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*Problems of Nationalism and Regional Security
in South and South East Asia*

M. R. MASANI

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Advisory Editors : NIRAD C. CHAUDHURI *and* LAXMANSHASTRI JOSHI

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Reviews Editor : NISSIM EZEKIEL

Astt. Reviews Editor : MRS. LAEEQ FUTEHALLY

Business Manager : MISS SHEELA SINGH

All contributions, which must be type-written, and correspondence regarding contributions should be addressed to THE EDITORS, QUEST, 5 Pearl Road, Calcutta 17. For book-reviews, subscriptions and other matters please write: THE BUSINESS MANAGER, QUEST, 148, Mahatma Gandhi Road, Bombay 1.

CURRENT AFFAIRS

Problems of Nationalism and Regional Security in South and South East Asia

M. R. MASANI

ON November 21, the Foreign Minister of India, Mr. Swaran Singh, made certain remarks that provide a good starting point for a discussion on the problems of Nationalism and Regional Security in South and South East Asia. He said the concept of Asian unity, forged during the struggle against foreign domination, was being damaged by new ambitions and new conflicts which had arisen in Asia. He regretted that the Asian picture today was very different from what had been envisaged and he also dwelt on the dangerous new factor introduced by China's nuclear detonation.

How justified is the disappointment of the Indian Foreign Minister about the kind of Asia we had imagined before we got our freedom and the kind of Asia we are now engaged in creating? It might be worth while to start by having a quick look round the region.

Starting from the Middle East, we find during the past few years a series of inter-Arab rivalries and intrigues, the last phase of which is the civil war in the Yemen with direct Egyptian intervention. Then we have the unfortunate situation of the Arabs *versus* Israel. We find several members of the United Nations proclaiming publicly their intention of destroying another fellow member of the United Nations and of driving it into the sea!

little further East, we find Pakistan and Afghanistan engaged in a quarrel over Pakhtoonistan. A little further East, we find Pakistan embroiled with India over Kashmir.

If we turn our faces further North, we find the heights of the Himalayas occupied by Chinese Communist troops, heights they occupied by military force after inflicting a decisive defeat in battle on the Indian Army in October-November 1962. That defeat was the consequence of the betrayal of Tibet by the Indian Government in 1950 and again in 1960. The supine standing aside and allowing a peaceful neighbour (a valuable buffer State) to be destroyed—for that act we are now paying in the occupation of our own territory and the strategic domination of the Himalayas by Chinese Communist forces.

Today our neighbours in Sikkim and Bhutan are being softened up for the final take-over. Our other Northern neighbour, Nepal is practising non-alignment against us, just as we have been pactising it against the rest these last fifteen years.

If we go a little further East, we find that we have been embroiled, till a few months ago, in military operations against the Nagas who claim independence for Nagaland. Since September, 1964, thanks to Mr. Jayaprakash Narayan, Mr. Chaliha and the Rev. Michael Scott, who have

done a wonderful job as mediators, a cease fire has been achieved and negotiations are proceeding between the Indian Government and the Underground 'Naga Federal Republic,' as they call themselves.

Burma, our Eastern neighbour, is becoming less and less friendly. Their treatment of Indian nationals in Burma is disgraceful. They are being thrown out without a paisa to take out with them after spending generations in that country. In foreign policy, Burma looks like becoming more and more a Cuba of the East, more and more a satellite of Communist China.

Ceylon, which had Trotskyite participation in Government—probably the only country in the world to have Trotskyites in Government—has mercifully been liberated for the time being from that yoke and we may look forward to the United National Party winning the general elections which will take place after a few weeks. But Ceylon and India also have a dispute over people of Indian origin.

The only friendly neighbours India has today are perhaps Afghanistan on the one side and Malaysia on the other.

If we turn to South East Asia, we find that Laos has been two-thirds eaten up by Communist infiltration as a result of 'neutralisation'. General Kong Lee has been the leader of the neutralist forces. Four years ago, he refused to accept American help and arms on the grounds that he was a neutralist and would only take Soviet assistance. Early last year he found that when he needed replacements and ammunition, the tap was suddenly turned off by Mr. Khrushchev and he had to shout for American arms and assistance! On 24th May 1964, he made the following pregnant remark: 'I do not like the Communists. I like neutralism. But the Communists like to destroy the neutralists every time. So from now on I announce that I will support all who are against Communists, and my neutralist forces will join them in the fight.'

