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Payable by MO/Bank Draft/Postal Order/Crossed Cheque in the name of Muslim India Monthly,
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Tel. 3782128

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K.S.A. Aleem Khan P.O. Box 4193, Jeddah K.S.A.

Printer & Publisher Syed Shahabuddin, 14, Janpath, New Delhi, and Printed at Bharat Offset, 2035, Qasim Jan Street, Delhi-110006.

Phototypeset by: The Ad-Setters, 2622, Kucha Chellan, Darya Ganj, New Delhi-110002, Tel. 260363

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Muslim India

MONTHLY JOURNAL OF
REFERENCE RESEARCH AND DOCUMENTATION

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A PUBLICATION OF MUSLIM INDIA EDUCATIONAL AND CULTURAL TRUST

WILL CIVIL SOCIETY SURVIVE IN INDIA?

The critical question that faces the country today is whether social violence has become endemic and assumed uncontrollable proportions?

Social violence, whether communal or caste, in origin, has gripped Society in a permanent state of tension, with numerically weaker social groups (call them minorities, if you like) in every village or mohalla in a state of seige. This sense of insecurity is neither ephemeral nor localised. It is permanent and universal. People are in a state of terror; at home or on the road, their minds are full of apprehension and fear at the physical attack that may come, any movement, not necessarily from strangers but even from their neighbours, the people they have known all their lives.

The State has laws adorning its books but they are not applied; the State has police machinery at its command but it dare not discipline it.

In any case when communal and caste polarisation has reached every nook and corner of the country and vitiated the social environment, can the security forces be or remain for long immune from the virus? Can the executive, the magistracy or the judiciary be immune and act as the custodians of public interest, free from bias and prejudice, function in a non-partisan manner, without fear or favour?

In any case, the coercive power of the State is also finite.

In an era of social upheaval, political parties having nexus with anti-social elements and being anxious to carve out and maintain their social constituency, cannot be neutral. This is the crux of the problem.

BJP has arrived—thanks to the successive Yatras undertaken successfully to mobilise and consolidate the Hindus in the name of Hindutva and Hindu Rashtrawad and to organise them en bloc against the non-Hindus. Its strategy is to unite the Hindus in the name of common symbols—Gangajal, Bharat Mata or Ram. Its modus operandi is to keep the fireburning, pour fuel over it from time to time to keep it ablaze, inject fear and hate in the mind of the Hindu against the Muslim as the historic adversary. Thus the Hindus are expected to vote as Hindus and therefore, en bloc for the BJP. To prevent this all political parties bend over backward to placate the Hindu community and compromise with Hindu communalism, at best beecome deaf & mute spectators and at worst apologists and defenders and even supporters of Hindu aggression, and state vidence against the non-Hindus.

This explains why the Governments fail to take a clear stand on the Babari Masjid question, give freedom to the RSS, the VHP and the BJP, to organise Yatras, to hold the country to ransom, to organise militant processions with provocative and inflammatory slogans, to give fiery speeches, to publish and distribute blatantly false communal literature as well as video and audio cassettes, to defy the law & to incite the Hindus and insult the Muslims. What is worse, even in the face of violence, the authorities appear be numbed, dazed and helpless, permit known culprits to go scot-free allow the police force & the magistracy to act as the participants in Dharamyudh.

Communal violence is no longer inter-communal violence, it has acquired the dimension of State violence, of genocidal pogroms, in which the state machinery plays the leading role and provides logistical support to the organisers and fire cover to the mobs. In the eyes of the common Muslim, the secular character of the State stands eroded and for all practical purposes the Indian state has become a Hindu state, in which the non-Hindus are second class citizens and do not enjoy any Constitutional guarantees, not even the most fundamental right to life.

Pious declarations which are made from time to time by the State authorities or by the eminent citizens have lost their value. Appeals make no impact. Both sides treat them with contempt; the aggressor, because they are not followed by any determined action; The victims because they do not make any difference to their sufferings.

The State is losing credibility, the Constitution, its sanctity, the laws their respect; the political executive is overwhelmed by 'democratic' & demographic considerations; the judiciary fails to defend human and fundamental rights; the legislature occasionally debates the situation with the government shedding a few tears and recycling its last reply.

In the eyes of the Muslim youth, the State which cannot apply its own laws has no right to be; the State which cannot protect the life of its citizens has no right to exist; they see no difference between State power and Hindu Shakti; they have become synonymous in their eyes.

How does the Muslim community react?

* with growing feeling of alienation, with dwindling confidence in the State, the national parties and their Muslim leaders, the Muslim parties, the executive , the judiciary, the Constitution, with rejecting the system.
* With emotional attachment towards any demogogue with a word of solace towards them or a strong word against the system.
* With occasional pleas for surrender of legitimate rights, if only 'they' would at least let 'us' live.
* With calls for armed resistance.

* With hopes of extra-territorial support.

All these reactions: Alienation, rejection, acceptance of fate, resistance are natural.

But since no political party, not even the communists, would stake their future for them, and since demogogues would fail them in the long run and since the system is not likely to become sensitive or responsive, alienation is bound to grow and lead to armed resistance.

Already the State armed constabulary is persona non-grata in Muslim localities and its posting is feared and its entry is resisted, howsoever foolish and whatever the cost.

Already every Muslim family is shifting to Muslim concentration localities.

Already the Muslim youth is speaking aloud in terms of taking to arms.

Already at times of tension, every Muslim house, every Muslim mohalla makes defensive preparations against the mobs, against the police.

Already, funds are being collected to purchase arms and ammunitions for collective, organised use.

For many of them, police repression and mob violence are but two faces of the same coin.

A civil war has begun and it has been formed on people. Those who take to arms feel morally justified in doing what they can to save themselves, their families, their community, their locality, their places of worship.

Can anyone restrain them? Not the state, not the secular parties, not the Muslim leadership, religious or secular. In fact the Muslim leadership may soon became irrelevant and constitute the first target.

Can anyone overcome them? Not the police force, not the army, once they take to the cult of the gun and the method of the urban guerilla and forge links with other disaffected elements in the country and with sympathetic forces abroad, if they are prepared to take losses, as they will be.

Can the state, based on a secular order, regain its credibility? Can the secular parties regain the initiative they have lost to the fascist and the chauninists? Can the secular citizen assert themselves to stop the dance of insanity?

Yes, a stable government can. Such a government in today's context is possible, **only if all secular parties join hands and launch a relentless struggle against the RSS-VHP-BJP.**

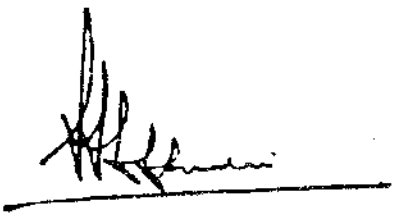
A 'national' government would not do because a national government by definition, shall include the killers and the sympathisers but a 'secular' government might.

Justice to minorities at all levels, whatever the religious or caste label, prompt state intervention to save their life, limb, property and honour and to subject those who today violate the law with impunity to the rule of law and to the discipline of office and a systematic campaign through the mass media to educate and inform the people may still save the day.

Shall Rajiv Gandhi, V.P. Singh, Chandra Shekhar and Jyoti Basu bury their differences and come forward today to save the country from organised hate and fear, from violence and confrontation, from tyranny and injustice, from anarchy and civil war by from a stable and winning alliance?

Tomorrow shall be too late.

Tomorrow the sun may not rise on a democratic, secular India; on a socially just and peaceful society.



MUSLIM INDIA
Offers
Best Wishes for the New Year
to its
Patrons, Subscribers & Readers
and
Prays for Peace, Progress &
Prosperity

Abul Lais Islahi Nadvi (1913 — 1990)

Religious Scholar, Ameer Jamaat-e-Islami Hind

Born on 15 February 1913 in village Chandpatti (District Azamgarh, UP) Abul Lais came from a well-known family of the area. His father was Tawajjoh Hussain.

Abul Lais recived his early education at home and in the local Madarsa and then at Madarsa-ul-Islah, Sarai Mir (Azamgarh) and at Darul-ul-Uloom Nadwa-ul-Ulema, Lucknow where he had eminent scholars Syed Sulaiman Nadvi, Manzair Ahsan Gilani and Hameeduddin Farahi among his teachers.

After serving on the staff of the Urdu newspaper Madina of Bijnore; he took up teaching and served at a Madrasa in Akola (Maharashtra) and then at his alma mater Madarsa-tul-Islah in Sarai Mir.

Abul Lais was one opf the earliest members of the Jamaat-e-Islami-Hind after its foundation by Abul Ale Mandoodi and served the Jamaat in many capacities, rising to be the Ameer in April, 1948, after its reorganisation folowing the Partition. He served as Ameer upto October 1972 and again from October 1981 to March, 1990. During 1972-81, he served asa member of the Majlis-e-Shoora.

A pioneer of the Islamic Movemmt in India and a renowned scholar, Abul Lais was a founder-member of the All India Muslim Majlis-e-Mushawarat and the All India Muslim Personal Law Board. He was also associated with various educational and research organisations like Deeni Talimi Council, UP, Jamia-tul-Falah in Belariyaganj (Azamgarh), Dar-ul-Musannefeen, Azamgarh and his alma mater Dar-ul-Uloom Nadwa-tul-Ulema, Lucknow.

A clear thinker, a prolific writer, as impressive speaker in Urdu, his books include 'Pas Che Bayad Kard', 'Bharat Ki Tameer-e-Nau aur Hum, 'Dawaat-e-Islami Hindustan Mein', and 'Tashkeel-e-Jamaat—Islami Kyon and Kaise', apart from innumberable pamphlets, speeches and articles in various journals including the Islamic monthly Zindagi.

On final retirement from the post of Ameer, Abul Lais had mover back to his native village where he passed away on 4 December, 1990 following a heart attack. He was buried in Chandapatti.

He is survived by a son and six daughters.

An embodiment of simple living and high thinking, he left an abiding impression on the youth who came in contact with him and thus influenced the thinkihg of successive generations. A true Muslim, he never changed his modest life style, when the Jamaat grew under his leadership into a well-established organisation. Ever humble, courteous and accessible, he never showed off his learning or piety. Far from being a fanatic, he always espoused the cause of Hindu-Muslim unity and wanted Muslims to live in peace and dignity and to contribute to the progress and development of their country.

ACHIEVEMENT

* **Dr. Rafiq Zakaria, Javed Habib** and **M. Farooqi** elected Members of 11-member National Committee on Education, New Delhi, 12 October, 1990.
* **Sardar Ali** appointed Member of Monopolies and Restrictive Trade Practices Commission, New Delhi, 25 October.
* **(Mrs) Ishrat Sultana, Mohammed Raziuddin Moazzam, Mohammed Ahmed, Mirza Humayun Baig, Sikander Baig and Abdul Rahim Adamibhai** awarded National Teachers Award, 1990, New Delhi, 25 October, 1990.
* **Dr. K. Haider Siddiqui** elected President of Cardiological Society of India for 1990-91, Bombay, 28 October, 1990.
* **Bashir Ahmed Khan** appointed Judge of Jammu and Kashmir High Court, New Delhi.
* **Mahfooz Ali Khan** nominal General Secretary of Janata Dal (S), New Delhi 11 November, 1990.
* **Hatim Bhai, S.I. Shervani** awarded Indira Gandhi National Unity Awards, 1990, New Delhi, 19 November, 1990.
* **Shakil-Ur-Rehman and Sarwar Hussain** appointed Union Ministers in the Janata Dal (S) Government, New Delhi, 21 November, 1990.
* **Dr. S. Sathikh** appointed Vice-Chancellor of the University of Madras, Madras, 22 November, 1990.
* **Suleiman, Md. Mushtaq, Md. Azeemuddin, Faiyaz Bhagalpuri Md. Subhan, Islamuddin Bagdi** and **Kafil Ahmad Kaifi** appointed Ministers in the Bihar Government.
* **Altaf Ahmed** appointed Additional Solicitor General of India, New Delhi, 2 December, 1990.
* **QUARRATUL-AIN-HAIDER** chosen for the 25th Jnanpith Award, 1989, New Delhi, 7 July, 1990.

* Mr. L.K. Advani having appointed himself as the sole agent of Ram, is the greatest national disgrace. **In fact, it was during the Congress regime that the foundation of the Ram temple was laid in Ayodhya last November**

— Kamal Nath, Congress (I) MP

Views of P.M. Chandra Shekhar

The Times of India, 19 November, 1990

...There is large section of BJP which thinks that an extreme view on the question of religion is neither beneficial to them nor the nation. There is a section in the BJP.... who are equally concerned and worried about the situation as I am.

...All religions have a certain set of formalities and if you go beyond those you are considered to be out of the purview of that faith or religion. But Hindu religion is such a religion where even an atheist is a Hindu. Nobody questions this. You worship or you don't worship; you observe rituals or don't observe rituals so the mind is free from obsessions... Hindu religion has never tried to discard other religions.

...It is superior because it is more accommodating and if this superiority is not there Hindu religion will not remain. Hindu religion has survived only because it could not be put into a strait-jacket. It could not be regimented. Whenever there was an attempt of regimentation of Hindu religion it crumbled...

...It am not trying to woo anybody. You cannot woo Hindus. Anyone who is trying to woo Hindus is living in a fool's paradise. Hindus cannot be won over on this slogan. Temporarily they may be but ultimately they will be guided by their philosophy.... This new philosophy of Hinduism is a total aberration. A distortion.

...If the people do not have any hope for the future they cling to old identities like caste and religion. Then you become sectarian and narrow minded. Another thing is that we do not know the problems of humanity and we do not understand them. The best answer to this was given by Swami Vivekananda.... that every religion had created a well of their own and thus failed to see the ocean of humanity.

The only way is to tell the people the facts of history. After all Tulsidas was born after Babar. Tulsidas wrote Ramayana and no one could be a greater devotee of Ram than Tulsidas but in the whole Ramayana there is not one word against the Muslims. That was Hindu religion and that is why I am proud of being a Hindu. This is not being communal. It is being objective. It is being proud of your heritage, culture and civilisation. Any nation, any community, any person who is not proud of his past, not aware of his present and not confident of his future cannot be a nationalist.

It cannot (lead to a communal divide) provided they consider religion as an instrument of communion between man and God.

...May solution is that people should sit together and reach an understanding. If that is not possible then we cannot hurt the feelings of one section. This, in my opinion, is not Hinduism. Therefore, I shall like to appeal to leaders of both the communities. We cannot afford to quarrel on this issue. We have to live together. Why don't people understand that if 10,000 Muslims could not be eliminated when Babar came, how can you eliminate 12 crore from this country? Or if Babar, Aurangazeb or Taimur could not eliminate Hindu religion, do you think some maulvis are going to be able to eliminate it? They only way is that people should under stand and accept the reality.

...It is possible. It has to be made possible. And I am quite confident that approched with confidence and trust this is possible.

I am ready to compromise on everything provided they do not demolish the mosque. I am willing to go to any extent provided they do not hurt the sentiment of the other community. That is the only criteria.

SPEECH,
17 NOVEMBER, 1990

"My fellow countrymen, I ha. come to you to make an appeal. You are the strength of today and hope of tomorrow. Upon your shoulders depends the future of this country. It is true that we are facing a difficult time — difficult.... in many ways. The most difficult problem before the nation is that there is a sense of apprehension in the minds of many people. Our minorities feel apprehensive because they feel that their life is not secure....

There is a a dispute on Babari Masjid and Ram Janambhoomi, I think that we shall find out a way by reconciliation, by mutual discussion. And, religion in my opinion does not teach confrontation. Region asks us to live like brothers.... Any killing in the name of religion is criminal. I think that people will under stand that we should eschew politics if you want to go on the path of religion. I hope and trust that religious leaders of Muslim and Hindu community will come to some understanding. Everybody wants that Ram temple should be constructed in Ayodhya, but not by demolishing the mosque. This can be done only by mutual understanding otherwise any confrontation will be disastrous not only for the immediate future, but it will create a misunderstanding for all times to come. I hope and trust that soon we shall find some way out to solve this problem...

If the Muslims agree to some adjustment, I will accept. I have little faith in either the temple or the mosque. I have faith in human beings. IN order to prevent discord and brutality, in order to prevent a permanent schism between Hindus and Muslims I am willing to go to any extent. There are no preconditions from my side.

JD : V.P. Singh's Farewell Address to the Nation, 9 November, 1990

...The National Front Government has gone but we have not lost our courage... It is this courage that will endure us in our fight for national unity, social and economic justice and communal harmony.

...Our country, our society, has been born of the confluence of the greatest religions of the world. Hinduism is, above all, a religion of synthesis. It has united the animate with the inanimate; the soul of one with the soul of all; the atma with the Parmatama. Islam teaches brotherhood and equality; Christianity lit the lamp of compassion; Buddhism and Jainism brought the message of nonviolence; Sikhism opened its doors to the people of all castes, religions and social strata. Where in all this is a conflict? The conflict is elsewhere and religion is only a pretext.

Religion is the lamp of the soul. Let it light your way. Do not use it to ignite the flames of hatred. If you do so, the temple of mother India will be reduced to ashes. I beseech you, do not let this happen. Religion belongs in our hearts, not on the throne of power.

Today, we face the supreme test. We must decide on the basis of principles whether we will uphold the rule of law and the sanctity of our Constitution, or violate them and run the Indian State through force and coercion. Shall religious polarisation divide the the country?

Who is opposed to a temple dedicated to Sri Rama built in Ayodhya? But has it to be done in violation of court orders and by breaking down the mosque?

