful speculative buying.

Values were holding near 10 per cent net gain at the end of the first half hour.

Silver futures were near the day's highs in the early afternoon. Values were running about 190 points up on balance on Commission house buying.

Trade sources noted that the movement today was narrow about a cent between the highs and the lows, with the lows not much below opening levels.

Chartist profit-taking earlier tended to restrict any breakthrough on the upside.

Silver futures closed 210 to 160 points higher, most months finishing 180 to 190 points higher. Volume today reached 4009 lots.

Trade sources said fresh commission house buying was the major supporting factor in the advance. Chartist profit-taking pared the day's highs of more than two cents net gain in the end and limited the advance in the afternoon.

Futures closing: Jan. 165.70, Feb. 166.70, March 167.80, May 170.30, July 172.90, Sept. 175.50 (All settlement).

**LONDON:** Silver spot 165-3/4, three months 169-1/4, six months 172-3/4, one year 180-1/4. Gold 37.32-1/2.

# Alliance Without Soul

(Continued from Col. 6)

trying hard to become supreme in the "alliance."

From among the "alliance" parties, the most ambitious is the Jana Sangh and most unreasonable the SSP. In the Jana Sangh, a section led by Nanaji Deshmukh and Mr. S. S. Bhandhari wanted the party to contest not less than 300 seats. But the more reasonable among it, namely, Mr. Vajpayee and Mr. Madhok wanted to make a claim for 200 seats but ultimately agree on 150 to 175 seats. As a compromise between the two factions, the Jana Sangh officially has demanded 250 seats.

The most difficult States will be U.P. and Bihar. These are the States of common influence of the Jana Sangh and the SSP. The Jana Sangh has already demanded 60 out of 85 seats in U.P. and 40 out of 53 in Bihar. It also wants to contest all the seats from Madhya Pradesh. The SSP has so far not made its demand known. But it would certainly be not far behind. In fact, the existing seats would not be sufficient for the

Jana Sangh and the SSP. Where will Congress (O) go? If Swatantra Party joins the alliance, which it is most likely to do when its National Executive meets, the house would already be full. At this rate BKD has done the wisest thing and can contest as many seats as it likes.

The question is that without any agreement on policies, the give-and-take spirit is totally missing. The adjustments become purely a matter of horsetrading. When parties have unlimited ambitious and exaggerated notions, there is every chance of their falling out at the crucial hour of adjustments. An idea of these exaggerated notions could be had from one fact. The Jana Sangh leaders openly say that through the mechanism of "alliance" they will carry the corpse of their partners on their shoulders. When the partners are harbouring such notions and do not bother to reach agreement on principles and programme, there is every possibility that the alliance may prove to be a non-starter.

## Steady Trend

From Our Market Staff

BOMBAY, Jan. 5.—Activity in the local gur market was moderate today. Prices fluctuated in a narrow range, and the trend was steady.

Inferior Ladoo ruled at Rs. 47.50, while Nizam gur changed hands at Rs. 41 per 50 kg. The market had some supply of gur from U.P. also, and it was offered at Rs. 44 per 50 kg.

Superior gur ruled steady on satisfactory supply and steadier advices from the origins. Daily arrivals at the Kolhapur market were placed at 1500 cartloads.

Prices here for No. 1 variety were quoted at Rs. 70-72 per 50 kg.

MUZAFFARNAGAR: Gur prices declined further here today. Arrivals of the commodity were 8,000 quintals.

## NON-FERROUS METALS

### Steady Tone

# Upward Sonepat

From Our Co

SONEPAT, Jan. 5. — An upward trend was witnessed in the local foodgrains market last week. Daily arrivals were restricted and consumers demand was good. Wheat and other coarse grains ruled steady. Rice and paddy were subdued on new crop arrivals. Pulses showed a mixed trend.

After early modest fluctuations, wheat ruled steady with the average quality quoted at Rs. 75-80 per quintal and the farm variety at Rs. 85-100 per quintal. The red-Mexican quality was traded at Rs. 70-76 per quintal. The daily arrivals were low, at an average of 500 maunds. Besides local consumer demand, support was evinced by outside areas.

