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Indian Ticker...

VIJAYAWADA : A large crowd of "separate Andhra" agitators spilled over 20,000 litres of milk from a milk wagon attached to the Secunderabad bound passenger train at Rayanapadu Station 10 kms from here. The agitators forced the driver to stop the train at the outer signal, detached the milk wagon and uncorked the stopper spilling the entire contents of the wagon on the tracks.

BANGALORE : According to a study made by a Central Committee on Population Projections, India's population in 2,000 A.D. would be around 900 million. To feed this population the country would need 200 million tons of food-grains.

CALCUTTA : Over 2,500 Congress volunteers were expelled from the AICC session following a violent clash between two groups. During the clash brickbats and soda water bottles were freely used as missiles. Over 20, including a woman were injured.

PALGHAT : A Kerala landlord has been reduced to dire poverty due to the loss of his land as a result of the Kerala Land Reforms Amendment Act. An erstwhile tenant who has become a landlord due to the Act has returned 1 1/3 acres of land to the former landlord and has given 10 paras of paddy as temporary relief.

SIMLA : At the time of his departure after the Simla Summit President Bhutto reportedly left Rs 10,700 to be given as tips to the class IV staff that attended on him and his party during their stay. Six months have passed but none of the employees have received the money yet.

NEW DELHI : Justice delayed is justice denied. Court records in Delhi reveal that

That's the way it is... A.G. NOORANI

India Without Rajaji

It is hard and it is sad to think of an India without Rajaji. For the sage was so much a part of our existence, perhaps more so since he left the seat of power nearly two decades ago. The historian of the future will in all probability hold that Rajaji's greater services to India lay when he was in the Opposition rather than when he was in power, although he was an administrator born.

Of all the many tributes paid to this genius, the aptest came from the man he liked but, with whatever reluctance opposed in 1962—V.K. Krishna Menon. It was Rajaji, he said, who won recognition for the role of dissent. This was his greatest contribution and in his passing away one mourns the "break not only with a generation but an epoch of India's emerging greatness."

Rajaji's service to Indian democracy is as great as Charles James Fox's to British democracy. The sacrifice is the greater in his case for Rajaji could have amassed power. He had tasted power. Indeed, he had used it manfully in causes he believed in. The first Prime Minister of the state of Madras, who governed from 1937 to 1939, set a fine example in administration. Some of his precepts are still remembered though seldom followed. To cite one, he forbade MLAs from approaching civil servants. It is significant that not even the worst critics of Congress Ministries ever accused him of sectarian or communal bias.

But it is as a fearless thinker and an able leader that Rajaji will be most remembered. He always thought for himself; thought calmly and deeply; and he always had said courageously, disinterestedly and yet with a profound concern for the national weal.

INCONSISTENCY

Nor did the charge of inconsistency deter him. He advocated the course which he felt best suited to the public interest. That it was at variance with advice given



Rajaji with Nehru

"in the event of separation, mutual agreements shall be entered into for safeguarding defence, commerce and communications and for other essential purposes."

If partition had come about as a result of a direct

Congress-League pact rather than through British mediation, it is very likely that these links would have been retained.

How consistent Rajaji was that even after partition he continued to remain an

advocate of Indo-Pak co-operation, that he refused to share self-righteous stance on Kashmir which false propaganda by officialdom had fostered, and that his great ideal was a joint defence pact between the two.

Yet, when Pakistan resorted to genocide in Bangla Desh this great fighter for human rights was the foremost in its condemnation.

The Rajaji who joined six other senior Congress leaders in writing to Congress President Nehru on June 29, 1936 criticising his "preaching and emphasising of socialism" was the very Rajaji who formed the Swatantra Party in 1959 to oppose Prime Minister Nehru on the same ground, substantially. The merits of his position are debatable. None can question his consistency on the basic issue nor, indeed, his earnestness and sincerity.

He was all of one piece, each facet of his personality however distinctive by itself fitted in with the entire whole. For Rajaji was above all true to himself. No wonder he had a gift of retaining friendships despite differences in outlook. Nehru and Sardar Patel differed fundamentally but were agreed in their high estimate of Rajaji.

Rajaji's own estimate of himself bespoke his greatness. He had great confidence in his judgement and was strong in resolve. Both followed from his earnestness and from a just estimate of the frailties of most around. But the man had no hauteur, no arrogance. He had an abiding faith in God and a deep love for fellow mortals.

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NEW DELHI : Justice delayed is justice denied. Court records in Delhi reveal that there are as many as 1,45,000 cases pending before traffic courts while under the Indian Penal Code and Criminal Procedure Code as many as 23,000 cases are pending.

HYDERABAD : According to the President of the Indian Science Academy, B. R. Seshachar India's contribution to the scientific world was not insignificant. According to him one of every forty discoveries in the world is from India.