I have sacrified my Government on this one issue. I shall devote my whole life, if necessary to resolving this dispute. But I want all of you to remember that a resolution that comes out of mutual respect and generosity of spirit will be the strongest foundation of this nation's unity and an abiding testament to religious tolerance. I wish to thank from the bottom of my heart all those who have worked with total sincerity, to resolve this problem. **I also urge the nation to enact a law in parliament that will protect the status of every existing mosque, temple or other religious shrine as of a given date, so that no such disute can arise in the future.**

To build our society we must eliminate entrenched injustice and inequality. We must do this not with anger but with compassion; not with confrontation but through cooperation. If some of us are weak or deprived, we must bring them forward. The nation is a family and we must bring them forward. The nation is a family and we must run it, if necessary, by denying ourselves some of our wants—that is the duty of the elder brother to his weaker brethren and that is the basis of social justice.

...Problems of Punjab, Kashmir and Assam still remain on the national agenda. We have to find a solution to these problems with the cooperation of the people there and we have to restore their faith in the essential fairness of Indian democracy.

(Source : Indian Express, New Delhi, 10 November, 1990)

V.P. Singh on the Fall of His Government

...We decided to jettison the Government. Because the BJP dictated that you have to follow a certain line if you want our support. To our point that was wrong. There was no inevitably of the fall of the Government. We could hve compromised with the BJP and the government would have continued. Many times one has to choose between office and principle and for me it has happened so many times. Therefore it was not because of any underhand games or this or that. It was plain and straight issue-based and we opted out of Government....

There is a difference between seat adjustment and alliance. Seat adjustments are electoral adjustments... After the election BJP said they will extend critical support. It was not qualified support. Never during the election or thereafter they said they will link Ram Jasnambhoomi to support. They used to say we give moral support to VHP. Then the basic shift came about in the rath yatra. They linked it to support. Not only did they link it to support they went round with the election symbol-symbolising the mixing of religion and politics...

...What is this election symbol going around. If you are for Ram, be for Ram. Why are you encashing him and putting him in the ballot box...

(Source : Indian Express, New Delhi, 23 November, 1990)

LEFT PARTIES : JOINT STATEMENT, 7, November 1990

It is unfortunate that an unprincipled, if undeclared, alliance of the Congress (I), BJP and a group of defectors from the Janata Dal has brought about the defeat of the V.P. Singh Government.... The Central issue in the Lok Sabha debate was the assault on secularism and Constitutional rights by the BJP-VHP combine, utilising the Ayodhya dispute. All those who combined to vote out the V.P. Singh Government on this basic issue will have a grim responsibility to bear before the people. This will have grave and unfortunate repercusions for the country which is facing a serious threat to national unity.

E.M.S. Namboodripad, CPI(M)
Tridib Chaudhury RSP
Inderjit Gupta, CPI
Chitta Basu Forward Bloc

BJP : President Advani's Address to the RSS,
Coimbatore, 18 March, 1990

...The field in which I am working has undergone a radical change. I am referring to the political field in which along with me many prominent Swamyam sevaks have been working for the last so many years. To some it may appear that it is a kind of change that we have been-looking for eagerly, for the last over fifty years, but which still seems to elude us. I hold that this change has come about outwardly through the instrumentality of the party which I represent and through which Swaymasewaks have been trying to restore political developments in the country. But really speaking without being in the forefront, Swayamsewaks have played a very key role in bringing about this change. In fact, very often I have had occasion to refer to the RSS in the context of formation of BJP.

The BJP was launched in 1980 and shortly after that whenever any journalist asked me what was the relationship between BJP and RSS, I always told them that organisationally there was no relationship, as the two organisations are separate. Neither the one takes directions from the other, nor is one superior to the other. RSS is not a political organisation, but at the same time Swaymsevaks of the Sangh are free to take part in any political organisation of their choice close to their ideology. They naturally participate in a party which is closer to their ideology, to their way of thinking and samskars and it is, therefore, that from 1951 onwards they participated in the BJS, which was launched by Dr. Shyama Prasad Mookerjee. But there is this difference between BJS which was launched by Dr. Mookerjee and the BJP which has been launched in 1980 that the BJP had its genesis in the issue of the RSS. It was in 1980... that the Janata Party decided by a resolution to prohibit members of the Janata Party from associating with the RSS and on that issue alone BJP was formed.

So while in the case of BJS the linkage was only ideological, in the case of BJP the linkage was both ideological as well as historical. With such a closer link from its origin in 1980 till today, we are about to complete 10 years of existence. There has been a conscious effort on the part of Swayamsevaks who are working in the BJP to make each one understand the ideological base to which we belong, and our connections with the sister organisations, like the VHP, the ABVP, the BMS, the Seva Bharati and the Kalyan Ashram, which are all based on the inspiration from RSS. Everyone working in these organisations is able to appreciate the work that has been done in the political field and I hold that among the various factors which have contributed to the radical change that has come about, the principal factor is the kind of understanding which has developed between the ideological family to which we belong:

In the political field, every party aspires to get maximum representation in parliament and in legislature.... We are also interested in projecting the nationalistic view-point we represent and the commitment that this is our ancient nation, this is a nation not born in 1947, but is a nation which has a hory past and whose culture is essentially Hindu Culture, should be reflected in the various policies, programmes, attitudes, positions that we take....

...I believe that these samskar that we Swaymasevaks have imbibed from Sangha, the cultural commitment, is the basis of our functioning in politics also during the last few years and as aresult of this kind of functioning only we find that in the political field also a change has come about...

...In the field of politics where an unhealthy competition is going on, one can never be certain what happens at the end. We have to intensify our efforts, we have to project the viewpoint of RSS, which is not being reflected so that with the instrumentality of the BJP in politics it gets more and more acceptance not only in terms of vote, in terms of parliamentary seats, in terms of assembly seats and in governments, but also in that(it) comes to be respected.

Very often in these days I come across people who say that the BJP is a very good party even though it is associated with RSS.... This kind of remark hurts me very badly. It makes me feel pained and angry and I always make the person who makes this comment to realise that the BJP which you described as a good party is good only because of its association with RSS. Because of the Samskars from RSS, the workers of the BJP have samskars of honesty, Samskars of dedication, Samskars of discipline, Samskars of service, Samskars of Selflessness and above all commitment to nationalism and patriotism in the true sense of the word..... The whole country.... should understand that whatever good is done in the nation today whether it is through the ABVP or through VHP or through Kalyan Ashram or through the BJP, all that is good and noble is essentially because of the samskars that the workers in these different fields and organisations have imbibed through the Shakhas of the RSS...

(Source : The Organiser, New Delhi, 13 May, 1990)

* It they (the Muslims) choose to live like Babars, we (the Hindus) shall become Shivajis and Rana Prataps.

—Uma Bharati, BJP MP

CPI : National Council Resolution.

New Delhi, 9 November, 1990

The National Council of the Communist Party of India, which held a four-day meeting in Delhi on November 6-9 adopted the following resolution :--

The National Front government has been brought down by the combined vote of the Congress (I), the BJP and the split-away group of the Janata Dal....

The Congress(I), which had earlier demanded that the rath yatra be stopped by the NF government, nevertheless chose to join with the BJP in order to pull it down.

Th downfall of the government was initiated by the BJP after the NF government had refused to yield to its blackmail not to stop the rathyatra.... The qout fell because it firmly upheld India's secular values and defended the status quo on the Ram Janamabhoomi-Babari Masjid issue.

...This unfortunate development has given a blow to the consolidation of the secular democratic forces at this critical juncture....

...The growing monster of communalism... assumed diabolic proportions after the BJP, VHP, RSS and Bajrang Dal undertook their aggressive campaign throughout the country.

The BJP brazenly mixed religion with politics, exploiting to the full the religious sentiments of the people for serving its political ends....

The issue was whether a mosque should be demolished or forcibly shifted or not. It was a full-scale offensive against India's secular polity, its glorious national traditions, its secular democratic values, enshrined in the constitution. It was an all-out attack against the sanctity of the courts and the rule of law.

It was an assault on the age-old harmony and brotherhood prevailing among all communities, irrespective of religion and faith. It was a calculated move to divert attention from and frustrate certain steps taken to give social justice to the downtrodden...

Against this... left forces and mass organisations had launched a campaign in defence of secularism and communal harmony. The campaign grew into a powerful joint political movement in UP with the active participation of the Janata Dal and its chief minister....

However, the poisonous seeds of communalism have been sown deep and widespread in our social life by the vicious communal campaign of the BJP and its allies....

....A grim harvest of riots in several parts of the country has been reaped in recent months resulting in a heavy tool of death and devastation. Places of worship have been attacked and desecrated.

...The communal offensive and attacks on places of worship have generated a feeling of insecurity among all minorities...

The VHP and Bajrang Dal, aided and abetted by the BJP, are now talking of taking on hundreds of other mosques as their next target and seeking to further inflame passions by carrying the ashes of those killed in Ayodhya from village to village.

The CPI is of the view that a government formed by a small breakaway group in parliament and holding on to power with the support from outside by the Congress(I), in a sort of opportunist gang-up, can hardly meet the political and economic challenges posed by the present situation....

The priority task today is to rally together all secular and partiotic forces, all peace-loving citizens and men of goodwill, all truly and deeply religious people who are moved by feelings of humanism, tolerance and compassion, in a mighty struggle against the monster of communalism....

The priority task is to heal the wounds inflicted on the country, to preserve the character and secure the future of our great country as the national movement had visualised and as our constitution has enshrined.

All efforts have to be directed towards a negotiated settlement of the Ram Janambhoomi-Babari Masjid issue, which is agreeable to both sides and takes into account the religious sentiments of both Hindus and Muslims.

Failing this, the court verdict should be respected by all and, meanwhile, the status quo has to continue...

The CPI along with the...other left (parties), groups and mass organisations, should immediately launch joint campaigns on the above issues, drawing in all other parties and forces wherever they may be, including the JD, the Congress and the masses...

Electoral considerations and exigencies of political combination should not inhibit and narrow down the broad, all-out character of such a campaign in the present bleak situation....

...The ... Council.... calls up as all secular and democratic forces to rise to the occasion and meet the challenge.

BJP: MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS IN RAJASTHAN

No. of Municipalities	:	138 (32 others stayed)
No. of Seats	:	2157
	Votes	No. of Chairmen
BJP	38%	68
Cong(I)	29%	32
Independents	24.3%	26
Janata Dal	8.7%	12

(Source: The Organiser, 9 September, 1990)

Insaf Party : National Executive Resolutions,

New Delhi, 9 December, 1990

I. Threat of Fascism and Consolidation of Secular Forces:

The National Executive endorses the policy of selective support to and cooperate with the Chandra Shekhar Government on its initiative to resolve major national problems such as the Babari Masjid dispute, the political impasse in Punjab, J & K and Assam and the communal situation. The National Executive identifies the RSS-VHP-BJP axis as a serious threat to the secular order and to national integrity and calls for the consolidation of all secular forces to meet the creeping challenge of fascism, rising above partisan and personal considerations. The National Executive authorises the President to take all possible steps to accelerate such consolidation.

II. Babari Masjid Dispute

The National Executive reiterates its view that since negotiations at various levels have not discovered any meeting ground between the parties, both sides must commit themselves to, and await the final judicial verdict on, the question of title and in the meantime eschew all agitation. The National Executive demands that the State must protect the Babari Masjid as well as the disputed land adjacent there to, in accordance with the injunction of the High Court. The National Executive also demands that the Central Government should enact a legislation to protect the status of all places of worship as on 15 August, 1947.

The National Executive considers it an unprecedented and generous offer on the part of the Muslim community in the interest of national unity that it would hand over the Babari Masjid site if it is found that a Ram Mandir was demolished to construct the Babari Masjid on its site, even if the title suit is decided in its favour. In this context, the National Executive generally supports the Rajiv Gandhi formula provided both parties commit themselves to accept the finding of the Commission and the final verdict on the question of title subject only to the finding of the Commission, and suspend all agitations and a central law is enacted as mentioned above.

III. J & K Situation

The National Executive feels that the political situation in J & K cannot be resolved by brute force but by political negotiations with the genuine representatives of the Kashmir people on the question of autonomy. In order to create a suitable environment, the policy of reprisal and crackdown, of encounters and detention must be abandoned and life in the valley must become normal. In the meantime a sincere effort must also be made by all national parties to evolve a national consensus on a scheme of autonomy within the Union which would satisfy the legitimate aspirations of the Kashmiri people.

IV. Punjab, Assam, Bihar and Tamil Nadu

The National Executive favours elections to be held in Punjab at an early date. While welcoming the President's rule in Assam, the National Executive is of the view that no further extenson of President's rule should be sought by the Central Government.

The National Executive cautions the Government against imposition of President's rule in Bihar or Tamilnadu as such a step would be totally unwarranted and anti-democratic.

V. Communal Violence

The National Executive expresses its deep concern and anguish at the wave of communal violence precipitated by the Ramrathyatra, the Kar Seva and the on-going so-called Satyagraha as well as the Kalas Yatra and incited by the inflammatory speeches and incendiary slogans and their video and audio cassettes.

The National Executive has also noted that the police machinery in general and the state Armed Constabularies in particular, have openly collaborated with the Hindu militants in planning and attacks, by providing fire cover, by committing atrocities and by erasing evidence, thus eroding the confidence of the Muslim community.

The National Executive is of the view that the loss of faith by the minorities and weaker sections in the political system and the administrative machinery shall have disastrous consequences, with the target groups inevitably taking to self-defence.

The National Executive, therefore, demands that:

a) All militant Senas, particularly Bajrang Dal, should be banned;
b) Organisations like the VHP and its leaders and spokesmen should be brought within the discipline of the laws of the land;
c) Offensive audio and video cassettes and publications should banned;
d) Those making inflammatory speeches and organising provocative processions should be prosecuted;
e) State Armed Constabularies, particularly the PAC of UP, should be restructured, reorganised and retrained and, until this is done, they should not be deployed in Muslim localities;
f) Muslims and other weaker sections should be given due representation in the police force, the intelligence machinery and the armed constabularies so that they are composite in character and develop a national and secular ethos.
g) Special anti-riot force with 50% representation of Muslims and Harijans and Adivasis should be formed both at Central and

State levels.

h) Magistracy and police personnel should be deployed in a composite manner in riot-prone areas.

i) The Law against atrocities should apply to communal violence as well.

j) A Central law for payment of compensation for loss of life, limb and property should be enacted.

k) Collective fines should be imposed in all affected areas with the Panchayat/ward as the territorial unit to collect the compensation, paid to the riot-affected from the two sides, in inverse proportion to the loss suffered by them.

l) All places of worship damaged/destroyed or adversely occupied should be repaired/constructed by the State and restored to the community to which they belong.

Without such drastic measures, the National Executive is of the view that social violence shall become endemic and the country shall soon be reduced to a state of civil war and anarchy, in effect, become ungovernable.

VI. Minorities Welfare

The National Executive also demands the urgent implementation of the recommendations of the Gopal Singh Panel, the Gujral Committee on Urdu, the Minorities Commission and the National Integration Council by the Central Government and the presentation of an annual report to the Parliament on the implementation of the Prime Minister's 15-Point Programme for the Welfare of the Minorities which should be revised to give it a quantitative orientation.

VII. Reservation

The National Executive demands reservation in public employment and higher education for all social groups, identified by caste or tribe or religion (in the case of religious minorities) the extent of 50% of the population, subject to the Constitution that the candidates fulfilling a uniform economic criteria shall have priority in filling the quota available to their social groups.

VIII. Bofors Investigation

The National Executive demands that the Bofors investigation be taken inexorably to its logical conclusion without fear or favour and without any delay.

IX. Economic Situation

The National Executive urges the Central Government to make every possible effort to control inflation and to bring down the prices of essential articles of mass consumption. The National Executive welcomes the policy of reduction in non-productive expenditure and import in order to tide over the financial crisis and to maintain foreign exchange reserves at a safe level.

X. Decentralization of Power

The National Executive demands that the Central Govt. initiate consultation with political parties as well as other voluntary organisations and institute national importance on the formulation of a Scheme of Decentralisation of Political and Administrative Power, based on devolution from the Union to the States, from the States to the Districts, from the Districts to the Blocks and from the Blocks to the Panchayats.

XI. External Affairs

The National Executive welcomes the progress made by the SAARC Summit towards economic integration of the Sub-continent. It urges the Chandra Shekhar government to concentrate on improving bilateral and multilateral relations among the states of the subcontinent and transform into a Zone of Peace, Cooperation and Friendship. The National Executive also expresses the hope that India shall make effective contribution towards national reconciliation in Afghanistan, restoration of democracy in Burma, vacation of Kuwait by Iraq, of Arab Occupied Territories by Israel and the dawn of democracy in South Africa, the defence of human rights all over the world and finally the reduction of disparities between the developed and the developing countries through restructuring of international economic relations.

INSAF PARTY DEMANDS WITHDRAWAL OF PAC, RESTORATION OF MOSQUES IN ALIGARH AND REORGANISATION OF POLICE MACHINERY

"The communal violence in Aligarh has taken a very serious turn. Trains and buses are being stopped and persons identified as Muslims are being killed in cold blood. PAC and Bajrang Dal are jointly attacking Muslim mohallas and shooting down innocent persons in their houses. Mosques have been attacked illegally occupied and converted into temples. The Aligarh Muslim University is besieged and its teachers and students are apprehensive of their security.

We demand that : 1) The Central and State Governments **withdraw PAC immediately** from Muslim localities and from the University and replace PAC by the Central para-military forces or by the Army.

2) Effective steps be taken for the security of rail and railway passengers;

3) The PAC personnel against whom there is a prima facie case of murder be suspended, arrested and prosecuted;

4) The mosques be restored immediately;

5) The State Governme't take steps to identify the missing;

6) The State Government announce and implement a Scheme of Relief and Rehabilitation.

