

THREE WONDERS OF
COMPRADORISM
AND
THE TRAGIC FARCE OF OUR
CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY

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5, 2nd Floor, 372 A, Cadell Road,
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Price Rs. 40/-

1989.

to

Ram Manohar Lohia,

that intrepid militant left socialist,
who first drew my attention to the fact
that the dynasty which claims credit for
all the achievements of free India,
is the real source of all evil,
is the actual beneficiary of all corruption,
is the true saboteur of all standards;
and to
all my fellow-writers in **Mankind**,
that superb little fighting journal,
I pay my humble tribute.

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I. Introductory Remarks.

The politics of each country has its peculiarities. We in India are unique in innumerable ways. Generally speaking, such characteristics are determined by the geographical location and size, demographic density, historical antecedents, cultural parameters, and so on, of each country. However, after subjecting the problem of national peculiarities to multiple rational analyses, there is always a residue which defies easy explanation. For instance, the Japanese and the Koreans suffer from a peculiar national trait of "saving the face". Just the other day, a South Korean ex-president confessed to his crimes, returned his ill-gotten gains to the nation and became a Buddhist monk. Only two weeks ago an aide, Mr Aiko to the Japanese prime minister committed harakiri or ritual suicide. Similarly, the English are not only cowardly bullies, which is explicable (a small off-shore island of Europe became beyond its means, the possessor of a vast empire just because it was almost the first country to accomplish successfully the bourgeois revolution). They are also incorrigible gamblers¹ which, is not so easy to understand. The Germans have a peculiar madness for military precision and humourless perfectionism.

I am sure for all the above, and such other, national traits, some rational explanation, however elaborate, recondite and involved it may be, can be found. In fact, that is the purpose of describing national peculiarities so that we may focus our research. The description enables us to aim at a target.

There are many Indian peculiarities. I do not think we can ever make an exhaustive list of them. In this paper, I would like to concentrate on three, which could lead us onto fruitful investigations :

1. How and why do we consider India a democracy when the ruling party has had no internal democracy for decades and where the rulers follow dynastic succession?
2. How is it that the Communist Party of India, or any faction thereof, has never attempted seizure of power at the national level throughout its seventy years of existence? Failures and defeats, we can understand, but why no attempt?
3. How did it come about that after forty three years of life, the Socialists of India committed a mass harakiri and dissolved their party into a non-socialist force? The British imperialist Ramsay Macdonald's example must have "inspired" the Indian Socialists, but even in degenerate England, only a fraction of

1. Bismarck actually felt that the ruling classes of England would be able to stave off the social revolution so long as the ordinary Englishman continued to indulge in his passion for horse races. And this was before the modern era of Football Pools, and street corner Bucket Shops, where you could openly gamble on literally anything under the sun, including the probability of rain on a date and time.

the Labour Party was dissolved into the Liberals and the Conservatives.
Not the whole of the Party!

We will take up these three peculiarities of our party politics concerning
the Socialists, the Communists, and the Congress I in that order.

II. THE PSEUDO-SOCIALISTS OF INDIA

The Socialist Party of India was formed in 1934, I believe, in Nasik jail. Its programme of 1934 was a very radical one, hardly distinguishable from the programmes adopted by the breakaway factions of the Second International after the first World War, those which became the nuclei of the future Communist Parties of those countries.

As a matter of fact, the Communists and Socialists of India had joined hands in the late thirties for two or three years (1937-39),² and had worked together for a short while inside the Congress in co-operation with other radical groups.

But the permanent socialist traits of betrayal, reformist gradualism, unprincipled compromise and narrow-minded careerism were visible from quite early on :

1. During the Gandhi-Subhas Crisis (Haripura and Tripuri sessions of the INC, 1938-39), they betrayed the radical wing of the Congress and ensured the defeat of Subhas by remaining neutral on a crucial vote.
2. The original 1934 programme was whittled down into an absolutely innocuous affair by the fifties and the sixties.
3. The lust for personal power was such that the Socialist Party of India split again and again into PSP, SSP, etc. not to speak of the innumerable state-level groupings that arose and disappeared from time to time.
4. One president of the party overnight became Vice-Chairman of the Central Planning Commission and resigned from party presidentship.³
5. Pattom Thanu Pillai of Kerala not only ordered merciless police firing upon unarmed workers and peasants, but suddenly joined the ruling Congress and became the Governor of Punjab! (1960-62).