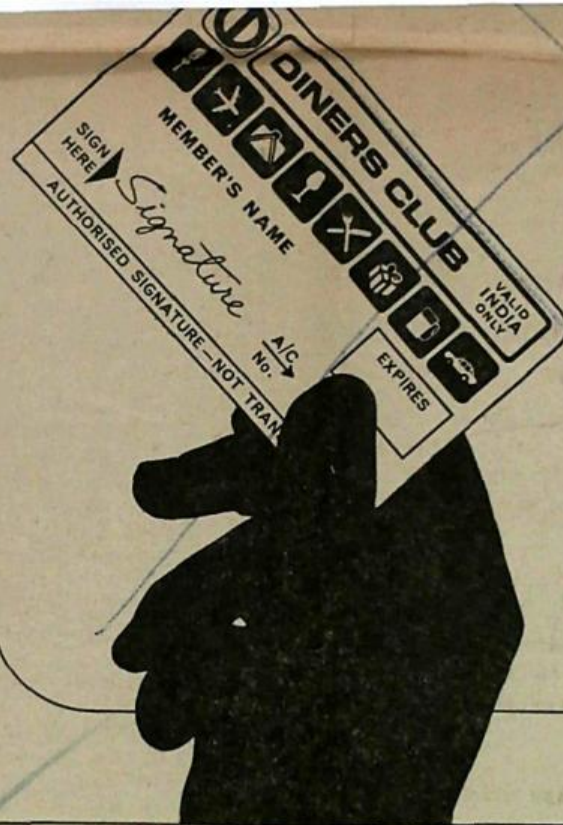
BOMBAY : Office bearers of the Greater Bombay, Hair Dressing Saloon Owners' Association recently revealed that the craze for growing long hair, keeping long side locks and sporting a beard has resulted in a 25 to 40 per cent fall in business in the city's 3,000 odd saloons.

advocated the course which he felt best suited to the public interest. That it was at variance with advice given years earlier did not bother him. But he would be shortsighted who did not perceive despite all the changes a remarkable continuity of outlook.

The advocate of boycott of legislatures at the Gaya Congress in 1922 altered his views a decade later, because the situation had altered radically. The civil disobedience movements were taking the country nowhere.

In the early forties he urged conciliation with the Muslim League as well as the British because the alternative was deadlock. How wise he was the failure of the Quit India movement proved. With the Congress leaders behind bars, the League and the Communists gained ground.

The CR Formula prepared the country to think in terms of partition. But it is commonly overlooked that the formula provided that



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WITH APACHE ON THE LEFT BANK

Russia's Troubles Not Due To Bad Weather Alone

In November 1971, Premier Alexei Kosygin assured the Supreme Soviet that agricultural production in the Soviet Union would in 1975 exceed the present agricultural output of the United States.

Last year, at the time Kosygin made his brag, the Soviet Union had gathered in the second largest harvest in its history—even though it still had to import more than a million tons of grain from abroad. This year Russia is forced to import several times that amount. So much for wishful thinking!

Kosygin was not of course the first one to build castles in the air about overtaking America. Khrushchev made identical airy promises, only to be toppled from power when his agricultural policies turned out to be monumental fiascos.

Less than a year after Kosygin painted his proud picture Soviet papers have been urging Russians not to waste bread, are carrying lengthy articles condemning the evils of hoarding, and pleading with farmers to see that not a grain of wheat is wasted.

WHAT WENT WRONG?

What exactly went wrong? The general impression sedulously created by the Russians is that unusually bad weather this year was entirely responsible for the crop failure. But this is plain and simple poppycock.

About a tenth of the winter crop was certainly damaged due to bad weather. More damage was caused because European Russia had its hottest, driest, summer in a quarter century. It is also true that the late-ripening grain areas of Siberia had a cold, wet autumn and farmers had to race against early frost to get their grain in.

But as we shall see, planning bumbles, wastage, mix-ups in transport schedules and other break-downs have caused far more damage than weather or natural causes.

BLEAK PICTURE

The extent of the shortages are truly staggering. Around the time the Soviet Union celebrated Farmers Day on October 8th, radio, TV and other official media were admitting that this year's harvest would come to around 167 million tons, quietly ignoring the fact that this meant a 30 to 35 million shortfall below the Plan target, and a drop of 25 per cent below last year's harvest.

Actually even 167 million tons is almost sure to prove a gross exaggeration. Due to extreme dampness in the Siberian farm areas, crops



Alexei Kosygin

are likely to have an extremely high spoilage rate so that edible grain will probably amount to far less than 167 million tons.

With its obsession over the industrial sector, the Soviet Union has always neglected agriculture. Due to irrational planning and a top-heavy bureaucracy, there are shortages of tractors and tractor yards, poor storage facilities, a woeful lack of fertilisers and inadequate transport in the rural areas.

Not that money has not been spent. Between 1950 and 1960, the government poured in close to 50 billion roubles into agriculture, stepping this up to some 250 billion in the 1960's with the same amount planned for the current five year plan.

In other words, in twenty years, Soviet agriculture will have received around 550 billion roubles in capital funds—over and above what is spent on chemicals, warehousing and a network of roadways for the rural areas.

RESULTS COUNT

consists of some 350 acres. Soviet collectives, on the other hand, average more than 25,000 acres while the huge state farms extend to an average of 1,000,000 acres.