We warn the government that if the Muslim community continues to feel insecure and to be the target of the PAC and the Hindu militant organisations, **it shall lose not only its confidence in the good faith of the Government but its faith in the political system**. Such a loss of faith and

(Contd. on page 31)

A.G. Noorani on Choice Between Advani and Nehru

On September 12, 1990, the BJP's President L.K. Advani, announced at a press conference in New Delhi his decision to undertake a rath yatra, from Somnath to Ayodhya from September 25 to October, 30, "to mobilise public opinion and canvas support for the BJP's viewpoint on Ramjanmabhoomi." He added that the BJP would fully associate with the Vishwa Hindu Parishad's kar seva to construct the Ram temple at Ayodhya on October 30. If this is not permitted "peaceful satyagraha" would be offered at the site.

...Vajpayee said at Bhopal on September 16 that "no man in his senses will take this issue to the streets as the UP Chief Minister is trying to do" when his colleague had already announced a rath yatra of explosive potentialities. He also said "There is no element of revenge in the move to build the temple" yet asserted that the Ramjanmabhoomi is a question raised by history and the answer is to be found by the present generation. The implications are obvious.

True to form, he proceeded to assure that today's Muslims are not responsible for what happened hundreds of years ago. Yet, he not only asked them not to be a party to the "distortions" of the past, but cited for their instruction the example of the German President (sic) bowing before the memorial to the Jews in Poland massacred by the Nazis.

This is an old RSS line and Deoras reiterated it on September 29 at Nagpur when he asked "a straight question to my Muslim brethren". Do they "endorse the destruction of temples" in the past? "If not, they must feel remorse" for the destruction and atrocities committed by "their co-religionists". In other words, the Muslims in India are accountable for the acts of those invaders of the country in the past who happened to be Muslim....

If one were to pursue the argument, two other questions are in order. There was not a single Mughal ruler who did not have Hindu officials in high service. Are their progeny to be tracked down for an answer "to a straight question" and for expression of "remorse"? Secondly, as some of the country's most distinguished historians asked in a letter to the Times of India (October 21, 1986), "Can we push this to the restoration of Buddhist and Jaina monuments destroyed by Hindus".

Advani's goal is "the restoration of the dignity of the Hindus" he said on September 27 as the rath yatra wended its way. "Let us see who dares to stop this rath" said the "peaceful" satyagrahi. On September 30 at Bombay he and his ally Bal Thackeray of the Shiv Sena warned of serious consequences all over the country if the government thwarted the construction of Ram temple at Ayodhya, beginning on Oct. 30. The Indian Expres reported on September 30 the presentation of a kumbh of blood to Advani and the Bajrang Dal's dance with naked swords. "The blood was donated by 101 youth members of the newly formed Bajrang Dal, **the suicide squad of the BJP.**

Admittedly, none can pin-point the exact place where Shri Rama Chandraji was born. Here are the admissions by those who wish to build the temple:

May 17, 1989 Vajpayee: It was not possible to pin point the exact place where Ram was born thousands of years ago. The temple was built and rebuilt over the ages and had existed since Emperor Vikramaditya's time (The Hindustan Times; May 18, 1989). Yet on September 23, 1989 he had no hesitation asserting that there is only one birth place of Shri Ram (The Hindustan Times; September 24, 1990).

September 30, 1990: "No one can prove that it was the birth place of Shri Ram". Advani admitted at Bombay. But he contended that it was a matter of belief which the Government could not afford to ignore (The Independent, October 1, 1990).

This explains the refusal to submit the matter to the Court's verdict. Quite apart from the enormity of the outrage in the use of force to make one community submit to another's belief, even in terms of belief the site of birth was not the Babari Masjid but the chabutra outside it but within its compound.

The Mahant of Ram Janmasthan should know, surely. The suit which the Mahant, Raghubar Das, filed on January 18, 1885 sought permission to build a temple on the chabutra. The District Judge in his Judgment dated March 26, 1886 said : "This chabutra is said to indicate the birth-place of Ram Chander."

The distinguished historian Prof. Ram Sharan Sharma said [illegible] been there (Ayodhya) [illegible] least 15-16 mandirs [illegible] which claim that their temple [illegible] real birth-place of Ram." (New [illegible] October 8, 1989)

Advani sweats by the BJP's Palampur resolution of June 11, 1989 on Ram Janmabhoomi and keeps repeating its formulation ceaselessly. It is hard to [illegible] a document [illegible] resolution.

I. "According to all [illegible] records, the [illegible] visited Ayodhya [illegible] the Temple situated at [illegible] believed (sic) to be Ram Jan[illegible] and constructed [illegible] place."

No [illegible] is no proof at all [illegible]

Ayodhya... It is an irony that a lover of Hindu art and architecture should be credited with the destruction of a temple which in any case did not exist. It is, therefore, very clear that Babari mosque was not built by demolishing a temple of Ram at Ayodhya". Dr. Sushil Srivastava of the Allahabad University expressed the same view (Probe India: January 1988). Reporting from Ayodhya, Sanjay Suri wrote (Indian Express, February 11, 1987): "The disputed place is not believed even by pandits to be the birth-spot of the legendary god Ram. The pandits, who have not timed the 'birth' within thousands of years, have pin-pointed the 'Janmasthan' as Ram Chabutra. This Chabootra marked by a platform under a tree is outside the disputed area. The Janamsthan is not claimed by Muslims."

2. "By the time the second court order of 1986 came, secularism had come to be equated by interested quarter with an allergy to Hinduism and synonym for minority appeasement. The Muslim League lobby in the country had acquired a new militancy and aggressiveness. The campaign launched by this lobby against the Supreme Court's judgement in the Shah Bano case in 1985 had brought it rich dividends. A panic-stricken Government had amended the criminal law, the Supreme Court judgement was legislatively annulled. Having thus tasted blood, this lobby set up the Babari Masjid Action Committee, and mounted a vicious assault on the decisions of the Faizabad Court, and went to the length of boycotting Republic day celebrations in protest against these orders."

The locks of the Babari Masjid were opened on January, 1, 1986 while the Muslim Women's Bill was introduced in Parliament on February 25, 1986. Neerja Chowdhury gave the details of Rajiv Gandhi's game in The Statesman (May 1, 1986). It was to mollify the Muslims that the Bill was introduced. "To be honest we were not expecting it (the Bill) to come so soon" a Muslim leader remarked. There were many Muslims, this writer included, who denounced the Bill as well as the opening of the locks. And very many non-Muslims also who denounced both. The BJP's reversal of the sequence and its explanation for Muslim resentment are belied by the facts.

To these Advani adds his own concoction: No namaz had been offered at the Babari Masjid since 1939 (Indian Express, September 17, 1990).

The FIR lodged by sub-Inspector Ram Dube on December 23, 1949 showed how a mob took over the mosque "entered the mosque surreptiously and spoiled its sanctity". The 93 year old Imam of the mosque, Maulvi Abdul Gaffar in an interview to sunday Mail (July 2, 1989) said "we used to offer namaz inside the mosque and the Hindus prayed on the chabutra. We never fought. I want that things should be restored to the pre-1949 days."

Lawyers have a saying "Truth will not, even in an affidavit." In 1988 the VHP presented to Home Minister Buta Singh 13 "Legal, historical documents". Two of these relied on by the VHP prove that namaz was, indeed, being offered in the mosque. They are reports by Muhammad Ibrahim, Inspector of Wakfs, on December 10 and 22, 1948. The first said "outside the Masjid compound there is a Hindu temple and any Muslim going towards the Masjid is accosted and called names. I went to the site when I understood that many of the rumours are true. People there told me that there is a danger to the Masjid from the Hindus, the wall of it (sic). It appears that an application be lodged with the Deputy Commissioner, Faizabad requesting those coming for namaz should not be troubled and since the Masjid is the Wakf property it should be protected".

The next report of December 22, 1948 records the beating up of the muezzin and two "pardesi Muslims". He recorded: "I spent the night in Ayodhya and the bairagies are forcibly taking possession of the mosque" The danger was staved off for just one year. The authorities wilfully allowed the mosque to be taken over and converted into a temple though they were aware of the danger. He recorded "when the namazies leave, shoes and stones are hurled" towards them.

There are records of the mosque's registration under the UP Muslim Waqfs Act (February 20, 1944) and a judgement on March 23, 1946 by a civil judge in a Shia-Sunni dispute regarding the mosque.

Not content with perpetrating a fiction regarding the absence of prayers, Advani goes a step further and argues that in any case no prayers were said after 1969 when it was forcibly closed to Muslims. Comment on this is unnecessary.

This brings us to a sinister aspect of what is afoot. Advani now asserts that the mosque does not exist any longer: "There is a temple in Ayodhya. There is no such thing as Babari Masjid now." (Interview in the Hindustan Times, September 23, 1990).

This explains the Vishwa Hindu Parishad's Secretary-General Ashok Singhal's cryptic remark at Haridwar on June 24, 1990 while announcing its "programme of action". He said "There will be no demolition of any part of the Shri Ramajanmabhoomi shrine but some remodelling and renovation will be done". In other words the mosque will be treated as a temple. The only concession offered to Muslims is to remove the bricks elsewhere if they so chose and the tablet containing the inscription by the builder, Mir Baqi.

In an interview with Smita Gupta of The Independent (September 25, 1990) Advani said: "Now every one says that the temple must be built whether the existing structure is pulled down or not. Earlier the reaction was: How can you build a temple? Now they are agreed that if the

structure is not pulled down then a temple should be built on the site. I am prepared to say that a temple should be built on the spot believed to be Ram Janamabhoomi without hurting the sensibilities of any group of people."

He said on September 23: "Today nobody objects to the idea of building a temple in Ayodhya. What they are debating is the spot where it should be built"—as if the construction of a temple was even an issue. The issue has been and is the demolition or conversion of a mosque which has stood there since 1528. The limit of demogogy was reached in his famous statement on August 13 in New Delhi: 'If Hindu sentiment is not gong to be respected in India where else in the world can it command respect? The implications of this for the minorities do not require to be spelt out.

Advani has not undertaken a 10,000 km march in order to build a temple on the chabutra. There was no dispute on that from the beginning. He is out to make a temple out of the mosque—perhaps without demolishing it sensibilities as a gesture to "Muslim susceptibilities." It would be an outrage no less grave and people should guard against it.

Advani lamented at Somnath, on September 25, that the country does not have a Sardar Patel today. The Sardar was very much alive when the Babari Masjid was taken over and he disapproved of that. He wrote to UP's Chief Minister Pant on January 9, 1950 in these disapproving terms: "I realise there is a great deal of sentiment behind the move which has taken place. At the same time, such matters can only be resolved peacefully if we take the willing consent of the Muslim community with us. There can be no question of resolving such disputes by force. In that case, the forces of law and order will have to maintain peace at all costs. If, therefore, peaceful and persuasive methods are to be followed, any unilateral action based on an attitude of aggression or coercion cannot be countenanced."

As for Advani's reliance on the Somnath precedent, there was no mosque there to be taken over or demolished. N.V. Gadgil, then Minister of Works, Mines and Power, recorded in his Memoirs "Government from Inside" (L.184) "Sardar Patel and I went to Junagarh after it had been liberated and saw the remains of the ancient temple". It was decided simply "to restore the temple".

But Advani does have problems quoting accurately. At the Agra session of the BJP on April 8, 1988 he quoted a line from Prof. Donald Eugene Smith's classic "India as a Secular State". It read "Hinduism has indeed provided the essential genius of Indian culture; this cannot be denied."—and stopped at that.

The passage (pp 378-379) reproduced in full not only conveys a different meaning

"Hinduism has indeed provided the essential genius of Indian culture; this cannot be denied. Significant cultural synthesis has not taken place everywhere; with the exception of Christianity in the small State of Kerala, there is much less non-Hindu cultural influence in South India than in the North. Thus, while not denying the reality and importance of the composite culture, we must be prepared to deal with an Indian culture largely rooted in Hinduism. Those who equate Indian Culture with Hindu culture can produce considerable evidence in support of their position, although that part of empirical Indian culture which they ignore or reject makes their equation factually wrong; the use to which their argument is put is frequently disruptive and anti-national".

That is what the BJP is busy doing...

The choice before the country is not between Ram and Babar as Advani... puts it. It is between Nehru and Advani.

Editorial
The Hindustan Times,
24 October, 1990

The crisis over... Chautala earlier this year, ... V.P. Singh's attempt to carve out a support base by resorting to the Mandal Commission and ... Advani's ill-conceived attempt to look for votes for his party in the name of religion have all led to the present crisis. ...Advani's arrest.... was the culmination of a process that had set in much earlier. The way events are taking shape and a pack of short-sighted men is pushing the country further on a disastrous course can only deepen the anxiety of the people.

... V.P. Singh.... should have known that it would divide an already fractured society and alienated an entire constituency that creatively used could take the society ahead and work at the same time for distributive justice for the deprived...

...Advani... got on to a Rath Yatra without thinking about the consequences of what he was doing, he also ought to have realised that the divisive trail he was leaving behind as his Rath rumbled through various States would create a situation no leader in India can handle. That he would be arrested and Rath Yatra cut short was to happen once it became clear that the talks had failed to resolve the dispute over the Ramjanmabhoomi-Barbari Masjid. The BJP leadership should neither have set the October 30 deadline, nor have rejected pleas for calling off the Rath Yatra. As it happens to those who choose to ride on a tiger, it is easy to get on to a Rath than to get down. ..

... The withdrawal of the BJP's support from Mr. V.P. Singh marks the failure of the second experiment to evolve an alternative to the Congress Party... A mid-term poll is likely to be preceded by re-alignment of the forces and search for new political constituencies...

Girilal Jain on Interplay of Casteism and Communalism

[illegible] Singh's ... decision to [illegible] the [illegible] Mandal [illegible] August 7 ... [illegible] of [illegible] Rama [illegible] to [illegible] thereby decimate the [illegible] society as it had not been [illegible] and decimated even by the [illegible] nationalists.

Mother India lies brutalised and [illegible] as a result of the assaults [illegible] Raja has led on her, and the prospects of her being nursed back to [illegible] physical as well as psychological, appear bleak to me.

... It is sheer hypocrisy and chicanery on the part of the man, who engaged in secret discussions with BJP-VHP-RSS leaders and claimed to be wholly in sympathy with their stand for a whole year, to claim to be [illegible] and principled secularism [illegible] BJP sense of the term. [illegible] abide fully by [illegible] formula which he [illegible] devise in the ordinance issued on October 19, he cannot deny either that the ordinance was essentially based on them or that he had not taken BMAC into [illegible] and in view of the welcome, even if a cautious one, [illegible] to the ordinance by L.K. [illegible] and Atal Bihari Vajpayee, it is plainly inconceivable that he withdrew it only because the VHP [illegible] to it on the ground that it [illegible] not address the central issue at [illegible] transfer to it of the [illegible] site on which the... [illegible] Masjid stands.

Muslim leaders have not made a [illegible] disclosure of secret discussions, if any with them....

As for Mulayam Singh Yadav... I am ... unable to understand except in terms of personality clash, the reasons behind his break with the Raja since both are Mandalisers and believers in the importance of the Muslim vote in a non-Congress power arrangement. Indeed, Mulayam Singh has been truly reckless in trying to bash up the BJP-VHP-RSS combine so much so it is difficult to think of another politician in the land who would have gone as far as he has in frustrating Kar Seva...

...Mulayam Singh strikes me as being perhaps the most ruthless politician India has thrown up. .

The casteist warriors have doubtless fallen out among themselves, as they were bound to; for, it is well known that no caste is free from factionalism in any village; that any caste alliance is temporary by its very nature because members of one caste must feel superior to those below them in ritual hierarchy and/or economic/political/power terms; and that the chances of the survival of such an alliance are better in opposition than in office since that must lead to struggle over sharing the booty.

...As in 1979, it has been demonstrated once again that an essentially casteist alliance with a thin moralist cover is just not viable in modern India... The catch is that this time a genie called Mandal has been unleashed and it is not going to be easy to contain it since even otherwise forces of disruption are sweeping India....

...Only a return to Rama can help us cope with the forces of disintegration that the Raja and his accomplices and even opponents have released. Hindus have been stirred as they have not stirred ever before. But they face formidable odds, especially from the upper crust intelligentisa in the media and the academics, who understandably continue to swear by 'secularism'....

Hindus do not need the imported concept of secularism in order to be able to show respect towards other faiths. That comes naturally to them.... But the upper crust Indian intelligentsia needs secularism to legitimise their own alientaion and superficial imitation of the West. In the process they... espouse.... the absurd preparation that you can fragment the Hindu society and unite the country.

(Source : The Sunday Mail, 11 November, 1990)

Sita Ram Kesari on Reservation

...The present student's agitation against the Mandal commission Report and its acceptance by the govt....is not jusitfied morally, intelectually or politically. The members of the forward community must learn by the logic of history... I appeal to the students of the backward community to show patience and remain composed against (the) misguided people who are attempting to reverse the course of history. Such attempts are inevitably followed by disaster.

The Congress Party...remains committed to.... alleviating the (lot of the) backward and (the) socially oppressed and economically **deprived** (in) our society....

(The) Mandal Commission report, in fact, is a decree against centuries of social, economic and political (in justice) to that section of the society (which is) anyday greater in number than the caste Hindus and if (there is) a referendum, the verdict of the people shall certainly go in favour of the backward classes, the harijans and the minorities.

... The acceptance of (the) Report by (the present) Government is not a culmination of.... good intentions but, a desperate attempt for.... survival... Nevertheless, the fallout (means) the salvation of the people at large. Now the Harijans, the Scheduled Castes, the Scheduled Tribes, the Backward (Classes) and the Minorities must rally... to see to it that . .. delayed justice is not denied at any cost.