Anyway, despite all such pre-figurations, the decision in 1977 to dissolve the Socialist Party into the Janata Party was a breathtaking decision even by the abysmal socialist standards. How could a bunch of avowed socialist leaders actually dissolve their own party into something totally non-socialist is, I think, one of the seven wonders of world politics!

We can search and search for a rational explanation. We can point to many treacherous indications and antecedents but somehow the complete explanation eludes me, at least for the time being!

2. In fact, many of the top leaders of CPI(M) were leaders of the erstwhile Congress Socialist Party. Nambudiripad was a secretary for the South of CSP, and Gopalan, Ramamurthy, and Sundarayya were leaders of the CSP for Kerala, Tamil Nadu, and Andhra, respectively.

3. This depraved opportunist was Asoka Mehta.

III. THE IMPERIO-COMMUNISTS OF INDIA

The Communist Party of India was formed in 1919-25;⁴ From the beginning its record was one of subservience to foreign dictates, treacherous anti-nationalism, disruptionism and acting as agent-provocateurs :

1. It is astounding and possibly unparalleled in the history of the world communist movement, that a leader of the stature of S.A. Dange should offer to work as an imperialist spy in the early thirties and that this whole imbroglia should be exposed by an Old Communist like Muzzaffar Ahmad. Even more strange was the cover-up of Dange's criminal offer organised by the right-wing bourgeois politician Morarji Desai, who withdrew the dangerous file from the National Archives.

2. The Communist Party of India was not even ruled directly by Stalin's Moscow. It was controlled through CPGB. And the Indian Communists actually acquiesced in this imperialist control over them by Britishers like Bradley, Sprott, Henderson, Poliit, and Palme Dutt.⁵

3. The communists not only played imperialist politics, but physically assaulted nationalists right in the midst of the anti-imperialist movement of 1931-34.⁶

4. The communists disrupted the unity of the trade union movement of India and split the AITUC, when the Indian working class was waging a life and death struggle for survival, during the Great Depression.

5. The communists vigorously supported the communal and disruptionist demand for the partitioning of India by the British Stooze, the Muslim League.

6. The communists made a 180° turn and swung from "Imperialist War" to "People's War" in the middle of the Second World War (1939-41 to 1941-45) and completely disoriented the masses and the intelligentsia.

7. During the "People's War" period, the communists performed the most dastardly deeds for the British and actually acted as spies and agent-provocateurs.⁷

4. There are several alternative dates, depending on the whether M.N. Roy or Radek or Virendra Chattopadhyaya or some other historical personage is to be given credit or not. Anyway, the CPI itself believes that 1925 was the critical year. See select bibliography at the end.

5. See bibliography attached to S.P. Singh's work, cited in Select Bibliography at the end.

6. At Chowpatty in Bombay. This incident is too well known to need reference.

7. I was personally victimised by a communist agent-provocateur, who infiltrated our Trotskyist-Nationalist General Motors' cell, which had organised a strike in their assembly plant in Bombay in 1942-43. As a result, scores of our comrades were arrested and after a heavy repression lasting several months, the strike was suppressed.

The list of "dirty tricks" performed by the communists during 1925-47 is infinite. Right from the beginning, the CPI took a consistently anti-nationalist and pro-imperialist stand. But whatever the twists and turns, it is amazing that after nearly seventy years they have never attempted to call for a National General Strike or a National Seizure of Power!

Contrast our condition with that of China, where the CPC was formed in 1921 and seized power after just twenty eight years.⁸ Take Vietnam, where the party was formed by the late twenties. And this party fought possibly the longest armed anti-imperialist struggle in world history. The CPVN defeated French imperialism in eight years between 1946-54 and then American imperialism in another twenty, between 1955-75. The Cuban communist party⁹ seized power in 1959, within a decade or two of coming into being.

What are the doddering, cowardly, aging leaderships of the CPI or CPI(M) upto? What is the revolutionary perspective to which they are wedded? To launch regional peasant agitation like Tebhaga and Telangana? To win state elections in Kerala, West Bengal, Tripura and perhaps Pondicherry and Lakshadweep? What the hell is going on?