Vietnam has been a vacuum since the overthrow of President Diem. The war

there cannot possibly be won so long as the concept of a 'privileged sanctuary' in North Vietnam is tolerated. Either North Vietnam will have to be liberated or in the end the whole of Indo-China will fall to Communist imperialism.

Cambodia, which claims to be neutral, sees the only threat to its security from the United States, and not from Peking. It is engaged in a quarrel with the United States, with South Vietnam and with Thailand, its small neighbours, while professing to see nothing but good in the big neighbour further north. Prince Sihanouk Norodom, who has been breaking off relations all round, recently broke off relations with the last organisation, the International Boy Scout Organisation, as an imperialist agency.

Malaysia, a member of the Commonwealth along with India, is up against aggression from Indonesia, and it is good to remember that Indonesian aggression has two supporters, Communist China and Soviet Russia. Mr. Mikoyan visited Jakarta a few months ago and publicly boasted that they would give Indonesia arms superior to whatever the British might be able to deploy. It is with the instigation of these two incendiaries, Moscow and Peking, that Indonesia is launched on a career of aggression against its peaceful neighbour.

If Vietnam were to fall, if the Americans were to withdraw from Vietnam after a face-saving 'neutralisation' as in Laos, then the defence of Malaysia will become immensely more difficult because of the common frontier that will be established with Chinese communist forces. And if Malaysia falls, then, we shall have Chinese communist domination right down to Singapore. That would undoubtedly be a fearsome prospect for India—to be out-flanked all the way from Karachi to Singapore, but it will also be a very dangerous situation for the free world as a whole.

The questions that arise are: How did this happen? What has gone wrong? I think it is necessary to analyse what is the

cause of this picture where there is a big threat from the North to the soft underbelly of Asia, but where the peoples of those countries and the governments, instead of facing up to the threat from the North and joining hands, are found to be quarrelling amongst themselves. Afghanistan and Pakistan, Pakistan and India, Burma and India, Ceylon and India, Cambodia and Vietnam, Malaysia and Indonesia, all natural allies, are squabbling among themselves and taking the help, sometimes, of the common enemy just to weaken their neighbours. What is the cause of this suicidal situation?

I think the basic answer is Nationalism—nationalism of a rather superficial and foolish kind—which is the cause of this failure to build up any kind of regional security against the major threat from outside.

What is the role of Nationalism in Asia today? We claim that we all live in a shrinking world, that this is One World, to use Wendell Wilkie's phrase. Undoubtedly, the objective situation calls for a world order. This is due to three factors: the elimination of distance, thanks to the supersonic jet; the elimination of distance in the way of communications, thanks to telecommunication; and the economic shrinking which makes the world a natural market. It is already potentially one market, but we divide it into bits and pieces and compartments. It has rightly been said that if someone sneezes in Peking, there is an influenza epidemic in Moscow or Washington as a result. Recently, Peking sneezed in a nuclear sense and Mr. Khrushchev was the first victim of the influenza epidemic in Moscow! This is therefore not a world of national sovereign States. Political boundaries have become, not yet meaningless, but much less meaningful than they were fifty or a hundred years ago. We find that Europe is trying to overcome these political boundaries which colour its map and become a community and a common market. The fact of interdependence is as real in Asia as in

Europe, though the readiness to see it may not yet be there.

A symptom of the fact that national sovereignty has lost real meaning was the resignation of an Iranian Prime Minister, Mr. Amini. When Mr. Amini resigned some time in 1964, the statement he made giving the reason for his resignation was most interesting. He said he had resigned because the United States was not giving his country enough economic aid! It will be agreed that this was the first time that a Prime Minister of a free country resigned as a protest against an act of another government. This shows that Iran—I mean no disrespect to Iran—has ceased to be a sovereign national state. Even the United States is no longer a sovereign national state. President Kennedy was big enough to say that the United States cannot survive alone. Neither can India.