6 JAN 1971

**A Thought for Today**

*Kindness consists in loving people more than they deserve.*  
—Joubert

**A REFERENDUM**

The forthcoming elections to the Lok Sabha seem to be assuming the character of a referendum. Contrary to the concepts of parliamentary democracy with which this country has been familiar, the people are being called upon to give a verdict not so much on the performance and programmes of the various parties as on Mrs. Indira Gandhi's title to remain Prime Minister for another five years. Various factors have conspired to give this turn to Indian democracy — Mrs. Gandhi's emergence as the most popular leader in the country, the fear of other parties that she may sweep the polls unless they combine, irrespective of ideological and programmatic differences, and the absence of a right-left polarisation which was expected to materialise in the wake of the Congress split in 1969. The formation of an electoral front between the old Congress, the Jana Sangh and the Samyukta Socialist Party can be said to have clinched the issue and converted the election into a referendum. This might not have been the case if the SSP had stayed out and succeeded in organising a coalition of parties which have much more in common with it than the desire to unseat Mrs. Gandhi. But it has not even seriously tried to do so. This is not all. It has taken the initiative in persuading the old Congress and the Jana Sangh to give up the idea of working out a minimum programme and to concentrate on the one-point programme of ousting Mrs. Gandhi from power. Since in different circumstances the SSP has not only insisted on a minimum programme but also sought to set a time-limit for its implementation, its action amounts to an open acknowledgment that only an all-inclusive alliance can hope to defeat her party.

In spite of Mr. Masani's angry reaction to the SSP's inclusion in the front it will not be surprising if the Swatantra party joins it in the end. The party cannot afford to go it alone in any State with the possible exception of Orissa—and even there its position is not as strong as it was. It may find it easy to sell it to their followers. In any case the absence of even a minimum common programme cannot but reduce the credibility of the front inasmuch as there is no assurance that they can hold together after the election.

*Referral*

*to 95*

THURSDAY, JANUARY 7, 1971

## THE ECONOMIC TIMES

BOMBAY, THURSDAY, JANUARY 7, 1971

### The alliance move

Only two days ago, it seemed as if the Swatantra had dropped out of the Grand Alliance. Now, the outlook is somewhat different and some observers are beginning to feel that Swatantra will almost certainly join the Congress (O), Jana Sangh and SSP front. The point that largely weighs with the Swatantra leadership is that it is worth subordinating almost any principle to the paramount aim of defeating Congress (R) and its policies and alliances. The fluidity and the lack of any consistent pattern in the matter of poll alliance and understanding is itself a reflection of three dominant characteristics of inter-party relations on the eve of the election. First, there is a general realisation that no party is strong enough to fight on its own. In other words, some kind of alliance with some party or other is essential. Secondly, the odds are so evenly balanced, that every party, big or small, seems to count for something, in some area or other, and cannot, therefore, be ignored. The aims and objects are to a certain extent confused and divided and no alliance, however, grotesque, seems unacceptable. Finally, since no party can be ignored, every party thinks that it is in an ideal position to obtain the best possible bargain for itself. The desire to form the widest possible partnership is best seen in Mr. Nijalingappa's oft-repeated hope that all those who can will join the alliance Congress (O) is building. The Congress (O) strategy is to rope in as many parties as possible—even the Akalis are regarded as a

re-statement of the old position that there can be no alliance at the national level, it would seem that Congress (R) thinks that there is a good chance of the party obtaining an absolute majority or at least coming

back in such numbers that its dependence on others will not be more than minimal.

The parleys that attended the formation of the Congress (O), Jana Sangh and SSP partnership, and the Swatantra walk-out are of considerable significance. One must concede that Mr. Masani had both logic and political principle on his side when he asked that there should be a full-fledged alliance based on a minimum programme. In any case, the Swatantra has little prospect of making its presence felt except in collaboration with allies like Congress (O) and Jana Sangh. Quite obviously, Mr. Masani was asking for a much deeper commitment to hold together than the SSP, for instance, was willing to concede. The SSP contention was that even if an alternative Government was to be formed, a common minimum programme could be worked out later. There is, for instance, the precedent of the various SVDs, most of which found it possible to draw up a common programme after the elections had taken place. There was possibly one more objection here on the part of the SSP. And that is, that if the Congress (O), Jana Sangh, Swatantra and the SSP are to agree on a common platform, then according to the SSP, many more points indeed would have to be added to what had at the time been agreed upon. And this was not found to be feasible.