Swapan Dasgupta on the Nationalist Disarray

... The track record of the Congress governments at the Centre clearly shows that they have always been mindful of the crucial importance of a regenerated Hindu society as the central pillar of Indian nationalism. For all Jawaharlal Nehru's apparent disregard for organised religion, it was his government that took a major step towards the creation of a composite Hindu identity by codifying the personal laws. The policy of affirmative action for scheduled castes was an extension of Mahatma Gandhi's crusade to rid Hindu society of the curse of untouchability. Indeed, the Mahatma's critique of Sanatanism was conducted within the parameters of religious discourse, a reason why he resolutely opposed the British's government's attempt in 1932 to detach Harijans from Hindu society. it was not and was never intended to be, a westernised, secular critique of Hindusm. The Congress tradition was unquestionably shaped by the ongoing social reform movements that were located within mainstream Hinduism and which perceived Hindu consolidation as a natural corollary to the development of Indian nationalism. It is no accident, for example, that the Congress anthem throughout the struggle for independence was Vande Mataram.

The crucial difference between the Congress and the BJP is one of emphasis and tradition. Whereas the Congress vision of nationalism concentrates, although implicity, more on the essence of Hindu consolidation, the BJP focusses inordinately on explicit symbols and mythology. Moreover, there is marked absence of shared political tradition between the two parties. The early RSS leadership, for example, perceived the sangha as one that would provide the moral leadership to Hindu society and not be in the forefront of political acticism...

Common Ground

...For the BJP, the political fallout of Mandai is potentially devastating. As a party that has tried to project the idyllic notion of an undifferentiated Hindu society, the legitimisation of caste as a basis of political organisation can be very damaging. First, the Mandal commission attacks the basis of Hindu consolidation by reinforcing a set of alternative social alleginces. In practical terms, this casteist regroupment may mean that the BJP will once again have to confront the familiar problem of being naturally identified with its Brahmin-Bania core. Having recently made inroads among the so-called backward castes in the whole of North India, the BJP is threatened, if caste polarisation extends to electoral behaviour with being reduced to a rump.

In more immediate terms, the focus on the Mandal commission constitutes an organised assault on the Ram Janambhoomi agitation. By making ritual backward status a political attribute, the government has, in effect, questioned the underliying Sanskritising logic of particiption in the quasi-religious ceremonies associated, with the movement. Mr. Mulayam Singh Yadav has, in fact, made this direct link with support for the new reservations policy. It remains to be seen whether the BJP's double-speak on the Mandal commission can successfully blunt Mr. Yadav's offensive.

Nor is the BJP likely to be the only casualty of Mr. V.P. Singh is offensive... The The Congress will not escape unscathed since, even more than the BJP, its electoral strategy is based on universal appeal that override community and caste. The recent clamour for reservations for all minority communities is a pointer that Mandalisation is infectious, and this has the potentiality of adversely affecting the Congress...

In short, Mr. V.P. Singh's government has launched a frontal attack on the very assumptions of nationalism which, if unchecked can result in political acute fragmentation....

ards-backwards divide... The harsh truth is that while the progress of Mandal can be checked, the existing policy will not be reversed irrespective of which party comes to power.

The fragmentation of India, it would scem, can only be arrested by creating alternative focal points of national consolidation that will relegate caste identity to the background. It is in this context that the movement in Ayodhya is of critical importance. The defeat of the BJP on this issue will, in one important sense, only aggravate the crisis of Indian nationalism.

P.M. CHANDRASHEKHAR, 13 NOVEMBER, 1990

We shall find... a way by reconciliation, by mutual discussion.... Religion in my opinion does not teach confrontation. Religion asks us to live like brothers. Hindu religion has always pleaded for human approach to all problems. compassion and sympathy for all. Any killing in the name of religion is criminal... I hope and trust that religious leaders of Muslim and Hindu communities will come to some understanding. Everybody wants the Ram temple to be constructed in Ayodhya, but not by demolishing the mosque. This can be done only by mutual understanding... Any confrontation will be disastrous not only for the immediate future, but (by) creating a misunderstanding, for all time to come....

(Source: The Young India, 4 December, 1990)

BMMCC Conditionally Welcomes Rajiv Formula but opposes Kar Seva

"The Babari Masjid Movement Coordination Committee (BMMCC) appreciates the approach suggested by Shri Rajiv Gandhi for resolving the Babari Masjid dispute. However, the Committee is prepared to consider a reference to the Supreme Court or a Commission of Inquiry, as proposed, provided:

a) A Central Law is enacted to protect the status of all places of worship **as on 15 August, 1947:**

b) the VHP suspends its agitation and postpones Kar Seva.

c) the title suit pending before the Special Bench of the Allahabad High Court is expedited so that other questions of law and of fact already identified as issues are urgently disposed of.

The Central and the State Governments are under pressure from various sides to buy peace from the VHP by permitting 'symbolic Kar Seva' on or near shilanyas site. The Committee is firmly of the view that no Kar Seva can be lawfully performed on the site by the VHP till it has the title to the site and the site-plan is duly approved. The existing site-plan cannot be approved as it covers the disputed pemises.

If the VHP is prepared to revise its site-plan to exclude the Babari Masjid, a final settlement may be possible through negotiation if the Babari Masjid is secured against any future claim. Once there is a settlement, the authorities can approve the revised site-plan and High Court can be requested to withdraw the status-quo order.

But, if the VHP insists on the original site-plan, the Kar Seva has to wait till the question of fact about the Babari Masjid: whethre a temple was demolished in 1528 to construct the Babari Masjid on its place, is inquired into by a Commission of Inquiry or the Supreme Court, as proposed."

RSS-VHP-BJP Insulting Mahatma through their Fake Propaganda

"Shri K.L. Sharma in his letter of 2 December, 1990 to the Prime Minister has urged him 'to accept Mahatma Gandhi's Formula to resolve the Ram Janambhoomi-Babari Masjid dispute.

Shri Sharma has quoted an 'article' by the Mahatma said to have published in Harijan Sevak of 27 July, 1937. **Such an aricle does not exist. The entire quotation is a blatant forgery.**

The correct position was indicated by Jivanji Desai in **Harijan Sevak of 11.6.51.**

Mr. Sharma has subsequently quoted Gandhi's reply to a question in the Young India of 5.2.25. Once again he puts into the mouth of the Mahatma what he never said. Gandhiji counsels legal action to retrieve unlawfully occupied property after the owner has failed to defend it. That is precisely the course which the Babari Masjid Movement has adopted and which the VHP and BJP have rejected.

The Mahatma was totally opposed to forcible seizures or restorations. Indeed such blatant faisifications constitute a crime against the Nation. Even to impute such revanchist views to Mahatma Gandhi is an insult to his memory.

This is not the first time that the RSS-VHP-BJP have resorted to forgeries or to misquotations with significant omissions to support their cases against Babari Masjid. Their earlier efforts include 'Babar's firman' in the Modern Review, Calcutta, quotations for Abul Fazal's 'Diwan-e-Akbari' (they meant 'Aine-Akbari), 'Aurangzeb Nama', several District Gazetteers, 'Hindustan Muslim And Men', a book with a foreword by Maulana S. Abul Hasan Ali Nadvi. BJP carries on its campaign of falsehood some times in a more subtle manner.

The BJP President Advani never tires of designating interlocutory orders as 'judgements' while refusing to accept the judgement of the Court. He invents also a new sequence of events, forgetting that the VHP had launched its 'liberation' campaign in 1983 while the Babari Masjid Movement came into being in February, 1986, **after** the Babari Masjid was unlocked, but **before** the Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Divorce) Act, 1986 was enacted.

The BMMCC appeals to the RSS-VHP-BJP to stop its propaganda based on falsehood and distortions and agree to negotiate to resolve the dispute in the true spirit of the Gandhian thought and the Hindu ethos."

GANDHIJI ON REGAINING OCCUPIED LAND

Question : What are we to do when mosques are being put up on our ground without our permission.?

Answer :.... The question of mosques built on another's land without his permission is incredibly simple. **If A is in possession of his land and someone comes to build something on it, be it even a mosque, A has the right at the first opportunity of pulling down the structure.** Any building of the shape of a mosque is not a mosque. A building to be a mosque must be duly consecrated. A building put up on another's land without his permission is a pure robbery. Robbery cannot be consecrated. **If A has not the will or the capacity to destroy the building mis-called mosque, he has the right of going to a law court to have the building pulled down....** So long as I own property I must defend it whether by the force of law-courts or by the force of my own strong arms. The act is in essence the same... When a robber comes to take away A's property he can deliver the property to him, if he recognizes in him a blood brother. If he does not feel like one but dreads the robber and would wish that someone was near to knock

(Contd. on page 27)

PROGRAMME FOR OBSERVING 41st ANNIVERSARY OF OCCUPATION OF BABARI MASJID

Memorandum to District Magistrate on 22 December: 'DOA' and 'Fateha' in Mosques on 23 December, 1990

"To mark the 41st anniversary of the illegal occupation of the Babari Masjid, the Babari Masjid Movement Coordination Committee (BMMCC) has decided to observe the following programme:—

1. At every district headquarters, a District Action Committee shall submit a Memorandum to the District Magistrate on 22 December, 1990 for onward transmission to the Prime Minister demanding:
   a) Central Legislation to maintain the status of all places of worship as on 15 August, 1947;
   b) Restoration of Babari Masjid to the Muslim community through day-to-day hearing of the title suit so as to expedite the final judicial verdict;
   c) Ban on agitation in any form in violation of the status-quo order of the High Court;
   d) Ban on militant organisations like Bajrang Dal;
   e) Ban on inflammatory and provocative audio and video cassettes as well as prosecution of those who make such speeches and raise such slogans.

Copies of the Memorandum may be sent to the State Babari Masjid Action Committees as well as the Babari Masjid Movement Coordination Committee.

2. In every mosque, **after Zohar congregation, on 23 December, 1990** there should be a 'Doa' for the liberation of the Babari Masjid and other Masjids in illegal occupation and a '**Fateha**' for the eternal peace of the innocent persons killed in communal attacks and police atrocities.

The BMMCC advises the people that **there should be no public meetings or processions of demonstrations or rallies on this occasion."**

JOINT APPEAL BY POLITICAL PARTIES

A meeting was held today (December 5) in the Prime Minister's Office. The following attended the meeting:

Prime Minister, Deputy Prime Minister, Yashwant Sinha, Satya Prakash Malaviya, Subodh Kant Sahay, V.P. Singh, JD, Madhu Dandavate, JD, Santosh Bagrodia, Cong(I), M. Farooqui, CPI, Indrajit Gupta, CPI, Harkishan Singh Surjit, CPI(M).

The developments relating to Ramjanambhoomi-Babari Masjid issue were reviewed. The meeting appreciated the beginning of a dialogue between the two sides...

The meeting... appealed to the BJP and VHP to abandon the programme of satyagraha starting December 6 so that the dialogue could go on in a cordial atmosphere....

(Source : New Age, New Delhi, 9 December, 1990)

LEFT PARTIES : JOINT STATEMENT, 18-Nov. 1990

The Left parties strongly condemn the VHP's call for a "second phase" of the kar seva at Ayodhya from December 6... for building the temple at the disputed site. The VHP has also announced that it will take the ashes of those killed at Ayodhya round the country and hold meetings. This is a move calculated to rouse passions and anti-minority feelings....

All these activities will further vitiate the atmosphere and strengthen the communal divide. These activities are directly against the inteests of the country.

The Left parties demand that the Central Government announce its firm stand of opposing these provocative activities of the VHP and the BJP, and take all necessary measures to preserve peace and communal amity. Similarly, the UP Government also will have to adopt adequate measures to maintain law and order and foil any communal mischief at Ayodhya and in the rest of the State.....

The Left parties will work in concert with all other secular forces to conduct a mass campaign to expose... the disruptive nature of the BJP and the VHP stand.

CPI(M) : STATEMENT ON PROPOSED KAR SEVA

The CPI(M) and the Left parties have consistently maintained that they would support any settlement of the Ayodhya dispute which would be acceptable to both sides...

Now there is talk of allowing the VHP to conduct kar seva at the Shilanyas site. The shilanyas site falls within the ambit of the disputed area as defined by the Lucknow bench of the Allahabad High Court.

The Congress(I) in UP is now advocating that the kar seva be allowed at the shilanyas site on December 6. But they do not explain how the structure of the mosque will be protected, **without an overall agreement with the VHP that they will alter the architectural plan for the temple so as to not encroach on the structure of the mosque.**

Any step to permit construction at the shilanyas site on December 6 without committing the VHP to alter its temple plan, which extends to the heart of the Masjid, as the sanctum sanctorum would mean the demolition of the structure. This would be a disastrous step, harmful to national unity, and will permanently damage communal amity.

The Central Government and the UP Government have to see that any proposed solution takes into account this vital factor....

...The V.P. Singh Government had no other option but to defend the status quo at the disputed site in Ayodhya, given the fact that the VHP and the BJP rejected all attempts at reasonable compromise.... in keeping with the defence of secular values and maintenance of communal peace in the country.

(Source : The People's Democracy, New Delhi 2 December, 1990)

BJP : National Executive Resolution, 10 November, 1900

A tits Palampur meeting the BJP National Executive had urged the Government of India to respect the sentiments of the overwhelming majority in the country and allow a Ram Temple to be built at the Rama Janmasthan. Construction of such a temple has been a centuries old aspiration of the people. Government was urged to adopt the same positive approach to Ayodhya that free India's First Government had adopted towards Somnath.

To mobilise national support for our stand... the BJP President undertook Ram Rath Yatra from Somnath to Ayodhya. This Yatra roused and united the people as never before... But the small men in power viewed this...as a threat to the petty little political constituencies carved out by them. And so they arrested Shri Advani and impounded the Ram Rath...

...The Prime Minister issued a belated, flawed and half-hearted ordinance- and withdrew even that under pressure of his communal friends. The Chief Minister of UP of course had already set a new record in State terror.... The pilgrim's rights of Puja, Parikarama and Akhand Path were violated, inspite of High Court Supreme Court orders. Even the Chhatri over shilanyas spot was removed in an act of sacrilege.... A total of 3,30,000 kar sevaks were arrested...

....However, defying all the repressive might of the State, tens of thousands reached Ayodhya, braved lathis, teargas shells and bullets, and symbolically accomplished Kar Sewa.

...On November 2, they staged a Second Jallianwala and mowed down unarmed, peaceful Ram Bhaktas....

The Bharatiya Janata Party demands:

1. Dismissal of the Mulayam Singh Ministry;
2. Suspension of officers involved in all these excesses;
3. Prosecution of officers and leaders who terrorised the people...
4. Facilities for early construction Ram Janma Mandir at Ram Janmasthan, to defuse the tension **and redeem National Honour.**

At this historic moment....the BJP....

....7. Holds that a non-official Inuiry Commission comprising of eminent citizens, jurists, journalists etc. should be set up to conduct an early inquiry into the excesses committed during the Ayodhya movement culminating in the mass murder of November 2.

The blood of the Ram Bhaktas shall not go in vain. And the BJP rededicates itself to the sacred task of rebuilding the Ram Janma Mandir at Ram Janmasthan and initiating the movement for establishing of Ram Rajya.

In conclusion we would like to advise our Muslim brethren once again to come out of their isolation and join the National Mainstream... find security and honour in peace with Hindus.

VHP : Views of G.S. Ashok Singhal

...The people of the country in general and those of Uttar Pradesh in particular were very much with us. They knew well beforehand that Mulayam's Government was likely to impose many autocratic, restrictive and repressive measures on Kar Sevaks and the Hindu pilgrims. They made small and narrow pathways at many places near UP border and inside UP which passed through jungle areas, avoiding police cordons and checkposts. They helped the Kar Sevaks at many places to cross the border areas and pass through villages. They even arranged tractors at many places to carry them. Food and accomodation were generously arranged by them at almost all villages enroute...

...Hindu nationalist consciousness has risen to a considerable extent.

The Kar Sevaks have, in fact, revitalized the courageous character of the Hindus... Teargas, lathi-charge and firing could not stop the peaceful Kar Sevaks on their determined path... They proceeded and ultimately hoisted the Bhagwa Flag on the domes of the Babari structure at Shree Ram Janmabhoomi.

...Our movement has been peaceful all through. We have acted only on... fundamental rights... given to us by our sacred constitution.

We, Hindus, by tradition have never accepted hinsa or violence as a means to the end. The Kar Sevaks... have only displayed the spirit of assertion in order to fight injustice done to them. We want Hindus to be assertive and not violent...

...The Hindus will no longer tolerate injustice. They will definitely assert themselves for their rights. Hence it is high time that... politicians and the administration should change their attitude towards Hindus.

The concept of Hindu Rashtra is not based on religious theocracy, unlike the Christian and Islamic States. The concept of Hindu Rashtra is based on Sarva Dharma Samabhava. There is absolute freedom of worship and faith in the concept of Hindu Rashtra, because Hindus by tradition are not bound to any particular religious text like the Christians or the Muslims... Moreover, the word Hindu is representative of a nation of people having common tradition, history culture and sociology. Therefore, those who call us communal are themselves confused and do not have a clear-cut

VHP's Ayodhya Campaign Launched on Indira Gandhi's Advice

Statement of George Fernandes, MP, New Delhi 19 Nov. 1990

I was at Ayodhya yesterday. Accompanying me were Harsh Vardhan, MP.... Hari Kewal Prasad, MP.... Mohan Singh, MLC, Ganesh Dixit, MLA, and several Janata Dal and Hind Mazdoor Kisan Panchayat function aries and workers.