Stalin, of course, committed many crimes against the Old Bolsheviks, against communists in general, against the Russian people and against humanity which Gorbachev's *glasnost* is exposing today. But why and how come Indian communists succumbed to his dictates when he wielded no OGPU, no GPU, no MVD in India? Khrushchev reported at the 20th Congress of the CPSU that Stalin's favourite macabre joke was to ask those who opposed him: "Do you want to awake tomorrow morning shortened by a head?"

But the Indian communists did not need the Russian police or Russian army to obey Stalin's horrible orders. Just the prospect of a free tour to USSR or the promise of a free medical treatment was enough.

The central problem is: How are the Indian people going to end the capitalist exploitation of man by man in India without throwing up a national revolutionary communist party?

8. Even during those twenty eight years, there had been several other unsuccessful efforts at seizure of power. The wisdom of such ultra-left coup attempts we do not want to question here, but the boldness of the Chinese communists is what we want to draw attention to. As Danton said, for revolutionaries the dictum is always: "Audacity! More audacity! And still more audacity!"

9. Not the official Stalinist group which had joined dictator Batista's coalition, but the real militant group led by Fidel Castro and Che Guevarra.

IV. THE DYNASTIC DRAMA OF AN AUTHORITARIAN DEMOCRACY

The strangest *baniagiri* is visible in the case of the ruling Congress (I) Party. Neither I, nor any other student of Indian politics, can remember the last democratic elections held inside the Congress Party. Perhaps when Purushottamdas Tandon defeated Nehru's nominee and was later forced to resign, was the last such occasion (1950). May be some vestiges of democratic norms survived till Nehru was alive (1964) and till the time that the so-called Syndicate (Nijalingappa, Kamaraj, S.K. Patil, Atulya Ghose and Sanjiva Reddy) could defy Indira (1969). But definitely after 1969 for the last twenty years there have been no elections whatsoever within the Congress Party. The self-appointed President of the Party nominates all committees including the Parliamentary Committee, which selects all Congress legislators; nominates all state Chief Ministers of all Congress (I)-ruled states; nominates all state-level and district-level Congress Committees; and so on. Elections within the party were promised by Indira and Rajiv time and again, and have been repeatedly postponed. In fact, promises of elections within the Congress (I) have become a chimerical joke.

Furthermore, the only "evidence" of democracy within the Congress is provided by the phenomenon of dissidence, and the toppling of Congress Governments by Congressmen themselves. There are not many Congress-ruled states where the Chief Ministers have not changed several times within the term of a single legislature, wherein the Congress party enjoyed a majority.

Since the last state elections, Bihar, U.P., and Maharashtra have had six Chief Ministers all from the Congress Party. Other Congress-I ruled states have had between 2-5 changes of leadership. The Telugu Desam Party of Andhra defeated Congress (I) twice precisely on the grounds that the Congress high command interfered with the state capriciously and arbitrarily.

Apart from the phenomenon of the absence of democracy within the ruling party, we have the ridiculous spectacle of dynastic succession. I feel completely exasperated when a Congressman talks about democracy: 'How can democracy be reconciled with dynastic rule by three generations of Nehru-Gandhis? This is so elementary that I refuse to argue about it. Anyone who can reconcile democracy and dynastic rule is either ignorant of the meaning of the word democracy, or is a fool, or is a scoundrel. In all probability, he is all three combined.

Even when England was an Oligarchy, at the most a son succeeded a father, and that on a rare occasion (the Pitts). That Jawaharlal Nehru should

be succeeded by his daughter Indira Gandhi, who in turn should be followed by Rajiv Gandhi, is a mind-boggling fact. Of course, the Congress Party had to be vertically split twice, in 1969 and in 1978, to ensure precisely this dynastic succession.