The tragedy is that the new states of Asia and Africa have appeared on the scene as nation states too late in history. They have come into existence when the nation state is already on its way out. It is like a baby born after its time. This fact, which is becoming more and more clear as the years pass, was seen with great foresight by E. M. Forster, the British writer about India, several years ago. He wrote many years ago: 'India a nation. What an apotheosis. Last comes to the drab 19th Century sisterhood, waddling at this hour of the world to take her seat. She whose only peer was the Holy Roman Empire, she shall rank now with Guatemala and Belgium perhaps.'

This was the great insight of a novelist who saw many years ago what a tragic joke it was that a sub-continent which should really be part of a world order as a region was now professing to be a national state and joining the body of those who were about to stop being national states themselves, as Belgium is today, with Benelux on the one hand and the European community on the other.

In this context, what is the role of nationalism? I have been a nationalist

myself. I have been to British prisons more than once. I believe that Nationalism has a progressive role to play under imperialism, under foreign rule, but, as far as I can see, Nationalism has no major progressive role to play once a nation is free. Because then it is likely to become a disease, to turn into chauvinism, xenophobia. Mazzini's dream of nationalism as a stepping stone to internationalism was a very beautiful concept, but in the case of Asia or Africa today, it would be difficult to find much justification for that hope. Look at Ghana or Indonesia or Egypt. It would be very difficult to imagine these as stepping stones to real internationalism, as Mazzini had hoped. Nationalism in these countries appears to spring from a sense of inferiority. It means that the feeling that one is not free has endured. Gandhi, who was a great man, used to say under British rule: 'I feel free. Nobody can stop me from doing anything I want to. I take the consequences.' In other words, even under foreign rule, a man of courage and conscience can feel free because he is prepared to pay the price of what conscience and conviction decree. The reverse is also true—that you may get political freedom and that you may not feel free, you may not feel secure, because you still feel dominated. The result is manifest in various forms.

One of these is the thesis of Neo-colonialism. Neo-colonialism is nothing but a reflection of a subjective feeling of inferiority and insecurity that your newly won freedom will be snatched away again by some wicked person from outside. Economic aid, which should be welcome, becomes a symbol of neo-colonialism because the country receiving it is so frightened of losing its freedom that it cannot trust even its friends.

Non-alignment is another form of that sense of inferiority. Non-alignment or, as I prefer to call it, neutralism, is a moral evasion. It is a refusal to judge between freedom and tyranny, between right and wrong. It is an attempt to claim that grey

and black are the same. It is a theory of equidistance from both camps, the Democratic camp and the Communist camp. If you are equidistant between right and wrong, between freedom and tyranny, then inevitably you take the side of wrong and tyranny. Recently, the Prime Minister of India, replying to a suggestion that we should take the assistance of the American nuclear deterrent as a reply to the Chinese explosion, said: 'Yes, but we do not want to lose our sovereignty and our freedom,' as if the people of Germany, Britain, Turkey or Japan had lost their freedom by relying on the American nuclear deterrent.

A third manifestation of such a slogan of nationalism is, 'my country, right or wrong' which, as someone so aptly put it, is like saying 'my mother, drunk or sober.'

The result is described by Professor Dr. W. Salaam, an advisor to the Pakistan President, who recently wrote a series of articles on 'World Security—Poverty and Conflict.' I would like to quote a paragraph from this Pakistan thinker:

I wish to turn to the problem of local wars between the developing countries themselves. Unfortunately, the liquidation of colonial rule has introduced among us all the traditional diseases of Europe, excessive nationalism, territorial accretion, racial intolerance, and intolerance of minorities. We in our turn are as likely to flout the U.N. resolutions, as likely as any super power to go back on solemn pledges given, as likely to suppress unpopular political opinion and as likely to dishonour the obligations imposed on us by the Security Council. Most of our countries have embarked on expensive armaments programmes, directed principally against our neighbours. With what face can we go to the disarmament conferences of the world, with what face can we pass judgement on the super powers? Pakistan is spending nearly 3% of its national income on defence. I think India is currently devoting 2.5%, and this may increase to 5%. When we remember that the yearly investment rate in both

countries does not exceed 10 to 12 per cent, one can see what a tremendous difference a determined resolution of our conflicts could imply.'