We visited the Digambar Akhara where we had a long meeting with Baba Paramhans Das, the head of the Mandir and also the Chairman of the Ram Janam Mandir Nyas and with Mahant Nritya Gopal Dass, head of Maniram Chawani. Mahant Dharam Das of Hanuman Garhi in Ayodhya was also present.....

... I would like to share the following observations :—

1. Conflicting figures on the total number of people killed on October 30 and November 2 were mentioned to us.... The Central government must interact with the concerned State Governments in the country and identify those killed in police firing in Ayodhya....
2. ...Grave mistakes were committed while drawing up the strategy to protect the Babari Masjid structure from any damage. The Chief Minister's strong and sometimes harsh words were not backed with adequate action.... It would have been possible to segregate the Kar Sevaks from the large number of people who had come to Ayodhya to do Panchkosi Parikrama, and that would have reduced the pressure on the security forces deployed in Ayodhya....
3. ....Many people in Ayodhya... believe that it is still possible for the religious leaders from both sides... to sit together and find an amicable solution....
4. If the religious leaders... cannot come to any amicable understanding... the matter should be left to the courts—where it now is — to decide. The advice and direction given by Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel in his letter of January 6, 1950 to Pt. Govind Ballabh Pant, Chief Minister of UP should be followed in letter and spirit both by the disputants and the Governments....
5. **We were shocked to hear that Mrs. Indira Gandhi had advised the leaders of the Vishwa Hindu Parishad in September, 1984 that if they (VHP) were really serious about taking over the Babari Masjid to build the Ram Janambhoomi Temple they should mount a massive agitation so that she could then plead that she had no option but to concede the demand... The opening of the locks in 1986 and the consent to lay the Shilanyas in 1989, both with the personal clearance of Mr. Rajiv Gandhi, are looked at as a part of a single design by the Congress(I) to win the Hindu vote first in 1984 and then in 1989, though without much success...**
6. The Janata Dal, the parties of the National Front, the Left parties, Gandhians, and all other secular groups, trade unions and individuals need to jointly launch an.... intensive campaign to expose the unscrupulous exploitation of religion for political purposes by the BJP and the Congress-I
7. ...**The construction of the Ram Janambhoomi Temple at Ayodhya must be taken up by a committe to be set up by the people of Ayodhya and supported by a National Fund Raising Committee...**

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vision of either secularism or nationalism....

The concept of Hindu Rashtra is secular. The Muslims and Christians need not entertain any fear in this regard. If they entertain the idea that the politicians, political parties, the government or the administration can be a guarantee for their safety, then they are sadly mistaken. No politician, political party, government or administration can guarantee their safety.

It is the Hindu Samaj alone, which can guarantee their safety. Government can come and, go, but they cannot assure them of their safety. Muslims are free to live here as citizens. But if they try to live as invaders, Hindu Samaj is no longer prepared to tolerate this attitude.

I appeal to the Muslims in general to revolt against thei rso-called Muslim leaders who are trying to detract them from the path of Nationalism and inculcating in them a sense of separateness. They should feel one with this sacred soil and be proud of the common culture, heritage, history and sociology. ...

The movement for the liberation of Janmabhoomi will continue till we achieve our goal. ...

I want to appeal to our Muslim brethren once again that there is still time to ponder ever it and come to a mutual settlement by handing over the three sacred palces to the Hindus, namely-Ram Janmabhoomi, Krishna Janmasthan and Gyan Vapi, Varanasi. If they fail to decide on this then we will start our campaign for liberating 3000 sacred places of Hindus desecrated by Muslim vandalism. The choise is now upto them-Whether for 3 or for 3000.

...The issue of the Ram Janambhoomi should be delinked from party politics. ... The only possible political solution... is that all political parties irrespective of their strategies should accept the fact of Ram Janmabhoomi and allow the Hindus to construct the Temple.

(Source : The Organiser, New Delhi, 18 November, 1990)

AIMPLB : Resolution on Status of Babari Masjid in Shariat, 3 December, 1990

The working Committee... deems it necessary to explain the rule of Shariat with regard to a mosque... that **the title (to) and the ownership of a mosque and its site vest in God...., neither can (a mosque) be changed nor sold nor purchased, nor ... transferred by way of compromise to any individual or group or Government nor acquired by a Government.**

The Committee... hs arrived at the conclusions:—

a) that undeniable historical and legal evidence makes it obvious that Babari Masjid is a mosque. The Government of UP has also admitted this fact in its affidavit before the Court. In fact the Babari Masjid was not built on any usurped land or by demolishing any temple. **Hence its status in Shariat is that of a mosque. Therefore, the (status of the) mosque should be restored... as it was till December 22, 1949.**

b) **the Shilanyas performed on the graveyard land adjoining the Masjid on November 9, 1989 was illegal and wrongful. Kar Sewa or any such programme should not be allowed on this site.**

c) It is the responsibility of the Government to comply with the injunction... of the Allahabad High Court and to prevent its contravention. The attempt to construct a temple at the site of the mosque or on its land (constitutes) law-breaking and rebellion against the Constitution. It is the duty of the Government to safeguard the Constitution and to uphold the rule of law...

d) If the Government desires to settle the dispute through negotiations, the Board will welcome any **settlement which is not in conflict with Shariat.**

e) The Communalists, for last three years, are stoking the communal fire... al over the country through speeches, statements, audio and video cassettes... The Government should fulfil its duty by putting a brake on this unf tunate campaign and sh ot realise that this campaign of hatred and a ression is detrimental to the interests of the country, its integrity and solidarity. The Government should also realise that the Muslims, in the common interest of the country have conducted themselves with patience and forbearance and have desisted from adopting extremist reaction.

f) The Government, the political leaders and well-wishers of the country should realise that the future of country and its (democratic' secular) character are also involved in this dispute and they... can be saved by upholding (truth), justice and the rule of law.

PUCL : DEMAND FOR JUDICIAL INQUIRY, 16 NOVEMBER 1990

It has been widely reported.... that during the events leading to the 30th October, 1990, to Ayodhya, law enforcement agencies of various State Governments have acted arbitrarily and in complete violation of the rights of the citizens by mass arrests and excessive use of force. The State Government have of course denied that any excesses have been committed.... The gravity and the enormity of the task require that a high level judicial enquiry should be held by the Government of India. We would, therefore, urge government of India to immediately announce the constitution of a high level judicial equiry and investigation into the various aspects and facets of these events. This alone can given a sense of confidence to various sections of the society.

> It is ironical that Hindus should have to go with a begging bowl for their rights in their own motherland.
>
> **— Bal Thackeray**

IUML : Statement by G.S., G.M. Banatawalla

The reported initiation of efforts by the Prime Minister Shri Chandra Shekhar to bring about a negotiated settlement of the Ram Janambhoomi- Babari Masjid dispute is welcome. The negotiations must be broad-based and include all the parties to the dispute.... However, the first step in the direction of an acceptable negotiated settlement is for the Vishwa Hindu Parishad and their allies to come to the negotiating process for a just and fair solution without any pre-conditions....

The Muslim League stresses upon the Central and State Governments that.... firm and adequate measures to meet the impending kar sewa threat to law and communal amity cannot be made to await the outcome of efforts for a negotiated settlement....

The agitation to interfere with the disputed complex, including the Shilanyas site, be banned and the provisions of Indian Penal Code, the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act and of all other relevant laws be invoked against guilty individuals and organizations. **The security of the entire disputed complex be entrusted to the army...**

...Legislation must be immediately enacted to protect the status of all places of religious significance as.... on the independence of the country.

B.B. Lal's Report
On Archaeology of Ramayana Sites Project

...Accordingly, a project, called 'Archaeology of the Ramayana Sites', was planed and initiated by the present writer in 1975 when he was working at the Jiwaji University, Gwalior. There was, however, an interruption and it was only in 1977, after the writer had joined the Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Shimla, that the project was put on a regular basis. Until 1987 it was operated jointly by the Institute and the Archaeological Survey of India. The latter gave full financial support for the field-work and also deployed its officers and staff. Since November 1987, it is the Survey alone that is supporting the project by providing facilities for the preparation of the reports, which are likely to cover five volumes.

In the Ramayana story, the principal place is Ayodhya, the capital of King Dasaratha whose son, Rama is the hero of the epic. Located on the right bank of the Sarayu (Fig. 1) in Faizabad District, Uttar Pradesh, the site covers an area of over one sq. km...

Under the research project in hand, excavations have been carried out at five of the aforementioned places, namely Ayodhya...

Results of the Excavations:

Ayodhya—Judging from the size of ancient settlements, the mound at Ayodhya is fairly large. It covers an area of about one square kilometre and rises at places to a height of about 10 meters. ...

... The excavated trenches consistently revealed that **the earliest settlement at Ayodhya did not go back prior to the early stage of the Northern Black Polished Ware (NBPW) Culture.** In these early levels a few stray shards of a late stage of he Painted Grey Ware (PGW) were also encountered, but sure enough there was no independent horizon of the PGW. Nor was there any such horizon of th Black-slipped and Black-and -red Wares. ...

Without any interruption, the habitation passed on to the Sunga, Kusan and Gupta periods. ...

A reference here may also be made to an inscription on a stoneslab, discovered not from our excavations but long back in a suburb of Ayodhya, known as Ranopali. Ascribable to the second half of the first century B.C., it refers to the construction of a ketana (shrine) by Dhanadeva who has been mentioned as Kosaladhipa, i.e. king of the Kosala'. ... **From this inscription it is clear that Ayodhya continued to be the capital of the Kosala kingdom during the early centuries before and after the Christian era.**

In the Janmabhumi area, the uppermost levels of a trench that lay immediately to the south of the Babari Masjid brought to light **a series of brick-built bases which evidently carried pillars thereon. (This relates to the 11th century A.D.—Editor). In the construction of the Babari Masjid a few stone pillars had been used, which may have come from this preceding structure. However, in order to confirm this and to obtain a full plan and other details of this earlier structure, it would be necessary to carry out further excavation in the area.**

Likewise, horizontal excavation is also necessary of the earliest levels in the Janmabhoomi area, since it is only through such an excavation that one can get the plans of houses and other buildings of the period around 700 B.C. when, as the evidence discussed in the following pages indicates the Ramayana episode is likely to have taken place. ...

A look back at the results obtained from the above... would show that **the earliest time when all these sites were under occupation was that of the Early Northern Black Polished Ware, which would be assignable to circa 700 B.C.** The two earlier periods, viz., those of the Ochre Colour and Black-slipped Wares, encountered at Sringaverapura are limited only to that site and occur nowhere else. Thus, **if the Ramayana episode has any basis in historical reality, the archaeological evidence available to us suggests that it could not have taken place earlier than circa 700 B.C.**

But the archaeological evidence, such as it is, is still mute about the basic question, viz., the historicity itself. No contemporary inscription testifying to it is available to us. Nor is any such evidence likely to turn up since we have not come across any inscription prior to the fourth century B.C. ... But then does the Archaeological evidence completely fail to provide any clue what-soever which might help us in solving the riddle of the historicity of the Ramayana even partially? The position is not so bad as it appears to be. ...

To sum up. The archaeological evidence. ... does indicate that the Ramayana is not the figment of some body's imagination but may have had a kernel of truth at its base. ... Thus, the description of houses, town-planning, etc. **would correspond more to the period of the transcription of the text-from second century B.C. to second century A.D. -that to the actual period of the episode itself, which appears to have been around 700 B.C. ...**

(Source : The Manthan Monthly, New Delhi, October, 1990)

* (The) Ram Janmabhoomi temple is more important than the BJP winning or losing elections.

—BJP Secretary J.P. Mathur

Joint Statement of Thapar, Gopal and Panikkar of JNU On Archaeological Evidence of Demolition of 'Mandir.'

It does seem peculiar that fifteen years after the excavation of a site adjoining the Babari Masjid and claimed as the site of the Ramjanambhoomi, new evidence should now be introduced as having been earlier excavated at the site. So far there has been no reference to this evidence in any of the excavation reports published after the excavation by the Director of the excavation, Prof. B.B. Lal in Indian Archaeology — a Review 1976-77 and 1979-80, nor in any of the subsequent papers presented by B.B. Lal at various academic seminars One wonders why, if there was such evidence, B.B. Lal is only revealing it now? Could it be that because of the politics of the Ram Janmabhumi, it is being claimed as fresh evidence?

In his excavation reports, B.B. Lal mentions those who excavated along with him and curiously, despite his insiting that he was part of the team, the name of Dr. S.P. Gupta, is conspicuously absent. B.B. Lal states that the site was first occupied in the seventh century B.C. and continued upto the third century A.D. A possible fortification wall, and what might have been a moat cut across the Janmabhumi area. He then mentions that among the finds were half a dozen seals, seventy coins and over a hundred terracotta figurines. He makes special mention of pottery of the rouletted ware generally associated with the Roman trade of the early Christian era. He adds that it is rather remarkable that the Gupta period is not significantly indicated at this site, a fact also noticed in the first session's dig in 1975. He continues "After the early historic deposit there is a break in occupation, with considerable debris and pit formations before the site was again occupied around the eleventh century A.D. Several later medieval brick-and-kankar lime floors hve been met with, but the entire late period was devoid of any special interest".

These earlier statements contradict his present claim to having found the pilar-bases of what may have been a temple at the site, a claim made by him recently in the RSS Magazine Manthan (October, 1990). Could it be that the requirements of VHP politics have occasioned this new claim? This claim cannot now be examined by other scholars since the excavated site has been filled in. A reexcavation of the same site becomes extremely difficult given that the sequential layers have been disturbed by this covering up. Archaeological evidence is not self-explanatory; it has to be interpreted. The interpretations of the same data by different archaeologists can vary. This is why it is necessary preferably, to leave the excavated site open and at any rate to keep a meticulous and exact record of the excavation so that it can be made available to other archaeologists.

Contradictions

As regards the statement by Dr. S.P. Gupta, that too carries contradictions.

1. The fact of the pillar bases running behind the wall surrounding the mosque does not mean that they necessarily run under the mosque as well, as is claimed, since there is space between the wall and the mosque and the pillar bases may have terminated just behind the wall. It is equally possible tht no more pillar bases will be found even if there were to be excavations below the mosque.

2. The debris associated with these bases is said to have contained glazed pot sherds of the blue-and-white Islamic style. This style of pottery first comes into use in Persia in the fifteenth century and therefore, cannot date to an earlier period in India. **Thus the evidence of the pottery would point to the bases being constructed not earlier than the fifteenth century and possibly even a later period.** Whatever the style of the stone pillars incorporated in the Babari Masjid, **the pillar bases cannot be dated to the eleventh century.** In his article in Manthan B.B. Lal has said that the pillar bases were found in the uppermost levels of the trench: this would certainly not make them as early as the eleventh century A.D. since the uppermost levels would be comparatively recent. If the contention is that these were pillar bases of the stone pillars used in building a temple **then the temple cannot be dated to earlier than the fifteenth century since the debris in the bases would be of the earliest period.** Therefore, the carved stone pillars which S.P. Gupta dates to the eleventh century clearly do not belong to this temple, if in fact, it was a temple.

Brick pillar bases

3. Brick pillar bases do not in themselves indicate the presence of a temple. The structure supported by such a base could be of any kind. The pillar bases may well have held up a brick structure with arches, the kind of structure common in medieval times, which may have been a hall adjoining the mosque. The size and shape of bricks used on construction in India varied from time to time and a study of the actual bricks used would have been an additional factor in dating the pillar bases.

4. The photographs of the stone pillars and the doorjamb in the article by S.P. Gupta, come from sites, some as far as a kilometre away, and these can hardly be used to illustrate the supposed temple at the site of the Babari Masjid.

quoted in S.P. Gupta's article does not allow one to assume the existence of a unique temple at this site. **The decorations on the pillars are not exclusive to temple architecture for**

even domestic architecture would have had the same decorative motifs. Load bearing pillars do not mean that they are necessarily in the position as when they were first used. It is feasible to bring pillars from elsewhere and use them as load bearing pillars in a new construction.

To sum up: There is no evidence that the brick pillar bases supported a temple and that this temple dedicated to Rama, was destroyed and replaced by the Masjid. It is quite plausible that there was a temple somewhere in the vicinity perhaps dating to the eleventh century A.D., which gradually fell into disrepair and disuse, as temples did, and that some of the material from this was picked up to be used in the construction of the mosque. What is being contested is the claim that the recently disclosed* of pillar bases at the site proves that there was a temple dedicate to Rama and meant to mark the birthplace of Rama, which was destroyed by Babar and a mosque built on the same site. The evidencedoes not support this claim. To that extent the evidence from archaeology bears out the evidence from other sources

The VHP, which was earlier arguing that historical evidence did not matter as the site of the Ramjanmabhumi was a matter of faith, has once again shifted its ground and is now contending that the issue should be decided by archaeological evidence.

We would like to re-iterate **that the Babari Masjid-Ram Janmabhumi dispute is not a question to be decided by historical or archaeological evidence. The fundamental aspect of this issue is that the destruction of the mosque and its replacement by a temple, as a means of getting even with Muslim rule, is a return to the politics of medieval times—and therefore an action which we cannot endorse, either as historians or as citizens of India.**

(Source : The Indian Express, New Delhi, 5 Dec., 90)

A Turning Point in India's History
Chandan Mitra on Ayodhya, 30 Oct, 1990

It was 12.02 in the afternoon. It was the high noon of Hindu militancy...

...Without the covert rebellion of the Uttar Pradesh police and sections of the other security forces, the storming of the shrine would have been impossible.

...An amazingly agile Srish Chandra Dixit, Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) vice president was seen clambering over a ledge trying to secure entry. He slipped twice as he tried to scale the height, **till policemen standing above gave him a helping hand. He was after all, their former director-general.**

Later, after the show was over, Dixit sat in a room in the police outpost outside the shrine and addressed a full-fledged press conference...