A nagging doubt remains: How has this been possible? Why have Indians reposed such blind faith in the talents of a single wretched family? This family has been known for its extreme corruption; nepotism; near illiteracy in the third (Indira) and fourth (Sanjay-Rajiv) generations counting from Moti Nehru; and for its capricious, arrogant, and wasteful outlook from the first generation itself. I remember the day when Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia shocked the nation by proving that Jawahar spent rupees 25,000/- a day on himself.¹⁰ To day, even allowing for the drastic depreciation of the rupee, we have reached a point when a few crores spent by Rajiv on a single visit to a state lasting a day or two or on a single holiday at the end of each of the last four years or on his personal praetorian guard (the budget for prime minister's personal security has been calculated at rupees 7.5 crores for 1989-90) does not arouse even a murmur. For the celebration of the centenary of Rajiv's grand-father's birth, coinciding with the election year 1988-89, it is estimated that the centre and the state governments will spend in excess of rupees one thousand crores. For a single cultural institution in New Delhi associated with the name of Indira Gandhi, the construction of the building complex alone will entail an expenditure of several hundred crores.

The expenditure on Rajiv per day is not Rs. 25,000/- as on Jawahar, nor Rs. 2,50,000/- as it probably was on Indira, but over Rs. 25,00,000/- a day at the least! If kickbacks and commissions are counted probably Rajiv makes or forces the nation to spend on himself, over one crore rupees per day.

And what kind of government have the three Nehru dynasts provided India with? A state that kills scores of its citizens every day, in one fracas after another; a state in which innocent people cannot make even a bus journey in the North-West, in North-Bengal, in North-of-Brahmaputra Assam, in safety; a state which has extracted almost the highest rate of taxation in the world from its inhabitants; a state which has the power to jail any citizen without trial or even without intimation to him of the grounds of his detention; a state which is so shameless in its loot and oppression of the people that one is compelled to hang one's head in shame.¹¹

Really, how is democracy conceivable under the Nehru dynasty? And how did such a cruel joke get perpetrated upon the Indian people?

10. Lohia even wrote a book titled, "Rs. 25,000/- a Day"

11. The speaker of the Lok Sabha, supposedly the repository of rectitude and propriety in "democratic" India, one Balaram Jakhar, has just this week (May 15, 1989) admitted responsibility for robbing Rs. 3.6 crores for his cronies who obtained exemption from equivalent customs duty using his name which he willingly lent. Obviously, Jakhar must have had his share of the loot!

That the Nehrus hailed from U.P., the biggest Indian state; that Jawahar's father was a rich lawyer, who flourished amidst Zamindar litigants; that Jawahar was rich enough to secure foreign education in prestigious English schools and colleges; that he possessed an extraordinary cunning and relentless careerist drive; that being a Kashmiri emigrant to U.P. he possessed the advantage of being an "outsider"; that being by nature a kala-gumasta, he found fulfillment in acting as a middle-man and a dalal between an imperialism and its subject people; these and other reasons do explain some part of the mystique. However, there remains an unexplained part.

Why do Indians, by and large, continue to elect such Congressmen as M.Ps., who in their majority are dynastic supporters?

I do not think that I can provide a complete answer. Nevertheless, it is obviously my moral duty, as a social scientist, to seek and suggest a solution.

I think, on the whole, we Indians live an extremely deprived existence. We are so poor that local Congress goons are able to herd us into election booths periodically, and to force, bribe, cajole, and frighten us into voting for such Congress M.Ps. who have already been pre-selected to favour dynastic succession.

Secondly, we are a masochistic people. Poverty has stripped us of the last vestiges of self-respect. We have become deliberately perverse. We do not want a better or a healthier alternative. We have come to the conclusion that life has no meaning, that existence is mortification, that there is not and cannot be a better future for us. We are born to endure filth and rascality and sycophancy. There is no choice; hence let there be one Nehru dynast after another. They are rotten and we deserve only the rottener, and we shall have the rotten-most.

Thirdly, hopelessness is our national trait. That Rajiv is a habitual liar; that he is an aggressively low-brow, badly educated, corrupt; that he has caused to be collected hundreds of crores of rupees as kickbacks and commissions from foreign arms suppliers; and that he is a man of extremely low taste, is by now abundantly clear to millions of Indians. But the trouble is that Indians are wedded to despair. They do not believe in anything like a better future. That is quite out of the question. Hence let Rajiv's nefarious ways continue.