Whatever the position, Mr. Masani was perhaps basically right in arguing that the voter must know clearly what the alliance stands for and what it entails. The construction of a coalition will be a delicate task. Alliances could also include a very wide range of the political spectrum. But then, what does all this mean in terms of beliefs, ideologies, policies and programmes? Or do they have no place?

NDA

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# HIMMAT

WEEKLY 35p

ASIA'S VOICE

FRIDAY JANUARY 8 1971

VOL. 7 NO. 10

## Alliance or opportunism— Do they have any programme?

Fernandes (SSP)

Masani (Swatantra)

Nijalingappa (Cong.-O)

Vajpayee (Jan Sangh)



Parliament House, New Delhi

***Lee Kuan Yew—man of the future***

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## Alliance or opportunism?

*"This above all—to thine own self be true,  
And it must follow, as the night the day,  
Thou canst not then be false to any man."*

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE, "HAMLET"

MRS GANDHI may not be an angel with flapping wings, but one at least knows where she stands.

But can anyone say where Messrs Nijalingappa, Vajpayee and George Fernandes stand together? They are united only in removing Mrs Gandhi from office. There is little else in common between them. For months the Swatantra and the Jan Sangh tried to get the Congress (0) to form an alliance. After months of vacillation and internal squabbles, the Congress (0) decided to join them.

Last Sunday, when Mr Morarji Desai was in Gujarat and Mr Kamaraj was in Madras, Mr Nijalingappa on behalf of the Congress (0) met with Jan Sangh chief Vajpayee and Swatantra Chairman Masani to confer with SSP leaders Mr Raj Narain, Mr George Fernandes and Mr Madhu Limaye. At first they tried to work out minimum common programme between the four parties. Understandably they failed because there is little in common between them. Some of them then came to the conclusion that if they could not arrive at a minimum common programme, the best thing was to say none was necessary until the time came to form a government.

The Congress (0) President, Mr Nijalingappa, always friendly and often accommodating, found himself under considerable pressure and yielded. Masani was less obliging and stormed out. He said he had no mandate to negotiate an unprincipled electoral pact, and would refer the matter to his National Executive and leave them to decide. Whatever decision this Executive arrives at (and it may well agree to put its principles in cold storage), the whole episode is an indication that the house of the Opposition parties is built on sand.

Meanwhile within hours of Mr Masani's exit, SSP leader Madhu Limaye declared that his party's participa-

tion in an electoral front did not preclude the SSP allying itself with other parties like the Marxists. Till recently SSP leaders had accused these very Marxists it now wants to ally with of murdering scores of their party workers in West Bengal and especially in Asansol. Only last month an SSP worker, Nani Chakraborty, a promising 35-year-old SSP worker, was killed in Jalpaiguri.

The SSP leaders are free to make their opportunist alliances. Accusations at their recent Poona party conference from their own people that the leaders were playing "the politics of convenience" seems to have had little effect on them. Allying themselves with the Marxists will show that they have scant respect for the blood and sacrifice of their own party workers. If they proceed along the present lines, they may one day find themselves as generals without soldiers.

The Congress (0), Jan Sangh and Swatantra if it decides to return to the fold may soon be subjected to pressure to work out an electoral adjustment with the Marxists. If they fall for it, they cannot blame the public for not lending credence to their cry of saving democracy and India from Moscow's rule.

The people will rightly ask, "What guarantee is there, that if elected to power, the alliance partners will not be as close to Moscow as they accuse Mrs Gandhi of being?"