SHEER WASTE

According to figures cited by economists Michael Bradley and Gardner Clark in British publication *Soviet Studies*, American farms average out at less than two workers per farm, while Soviet collectives have 506 and Soviet state farms have 635! Even granting the far smaller acreage of American farms, it means that a much greater labour force is required to handle the same amount of work in the Soviet Union.

There would be some hope of Soviet agriculture getting on to an even keel if intensive improvements were introduced, if quality were improved, if there were better technology, if labour were better trained, and if the authorities concentrated on yield per acre or weight per animal.

But this kind of sound sense has not dawned on Soviet planners yet. The authorities are merely going in for a fresh dose of gigantism, trying for more construction, more acres and greater numbers of livestock, regardless of whether the acres are unproductive or the livestock undernourished or undersized.

Not everybody in Russia is content to follow in the same old rut. Several farm managers and economists have come up with proposals to break the unwieldy *kolkhozes* and *sovkhozes* into smaller units that would be more efficient.

Some of these measures have, in fact, been introduced, with farms of around 300 acres being given over to two or three families to run for several years.

SOUND IDEA

These leasehold teams have done well wherever the experiments have been tried, but the reform has merely touched the surface, and only a few hundred farms of this kind have been established—because zealots maintain that such farms are beyond state

families have, for example, been allowed to cultivate small plots for their own use, with the result that a large proportion of the vegetables and fresh fruit that come to the Russian market are from these private plots.

It is on these private plots also that farmers grow such luxuries as flowers and out-of-season fruits which they sell at enormous profits in Moscow and other big cities.

Lately, there have been reports that the government is so hard pressed that it has asked collectives to handover food stocks reserved for their own use, offering prices higher than official rates. Purchasing agents are also being promised bonuses of a month's salary or more if they locate extra stocks of potatoes.

BOTTLENECKS

Fortunately, now that grain has begun to flow in from the United States, the Russian people are not likely to starve. Nevertheless, the country is by no means out of the woods, for there are serious bottlenecks still to be overcome.

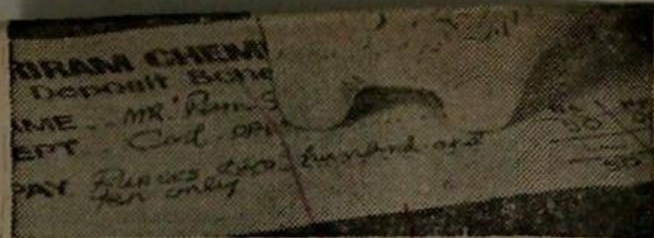
For one thing, so much grain has been imported that Soviet ports are finding it difficult to handle it. According to a Soviet maritime journal, grain ships are queuing outside Riga port in Latvia because of a shortage of storage facilities. The railways delivered only 40 per cent of the wagons needed to move the grain, with the result that huge stocks have piled up.

Even when the grain was moved out, many of the wagons were unsuitable so that a large part of the grain spilled out along the way. Bottlenecks are in fact so serious that even the party paper *Pravda* has dropped its coyness and has been carrying reports about them.

In the Svervlock district, *Pravda* reported, there was an abundant potato crop which could not be harvested because there weren't enough sacks; 3,000,000 sacks were needed but less than 1,000,000 were allotted. In the Ukraine, one of the country's main

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It is rather ironical that the Soviet Union should have to swallow its ideological pride and run to the United States for rescue, considering that during 1970 America invested less than six billion dollars in agriculture and that agriculture capital stock in the United States at the end of 1970 was valued at 66 billion dollars after depreciation and at 145 billion dollars undepreciated.

The truth is that agriculture remains the most inefficient and least productive sector of the Soviet economy, although between a quarter and a third of Russia's labour force is employed in farming—a proportion that is several times higher than in America or other capitalist countries.

The Russians have a mania for gigantism, but this does not always work. It certainly has not worked in agriculture. For example, the average American farm

control and are therefore a subtle way of letting in capitalism by the back door.

The system has strong champions at the highest level, chief among them being Politburo member Gennadi Voronov. If Voronov's plea to introduce these leasehold farms had been adopted, Russia might today have been a little better off.

Unfortunately, his suggestions raised such an uproar among the Communist die-hards that the idea was downplayed and Voronov was sacked as Premier of the RSFSR, though he still has his place in the Politburo.

WORKING WELL

Now that Russia is faced with near famine conditions in several areas, the "Zveno" (leasehold) system might get a fair chance.

Certainly the experiment of freeing the farmer from state control has worked well in whatever limited spheres it has so far been tried. Farm

grain-producing areas, elevator capacity was smaller than the amount of grain harvested in some districts. Here too, thousands of railway wagons sent in to off-load the grain were found unsuitable.

TOTAL CHAOS

In Kazakhstan, according to *Rural Life*, more than 500 trucks were lying idle on local farms, while 70 truck engines sent for repairs last June had not been returned by the local workshop.

It is ironic that only a few days ago the Soviet Union celebrated its 50th anniversary. If after half a century things are still muddling along, one can only take Khrushchev's and Kosygin's boasts about outstripping the United States with a large pinch of salt.

Things are not likely to change either. Not until somebody has both the guts and the authority to admit that Marx and Lenin were not all that infallible.