These are words of wisdom coming from a Pakistani advisor to his government, and they are a fair summary of the phenomenon which I have been trying to describe.

We have talked a lot about 'anti-imperialism' all these years without really knowing what it meant. But genuine anti-imperialism includes opposition to the imperialism of one's own country. It is not good enough for us to be anti-imperialist about some other part of the world. That is very easy. It becomes very difficult to be anti-imperialist when what one is combating is a kind of incipient imperialism of one's own country. That very few people today are prepared to undertake.

Finally, there is economic nationalism—the erecting of economic boundaries to destroy that world market which should be the Liberal goal. Most of our countries are engaged in it, and our pattern of planning of course makes it inevitable, because the planning in which many of the States of Asia are engaged is basically Soviet-type planning. It is based on being self-sufficient within a number of years. Mr. Nehru, for instance, was very fond of saying that India should be free of foreign capital and assistance within ten years. I remember once when I said in Parliament in his presence that I thought that this would last over half a century, he got worked up and said: 'I am astonished that the honourable member should admit that we shall have the humiliation of being dependent on foreign capital for fifty more years.' As if something terrible were involved in accepting foreign capital! To this I pointed out that the United States takes more British Capital today than is invested by the United States in Britain without any shame or any disadvantage. This kind of resentment of foreign aid or foreign capital, which is typical of the half-baked Marxist thought which has

been dominating our countries for the last generation, this economic nationalism, leads to the desire that our Plans should be autarchic, that iron and steel plants machinery plants should eat up all the capital investment which should have gone to agriculture and the land, thereby creating a food shortage. This type of autarchic planning is economic nationalism run mad. An example of this was that some people in Nepal, I understand, have expressed the wish that Nepal should have a steel plant! It has been rightly said that a steel plant, a five year plan and supersonic jets are the status symbols of the new emerging nations!

Having analysed the role that nationalism is playing in the context of the world in which we live, we can now look forward and consider the outlook and the possible solutions to this situation. As far as I can see it, the choice before us in Asia is between taking our proper place in the world order or going in for Balkanisation. Do we want to become the Balkans of the Twentieth Century or do we want to take our proper place in the world community? This broadly is the choice. Now, the communists understand this choice. Wicked as they are in many wars, the communists are on this point more intelligent than the democrats. They realise that national sovereignty is increasingly becoming a myth. They realise that there is only one war to fight—the international cold war—an international war of ideas and ideologies where national boundaries do not count, where you either belong to one camp or the other. Therefore, to them the fight in Vietnam and the fight against India and the fight against Formosa are all sectors of the same war. There is only one war—these are sectors, but they never compartmentalise them as we do. We think that the fight in different parts of the world are different wars, but this is not so. It is one fight. The sad thing is that while the communists talk of Panchshila, the United States and the Western Democracies practise Panchshila and non-intervention,

at great cost to themselves and to their allies and friends.

What is needed is a policy of Interdependence. This means that we should shed neutralism, that we should be prepared to make moral judgements which we have evaded so far. It was a Turk, Emin Pasha, who said as far back as 1886: 'A neutral State is as Utopian a being as a neutral man.'

Now, I do not think that even genuine non-alignment has to be sacrificed. If non-alignment means, as it meant ten years ago, that a country does not rush in to take sides in the conflict between the NATO Powers and Soviet Russia, then Sweden Switzerland have been non-aligned. They are neutral. That kind of State neutrality is legitimate and understandable, and I have nothing against Swedish neutrality or Swiss neutrality. But the Swiss and the Swedes have not failed to distinguish between freedom and tyranny, between democracy and communist dictatorship. They have kept a very strong military establishment, and there is no doubt that they would use it if attacked by the Communist powers. So, I am not against State neutrality. I am against intellectual neutralism of the kind that our leaders in Asia have been preaching to us the last fifteen years.

