

C. Rajagopalachari

Maaroh of the nation

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Few dominated the Indian political scene and commanded as much respect as Chakravarti Rajagopalachari, dearly known as Rajaji or C. R.

He was a colossus who strode across the political arena for over sixty years.

Rajaji was a phenomenon, faultlessly straight, miraculously clean and supremely wise.

Simplicity was his pleasure. He was not only the conscience keeper of Mahatma Gandhi, but of India itself.

Armed with an unparalleled administrative experience and gifted with the skill to meet all conceivable challenges in the political and social spheres, Rajaji excelled in everything he sought to do.

He was an intellectual giant, who was mentally alert till the very end. His was an inquiring mind which never accepted anything without proper and thorough investigation.

Rajaji possessed a marvelous gift of comprehension and receptivity whereby he could adjust himself to the ever-changing political current of events. His intelligence, ability, broad outlook, sacrifice, purity and courage were widely respected by leaders and the people alike.

He was a unique combination of high thinking and simple living. He lived a life of absolute fearlessness undaunted by defeats and disappointments. Behind his immense popularity was his high character and integrity, something that most present day politicians totally lack.

Throughout his entire public life there has never been a single charge of favouritism or selfishness against him. On the contrary there are scores of complaints against his lack of concern for friends and relatives.

Rajaji was a statesman of the highest calibre, one who always acted with great foresight. He had a tenacity of purpose; a thoroughness and sharpness to understand the subtle intricacies of any political problem.

A man with a courage of his convictions, Rajaji never hesitated to speak out frankly whenever the occasion demanded, even though it meant courting unpopularity.

He was an inveterate campaigner for the cause of democracy and individual liberty. To combat the totalitarian tendencies of the Congress he launched the Swatantra Party in 1959. The task he set forth for the Party was to fight for the "freedom of man and against totalitarian attack on the freedom of the individual."

An astute intellect, an uncompromising patriot and a profound thinker, Rajaji will be remembered as one of the greatest men of our times.



Daft Idea Revived

Considering that the Forum has long operated as a Soviet front, its proposals are true to form. They are, nevertheless, extremely dangerous; the ruling party is so deeply infiltrated by radicals with extra-territorial loyalties that this idea, however preposterous, could easily be pushed through unless it is shot down forthwith.

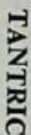
Paying tribute to "friendly gestures and help" from the Soviet Union, Chandra Shekar nevertheless points out that "to plan on the basis of unquestioned faith and dependence on any outside authority, however generous and friendly it may be at a given time, runs counter to the principle of self-reliance and is fraught with many dangerous possibilities."

Citing the sorry example of Egypt and other socialist countries, Chandra Shekhar concludes that any link up between small nations and giant powers must inevitably be "agonising and suffocating" for the smaller country.

An even more apt example than Egypt might be given—Czechoslovakia. Four years ago that nation was “liberated” by its Soviet Big Brother because the latter did not fancy the policies adopted by Alexander Dubcek and others freely elected by the Czech people.

The Prague Spring, which ultimately brought on the Soviet invasion, was only marginally a political matter. At the root of the Dubcek reform movement was resentment at Soviet economic dominance, for the Czechs were unable to make a single move aimed at national prosperity unless their plans fitted in with Soviet strategic concepts.

Having India tied hand and foot to Gosplan might suit Moscow's stooges, but it certainly must unnerve those who



Courtesy : HINDUSTAN STANDARD

PUBLIC FORUM

Tamil Nadu Politics

actor.

C. Rajagopalachari, the astute politician, was able to

Awards To Civilians

Illegitimacy

have India's interest uppermost in mind, for the plain truth is that Soviet planning has consistently proved a dismal flop throughout the fifty years of that nation's existence.

In Stalin's day millions died as a result of famine because he neglected agriculture in favour of heavy industry. Khrushchev was toppled largely because his brainstorms about corn and the virgin lands led to acute shortages. In the eight years the present leadership has been in the saddle, its performance has been equally inept. Instead of fulfilling Khrushchev's vainglorious boasts about outstripping America within a decade, here we have Leonid Brezhnev desperately seeking to buy two billion dollars worth of wheat from the United States.

When a nation can build space satellites but cannot feed its own people, when it can make ICBMs but cannot make a decent ball pen, when its industrial progress is attained only at the cost of infinite human misery, there is something very decidedly wrong. We in India may have our troubles, but in order to solve them we don't have to yoke ourselves to someone who is in an even bigger mess.

As for socialism, it is worth taking a hard look at some of those who have tried it. Cuba's survival has long been dependent on Soviet handouts of a million dollars a day. Chile, which went socialist a year ago, is today in deep trouble, with President Allende having to rush to Moscow for a half-billion dollar booster shot to keep his economy afloat. Indonesia under socialist Sukarno was headed for disaster when the new regime reversed his policies and brought the country back on an even keel.