By 3 p.m., the morning's prize catch, VHP general secretary Ashok Singhal, had 'escaped' from the hospital where he was allegedly convalescing after being tapped by a police lathi. Singhal resurfaced shortly, to address a public meeting in curfew-bound Ayodhya on Thursady and to lead the second assault on the shrine on Friday.

...It was tiredness that must have told on the guardians of the law when the sadhus hijacked a UP roadways bus. They had been shoved inside it around 9.20 a.m. and had appeared to accept their arrest calmly... When it came hurting back, few realised it had been hijacked...

The hijacking of the bus marked the turning point in the assault on the shrine...

This was the biggest mystery of them all. How were kar sevaks pouring out onto the streets when the town was supposedly under curfew? And why were policemen seated outside Hanuman Garhi grinning sheepishly as the frenzied volunteers went past screaming...

An even more mysterious development followed. Suddenly, the most active contingent of the police, led by the intrepid Sikh officer, the hero of the dawn battle of the bridge.... was withdrawn from the Hanuman Garhi area... It was 11 a.m. As if at the command of an invisible hand, the slogan-shouting crowd seated at the crossroad a little outside Hanuman Garhi got up and, in a mad rush, surged towards the alley leading to the shrine. The die had been cast...

Just before mid-day, the law-enforcing machinery gave up the battle...

Before anybody could figure out what was happening, the collapsible gate had opened, letting in some 300 kar sewaks into the complex. Senior Police and Border Security Force (BSF) officers swung into action and managed to prevent the remaining part of the hysterical mob from gaining entry. In fact, they were not too keen anyway; the vanguard had got inside. The objective had been achieved. within seconds the vanguard began dismantling the iron grills on the wall separating the Babari Masjid from the Ram Chabutra. Some managed to scale the dome, unfurl a saffron flag and commence demolition with bare hands and a few stricks. The maniacal strength of the fanatics was incredible. Before they were turfed out of the complex by CRPF jawans, they had succeeded in wrecking considerable damage. True, the main structure stood firm. But the fact was that they had reached their target and successfully commenced demolition. It was a great symbolic victory.

... Indeed it was Diwali that night in Ayodhya, Faizabad, Lucknow and countless cities of UP. Muslims stayed huddled, fear writ large on their faces. The State had failed. Indian secularism had been dealt a body blow by Hindu zealots.

State & Majority community must Protect Minority against Discrimination, Difficulties can be Overcome by Defining Areas of Agreement, Violence is Anti-thesis of Religion; Killing Each other is

Prime Minister Chandra Shekhar's Speech in the

... What is the programme before this Government? Or what are the issues on which we are going to run the nation in the coming days?... I really feel that times are grave, we have reached a perilous point in our history. I do not want to be a prophet of doom becuase I know that because of cultural heritage, civilization and vitality of our people we can overcome all the difficulties with cohesion and hard work. But... we have to find the areas of agreement, not areas of confrontation and conflict. This is true for all the countries which are fighting against poverty, squalour, misery and disease. This is true for the whole world and not only for this sub-continent. This is why I say that at this moment we should try to agree to work together on specific issues.

... I shall like to keep a side the manifestoes of all the political parties. Today, can't we agree on three, four, five points where we can say that we shall work together in order to retrieve the situation? For that a new political climate has to be created in this country and that political climate can be initiated by understanding each other's problems, each other's aspirations... I want everybody's cooperation, everybody's support. If you want me to express my political philosophy... I am not a progressive... I am a conservative... and as a conservative, I do not change every day. My philosophy is the same as when I was being called a Young Turk. And there is no alternative before this country, because we are a scarce resource society. If the resources are limited, we have to decide how to use our resources. We have to decide what is our asset and what is our strength... Above all there are more than 85 crore people in this country, who have got the strength to bring prosperity and progress to this nation... What has been our fault...? We have not been able to provide opportunity for these people, unfortunate people, who are ready to work hard, to utilise their strength for producing more. How can we do it? In a democratic society... we cannot force them to work. We have to create... will power... by assuring them that what they produce will not go for the ostentatious living of the chosen few but for meeting their basic needs... we will have to invest in Man... Child is the strength of today and hope of tomorrow. Every child who is born has the right to get from the society clean drinking water, necessary calories to develop as a healthy citizen, elementary education and primary health service and when he grows into a citizen, 18 years of age, he should not be discriminated on the basis of caste, creed and religion. If you take these five points as our manifesto, as our destination, as our goal, is there any difference in this House?... But... we will have to make many changes in our approach towards the economic problem, towards the social problem... If the country is poor, every section of the society will have to share this poverty. It cannot be that the toiling masses... will be called upon to go on making sacrifices... Poverty will have to be shared by those who are the privileged... If the privileged want to cooperate with me, they should learn to make sacrifice in order to make the people, our poorer sections, happier and richer...

...I want to assure that I may make any compromise but not... on the question of the dignity of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. ...

...Minorities all over the world feel apprehensive... I shall ask those who say that there should be not discrimination between the minority and the majority, why did the founders of our Constitution insert minority (safeguards) in our Constritution? Minorities all over the world, whether they are religious minorities or ethnic minorities on linguistic minorities, react in a sharp way because they have apprehension and fear in their minds. If we go by dictionary meaning of what they say, we shall always reach a wrong political decision. We should try to understand their aspiration. **We should try to understand their apprehesion, we should try to undersand that they have a psychology, a psyche in which they feel... insecurity, about their prosperity and about their future. It is the responsibility of the nation, it is the responsibility of the State and more so the responsibility of the majority community to see that this fear is alleviated from their mind.** This we will have to do.

...In the matter of religion everybody is free. Secularism does not mean that we should discard religion. Religion is an instrument of communion between man and God. ...

We should be proud of our religious heritage in this country. I am a Hindu. I am proud of Rama; I am proud of Krishna; I am proud of the Vedas and of our Arayan civilisation. But equally I am proud of the contri-

Understand Grievances and Remove Fear from their Mind. Understanding Each Other's Aspirations, & Respecting Constitutional Rights Irreligious and Inhuman. All Concerned Must Work for Peace

Lok Sabha, New Delhi, 16 November, 1990.

bution made by other religions which came to this country. And it is the superiority of the Hindu religion over others (that) we have... compassion and... tolerance. If this tolerance and compassion go, the Hindu religion will lose its power, its superiority over all other religions.

I am not against building (a) temple (in Ayodhya)... It is an emotive issue... In the birth place of Rama there should be a temple, magnificient, glorious, as big as we can. But I shall appeal to my friends that **in their enthusiasm to build (the) temple, do not try to demolish the mosque...** I assure you that I shall cooperate in every way to build the temple. But the only thing is, assure the Muslim community that their pride, their self-respect will not be hurt.

... In this house and in the other House many a time I have seen people taking an extreme view. But parliamentary democracy means dialogue, discussion, trying to persuade each other to come to some understanding. This is the essence of parliamentary democracy.

... My understanding with Advaniji or BJP... is... that I consider Advaniji to be a patriot. I do not agree with his thinking about the social and political life of this country. And I shall go on appealing to Mr. Advani and his colleagues... and tell them that the country cannot afford to have confrontation, the country cannot indulge in fighting with each other. I am sorry for what happened in Ayodhya. Nobody wants that even a single man should die. I assure you that even if a single man or women dies in this country, I feel that a son or daughter of Moti. India has died.

Death is... death, whether (it) comes by the kinfe of a rioter or by the bullet of the police. There is no difference... I cannot say that death by rioting is wrong and death by police bullet is good. But, sometimes, the State has to perform unpleasant duties... If sometimes (a) decision has to be (taken) in order to protect the lives of thousands, in order to protect millions from going in the street and killing each other, if some action has to be taken it is with regret... But the responsibility is not that of the State, this responsibility should be shared by all those who are concerned.... Whoever can contribute to peace, whoever can contribute to understanding I shall go and knock at his door. **If the Muslim community agrees to build the temple on the very spot where the mosque is, I shall be too glad. But this should be with common consent. It should be by... mutual understanding. It should not be forced on them.** I shall appeal again to the religious leaders of the Muslim community and also of the Hindu community that they should sit together and try to find a solution. Let us not politicise this issue. This is not a political issue. **This is a human issue. This is an issue which is going to have its bearing on history for times to come.**

.... In the name of religion please do not kill each other, that is antithesis of religion, that is against religion, whether it is Islam... Hinduism, Christianity or any other religion.... Traditions should be respected unless and until they come in the way of progress. My friend Prof. Madhu Dandvate was kind enough to refer about my stand taken at the time of (Operation) Blue Star.... I did not make any big statement. When some pressmen asked me, I just said, I still remember that sentence—It is unfortunae that we had to send (the) army to the Golden Temple and (we had) better withdraw it soon.... There were comments all over the country. Editorial were written against me. Political leaders came against me heavily and not only Rajivji who subsequently became Prime Minister but even the leaders of my own party condemned me... I might have criticised Rajivji and the Congress. He might have criticised me. ...elections at this moment... Will bring disaster to this country.... In all humility I shall like to say that I want cooperation from everybody. What has happened in Kashmir?. When Rajiv Gandhi left.. At least 25-30 per cent people were openly associating themselves with India. When our Government came, the first thing I got from the newspapers was that Mr. Jagmohan was going to be appointed as Governor. I wrote a slip to the Home Minister saying: "It will be a disaster, don't do it".... I tried to persuade the Home Minister that we have gone all over the world telling that there is an autocratic regime in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir, we have got an elected Government... Rigging in the elections was known (to) Mr. Mufti when he became the Home Minister! When he was in the Congress, he never remembered about the rigging. Is it the way to run a nation?

...I assure you... and the whole

(Contd. on page 45)

Rajiv Gandhi's Role in Shilanyas, November, 1989

Extracts from Nicholas Nugent : Rajiv Gandhi : Son of A Dynasty

...This was also the election in which the Nehruvian concept of secularism was on trial. The BJP, in particular, made it a central part of its campaign, asking "Why should we not be proud of our Hindu heritage and why should we pander to Muslims and other minorities?" Anyone who doubts the effectiveness of this argument has only to look at how the BJP, in alliance with another Hindu fundamentalist party, the Shiv Sena, increased its parliamentary seats at this elections from 2 to 88. At any rate, Congress seem to have lost the Muslim vote from an early stage; probably due to the feeling that the party was backing the fundamentalist Hindu line over Ayodhya. However, the failure of the Congress government to protect Muslims from being killed at Bhagalpur, whilst the election campaign was underway, was also a factor in bringing about the Muslim alienation from Congress.

It was at the insistence of the Uttar Pradesh chief minister N.D. Tiwari, that Rajiv went to seek the blessing of the Hindu holyman Deoraha Baba, 3 days before the foundation stone of the Hindu temple was to be laid at Ayodhya. Rajiv says Deoraha Baba sent me a message asking me to come to see him, indicating that he had convinced the various groups not to precipitate the Ayodhya issue". He says he called on the holy man in an effort to defuse the Ayodya dispute, and prevent it leading to violence.

Deoraha Baba.... was undeniably a Hindu holy man, living as he did on the banks of the river Jamuna, close to the birthplace of another Hindu god, Krishna. He would not reveal what passed between him and Rajiv at their....meeting, but said people came to seek his guidance for the well-being of the country. If there was a message of peace and reconciliation over Ayodhya, Rajiv did not share it. He made no effort to ban the laying of the foundation stone of the Hindu temple... Nor did he condemn the action, which was bound to cause concern to all India's Muslims that Hindu Nationalism was on the march again.

Indeed, about the only positive thing that can be said about Rajiv's role in the Ayodhya dispute is that he turned down a suggestion that he himself lay the temple's foundation stone, a suggestion that reportedly emanated from his own home minister, Buta Singh. Buta Singh had several meetings with the Vishwa Hindu Parishad in the period leading up to the foundation stone ceremony on 9 November. That may have been a legitimate role for a home minister, but it strengthened the belief that Congress were quietly supporting this provocative enterprise. Was Rajiv really putting into effect a Congress decision to exploit the dispute at Ayodhya for political advantage, a decision which, according to Arun Nehru, had been taken nearly four years earlier? The suspicions grew ever stronger.

Launching his election campaign at Ayodhya's district capital of Faizabad, Rajiv claimed that only Congress could restore 'Ram Rajya'. Mahatma Gandhi had first coined this concept of India's Golden Age. He had in mind a land in which minorities of all sorts were protected by the existence of perfect justice, tolerance, equality and freedom. But, in an age where religious fundamentalism was on the verge of becoming religious bigotry, the notion of 'Ram Rajya' was all too easily misinterpreted to mean the rule of the good Ram, in other words, Hindu rule. It was a dangerous appeal to introduce into the election campaign, and one which risked further alienating Muslims who had already been alienated by the Bhagalpur communal massacre....

If Congress was 'playing the Hindu card', it seems to have backfired. The foundation stone ceremony on 9 November passed off peracefully thanks to a heavy police presence. But this dangerous appeal to Hindu sentiment did not appear to win Congress any support, and may indeed have helped Congress lose the election. The Janata Dal picked up the mantle of secularism, and with it the votes of the minorities. Voters who were of a Hindu fundamentalist persuation rejected Congress in large numbers if favour of the BJP....

COMMUNAL RIOTS

JAMAAT-E-ISLAMI HIND'S REPORT ON PATNA RIOTS, OCTOBER-NOVEMBER, 1990

Communal riots which broke out on October 31 in Patna were preplanned to root out the Muslims.... It is but the vigilance... of the State (Government) which checked (a major) disaster... Thousands of innocent people have been affected. Many lost their lives, hundreds injured. Shops and houses have been burnt... (22 houses were burnt, 36 damaged and 84 looted. 46 shops were destroyed. 7 Mosques and 3 Idgahs/Maqbaras were totally or partially damaged).

List of Damaged Mosques/Idgahs/ Mazbaras

Mosques

1. Lohe Ka Pul
2. Ranipur Khidki
3. Mohammadjan Ki Masjid
4. Gorhatta Jama Masjid
5. Tayyab Raj Ki Masjid
6. Bagh Kalu Khan
7. Begumpur Outer

Idgahs/Mazbaras

1. Lal Imli
2. Ranipur
3. Gulzarbagh Idgah

P.C. Alexander on Ayodhya Issue

....Ayodhya was not just an issue of law and order. Much more than law and order are at stake in Ayodhya and it is this that should cause worry for every citizen. It may sound alarming but the hard fact is that the very future of the republic and the values which people had considered basic to their political beliefs for the last 43 years are now at stake in Ayodhya.

How could matters come to this stage?.... First, it was V.P. Singh's failure to grasp the implications of the problem in time that made Ayodhya blow up now. Second, it was the short-sighted calculation of the BJP to make quick political capital out of a religious dispute that gave the problem monstrous dimensions.

V.P. Singh is now trying to build for himself the image of one who would rather sacrifice his chair than budge from his commitment to secularism....

But what is relevant here is not the claim he has made about his commitment to "larger goals" but the fact that this commitment had not prevented him from accepting the support of those whom he now accuses of stoking communal flames. He should have known about the likely consequences of his action when he entered into seat adjustments with such a party in the last elections and when he agreed to form coalition governments with that party at the state level. He had no problem in accepting the support of such a party for remaining in office. Nor had he any problem in maintaining continuous consultations with L.K. Advani on the affairs of government or even in accepting his recommendatins on appointments of governors and other such functionaires. The BJP became a political untouchable for V.P. Singh only when he found that his last-minute efforts to appease it on the Ayodhya issue had failed and it announced the withdrawal of its support from his government.

...He cannot shift the blame to anyone else for the manner in which he had handled the Ayodhya problem as Prime Minister. He banked too much and too long on the anti-Congressism of the BJP without understanding the full ramifications of the problem and the likely consequences of his inaction. When he finally decided to intervene, the harm had already been done.

...One of the most unfortunate and unexpected developments in recent months has been the decision of the BJP to cross these limits. Anyone with even elementary knowledge of the political situation in India would have known that the demolition of a mosque—relocation as the BJP euphemistically describes it—was not just possible without the willing consent of the parties involved. But BJP surprised everyone by going in for the option of force. **Force does not become politically respectable merely because it is backed by the wish of the majority. In fact it becomes more heinous when it is used by the majority group to compel the minority group to do what it does not wnat to do willingly.**

...Nobody can seriously question the patriotic credentials of leaders like L.K. Advani or A.B. Vajpayee or attribute to them any sinister intention to destroy the nation's unity. Still their action in making the VHP's religious mission as their own political mission is producing exactly this result. V.P. Singh must have bungled in handling the problem, but that does not condone the action of those who created it in the first place....

What we are witnessing now is a direct assault on the very concept of our nationhood. For over four decades the people of India have been trying to build up this republic of their dreams on the foundations of socialism, secularism and democracy and it is that dream that is now under attack in Ayodhya.... The forces that have been let loose can, if not effectively curbed without any further delay, divert the course of the republic into altogether new directions where democracy itself may become irrelevant.

...In a democracy the power of the state is the power of the people and the people themselves willingly accept the exercise of state power in order to preserve the very system of democracy. But if the authority of the State is defied and discredited by mobs... democracy will become unworkable and the country itself will become incapable of being governed. It is in such situations that mafia gangs and unprincipled groups of vigilantes establish parallel power centres emasculating the authority of the state.

... The warning signals from Ayodhya are too serious to be ignored and it is high time that the people were alerted about the gravity of the dangers... to stem this rapid slide to disaster before it becomes too late.

(Source : The We ek, N 18 November, 1990)

All Mulayam Singh's efforts came to naught. His own administration had defeated the chief minister. Never before in the history of independent India had such elaborate arrangements been made to seal off a small town...