The tragedy of the Congress (0) is that its search for an identity is not yet over. The Jan Sangh is being given such "a new look" by Mr Vajpayee that one day his own volunteers will not recognise it. Perhaps that is not important if one can capture power and revel in it. And it seems unlikely the Swatantra will be able to withstand the temptation for success sans principles.

There is little to choose from between our political parties where opportunism goes. Men who do not stand for something fall for anything. Men who are not true to their deepest convictions will in the long run do little for themselves and even less for the country they profess to serve.

## Towards a new Calcutta

HOPE glimmered as the eye flickered over an advertisement in "The Times of India" of January 3, entitled "Towards a better Calcutta".

Inserted by the Calcutta Metropolitan Development Authority, it outlined the CMDA's plan of action for "increased water supply, better drainage, better roads and bustee improvement". It went on to say that work is already in progress on these fronts. By June 1971, water supply would increase from the present 328 million litres to 655 million litres per day. The main outfall channels for drainage are going to be remodelled to prevent waterlogging. The CMDA has sanctioned Rs 440 lakhs for water supply schemes, and Rs 469 lakhs for drainage during the current year.

Extensive road repairs, better flow of traffic, con-

structing overbridges, renewing tram tracks, are all part of the plan. The outlay for garbage clearance alone is Rs 1 crore and 33 lakhs. By March this year, 70 extra single-decker and 25 double-decker buses are expected to be in operation.

The CMDA has set itself ambitious targets, which if carried through will transform the daily life of the Calcutta citizen. Students from Calcutta and possibly all over India could be recruited during the forthcoming summer vacation to assist.

However, the fact remains that without political stability, economic progress will remain a myth. The people of Bengal will have to decide whether they want further misadventures with certain political parties or economic betterment. They cannot have both.

# Briefly Speaking.....

Finally, this is better, that one do his own task as he may, even though he fail, than take tasks not his own, though they seem good.

THE BHAGWAD GITA

## Welcome to Raj Bhavan

ONE great advantage of the institution of governorships in India is to rehabilitate old political war-horses.

Our politicians are an indestructible breed. They never consent to retire or even take up a governorship unless they lose at the polls. One would hope that men like Mr Satya Narayan Sinha, who has been sitting in the Cabinet for 24 years, would like to take a holiday sitting in a Raj Bhavan, but such a hope is unlikely to be fulfilled.

However, once the elections are over and some of Mrs Gandhi's revered colleagues find themselves beaten, she has at least three or four instant vacancies for governorships

they could fill. In the coming days Madhya Pradesh Governor, K. C. Reddy, finishes his term. In March, Mr Bhagwan Sahay completes his term, and Mr Ujjal Singh, Governor of Tamil Nadu, retires in April. Of course, if Mrs Gandhi creates a few more states, that will be an opportunity to have a few more Governors.

## It's in the book

BUSINESSMEN will do anything to secure a deal — even quote Mao's Thoughts back at him.

This is exactly what a delegation from Britain's Midland Development Association tried on the Chinese Commercial Attache in London to get China to open factories in the Midlands.

The text the Association quoted comes from page 274 of the little red book: "Communists must listen attentively to the views of the people outside the party and let them have their say."

## Mice or men

It is refreshing to look back on the recent session of Parliament and recall some of its highlights. We discovered from Mr Baburao Patel that the rat population in India at the moment is 2400 million. Mr Patel generously suggested the possible export of our four-legged friends to certain South East Asian countries where they are considered to be a delicacy.

It appears the Government is far more harsh when it comes to controlling the human population. Does anyone have the comparative figures for the amount spent on the Family Planning campaign in a year, and the amount spent on rat control? It just could be that we are more keen to have a nation of rats than of men.

## Costly suspicion

A RECENT ISSUE of the "New York Times" reporting the aftermath of the cyclone disaster in East Pakistan, states that even a week after the tidal wave, the Pakistan Government had given military preparedness against India priority over relief for East Pakistan.

It quotes a pilot in Dacca a week after the disaster saying that he was under strain, not because of long hours of airdropping supplies, but from practising bombing and strafing runs.

"This disaster has made us terribly vulnerable," he explained. "The Indians could walk right in and take over. We have got to stay alert."