Jawahar won his elections on the basis of Nationalism (he partitioned the country in reality) and Socialism (which naturally as a comprador capitalist, he had never intended to introduce); Indira won on the basis of **Garibi Hatao** (when actually the garibs multiplied) and now Rajiv proposes to win on the slogans "universal employment" and "power to the people through panchayats" (when, in the true family tradition, he proposes

to increase unemployment and deprive the people of whatever little power they are today enjoying through a reactionary 64th Amendment to the Constitution).

I am sorry, but no other rational explanation for the electoral behaviour of Indians occurs to me. Had our people the slightest sense of self-respect, they would never have flagellated themselves with Rajiv.

V. CONCLUSION

It is said that Indians are hero-worshippers; that they have always reposed blind faith in their semi-feudal rulers, etc , etc., I believe, these are canards against the Indian people.

There is nothing basically wrong with the Indian people. They are not fundamentally foolish or idiotic or anything like that.

They are just very poor and this poverty has induced certain perversities. Any other people, had they been so poor, for such a long time, would have behaved in the same way.

I think that the world does not know enough about the **quality of Indian poverty**. The President of India has just the other day admitted that the per capita income has not risen over the entire period of independence.¹²

This is the real meaning of Nehru-Gandhi dynastic rule. It has managed to keep the average Indian at the level of imperialist exploitation in apparently free India.

It is not the dimension of the absolute poverty alone or the fact that 50% to 60% of the people in India live below the poverty line that confronts us.¹³

It is the dimension of inequality which is truly horrendous. The top quintile of the Indian population appropriates half the national income, seven times the share of the bottom quintile. (The top decile misappropriates one third or almost five times the bottom quintile!)¹⁴

Nearly 80% of the population lives in the villages of India, though agriculture generates only around one-third of the national income.¹⁵

The rate of pauperisation of the Indian people is truly astounding. Over the last few decades, the number of landless labourers have multiplied enormously. From about 17% of the total work force in 1961, the proportion has risen to almost 25% in 1981.

Let us not burden our text with too many minute details. What is clear is that the poor in India are extremely numerous, extraordinarily deprived and

12. Speech by R. Venkataraman reported in Indian Express, Bombay, 17.04.89.

13. Poverty is officially defined in India as income below monetised food intake level of less than 1550 calories per day. In other words, a level of intermittent total starvation and intermittent mal-nutrition. See, Vinayak Purohit, *Arts of Transitional India*, Vol. I, Chapter IV, 1986, Popular Prakashan, Bombay.

14. World Bank, *Development Report*, 1988, Table 26.

15. See latest report on National Income by Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy, Bombay.

are multiplying amazingly fast.

This is the measure of the success of the Nehru-Gandhi dynasty. They have managed to fool a significant minority¹⁶ of the Indian people for over forty two years. The Indian people have nothing and the dynasty has everything.

It is now abundantly clear that enormous commissions and kickbacks in foreign exchange have been misappropriated personally by Rajiv and deposited in Swiss Banks and other accounts abroad.¹⁷ Corruption is no longer an ethical issue in India. It is an economic one. It is a question of a real drain of wealth, not qualitatively different from the imperialist drain of the period 1765-1947. The annual deposits in Switzerland alone of stolen money from India has been estimated by the International Monetary Fund as a several thousand crores of rupees.¹⁸

The sycophancy has reached unbelievable levels. It is more than probable that the number of times Moti, Jawahar, Indira and Rajiv have farted will be totalled up and the nation will be asked to celebrate the dynasty's millionth fart!

This is not a joke. It is a serious possibility. A little girl in a children's programme from Patna AIR, who spontaneously recited a ditty making the rounds recently, namely, that "Gali gali men shor hai, Rajiv Gandhi chor hai",¹⁹ caused heads to roll. Officials were suspended, the Station Director was transferred, and so on.

Attempts to launch Sonia and Priyanka (Rajiv's wife and daughter) into political careers, have already received nation-wide publicity.

It is nauseating beyond belief. How can there be democracy in India when the Congress Party, which has been almost continuously in power, is handled dictatorially? How can there be democracy, when the qualifications to rule are restricted to one family?²⁰

This is the sort of political set up we possess. On the one hand, an absolutely degenerate dynastic rule backed up by a semi-fascist authoritarian party which has not had an internal election for twenty years.