Such instances—and they can be multiplied indefinitely—prove it is socialism itself that is at fault, not the nations that pursue it. Instead of continuing with a system that has created a microscopic class of privileged people, led to shortages, killed initiative, expanded the bureaucracy, made the rich richer and pushed the poor to the verge of destitution, India should adopt something a little saner. If the government cannot find a solution to the nation's ills, let it at the very least modify those policies whose consistent failure has brought us to our present sorry pass.

Instead of making a god of the State, as the Socialist Forum wishes, instead of nationalising industries, instead of leaving economic matters in the hands of ignoramuses, let this government confine itself to maintaining law and order, safeguarding the people's liberties and ruling according to the Constitution. Let it leave production, distribution, trade and commerce to those who understand these things and who can make them work because they have a personal stake in their success.

Socialist theories are not infallible. Like any other theories they should be given a trial and be discarded if found wanting. India has tried socialism for a quarter century and ended up in an economic wilderness. It is time we changed course. If the diehards of the Socialist Forum don't like it they should in all fairness move to Moscow.

of the DMK episode is the strange and unexpected reaction of some eminent Tamil Nadu leaders.

Kamraj feels that he has done the spadework for the last five years for the downfall of DMK, but MGR is reaping the benefits against DMK. He has therefore refused to cooperate with the ADMK.

Kamraj is more concerned about the popularity of his own party rather than with the downfall of Karunanidhi and DMK.

Cho, editor of "Thuglak" who has also been vehemently criticising DMK for the last 2 to 3 years calls MGR an "approver". According to him MGR was privy to all the atrocities committed by DMK.

The people of Tamil Nadu, in my opinion, are aware of MGR's sincere efforts to purify the DMK. The Events that Tamil Nadu and the entire nation witnessed soon after MGR's suspension reveal beyond doubt how passionately a majority of the people of Tamil Nadu are attached to MGR. It is, therefore, difficult to understand Cho's description of MGR as an "approver".

Kannadasan, an eminent Tamil poet and a New Congress leader, calls MGR, a womaniser. MGR cannot be blamed if young, beautiful and upcoming actresses are fond of acting with him even though he is more than 50. It will be surprising if Kannadasan's campaign cuts much ice with the people of the state who know pretty well the disciplined character and the philanthropic attitude of the

understand MGR and even before his suspension from the party, paid his generous compliments for his bold stand against Karunanidhi in the Swarajya.

A.H. Venkatachalam
New Delhi

Education System Needs Change

Sir : Greek philosopher Aristotle once said : "All who meditated on the art of governing mankind have been convinced that the fate of empires depends on the education of youth". This holds good even today.

When I read about clashes between students and police, taught in various parts of India I feel there is really something wrong somewhere.

It is no use blaming students for they see darkness before them and it is also not much use to condemn the concerned authorities because they too are helpless.

To me it seems that the real cause is the defective system of education. Our educational system requires changes. The British did not want to really educate us. They merely wanted to teach us the three R's and to turn us into clerks.

Unfortunately even after 25 years of independence we have not been able to bring about the required change.

I request leaders, educationalists and administrators to sit together and evolve a system of education which will suit our needs.

G. C. Sharma
New Delhi

Sir : The former Chief Justice of India, K. Subba Rao, recently pointed out that the award of Bharat Ratna and other titles is unconstitutional.

When the Indian Constitution was being drafted M.R. Masani proposed that such titles should not be awarded. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru opposed it and said even Soviet Russia gave such titles. Though many members were openly opposed to titles, when the amendment was put to vote it was defeated!

Awards for the armed forces, and the Police, are a recognition of their service and necessary, but awards to civilians like the Bharat Ratna and Padmashri are feudal in character. These awards have also become a source of political corruption. Titles are being given with partial motivation. For instance, the late Pothan Joseph, the doyen of Indian journalists, was not considered for an award, while a person of obscure standard in journalism was honoured because he was serving a publication run by a prominent member of the Union Cabinet!

Selfless public servants do not attach any importance to such valueless titles. For instance, Dr. N.S. Hardikar declined to accept the award given to him.

This source of corruption should be put to an end. If government persists with these awards it is worthwhile testing their constitutionality.

M.R. Pai
Bombay

FULL, ACTIVE 94 YEARS

FIFTEEN

"How can I write your biography when you start a new chapter in your life every day?" asked Monica Felton, who came to India from England to write Rajaji's biography.

These words would suffice to describe what a full, active life of 94 years Rajaji lived. Old age had no effect on him. Almost, till the very last, Rajaji's razor-sharp mind amazingly cut through any political problem and had its own logical, clever and unscrupulous solution.