Of course to us this may sound crazy. But it makes us realise the strength of feeling that is there in Pakistan, and the tragedy is that thousands of innocent victims who could have otherwise been saved may not have been.

## Good prospects

THE chief of Bombay's twin city project, Mr J. B. d'Souza, says that the first party to ask for land in the twin city across Bombay harbour was the Bombay City jail. This augurs well for the future of the twin city. A couple of centuries ago 700 convicts were sent to Australia and see what happened! There is only one condition: the convicts should be released in the Twin City, as they were in Australia, to show their full initiative.

## Five-day army

EVER HEARD of an army on a five-day week? That's the latest good news for 185,000 American troops stationed in Europe. Not only is it Mondays to Fridays, but set "Reveille" time and special passes will be abolished.

How do you sum all this up? The changes, says the American general commanding in Europe, "are designed to increase professionalism and to improve motivation without relaxing standards of training and discipline."

Now, can you improve on that?

## The pollster's snare

Will she fare well in March, or bid farewell?

Too early for the pollsters yet to tell. But will they keep their silence? No, not they;

Each varying view will up and have its say

As to who leads (according to its science)

And how things fare with this or that alliance.

With many personalities contesting, The March results will be most interesting.

But if I were a pollster, I'd take care Not to fall into that particular snare Of a too early or cocksure prediction. They should remember last year's contradiction

When Gallup swore that Wilson was ahead

But British voters plumped for Heath instead.

**Birbal**

HIMMAT January 8, 1971



"In view of the great popularity of free inaugural flights, we have decided to charge full rates."



*Person*

# THE WESTERN TIMES

## THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

Great principles seldom escape working injustice in particular things.

—J F Cooper

AHMEDABAD, JANUARY 5, 1971

## RUDDERLESS IRIO

The much-talked-about triple alliance of the Congress(O), the Jana Sangh and the Swatantra Party has, at the last minute, reached a dramatic anticlimax. A short while before the three parties were due to make a joint declaration on Sunday evening, Mr M. R. Masani threw a spanner into the works by announcing the withdrawal of the Swatantra Party from the proposed arrangement. Explaining his decision, Mr Masani has stated that since the earlier understanding of a full-fledged alliance based on a minimum programme had been modified to one of only electoral adjustments, he had no "mandate" from his party to agree to the revised arrangement. Blaming the Congress (O) for "vacillation and indecision", he says: "What is now proposed of the Samyukta Socialist Party is an attempt at a mere electoral adjustment without a democratic front and without a common programme".

To the credit of Mr Masani it should be said that he has been consistent in his stand that the proposed alliance should be based on a common programme. His opposition to limiting the alliance to electoral adjustments is entirely justified in that, without an agreed programmatic basis, the "front" would be meaningless and reduced to an opportunistic arrangement. If the idea of the alliance partners were to offer an alternative to the country, the electorate should be told what the "front" stands for. To fight shy of this is only to suggest that the alliance has little to offer except catchy slogans. Mr Nijalingappa's denial of Mr Masani's contention that there was a firm decision to have a full-fledged alliance based on an agreed minimum programme merely confirms this impression.

Mr Vajpayee has sought to make out that there has been no change in the position. "We were three yesterday and we are still three today", he says, adding that the only difference was that the SSP had come in and the Swatantra had gone out. The Jana Sangh leader's arithmetic is no doubt correct, but there is a lot more in the latest developments than just adding and subtracting. The Swatantra Party is no less anxious than the Jana Sangh and the Congress(O) to defeat the present Government at the Centre. But at the same time, it rightly feels that if an alternative were to be offered it should be based on a common programme and not just alliances of convenience to fight the polls. Mr Vajpayee, however, appears to feel that a common programme could be evolved after defeating the Congress(R). But, significantly, the announcement made after the formation of the new triple alliance of the Congress(O), Jana Sangh and SSP says: "In order to offer the country an alternative which it urgently needs we have agreed to come together to fight the elections. We appeal to other parties, groups and individuals who share these objectives to join us". In the absence of a common programme, these "objectives" could be anybody's guess.