A shrine that lay unused for four decades had become the cynosure of all eyes, the world over.... India, meanwhile, took another step closer to anarchy.

Vinod Mehta's Solution

... Vishwanath Pratap Singh and Mulayam Singh Yadav... have conceded that the apparently impregnable cordon around Ayodhya had been breached. Indeed, as reports of official connivance pour in, the lapses in the security arrangement assume a frightening dimensions. Still, to describe the events of the day as the "storming of Ayodhya" is an exaggeration....

The Vishwa Hindu Parishad is busy circulating stories of masterly tactical strategy deployed to hoodwink the law and order agencies... But what was finally achieved? Fifteen minutes on top of the mosque and minor damage to its already peeling plaster is small potatoes considering how meticulously the onslaught had been planned and what huge numbers were involved.

...The VHP circles there is moderate euphoria—which is why the fiction that kar seva did actually take place is being persisted with. It is a patently false claim...

...Although... Rajiv Gandhi and his party swear by secularism and the minorities, in November 1989 they were manipulating vote banks on a daily basis so as to extract the maximum mileage from the controversy. On their part, BJP leaders talk bravely of sweeping the polls, but in their hearts they know that at best they can hope either to participate in a coalition as the junior partner, or support a minority government from the outside...

....Hindu and Muslim leaders should be in a mood to get back to the negotiating table and sort out this matter between themselves...

That a magnificient Ram temple should be built in Ayodhya is no longer a matter of contention. That it should be built... at the site which the VHP claims is the janmasthan is also not a matter of contention. Thus, the issue has not, as it were, remained frozen. There has been movement... The emerging consensus recommends:—

a) the proposed temple stand cheek by jowl with the masjid.
b) the possible destruction of the outer wall of the mosque...

...All that the country pleads for is... drop the demand for relocation or demolition. Take the disputed land, build in any manner adjacent to or around the Babari Masjid. The VHP can then have their sought-after temple at the holy site, while offence to Muslim sentiments will be spared. Perhaps, this formula is overly generous to the Hindus and Muslims fundamentalists will describe it as a sell out. Actually, it is the only way to keep this country from going up in flames.

...When people believe that their faith is threatened, they begin to cling to symbols. The mosque in Ayodhya, disintegrating, unused, forgotten is one such symbol.

A Glimmer of Hope

The Indian Express, 4 Dec. 1990

...Intense behind-the-scene exchanges on possible ways of breaking the current deadlock .... have thrown up some possible compromises, there is some reason to believe that honourable solution meeting the minimal aspirations of the two communities even while allaying their fears will be found acceptable by both.

...First and immediately, let the proposed Kar Seva in Ayodhya on December 6 be allowed to take place without too fussy a determination of its legality....

....The most promising course seems to be the one suggested by Mr. Rajiv Gandhi.... If a commission, set up to determine whether as a matter of historical fact there was an earlier temple at the site where the Masjid stands, comes to the conclusion that there was such a temple, there should be no objection to the place beturned over for the construction of a new temple. If there is no evidenc to this effect, then the whole raison d'etre of the VHP to have the mosque shifted and a temple built in its site fails and there would be no reasonable ground for its basic demand. As for Muslim opinion, many leaders—notably Mr. Shahabuddin—have expressed the view that they would be agreeable to the removal of the present structure, if this fact is established.

The third facet of this solution is the acceptance by Hindu opinion that all other Mandir-Masjid disputes must abate as a quid pro quo for this compromise. It is a nightmarish prospect that.... the country should be embroiled in quarrels over 3000-odd other such places of worship. And countless other claims would crop up of places of worship of other faiths displaced by shrines of Hindus or of other religions. Such a regurgitation of vandalism of long ago will be inexcusable frivolity in a country faced with intractable contemporary economic and social problems...

A composite package like this is eminently worth the serious attention of all those interested in putting an end to a dispute that has generated a bitter conflict among our people....

(Source : The Indian Express, New Delhi, 4 December, 1990)

(Contd. from page 16)

him down, he must try to knock him down and take the consequence. If he has the desire but not the ability to fight the robber, he must allow himself to be robbed and then call in the assistance of law-courts to regain the lost property. In both the cases he has as good a chance of losing his property as of regaining it....

(Source : Young India, 5-2-1925)

SUPREME COURT ON RELIGIOUS APPROVAL IN ELECTION

Komireddy Ramuloo, Appellant v. Chennemaneni Vidyasagar Rao and others, Respondents.

Representation of the People Act (43 of 1951), Section 123(4)— Corrupt practice of appeal to religious faith — Allegation of distribution of booklets containing photographs of leader of party.... in role of Lord Krishna and Lord Rama by candidate in meeting — Absence of mention of this in complaint petition made to Election observer— Failure to show that candidate took part in printing or distribution of book or same having been done by candidate's agents or anybody else with his consent—Corrupt practice is not proved.

Lalit Mohan Sharma and P.B. Sawant, JJ

...8. The evidence on the record does establish that the booklets containing the photographs of N.T. Ramarao were distributed in that meeting, but the responsibility for the same has not been satisfactorily shown to be that of the respondent No. 1.... However, as has been rightly held by the High Court, the more important circumstance against petitioner's case is the omission to mention this allegation in his complaint petition which was filed by him before the Election Observer on March 1, 1985. According to the case of the election petitioner the first respondent personally distributed the booklets amongst the voters, who wre present in the meeting. The High Court has pointed out that admittedly... workers of the first respondent were present at the meeting and that the respondent No. 1 sharing the platform... and the allegation of personal distribution is, therefore, very unnatural. It was asserted by the election petitioner that it was the respondent No who had got the document prepared out, No attempt was made to substantiate this part of the case either by examining the printer or leading any evidence in this regard. Unless it is shown that the first respondent himself personally took part in the printing or distribution of the booklets or the same was done by his election agent or by his agents, or by anybody else with his consent, responsibility for the same cannot be placed on his head...

(Source: AIR 1990 Supreme Court 1352)

Allahabad High Court on Divorcee's Rights

Shafat Ahmad, Applicant v. Smt. Fahmida Sardar, Opposite Party

Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on divorce) Act (1986), Section 3(3) — Order under—Is revisable under Cr. P.C.....

The fact that it has not been said in the Act that the order under Section 3 is revisable, is of no consequence. A order provision need not be made in every Act and it is sufficient if it is provided in one Act. The Act provides that the order is to be passed by the Magistrate and the Criminal P.C. provides that the order of the Magistrate can be revised by the High Court. The Act does not exclude the appliction of the Criminal P.C. So Criminal P.C. has to be given effect and the order passed by the Magistrate under Section 3 of the Act becomes revisable in view of the provisions in the Criminal P.C.

When a Magistrate passes an order under sub-section (3) of Section 3 the rights and liability of wife and husband are finally decided by the Magistrate. Thus the order will not be an interlocutory order and revision is maintainable....

The matter under sub-section(3) of Section 3 wether to grant maintenance or not is to be decided by a Court judicially having civil consequences on the rights of the parties. So, it is necessary that husband should be given notice and opportunity of being heard. It cannot be sub-section (4), it should not be given under sub-section (3). Under sub-section (b) the Magistrate has to determine after hearing the parties whether reliefs provided in that section should be given to the wife. Then comes the stage of subsection(4) Hence the husband cannot be allowed to question the order passed under sub-section(3) giving reliefs to the wife; rather he can only show as to why he could not comply with the order passed under sub-section(3). Thus, under sub-section(3) and sub-section (4) different points are to be determined and the opportunity is given to the husband on both the occasions for determining the relevant point....

(Source : AIR 1990 Allahabad 182)

M.P. HIGH COURT ON MUSLIM LAW AND WILL

Illyas and others, Appellants v. Badshah, Alias Kamla, Respondent

Muslim Law Executive of will

GULAB C. GUPTA, J.

....Though the Muslim Law does not debar a Muslim from executing a Will of his property in favour of any one including the persons outside the community a custom limiting the choice of a person in whose favour the Will is to be executed would not be contrary to this law. The said custom does not violate the aforesaid law. It only limits the choice of legatee without effecting the right of execute the Will. Such a custom cannot be held to be either against public policy or the Mohammadan Law. The custom would, therefore, not be rendered invalid for this reason.

Thus, even if in this case the will was held to be actually executed... The Court could not hold it valid for more than 1/3 rd share of the property, as that is the limit of testamentary power of a Muslim....

(Source : AIR 1990 Madhya Pradesh 334)

BOMBAY HIGH COURT ON RIGHTS OF CHILDREN ON DIVORCE

Siraj Sahebji Mujawar, Petitioner v. Smt. Roshan Siraj Mujawar and others, Respondents.

Muslim Law-Divorce — Maintenance-children born out of dissolved wedlock—Father's obligation to maintain them is absolute-Right of children not affected by the provisions of Section 3(1)(b) of Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Divorce) Act, 1986....

T.D. SUGLA, J.

Under the Muslim Law so far as the children out of the dissolved wedlock are concerned the father's obligation to maintain them is absolute in terms, so long as he is in a position to do so and the children have no independent income of their own. Section 3(1)(b) of the 1986 Act contemplates the divorcee wife's right to claim maintenance in respect of her **children... right of the children to be maintained by the father under the Muslim Law. is separate and independent of the divorcee wife's (their mother's) right to claim maintenance.**

...For two years from the date of their respective births, the children are supposed to be ordinarily if not necessarily in the custody of the mother. In other words she has necessarily to maintain them.... A provision is made under Section 3(1)(b) of the Act that the husband shall pay to the divorcee wife for period of two years from the date of their respective births in respect of their maintenance and will have no right to claim custody as that may not be in the interests of the children.... A Muslim husband/father may claim the custody of the children to fulfil his obligation to maintain them. But having not claimed the custody of the children, he cannot certainly refuse to maintain them just because the children are in the custody of their mother i.e. divorcee wife or somebody else....

(Source: AIR 1990 Bombay 344)

KARNATAKA HIGH COURT ON WAKF DISPUTES

Mirza Habib Aga, Petitioner v. Karnataka Board of Wakfs and Others, Respondents.

M.P. CHANDRAKANTARAJ URS, J.

Wakf Act (29 of 1954) — Section 6 — Disputes regarding Wakfs— Disputes and Civil Court contemplated to resolve such disputes are with reference to list published as wakfs in gazette and do not necessarily cover what is outside the list published..... Power of Wakf Board to decide whether property is wakf property.... not controlled by Section 6 — Decision of Board that certain property has been wrongly registered as wakf property, does not amount to reviewing earlier order, but.... merely acts as correcting register of wakfs by investigation or inquiry under Section 27(1). .....

(Source : AIR 1990 Karnataka 299)

PM's INTERVIEW WITH ANAND SAHAY, NOV. 1990

...The immediate difficulty is the danger of loss of life. It is a tragic situation.... We should avoid (sic) such a problem because you may be forced to take a decision that may not be very much to your liking, and which gives you a sense of anguish, a....pain in your heart. I don't want innocent people to die for nothing. At least there must be an assurance.... that confrontation won't take place.

I had the occasion to meet some leaders of the VHP. I made this appeal to them also... They were quite responsive in the sense that they also understood the gravity of the situation but they have their own point of view. We should not get agitated if they say something and do something else.... If peace is maintained.... in due course we can find a solution to the problem....

(Source : The Young India, 4 December, 1990)

Tahir Mahmood on Reuniting The Sub-Continent

Pakistanis are Indians, so are people of Bangladesh. This is a historical-geographical and cultural reality, though not political fact of the day... They continue to share with the people of what is now called India their religious and cultural traditions. Pakistani Islam is Indian Islam; it does not represent the Arab or persian brand of that religion. Hindus, Parsis, Sikhs and Christians in Bangladesh and Pakistan are in no way different from their co-religionists in this country... The people of today's India, Pakistan and Bangladesh are co-sharers of history, geography, civilisation, culture, environment, religions, languages and in fact everything else. They are only politically divided.

...In 1947 India became "India and Pakistan". Within a quarter of a century it became "India, Pakistan and Bangladesh"... Both partitions were unfortunate; in both the loss was of poor, innocent Indians. Both brought insurmountable miseries for the Indians across the sub-continent...

Division of a single people bound by historical, geographical and cultual bonds in indeed a horrible mistake. Political mistakes can, however, be fortunately rectified. They should be rectified as early as possible. Similar mistakes committed by misguided politicians are being rectified elsewhere on the globe... A gradual reunification of the sub-continent will indeed be a boon for all.

...Re-union of Indians will in fact be the most natural solution to all the major problems that plague the sub-continent today....

Punjabis, Bengalis, Sindhis, Assamese, Kashmiris, Gorkhas and the so-called Muhajirs and refugees all will live a peaceful life in the reunited joint family of Indians. Communal tension will give way to communal harmony. Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains, Parsis,

(Contd. on page 39)

BALRAJ PURI ON PROPOSAL TO TRIFURCATE J&K

... **What is called greater Kashmir includes the valley** and the surrounding Muslim belt of Kargil district of Ladak and Doda, Rajouri and Poonch districts of Jammu. Pakistani strategists are aware that consolidation of such an area on the basis of sentiments of Muslim solidarity would be the most lethal weapon to demolish ethnic loyalities....

Pakistan is unlikely to be so nasive as to believe that by supplying arms and training to Kashmiri militants or through a regular war, it can liberate Kashmir from India. Its immediate purpose would be served by getting a Muslim fundamentalist enclave carved out within India.

If its game plan is so far working successfully, it is partly because an influential school of thought in Delhi has always been as suspicios about the potentialities and implications of Kashmiriat as Pakistan is.

Formal Division

Campaigns for a formal division of the state have alread started. The majority opinion in the state BJP was in favour of it but was restrained by its national leadership. Other Hindu group, have emerged to raise the demand for separate Jammu state. Since they, like the BJP, are not in a position to inspire confidence among Muslims of the region, the demand would amount to separation of Hindu part of Jammu from the rest of the state. In case of Ladakh part of that region.

The idea of a division of the State - which is already getting polarised on communal lines - is being given a momentum by persons like Mr. Balraj Modhok. Dr. Karan Singh and Syed Shahabuddin. Mean while, it has received some international support also. Mr. Salig Harrison, a leading American expert on India, supported the idea in some of his recent writings as aslo at seminar at Oxford where I was also present. It is contended by those who are trying to sell the idea to Islamabad that an automomous exclusively Muslim state, even within India, would have ideological affinity with Pakistan and should therefore be acceptable to it for the time being.

But it would lead to large scale migration of minorities in both directions and communal violence. A fundamentalist Muslim pocket within India would damage communal relations throughout the country and its secular foundation.

(Souce: The Times of India, 13 August, 1990)

A Report by Arun Joshi on Kashmir Situation

Governor Girish Chander Saxena... looks forward to "further improving the situation wherein ultimately militancy is overpowered and political moves revived."...

...Neither did the killings stop, nor did the alleged excesses. All these things continue as more powers have been given to the armed forces under the provisions of J & K Disturbed Areas Act and Special Powers for Armed Forces Act.

During the past six months nearly 2,000 people have been detained and almost an equal number killed. Over 10,000 families have become shelterless in fire incidents. Scores of times searches were conducted in various parts of the Valley particularly in the interior... of Srinagar, Sopore and Anantnag. That is a harrowing experience for the residents, who have to remain lined for identification parade throughout the day.... But despite all this the common man feels relieved as compared to the days of Jagmohan era when there was curfew for days together and there is a record when the Valley reeled under continuous curfew for 18 days, during the holy month of Ramzan....

Now-a-days there is no curfew during the day time. One or two killings do not provoke immedite imposition of curfew. This has enabled the people to move out freely and do their daily business. It remains a fact tht Srinagar city becomes a "ghost town" like all other towns of the Valley in the evening hours but there is no denying the fact that these towns bustle with activity and life during the day hours, which occasionally gets disrupted in the event of shoot-tout or stray incidents of bomb explosions...

...(There) is the increased number of attacks on the security forces which evokes brutal retaliation at times, leaving houses gutted and people shelterless (and) innocents... also killed...

But things are certainly different from those of May 1990. The publicity shy Governor is cautious in making statements. It is reflected in his recent utterance "time is ripe for political moves but not revival of the political process as such". The difference n the working style at the top is being felt even by the common Kashmiri... whom along with "azadi" the question of survival also continues to haunt....

(Source : The Hindustan Times, New Delhi 2 November, 1990

(Contd. from page 10

confidence shall have dire consequences for the country.

In the long term, the only solution is the reorganisation of the UP police and PAC in UP as well as other states, with proportionate representation of the Muslims and other weaker sections **so as to create a composite force to be deployed composite in mixed areas.** Apart from this Special Battallions of the CRPF should be formed for riot control **with at least 50% representation of the minorities.** This proposal has been on the national agenda for too long. Time has come for the Central government to take immediate steps to implement the proposal."

New Delhi
10 December, 1990

P.K. Roy on Gonda Carnage

September-October, 1990

I have never seen such brutality, said former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi, following a visit to Colonelganj town and adjoining villages in Gonda district. Putrified and half-devoured bodies of children lay exposed, not far from the Inspection Bunglow. Six days after the carnage started on September 30, the administration had not disposed all bodies and they were left for the dogs and vultures. The stench from the village pond showed that bodies had been dumped there. Two grievously injured people came out of there. Two grievously injured people came out of their hiding in the fields on seeing Rajiv Gandhi's cavalcade. Hoodlums, had looted and burnt their houses.

The riots left 37 dead according to the official version.... It was for the first time in Uttar Pradesh after Partition that communal riots had struck with such ferocity in the countryside. Colonelganj had not witnessed riots since Independence. It all happened due to the passions worked up over the Ayodhya issue. A large number of Muslims from the adjoining areas had participated in Mulayam Singh Yadav's anti-communalism rally a few days earlier in Faizabad. Munnan Khan, with a police record, had been elected to the Lok Sabha in November, Rajiv Gandhi was shown provocative graffiti warning a repeat of Punjab in U.P.