16. The Congress has never won an election with absolute majority of all those entitled to vote. Less than 50% of those eligible actually vote at any election and of even this minority Congress usually gets a minority, since the opposition votes are generally divided. Roughly my personal estimate is that Congress has received between 20% to 40% of the total votes at any election.

17. Eminent jurist Shanti Bhushan has just this week (May 1989) asked the President to permit prosecution of Rajiv Gandhi in a court of law.

18. See. Study summarised in *Indian Express*, Bombay, of 16.11.1988. See also despatch in *Indian Express*, Bombay, of 08.11.1988 and Jay Dubashi's column in *Indian Post*, Bombay, of 17.10.1988.

19. Hindi Couplet meaning "The shout is going round in the streets that Rajiv Gandhi is a thief."

20. See, my Note On The Indian Constituent Assembly.

On the other hand, a non-existent Socialist Party, whose surviving scattered and scatter-brained leaders have ceased to be even mildly reformist. Also on the other hand, an aging, decrepit, doddering, divided, anti-nationalist, compradorist, communist leadership which has never had and does not have a revolutionary perspective before it. It is a truly calamitous situation.

The Indian people have reached the nadir. It is impossible for them to sink lower. The Controller and Auditor General of India has severely indicted the Rajiv Government for its grossest irregularities in the Bofors deal. Further, the Chief of Army Staff has nailed Rajiv's lies. I do not think that the Indian bourgeoisie, however compradorist, stupid, weak and divided it may be, will allow the Indian people to elect a Prime Minister who has lost faith with the Indian Army. Thus, the downfall of Rajiv, and with him the end of the Nehru-Gandhi Dynasty, seems to be within sight at the forthcoming elections in Nov 1989. I also see faint, but definite signs of rethinking and regrouping on the Left. The CPI-ML cadres, who are the best available in the country, appear to have corrected their suicidal course of senseless violence, and are poised to join the mainstream. Thus the end of the Rajiv, of the Nehru-Gandhi Dynasty, and probably of the nightmare of Congress (I) rule seems to be at hand.

In any case, I have not lost heart. I still hope for a better life for our people. I remain an internationalist marxist, a socialist and a revolutionary communist. I do not believe that a whole people, all eighty crores of them, can be totally lost or written-off. Bal Gangadhar Tilak once wrote that "There are no people so miserable as those of India. If a sinful man is to be punished, he should be sent to India."²¹

This may have been true at one time, and may be partially true even to-day. But I have faith in the Indian people:

Sare jahanse achha, Hindustan hamara!
Ham Bulbule hain uske, wo gulsitan hamara!
Yunan Misra Ruman, Sab mit gaye jahanse,
Phirbhi magar hai baki, Hindustan hamara!
Sare jahanse achha.....

21. Quoted in Vinayak Purohit's *Arts of Transitional India*, Vol. 1, p.324.

The Tragic Farce of Our Constituent Assembly

As a comprador society, we have an inveterate tendency to boast. A lie has been repeated too often to the effect that we are the largest democracy in the world, bigger than U.S.A., that we are infinitely better than dictatorial U.S.S.R. and China. As a matter of fact we are neither a democracy nor exactly a dictatorship. We are a transitional system not yet fully settled even in the direction of our political movement.

We similarly boast of possessing the third largest pool of technical manpower (after U.S.A. and U.S.S.R.), though the net output of R & D achievement by our National Laboratories is so far behind the world, that we may be better than merely the poorest African nations.

But let us stick to the matter of "democracy", where we are supposedly ahead of U.S.A., U.K. etc., in the matter of electoral size, if not anything else.