For a country which has had bitter experience of unprincipled alliances and adjustments and of a series of "united front" governments formed on a negative plank, the creation of one more "front" without an agreed programme would be cold comfort. A hotch-potch combination of the type now announced may spell hope for the Congress(O), which is desperately looking for any straw to clutch at and for whose tired leaders this may be the last chance. The SSP, which is more an aberration than a party, might fall in line too. But it is curious that the Jana Sangh, which claims to be the party of the future, should join what is obviously a programmeless and opportunistic alliance.

A long  
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—The several States had taken interest in manufacturing control science equipment. The Government had decided to entrust production of the equipment with the States as the Union Government was averse to Centralising the project. The project would give employment facilities to the technical personnel of States.

He said with the proposed aid from the United Nations Children's Emergency Fund, the Council could supply equipment to about 30000 institutions in the country. —UNI

## Novel cycle developed in Italy

NEW DELHI Jan. 4—A novel bicycle in which up and down pedalling instead of usual pumping in circle makes it go has been developed in Italy.

The inventor Mr Macro Marzaccini claims the new bicycle gives one third more power for the same effort because the driver has no dead points at the end of pedal strokes. —UNI

## CHARGE DIA

Delhi ities offered by India as "one-sided and inadequate."

Asked what step Nepal proposed to take he said since India applied trade control regulations to Nepalese goods except agricultural products Nepal was also 'compelled' to make necessary arrangement to control all kinds of industrial goods to be imported from India.

As such Nepal had decided to conduct all kinds of export-import trade with India except

## A long innings after heart transplant

NEW DELHI, Jan. 4—Perhaps the longest surviving heart transplant patient is Emmanuel Vitria of Marseilles.

According to a British daily, Emmanuel received the heart about two years ago in a transplant operation at Marseilles. The 'gift' came from a 22-year-old sailor who died in an accident. This makes Emmanuel's heart about 28 years younger than him for he is 50 years old.

Emmanuel is one of the ten who have received new hearts in France—and the only one to have survived. Married with three daughters Emmanuel leads a normal life—swimming, driving, cycling and smoking. In addition he takes a lot of exercise.

The only restriction in his diet is that he must take less salt. —UNI

## Fernandes confers with Charan

NEW DELHI, Jan 4. —The Samyukta Socialist Party leaders Mr George Fernandes Mr Rajnarayan and Ram Sewak Yadav held discussions with Bharatiya Kranti Dal Chairman Mr Charan Singh today in an attempt to draw the BKD into the electoral front of the Opposition Congress the Jana Sangh and the SSP.

Although BKD sources said that their party would "go it alone in the Lok Sabha polls, the SSP leaders were still confident

the traditional border trade in accordance with law.

Asked whether the Indian action could be described as an "economic blockade" he replied that the problem was a national one and could not be described as such so soon. But if somebody suspected it to be one it would not be unnatural to be added.

Mr Subedi appealed to all consumers to limit the use of imported goods to the least possible quantity. —AP

of arriving at some sort of an understanding with the BKD.

The sources said chances were that the BKD might agree to support non-Congress (R) candidates in constituencies where the party did not field its own candidates.

The sources made it clear that under no circumstances would the BKD extend any support to Ruling Congress candidates. —UNY

## Tomorrow's Progress Today

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## POWER CABLES

'Tomorrow's Progress Today'

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THE WESTERN TIMES

Dear Reader

IT MAY BE AN interesting exercise of the imagination to surmise the motives and calculations of the PM which have led to a poll at once instead of waiting till 1972. But what is important for the nation has been brought out by the *Hindu* in its editorial of December 29:

Too many things have tended to be done since the Congress split in the name of the people that it is time they had their say not only on the policies and programmes but the extraordinary ways in which those policies were sought to be executed. And against the background of the desperate expedients, horse-trading and prevarications which the minority government had to resort to, just to stay on in the saddle, while the colossal problems confronting the nation needed a strong and stable Government to tackle them, it will be the ardent hope of everyone that the people would vote wisely, vote only those persons into Parliament who will have sufficient wisdom and strength to steer the country properly along the admittedly very, very difficult road ahead.