We saw that kind of neutralism at the Cairo Conference in October. It was supposed to be a conference of non-aligned countries, in which case one might ask: What was Cuba doing at a non-aligned conference? What was Algeria doing at a non-aligned conference? And what was Indonesia doing at that Conference? On every single issue that came up, that Conference took the Soviet side against democracy, and the result was great rejoicing in Moscow at the end of the convention. For instance, the Cairo Conference sparked a declaration against Neo-colonialism and having done that it defined the fight against neo-colonialism as declaring war on Portugal and South Africa. There was not a word about Chinese colonialism in

Tibet, Vietnam or North Korea or Soviet Colonialism in the countries of Eastern Europe. Then there was a protest against the establishment of Anglo-American bases in the Indian Ocean, a thing which would be helpful to our defence. Thirdly, there was a commitment by all governments, including ours, to support the United Arab Republic against Israel on the Palestine issue and the Jordan waters issue. Is that being non-aligned between Israel and Egypt, to take sides in a domestic dispute between two countries about which we have neither any knowledge nor interest?

The so-called non-aligned Conference gave no support to India against Communist China and no support to Malaysia against Indonesia, thereby showing how much on the merits they were prepared to act. Finally, there was the treatment of Tshombe and more recently the so called horror against the rescue of innocent men, women and children in Stanleyville. If this is non-alignment, then I think the less there is of it, the better.

So far what we have considered is what we in Asia can do. Let us now consider what countries outside Asia can do, what role they have to play. I must confess that sometimes one wonders whether Europe is not turning away from Asia, whether Europe is not turning inwards and getting too preoccupied with its own internal problems. One feels that sometimes, attending conferences taking place in Europe. One finds that they are so much at sixes and sevens among themselves that the fight between the Six and Seven seems more important than the world fight against totalitarian tyranny.

Now, Liberals of course will accept the need for a helping hand from one side to the other. It can be mutual. Economic aid has been one of the expressions of that concern, and it has been very generous. The United States in particular and many other countries have given very generously of their economic treasure to help the underdeveloped countries.

Here I must enter a warning, which is

that economic aid, while generally helpful, can also harm; that the money can be well used or it can be wasted, and unfortunately a great deal is being wasted. Take for instance, the aid to India. The U.S. Government aid and British aid and West German aid is to some extent wasted because it is not given under proper conditions, because the right kind of strings are not attached, as they should be. If money is given for building a steel plant, as Germany and Britain have, that money is largely wasted, because that money does not give a quick return on the capital invested. So far, the German and the British plants have made colossal losses. This has saddled India with a big debt. If the money had been used for agriculture or road building or electric power, it would have given manifold returns and it would have been more productively used. It is good that the American Congress turned down, last year, the idea of another steel plant, which our Government unwisely wanted. That was the beginning of economic wisdom on the part of the United States. It is very important that the country that gives the money is satisfied that the purpose for which the money is used is the right purpose. This is not political interference and, if it is, it is sound interference because national sovereignty has become meaningless when you give and accept economic aid. I would say that one government should refuse to give another government economic aid except for legitimate purposes, and a Liberal would say that a legitimate purpose is the building of the infrastructure, the provision of irrigation, transport, communications, technical education and know-how, may be electric power. But to give money to another government to produce articles of manufacture, whether it is penicillin or steel, is wrong. It is wrong because it is unsound in principle, it is wrong because it is often wasteful, because these governments produce those articles at high cost, they mulct the consumer, and waste the money and incur

debt. For that kind of thing, these governments should be referred to the money market. The United States Government should give money for infrastructure, but, for anything else, they should ask them to raise equity capital.

Equity capital is in the interest of the developing country. If someone gives us a government to government loan, then we are bound to pay back the loan and the interest charges, however unwisely we use that money. If our government pours it down the drain, we still have to pay the capital and interest. This is not so with equity capital. When equity capital comes in, it comes in at its own risk. The man who brings in his money has to make a profit. If he does not make a profit, then he loses it and goes back empty handed. We lose nothing. Therefore, the insistence on the investment of equity capital is highly important from the viewpoint of the national interest of the backward countries.