His waspish stings at the government's failings and mistakes were as dreaded yesterday as they were during days when he boldly censured Gandhiji's Quit India movement.

Born on December 8, 1878 at Thorapalli village in Salem district of Tamil Nadu, Chakravarti Rajagopalachari was an Iyengar Brahmin by birth. But his greatest cause in life was the upliftment of the Harijans and the non-Brahmins.

A lawyer by profession, he took keen interest in social reform early in life. He was responsible for the admission of Adi-Dravida students in the Salem Municipal College against stiff opposition from

Madras. The casual encounter between the two was soon to develop into close personal and political ties. Before long CR's ardent nationalism and political acumen moved him into the national limelight.

He came to play an important role in shaping the policies of the Congress. Rajaji threw himself heart and soul into Mahatma Gandhi's non-cooperation movement.

As General Secretary of the All India Congress Committee (1921-22) and as a member of the Working Committee he wielded tremendous influence in the Congress.

CR was arrested at Vedaranyam in 1930 for leading the salt satyagraha in the south. He was imprisoned several times thereafter for civil disobedience.

After the passing of the Government of India Act in 1935, Rajagopalachari formed a Congress government in the composite Madras province two years later. It was under Rajaji's leadership that the first Harijan was allowed to enter a Hindu temple. It was he who first advised the south Indians to study Hindi way back in the thirties and did his best to popularise the language in that part of the country.

Later, in 1965 when a law



WITH LORD MOUNTBATTEN and President S. Radhakrishnan at Rashtrapati Bhavan in 1967. When Rajaji succeeded Mountbatten as Governor General, the Earl said there could not have been a better man for the office.

vehemently opposing the move.

He had always proved to be a fearless, outspoken advocate of justice. When he thought something was going against logic and principle Rajaji lost no time in leading a tirade against it, whatever the consequences.

After the failure of the Cripps Mission in 1942, he tried to break the deadlock

in principle. This was in the teeth of opposition from almost the entire Congress, including Gandhiji.

Rajaji displayed political shrewdness in deftly handling the sensitive situation in West Bengal as its Governor soon after partition. Then he was "automatically" chosen as the Governor General to succeed Lord Mountbatten.

In 1950, after accepting

Governor Generalship and made way for Rajendra Prasad to become the first President of the Indian Republic. Rajaji wanted to bid farewell to active politics then.

But Sardar Patel's death led Prime Minister Nehru to fall back on Rajaji and he was asked to shoulder the thorny Home Ministry. CR is the only south Indian to occupy this key post.

AFFECTIONATE HUG from the Iron Man, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel on January 27, 1950, when Rajaji left Delhi after laying down office as the last Governor General. Others in the picture are, from left: Maulana Azad, Rajendra Prasad, Pattabhi Sitaramayya, Jagjivan Ram and G. V. Mavlankar.



After the first General Elections, Rajaji returned to Madras (now Tamil Nadu) politics to head the first government and to firmly cement the fragmented state unit of the Congress party. He was Chief Minister for two years, 1952-54.

Perhaps, Rajaji's greatest quality lay in his democratic instinct of not bending over backwards to accommodate for an unjust cause even if it made him unpopular. CR did not like the direction in which the Congress under Nehru was taking the country. So he started campaigning through the press and platform against the Congress and its ruinous leftist policies. "The Congress has forgotten its mission and has been competing with the leftist parties", he observed.

When Rajaji formed the Swatantra Party in 1959 he was 80 years old, an age at which most statesmen, however brilliant, would have preferred to be left alone for "a peaceful last few years".

Under his starry leadership the party emerged as the biggest among the Opposition parties in the 1967 elections, though the 1971 polls proved a severe blow for Rajaji.

CR was a down-to-earth peace-lover. He would do anything for world peace. In fact, even on his death-bed he appealed for an early settlement of the Indo-Pak disputes.