The question is whether the 80 per cent uninformed people who form the electorate can be relied upon to do what the *Hindu* hopes they will do, viz., to vote only those persons into Parliament "who will have sufficient wisdom and strength to steer the country properly along the difficult road ahead". The PM has had time and ample power to collect funds to black out whatever wisdom there is among the voters. Still, notwithstanding the impediments and corrupting influences which in the India of today nullify the advantages of the parliamentary system, we have to hope for the best.

That Sri Masani was not ready to sign the agreement reached by the other democratic parties opposing Smt. Indira's policies need not depress us over much. The matter will be settled easily enough at the meeting of the Swatantra Party on the 12th and 13th of January in Madras.

★

THE FOLLOWING is an All India Radio talk given by Sri M. R.

Masani recorded on December 28 for being broadcasted:

"I cannot help feeling that the Prime Minister's decision to dissolve the Lok Sabha is influenced by her apprehension of an abject defeat if she were to wait till the life of the Lok Sabha comes to an end a year later.

"In her broadcast, last night, she lamented the existence of poverty and unemployment as if these were evils for which she and her party had no responsibility! The fact is it is precisely twenty years of the policies for which Mrs Indira Gandhi and her party stand that have brought the country to this pass. It is to change these policies that the Swatantra Party is working. If the present Parliament had been allowed to continue for another year, the wrath of the people would have been increasingly directed at the Union Government on account of the breakdown of law and order, economic stagnation, growing unemployment and rising prices, which are the result of its policies. One bad monsoon, and the chicken would have come home to roost.

"The dissolution of Parliament is an attempt to anticipate such a development by calling for a snap election and taking the electorate by surprise. This is not likely to succeed and may boomerang, as happened to Mr Harold Wilson earlier this year in England, when he too tried to play the same trick. Mrs Gandhi's move is likely to meet the same fate."

★

MY ARTICLE IN SWARAJYA of August 2, 1969 contains my views on the question of the medium of higher instruction. I believe I have expressed my opinion in clear enough language. It is no good quoting old articles of mine written on the subject in the context of the issues then troubling the public mind. Today the issue is the disintegration consequent on excessive provincialism. The im-

position of regional languages as media for college instruction, be it Hindi or be it Tamil or Telugu, will not help to integrate India, but serve to disintegrate and create internal barriers among the elite of India. If English must be accepted as the link language of all India and Hindi must be ruled out, English must be the language of our Universities. The mother-tongue has its effective roots and cannot be injured by English in the Universities. The literatures of all our Indian languages are flourishing today better than in previous decades. They are richer today for our association with English. We should not allow our college students to become poor in English. It would be a fatal mistake to make barbed wire fencing of our regional languages. It would be not patriotism but the opposite of it. English cannot be taught in a vacuum. It must be familiarised in application to concrete matters. The issue before the country today is, thanks to Smt. Indira Gandhi's decision to go to sea in a sieve, to use Edward Lear's picturesque story, whether our country should have its Constitution and the people their liberties, or allow both to be destroyed by a misguided Prime Minister. The country should not be broken up into parochially separated areas and become easy victims of conspiring groups.

I am glad an educationalists' panel has been constituted by the Tamil Nad Government to consider the question of medium of instruction in colleges. I hope the eminent members of this panel will apply their minds to the question without being in the least influenced by the opinions of the ministry in power or its politics.

Every encouragement should be given for books of science and other modern knowledge to be written in the regional languages by persons thoroughly conversant with the subjects. This will help the languages to get rich. But the medium of instruction in colleges is quite a different question.

★

I REVERT TO the subject of the Tamil Nad Government's intention to start a wine, beer and other spirituous drinks factory for pur-

poses of export. This is not politics but a question of morality. If the Government really supports a prohibition policy in the State, it is immoral to make and export intoxicating drinks. Such contradictory policies create a cynicism and distrust in general which is not desirable. To divert fruits and grains and sugarcane products to the manufacture of intoxicating drinks is the opposite of what we want to do in respect of food production. One year's good monsoon should not mislead us. Even if we forget everything related to principles and morality and ignore the objection to diverting precious food products to the manufacture of what is not food, the concern is bound to be an utter failure. It is foolish to imagine that we can compete with foreign beer, wines, whisky and brandy and make a profitable business of it.