A second factor is intellectual cooperation and aid. It would be fair to say that economic aid has outrun intellectual or ideological aid. True friendship requires frankness and not just politeness. Too many foreign experts, so called, and foreign politicians visit our countries and, without knowing what they are doing, they give a fine certificate to our governments, which are often engaged in doing something irresponsible. The result is that it becomes twice as difficult to open the eyes of our peoples and to educate our electorates about the mistakes of our Governments. They can always say, but look what Professor so and so from England or Mr. so and so from America said. *They* think we are all right, why are *you* bellyaching? Now this is something which has become very painful to Liberals and democrats in these countries. We find our position being continually eroded by well-meaning, starry-eyed gentlemen from abroad who think it is very good to tell the poor dears that they are doing very nicely. In other words, I do not think it is

a compliment to be so indulgent to the poor dears. The poor dears should be judged by the same strict standards by which they judge themselves and, if by those standards we are doing something wrong, we should be told that we are doing something wrong.

In a way we in Asia are where Europe was a generation back. Europe was involved in the Cold War and was threatened of being overrun in the years after World War II. Europe has some kind of a detente now and one hopes it continues

but, if Europe has entered 'the end of the age of ideology' Asia has not. The 'end of ideology' sounds very nice in Geneva or London, but the end of ideology has no meaning at the present time in Asia because we are very much engaged in the Cold War which has now become acute on our side. Partly, it is a shooting war. Asia's position is similar to that of Europe in the years after the War when NATO was formed, when there was Marshal Aid and the Truman Plan. It is in that age that we in Asia live today.

The Roots of the Dominican Crisis

THEODORE DRAPER

WHEN Dominican President Juan Bosch was overthrown in September 1963, President Kennedy publicly deplored the military coup, broke off diplomatic relations with the new self-appointed Dominican government, halted all economic and military aid, and withdrew U.S. personnel from Santo Domingo. Though diplomatic relations were re-established three months later, Bosch did not complain of the U.S. government's lack of sympathy. He recalled, on the contrary, that U.S. Ambassador John Bartlow Martin had offered to call for the U.S. carrier *Boxer* to deter the military conspirators. But Bosch did not wish to owe his political survival to a show of U.S. force in Dominican waters, and refused the offer.

On May 2 of the present crisis, President Johnson declared that the pro-Bosch uprising had begun as 'a popular democratic revolution committed to democracy and social justice.' He also said: 'We hope to see a government freely chosen by the will of all the people.' On May 3, the chief U.S. spokesman at the United Nations, Adlai Stevenson, assured the world organization that the U.S. government had 'never' considered Bosch's political party to be 'extremist' and called attention to U.S. 'cooperation' with Bosch's regime in 1963.

From all this it would seem that the general line of U.S. policy in the present crisis should have been quite clear—firm support of the man who headed the only government freely chosen by the will of the Dominican people in this century. The last thing one would have expected, if words were deeds, was U.S. support of the militarists who overthrew him in 1963 and were fighting him two years later.

To understand how and why a mockery

was made of everything the United States supposedly stood for, it is necessary to go back at least as far as Bosch's term of office and its immediate antecedents. The present crisis is, in essence, merely a continuation of the process which led to Bosch's overthrow. If the military coup of 1963 was a crude political swindle, as U.S. official policy statements have implicitly agreed, the military cabal to prevent Juan Bosch's return to power in 1965 was exactly the same thing.

Nothing has changed, not even the names.

In December 1962, Bosch's *Partido Revolucionario Dominicano* (PRD) won an overwhelming electoral victory. But it was an unexpected victory, at least for his conservative opposition, the *Unión Cívica Nacional* (UCN), which could not reconcile itself to defeat. Bosch took office on February 27 the following year, and he learned of a plot to overthrow him on March 9, ten days later. Another coup was scheduled for April, a very serious one barely failed to come off in July, a third miscarried in August, and the successful one was perpetrated in September.