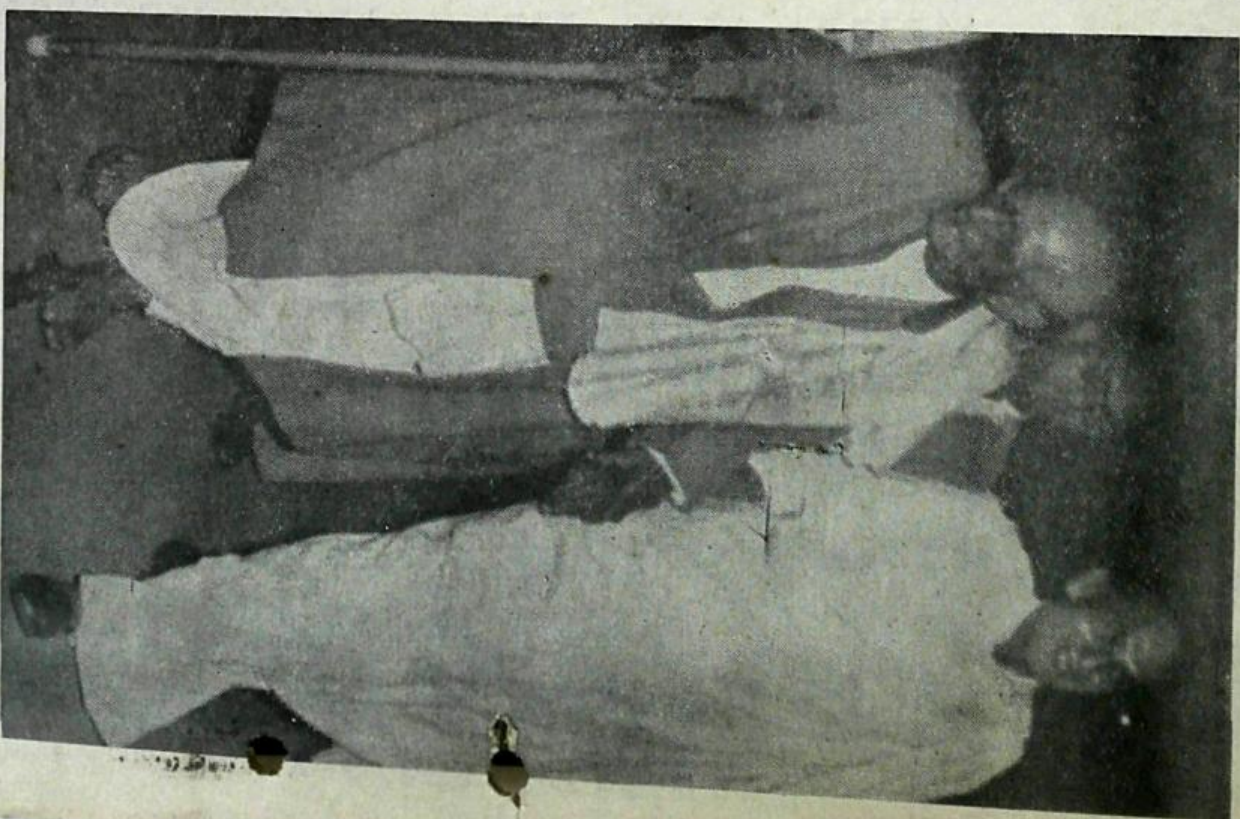


AT THE RIPE OLD AGE OF 81 Rajaji wrote another new chapter in Indian politics by starting the Swatantra party. Here he is seen with the founder-members, the late Sir Homi Mody, N.G. Ranga and the late K.M. Munshi.

Mr. Rajagopalachari was one of the makers of new India, a sincere patriot, a man whose penetrating intellect and moral sense added depth to national affairs. His analysis, his anticipation, his courage to steer an unpopular course if he felt the need, marked him as a statesman and made an impact on the national history at several crucial junctures. He had held the highest positions and lent distinction to every office.

In his death we loose a sage, indeed a force.

—Prime Minister Indira Gandhi



RAJAJI AND ACHARYA KRIPALANI were associated with each other for over 50 years. The Acharya has described Rajaji as a "great believer of Democracy. Rajaji held that democracy could not prosper without freedom of the indivi-

elder statesman and a grand patriarch who had adorned many positions in our national life with dignity and distinction.

Possessing an uncanny knack of expressing his views with precision, esteemed Rajaji took upon himself many causes which received the attention of even those who may not have agreed with his viewpoints.

A great personage that he was he played a crucial role in India's freedom movement and he was indeed a farsighted statesman, the like of whom we will not be able to see for generations.

A multi-dimension personality, Rajaji contributed to various fields of human endeavour. The nation has indeed become poorer by his demise.

—President V.V. Giri



HUMOUR AT A PRESS CONFERENCE. Rajaji's wit and puckish sense of humour never left him even on his death-bed. Here he shares a joke with Minoo Masani and the late Sir Homi Mody at a news conference.

IN YOUNG AND SAFE HANDS. Rajaji was always for infusing young blood into party ranks. Here he is seen discussing a point with the present Swatantra president Piloo Mody and general secretary Madhu Mehta.



usual and is unimpaired initiative. He was not only a great statesman, but it may be that he was in the line of our sages".

People of goodwill will miss his gentle wisdom.

In the death of Mr. Rajagopalachari India and the world have lost a great philosopher-statesman.

As a leader of India's freedom movement, as the last Governor General of India, as Chief Minister of Madras and in other important roles Mr. Rajagopalachari displayed high intelligence and a profound dedication to his country.

—President Richard Nixon