Let us examine the issue *ab initio*, that is, historically:

1. Our Constituent Assembly was formed under the aegis of the British army, which was ruling India as a Colonial power in the year 1946, when it first met. This is a very important historical fact. We did not "elect" the C.A. as a free people after achieving independence. We were slaves of British imperialism when an assembly named "Constituent Assembly" was created.
2. We did not elect the so-called Constituent Assembly at all, in any real sense. What happened was that the provincial Legislative Assemblies of British Indian provinces, under the colonial constitution of 1935 were re-formed. These re-formed L.A.s indirectly elected the members of the new C.A. of 1946-50 (in part only, see below).
3. The Franchise granted by the 1935 Constitution was a mere 12%, on the basis of property, education, and similar extremely restrictive qualifications.
4. Not only was the franchise restricted but the constituencies were, first of all, communally segregated, Muslims, Hindus, Parsis, Europeans, Anglo-Indians, Indian Christians, Sikhs, etc., voted in separate constituencies. Not only that, there were approximately forty other types of segregations, e.g., landlords, women, trade unionists, planters, businessmen, and so on, voted as distinct entities. Not only that, but the communal and the other "Specialist" divisions criss-crossed. In other words, Sikh Landlords voted separately, as did English planters.

Let us recapitulate. The Constituent Assembly was not formed by the free

people of India. It was formed under the colonial aegis. It was based indirectly upon a 12% franchise. It was elected by a 12% electorate fragmented into hundreds of constituencies, racially, communally and in other ways divided. Even the rolls under the 1935 constitution were not revised. The same old rolls of 1937 were reutilised as "living fossils".

But that is not the end of the story. There are still more funny twists.

5. More than one third of the members of the so-called C.A. were nominees of princelings. No elections of any sort whatsoever took place in the native states, indirectly or otherwise, with 12% franchise or less or more, with communal and other "specialist" electorates or otherwise. One third of the C.A. Members were just nominees and stooges of 600-odd miserable native princelings. For instance, B.R. Ambedkar, former member of the Viceroy's Executive Council and intimate collaborator of imperialism, supposedly the father of the Indian Constitution, was a nominee of a princeling. He was not a elected member at all.

It is a gross imperialist and comprador lie to call such a conglomerate of dubashes, dalals, brokers, commission agents, banias, kala gumastas and pimps a legitimate Constituent Assembly of the free people of India. By no stretch of imagination can such a worthless body be termed representative of the aspirations of the people of India. It was ab initio, from its birth, a bogus and non-sensical body incapable of formulating a real constitution for the free people of India.

Let us summarise: the C.A. was formed by British Imperialism in its own interest under a colonial constitution granted by it in 1935. Its primary task was to meet in sections and thereby decide to divide the nation. It was designed to partition the country three ways: West Pakistan, India and East Pakistan, which later became Bangladesh.

It was partly and indirectly chosen at most by only one out of eight adult Indians. The Indian National Congress of kala-gumastas has since 1946 maintained that elections were then "impractical" (1945-46). This is rubbish. For a revolutionary people on the verge of independence there are no times that are impractical to hold elections to elect a body to give themselves their fundamental law.

If elections could be held to re-form the old British Indian provincial Assemblies, why could not they be held on the basis of universal adult franchise to directly elect a Constituent Assembly which would embody the aspirations and desires of the entire Indian people?

Thus the elections were conducted under a restricted and fragmented franchise of 12% to elect indirectly only two thirds of the members of a bogus assembly of compradors, with the remaining one third nominated by

the native princelings, this bogus assembly being formed under the heels of the British army, having as its principal task the partition of the country.

Is it at all surprising that such a disreputable set of imperialist minions produced a constitution that is entirely undemocratic? A constitution which has never granted fundamental democratic freedoms to the people of India! A constitution that has permitted preventive detention from the beginning! A constitution that perpetuates in practice the rule of a single party and a single family! How can this shameful constitution be termed democratic?

It is ridiculous to suggest that the Indian Constitution is democratic.

The Indian Constitution is not democratic at all. It is hypocritic.

The Indian Constitution is a cruel comprador joke. In practice it is even worse. It perpetuates at least ninety clauses of the old imperialist constitution of 1935.

By devious saving clauses it perpetuates the entire legal framework of the British colonial system of India. In Indian courts, even today, the entire system of precedents relates to colonial India.

It is a lie to suggest that we are living under a democratic law of free India. We are living under a largely British colonial legal system, as marginally modified by a few minor cosmetic alterations.

There are still further grave qualifications to the so-called Indian democracy.