In the atmosphere of Santo Domingo, these conspiracies were known to Bosch almost as soon as they were hatched. When Bosch heard of the last one, he called the military leaders to his office and decided to force a showdown by demanding the dismissal of one of the ringleaders. The officer he named was Colonel Elias Wessin y Wessin of the San Isidro Air Base outside the capital. In reply, the military made Bosch a prisoner in his own office for four days and then put him on a boat to the island of Guadeloupe, from which he quickly made his way to Puerto Rico. Less

QUEST IS BEING CHANGED from 'a bimonthly of arts and ideas' to 'a quarterly journal of inquiry, criticism and constructive thought'. If that sounds a bit ambitious, we must say at the outset that we are a bit ambitious. . . . We would add, however, that it is by no means our intention to eschew creative literature and the other arts altogether, though the emphasis henceforth will be on 'ideas' rather than on 'arts'.

In the first policy statement of this journal occurs the sentence: 'Quest's policy is to deal specifically with cultural questions and with politics by implication.' We endorse that, but would like to be a little more analytical. The word 'politics' is used in two different though interdependent senses. In one sense 'politics' borders on 'ethics' and refers to the goals and ideals which society puts before itself; it is concerned with the investigation and evaluation of social growth. In this sense politics is very much a cultural question, and will be treated as such by *Quest*. Which does not mean that we are intending to turn it into a journal of political science. Politics will have to take its place alongside history, economics, society, metaphysics, ethics, the positive sciences, the theory and criticism of literature and other arts, as well as creative literature. We are inviting contributions on all these topics, only reminding our contributors that they will be writing not for the specialist but for the generally intelligent and educated layman. The attempt should be at simplicity without superficiality, at thoroughness without the minutiae of scholarship.

It is politics in the other sense, in the sense of day to day political practice, of the party line, of national and international conflict, which will be dealt with only by implication, i.e., in so far as it has bearing on cultural questions. On one particular cultural question, however, even current politics has the strongest bearing—the question of cultural freedom. And our journal, sponsored by the Indian Committee for Cultural Freedom, is naturally concerned with that question in a very special way.

It is sad to reflect that here in this country, by and large, we are not so deeply stirred by the issue of cultural freedom as are the thinkers and writers of the West. That is so for two reasons. Firstly, we are not fully aware of the threat to cultural freedom that has been rumbling in the

political clouds of the last few decades. Secondly, we have had a long tradition of being reconciled to or even happy at the fact of culture (to be more specific, thought and art) serving as the handmaid to theology and religion. And we are not quite over that tradition yet.

One of the most vital elements in the European renaissance was the assertion of the freedom of thought and art from any kind of subservience, the assertion of their claim to be spheres of experience possessing intrinsic worth. Such a renaissance has yet to come to fruition on the Indian soil. Its very promising efflorescence in mid-nineteenth century Bengal was largely swept away by gusts of revivalism and nationalist hyperaesthesia to everything Western.

But we will not be dogmatic about our conception of cultural renaissance. If any one wants to hold forth that knowledge and art have other ends beyond themselves, e.g., moral upliftment, the establishment of a classless society based on justice and human brotherhood, or deepening our intuition of unity with the Cosmos or with God, we shall not dispute his right to maintain that. But we must insist that what ends knowledge and art are to serve, whether intrinsic to themselves or extrinsic, is for the individual thinker and artist to determine. This is what we mean by the freedom of culture; and we hold that this freedom is a sacred right of all those who work in the fields of culture, and of those who enjoy its fruits.

We will treat with respect all views and attitudes however different from ours provided they are presented with reason, tolerance and competence. As believers in the primacy of freedom, we cannot naturally claim to possess the truth or any monopoly of wisdom. Against one thing only our opposition is total—and that is anti-reason. Although we are ready to admit the limitations of reason, and certainly of our own reasoning powers, we reject totally its total rejection. If that is intolerance, then we are intolerant to that extent, but precisely to that extent. With unreason we intend to hold no truck; with reason that follows a line different from ours we shall always be patient, ready to be persuaded and eager to persuade. We extend our invitation to all those who have views which they consider worth expressing, whether they agree with us or differ from us. This journal is an open forum.

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