\*

The *Hindu* has come out with an editorial which asks the following question:

"Can an election be held in turbulent West Bengal, be it for the Lok Sabha or the State Assembly, with a reasonable prospect of free and fearless campaigning and fair voting? Or will it prove a mad adventure that will confound further the prevailing chaos?"

#### BOMBAY LETTER:

### RE - THINKING SOCIALISM

BOMBAY, December 29: With the announcement of the election, business opinion here has become discreetly silent. The business community, who have much more at stake than the political power-seekers, can only remain in the background, hoping that the voters will return a strong Government committed to effective and practical policies calculated to lift the nation to a stage of rapid growth.

No one can question the statement by Mrs Gandhi that "the present political situation has set in motion a process of rethinking on major political issues within every political party." Let us hope the outcome is rethinking on

The leading article of the *Hindu* continues:

"The Centre would indeed be adding fuel to the fire, should it top its incompetent handling of the disorders by aggravating them with elections. Many may think that rather than bring the military later to ensure free and fair elections, it may be wise to use it right now to restore order (which seems beyond the powers of the State or Central police) and then consider the possibility of elections."

\*

IF THE RECENT Municipal elections in Tamil Nad are of any consequence in national affairs, it may be noted that out of the seats contested, the DMK got 95 and the Congress (O) got 94: this in spite of the great advantage the DMK enjoyed being in charge of the State Government and all that it implies.

\*

IF THE DISSOLUTION of Parliament was done in an arbitrary manner by the Prime Minister, the dissolution of the Tamil Nad Assembly at the instance of the Chief Minister, Sri Karunanidhi, is even more arbitrary. The question is not whom it helps, but these arbitrary exercises of power tend to undermine democracy and are to be strongly deprecated.

C.A.

put is nowhere near the growth rate needed to feed a rising population.

In terms of living standards, as judged by the availability of the necessities of life has the total supply increased enough for a rapidly growing population? Even in Communist Poland, a 20 or 30 per cent increase in food prices angered a regimented people to riot and throw out their rulers. Here in this democracy prices of essentials for ever rise, as if it is nobody's business. Yet there is not even a whimper of protest, and the powers-that-be go on merrily, raising slogans.

Over the past 20 years the annual increase in the GNP has been 3½ per cent, which is largely wiped out by the annual 2½ per cent growth in population. And an inexorable price inflation sees to it that the average citizen's earning or saving can fetch less and less of the essentials. Yet our goal is socialism!

If socialism has brought this adverse result in 20 years, then not only the political parties but every voter must start some rethinking. Socialism is not something in the next life or for the next generation. For the common people, socialism must mean more food, clothing, etc. The political parties seeking the common man's vote must tell them what socialism means in terms of tangible goals.

In Bombay, the BPCC (O) has already started working its election machinery to contest the 5 seats that this metropolis has in the Lok Sabha. So has the BPCC (R), which is as yet a party more of leaders than party workers, and the Jan Sangh, Shiv Sena, Swatantra and other parties. Perhaps "me-too-ism" will afflict most of them, with the exception of Swatantra and Jan Sangh. The Shiv Sena is a new force, and having worsted the Communists in their own stronghold in the mill area only two months ago, it is bound to influence the outcome. If there is an adjustment constituency-wise between the Congress (O), Jan Sangh and Swatantra, and if Shiv Sena support can be had for their side, the BPCC (R) will find it quite tough going.

the empty and often disastrous socialistic slogans that have shaped the economy and economic policy in the past two decades.

While most other countries, including the developing countries, have achieved sustained economic growth and a progressively better life, what have we achieved in the past 20 years of socialist pattern and socialism? India has made industrial progress in terms of prestige projects and sophisticated output on a scale too small to have any impact on the lives of 95 per cent of the population. We have had a "green revolution" mainly confined to wheat. Overall agricultural out-