Upto 1989, we have made a series of sixty-five amendments to the constitution at the rate of over one and half per year and almost every one of them has taken away or further restricted the rights of the citizens of India (especially amendments No. 1,16,24,25,30,38,39,42,50,52,59, and 64).¹

Apart from these heinous amendments, we have been foisted upon with a series of Congress Speakers who have emasculated the Parliament. They have prevented the parliament from discussing vital matters. The Congress Speakers have prevented the M.Ps. from controlling the ministers, the administration and the bureaucracy. Not a single day of parliamentary session has passed during the last forty two years, when one Congress Speaker after another has not dis-allowed debate on an important national matter or another.

1. This has happened essentially because the comprador drafters of original constitution were greater hypocrites and had left many provisions which were suitably crystallized by the sixty-five amendments as enabling provisions entirely suited to the total undemocratic constitutional frame-work.

In fact the parliament has been turned from a legislating and monitoring body, into a house perpetually pitted against a Congress Speaker, who disallows and restricts even mere debate on vital issues. Questions remain unanswered, ministerial assurances remain unfulfilled, calling attention notices are suppressed, adjournment motions are disallowed. There is no end to the Congress Speakers' tyranny.

The parliament should sit for many more days and many more and longer hours. There should be many more Committees of the House with much wider powers.

There can not be a single national issue that can be debarred from parliamentary debate. Let there be overlapping debates in the State Assemblies in the Lok Sabha. After all, problems and crises will be geographically located in one state or another, that does not mean the country's parliament cannot debate anything it likes, and which it considers to be of national importance. In fact most of the times, the "jurisdiction of States" is pleaded by the Congress Party, merely to avoid and suppress debates.

In the same way, the excuse of "the matter being sub judice" is being forever trotted by Congress Speakers.² Actually, in ninety nine cases out of hundred, let the judges ignore parliamentary debates. Why should a matter which is with the police or the courts be undebatable in parliament? Let truth emerge out of a double, a triple, parliamentary plus judicial plus state assembly scrutiny.

There is no such animal as Indian democracy. As aforesaid, it is a cruel comprador joke. What we have is a single party and single family semi-dictatorship.

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2. How deeply Congress Speakers are involved in the general Congress-created malaise of defalcations of public money, was recently exposed, when the current Speaker, one Balam Jakhur, was compelled to admit in the Lok Sabha (May 1989) that he took full responsibility for helping his cronies to illegitimately claim custom exemption to the extent of Rs. 3.6 crores.

A NOTE ON CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS FROM 1951 TO 1989

The 1st Amendment of 1951 itself imposed "reasonable" restrictions on freedom of speech, i.e. "reasonable" from the angle of the compradors.

The 16th Amendment of 1963 imposed "reasonable" restrictions on the exercise of all the fundamental rights by the citizens.

The 24th Amendment of 1971 imposed still further restrictions on the exercise of the fundamental rights.

The 25th Amendment of 1971 continued the same dirty game still further.

The 30th Amendment of 1972 restricted access to the Supreme Court.

The 38th Amendment of 1975 made Emergency non-justiciable.

The 39th Amendment of 1975 placed the Prime Minister above the law.

The 42nd Amendment was a mini-constitution in itself, containing 59 clauses, and tightened the noose further round the throat of the incipient and aborted democracy of India.

The 50th Amendment of 1984 took away the rights of the armed forces, which were in any case insignificant and had been only on paper.

The 52nd Amendment of 1985 subjected Congress members (and also others) to the tyranny of an undemocratic Congress organisation. This was the so-called Anti-Defection Law.

The 59th Amendment of 1988 imposed an Emergency on Punjab and made the whole country subject to the so-called anti-terrorist measures, which were ostensibly applicable only to selected regions, but which in effect were enlarged to include the whole country.

The 62nd and 65th Amendments of 1989 took away the control of the local bodies from the State Governments and handed them over to the Dynastic Centre.

This is merely a sampling of the overall heinous trend. Almost every amendment either took away the rights of the citizens or infringed upon the State's rights or did both. Actually a more rotten Constitution than that of India can hardly be imagined even at the start in 1950. But the Sixtyfive amendments from 1951 to 1989 have made the Constitution still more tragically farcical as far as democratic norms are concerned.

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THREE WONDERS OF
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