Tension had been growing in Colonelganj a few days before the Dassehra festival.... The Police chief had been replaced only three weeks earlier and the new incumbent was yet to get abreast of the situation. An eve-teasing incident had generated tension.

According to local tradition, thousands of men, women and children from the neighbouring villages had come to Colonelganj to witness the Durga immersion. Idols had come from other villages for immersion in the Sarayu.

All was peaceful till the procession of about 5,000 people reached the Kasaibara locality. Some youth displaying martial arts formed part of the procession. One of them was injured accidentially and taken to hospital, and it led to rumours that a youth of particular community had been killed. In no time the marchers, who included a large number of women and children, were attacked with bombs, explosives and brickbats.... riots broke out in full frenzy.

As the news reached the adjoining villages, laced with wild rumours, the relatives of those who went to the town became rabid. As curfew had already been imposed in the town and it was sealed off, there was no way people could have ascertained whether their family members who had gone for the Durga immersion were safe. They in turn looted the houses of those belonging to the other community. The next day houses were burnt and on the third day people were hounded and killed. In Pande ka Purwa nine of a family were butchered and bodies thrown into a well....

Colonelganj has disillusioned many a Muslim leader who so far thought a tough stand by Mulayam Singh Yadav... would ensure them total protection from the administration's side. The only thing Yadav did was to transfer.... the district police chief.... and the district magistrate, besides suspending a few officials. But the damage has been done and a sense of insecurity has gripped Muslims, particularly in the countryside.

(Courtesy : Frontline, 13-26 October, 1990)

Ashraf Sayeed on Gujarat Riots, Aug.' 90

The riots in Baroda, Ankleshwar and Bardoli on the day of the Ganesh festival serve as yet another reminder that in Gujarat a communal flare-up needs only a little spark.

The violence on Tuesday was also a reminder that the police force in the state has not only become politicised but also highly communalised. Otherwise, how can one explain the situation in Baroda where hooligans had a field day while the police just looked on and even aided and abetted anti-social elements? For one long hour, the police could not find the courage or the inclination to act decisively against the anti-social elements who ended up looting and burning nearly 100/ shops and kiosks.

Even the Chief Minister, Mr. Chimanbhai Patel had to admit that the Police Commissioner of Baroda had erred in assessing the situation and in not taking necessary action. According to the Chief Minister, the government had received an intelligence report about the likelihood of communal trouble in Baroda, Surat and other places and senior police officers, including the Commissioner of Baroda, were alerted a full 24 hours in advance.

It is baffling why the police failed to take any precautionary measures to deal with the situation. According to reports from Baroda, only a handful of policemen, armed with lathis, were accompanying a procession of an estimated strength of nearly one lakh...

The speed with which the hooligans struck also surprised the Chief Minister. Within one hour, 6 persons were killed, more than 80 injured and shops on the entire route were either burnt or looted. This led the Chief Minister to conclude that the riots were pre planned but he declined to name the people behind them....

Many observers are also surprised by the timing of the riots, which broke out simultaneously in four towns. Some believe it was a strategy to destablise the Chief Minister, who

Seema Goswami's Report on Delhi Riots, November, 1990

The tension began with Advani's rath yatra. As the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) president's Ram rath made its way down the narrow lanes and by-lanes of the walled city of Delhi, feelings on both sides of the communal fence ran high...

...Only a month later on 14 November, communal riots were raging in the Sadar Bazar area of old Delhi, with looting, arson and loss of lives.

The immediate provocation was a procession taken out jointly by a number of minority organisations. All three were relatively unknown outfits, the Sikh Muslim Dalit Panth, the All India Minority Front and the All India Muslim Unity Front. The organisers, apparently, assured the police and the administration that theirs would be a peaceful procession, with no raising of slogans. Permission was granted to this silent procession to go around the walled city...

The procession began from Sisganj Gurdwara, Chandni Chowk at 10 AM. .... The processionists reached Idgah, Sadar Bazar, at 2.30 pm.

...Some of the prominent leaders, including Jasbir Singh Rode of the Akali Dal (Mann) and Sukhvinder Singh Khalsa of the All India Sikh Students Federation (AISSF) made provocative speeches at the venue, instigating the 15,000 odd people assembled. Some of the young people were sufficiently roused to rush off to the adjoining Dhobi Katra to pelt stones at members of the other community. Swift retaliation followed and soon a full-fledged battle was in progress on the street.

. .The small group of policemen on duty stood around waiting for reinforcements...

The police finally swung into action, using tear-gas shells and firing 22 rounds at the mob. Shopkeepers quickly downed shutters, while the smoke rising from burning vehicles gave an ominous look to the entire scene. Around 14 vehicles were set on fire and so was the fodder at the Idgah slaughter house.... By evening, however the situation was under control, with the death count standing at five

Curfew was imposed in the area for an indefinite period and cases registered against those who had made provocative speeches, for the police held that the violence had been pre-planned.

...The Lieutenant-Governor of Delhi, Arjan Singh... went around the affected area announcing the grant of Rs. 1 lakh to the next of kin of those killed

The next day, 15 November, it was Prime Minister Chandra Shekhar's turn to conduct a tour of the affected areas...

Earlier in the day, despite the curfew and heavy police presence, violence had broken out again in the Qasabpura, Sarai Khalil Khan and Nawab Road areas, with members of both communities getting on roof-tops to pelt stones on each other and the police. The security forces retrieved the situation by firing tear-gas shells and plastic bullets... 250 miscreants were arrested, including those who had violated the curfew, and Nooruddin, the main organiser of the 14 November rally....

....Fighting broke out again that same night, Around midnight, the Border Security Force (B SF) was roped into the task of instilling confidence in the local populace, and it staged a flag march in the riot affected localities.

On the 16th, the Shahi Imam, Syed Abdullah Bukhari, got in on the act, condemning the organisers of the march at his Friday sermon at the Jama Masjid, and distancing himself from the endeavour. "Kuch sirphere Mussalmanon ne ye shararat ki aour doosri guam ke logon ke khilaf nare lagane ki ijazat di"... said Bukhari, adding that he was.... apologising on behalf of his errant brothers....

By then, law and order appeared to have been restored.... but beneath the veneer of normalcy, communal passions still raged....

(Source : The Sunday, 25 November 1990)

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is emerging stronger with each passing day. Significantly, soon after he assumed office in Gandhinagar, a chain of riots broke out in Gujarat. Leaders in the Janata Dal felt it was an attempt to malign the Chief Minister.

Even then, the Chief Minister had broadly hinted that certain communal forces, having political designs, were behind the riots. The recent riots are considered to be a trial run for the eventual show down between communal elements and the Chief Minister, probably in October.

...On several occasions, the Chief Minister has made it clear that he is fully prepared to meet the challenge on the law and order front. He told newsmen recently that he had issued strict instructions to the police to act firmly without succumbing to political pressure.

However, it is a known fact that it has been a tightrope walk for the Chief minister from the day he assumed office and that his opptions are limited. Therefore, it is anybody's guess how firm the police would be in Baroda and other riot-torn towns.

Moreover, the police force itself is divided....

Another factor that has totally ddmoralised the police force is political interference in the posting of police personnel at all levels.....

(Source : The Times of India, New Delhi 8, September, 1990)

Prem Shankar Jha on the Spectre of Fascism over India

The Vishwa Hindu Parishad's announcement.... (of) the second phase of... kar seva at Ayodhya on 6 December has dashed any hope that our sorely bruised society will be given a respite to lick its wounds and return to a semblance of tranquillity....

....What is still more disquieting is the Goebbelsian finesse with which it intends to use Hindu symbols to achieve its ends. The ashes of those killed in the police firings of October 30 and November 2 are to be carried to every village in India. No one knows exactly how many were killed, and no one will know just how many urns are voyaging through the country. But no one will open them to examine their contents either. The VHP's purpose will therefore be admirably served.

...The VHP clearly intends to continue stoking the communal fires till a wave of Hindu religious passion sweeps the Bharatiya Janata Party... to power.

...Fiftyseven years ago in two elections held six months apart, the vote of the National Socialist Party in Germany jumped from less than one to six millions. That sudden wave of passion swept Adolf Hitler to power, destroyed the Weimar Republic and led inexorably to the holocaust (in which six million Jews lost their lives) and the second World War.

...India could easily travel down that same road in the coming years. The threat is not imminent but it is near enough, and serious enough to be ignored only at our peril.

What is the VHP feeding on?..... Fundamentalist passions are often shortlived. This would be all the more so in Hinduism, whose eclecticism, lack of Messianic doctrine and a religious "Book" make a fundamentalist interpretation extremely difficult to sustain.

...What we are seeing is the beginnings of a neo-fascist movement whose goal is the capture of state power and the replacement of a democratic state with an authoritarian state.

...The VHP and more recently the BJP are exating Hindutva. Their favoured epic is of course the Ramayana and the symbols they are exploiting are taken from this great epic. Thus Mr. Advani's Ram Rath evokes the image of.... the Aswamedh Yagna. Whoever dared to stop it had to be prepared to battle against the king. The Bajrang Dal refers to Rama's army of monkeys in the battle against Ravana. The despatch of urns containing the asthi (ashes) of kar sevaks killed in Ayodhya evokes not only the image of martyrdom but touches a potent nationalist nerve....

The VHP is harping on humiliations heaped on Hindus by the Muslims over six hundred years, in particular the destruction of their temples, to destroy the Hindu identity. The "relocation" of the Babari Masjid or for the matter the mosques at Mathura and Kasi, is designed to wipeout this humiliation. And just as the Nazis exploited anti-semetism and focussed hatred on the Jews, the VHP is exploiting the latent distrust of Muslims after the partition of British India and focussing hatred afresh on Muslims. And while the Nazis had then storm troopers — the SA — the VHP has its Bajrang Dal.....

For the VHP, Ayodhya is not an end but the means to an end. It has become both the justification and the rallying point for a coldly calculated bid to mobilise support under the banner of recalcitrant, vengeful Hinduism. What it is doing is not do defend Hinduism — the very idea that this is necessary in a country where 85 per cent of the population is Hindu is ludicrous — but to hijack the symbols of Hinduism to serve the political end of creating an authoritarian State.

..Four out of five acts of provocation, if not more, have been by the VHP and the Bajrang Dal. These range from deliberately taking religious processions through sensitive areas, to attacks on and desecration of mosques and idgahs, to the burning of shops, to the stabbing of individuals simply because they are Muslims. In the last twelve months in paticular, the Shilany—as at Ayodhya (October — November, 1989) the sending of the Ram Jyotis to the villages (September 90) and the kar seva of October have been the main modes for fanning communal passion. Each of these has left a trail of dead bodies in its wake.

Why have the communal fires begun to burn brightly once again.... The answer lies not in the rise of Islamic fundamentalism or the excesses of ruling parties bent on capturing the Muslim vote banks. It is to be found in the forces unleashed by.... capitalist industrialisation....

Fascism was born in Europe to a very large extent out of the attempt to fight back against the forces of modernisation....

It is no coincidence that the leaders and cadres of the BJP and the VHP are drawn by and large from precisely the.... treatened small business classes as wee those of the European fascists and the French Poujadistes. It is also no surprise that the BJP's economic platform.. has the blend of market-oriented populism that is best designed to protect the interests of this intermediate class in our society.

The paranoia that makes credible the assertion that Hinduism is in danger in its own homeland is the paranoia of this threatened class and the anger and hatred that the VHP seeks to turn against the Muslim

(Contd. on page 43)

Alok Rai on Theory of Invasion as Cover-up for Social Fragmentation. Conversation as Assertion of Freedom.

The phenomenon of conversion is guaranteed to make the militant Hindu turn a violent shade of saffron. This was evident, for instance, in the fuss regarding the .... Tipu Sultan... What exercised the VHP so vehemently was not its brazen tastelessness, but rather the alleged glossing over of Tipu's "forcible" conversion of Hindus to Islam in 18th century Malabar... Even if it is agreed, for the sake of argument, that 18th century Malabar was the scene of widespread and forcible conversions, of Muslim tyranny surely any protest had best come from the descendants of the "victims" of that "tyranny" - i.e. the Muslims of present-day Malabar ! And if, indeed, there is no protest, are we to suppose that we confront, in 18th century Malabar, a tyranny without victims? After all, the Hindus of Malabar (and elsewhere), who evidently survived the ordeal with their Hinduism intact, can hardly claim to be victims of forcible conversion.... Unfortunately, however, the VHP's loud outrage.... manifests itself in a spirit of vengeance against their heirs and successors --even, it seems, a wholesale transformation of the only possible "victims" into tyrants and "invaders".

... In confronting such Hindu ideologues, it is a difficult matter deciding whether one is dealing with a position or a pathology? Thus, should one trade arguments.... seek to understand the traumas, individual and collective, that have produced there widespread neuroses? To wit, who "invaded" the infant Hingorani? As a consequence of what terrible violation do these ideologues now seek to violate the "invader minorities" and expunge them, now and in the irretrievable past, so that the body politic may once again regain its mythical virginal innocence-its "univadedness"?

Needless to say, the metaphor of "invasion" provides a curious and wholly inadequate matrix for interpreting the.... spectacle of our history... The continually deliquescing and crystallising polities, the endlessly shifting boundaries, the fractious principalities that were being invaded when they were not themselves invading some hapless neighbour-these cannot be accommodated within the simple binary frames of the contemporary Hindi ideologues.

Their implicit discovery of some mythical "aboriginal moment some point or threshold where the "original", as it were, ended, as the "invasion" began — this is at best naive. After all, one asks where might such a point or threshold be most profitably located: in the 11th or 12th century, or the 15th... or in the turbulent millenia before the birth of Christ, when fair skinned "invaders", also from the north, violently displaced over the course of centuries — as the epics record with such irretutable eloquence — the forest-dwelling tribes of the India sub-continent?

... The "Hindu" location of the threshold, after which all is violence and "invasion", sometime in the 10th century serves an obvious purpose; the familiar periodisation of Indian History into Hindu, Muslim and British periods. There is however, a problem with this: whereas the British -- the "last invaders" — left in 1947, the Muslim "invaders" are still very much in our midst indeed, "they" are indistinguishable from "us". The unacceptable truth of the matter unacceptable to Hindus, unacceptable to Muslims—is that the vast majority of Indian Muslims are converts from that loose conglomeration of beliefs which are sought to be unified in "Hinduism".

The myth of "violent invasion" then— as distinct from the historical facts of conflict and conquest— serves two distinct sets of purposes. The first of these has to do with the retrospective absolution of brahminical Hinduism. The reiterated myth of "invasion" seeks to camouflage its inner defect, to elide the inhumanity of caste-ridden Hindu society. By implying a state of innocence prior to "invasion", it cleverly assumes the existence of a Hindu "body" which could, so to speak, be "invaded". The myth thus seeks to cover up the facts of social division, of sclerosis and callousness. Ironically enough, it is the myth of invasion" that yields a homogeneous Hindu past as an ideological spin-off.

The myth of "invasion" of which the myth of forcible conversion is a part--serves the further purpose of denying present historical rights to significant sections of the population the Muslim. Because the curious thing is that this "invasion" is not a matter of a historical moment or threshold. Akbar... is as much of an "invader" as Babar, as Aurangzeb, as Bahadur Shah Zafar, who died, pining in exile, for the dust of that homeland where he has become, after a mere hundred odd years, an "invader". Invasion then, is not an act or an event, it is a taint, a curse that passes down the generations and the centuries, to afflict the upwardly mobile artisan who opts out of hierarchical Hinduism, and the restless and conscious peasant who seeks to escape the dead hand of Hindu orthodoxy. All of these are simply, "babar ki aulad", invaders all.

The reiterated myth of the invader—or the perpetually renewed "invasion" that is always and everywhere — serves and seeks to disenfranchise the Muslims in the present. It casts on them a sort of spell of silence and even of invisibility. Saddled with a historical guilt, Indian Muslims are increasingly

being forced into a sullen, ominous silence. The most conscious, restless, dynamic and articulate classes that courageously opted out of the dread embrace of brahminical Hinduism in the course of the centuries—these are sought to be conjured away in visions of Central and West Asian "invaders".

...The paradoxical working of the Hindu myth of Muslim invasion and forcible conversion.... serves to deny sympathy and recognition not only to its alleged victims — i.e. today's Indian Muslims — but also to the present—day victims of the traditional tyranny of brahminical Hinduism—the orphans of Hindu society, the so-called children of God. Because, of course, corresponding to the "invasion" that is always and everywhere, the threshold of the "innocence" too is highly mobile. And, wonder of wonders, "we Hindus" are always on the right side of it. Thus, while "we" cannot invade ourselves, "their" mere presence in an invasion. The ideological manoeuvre thus serves to exculpate the contemporary violence that is being wrecked on Harijan bastis, or tribal societies.... It serves to cast a pall of "innocence" over contemporary acts of callousness and appropriation.

...The truth is that militant Hindus, eager to inherit the vishwa cannot afford to recognise the fact of conversion: not in the past, and not in the present. Because conversion —which must undoubtedly sometimes have been enforced, and sometimes undertaken for cynical and opportunist reasons—is most frequently an assertion of the freedom of belief and association, an assertion of the freedom to secede from a "community" whose precondition for membership for large sections of the population is a denial of their humanity... It must be, in the first instance, an act of refusal. It is this that the militant Hinduscannot countenance, because it implacably draws attention to the skeletons in Hinduisms' bulging cupboard of horrors.

...Hindu pathologies : the fierce refusal to recognise the fact that people can choose—freely, deliberately, without threat of violence or lure of lucre—to secede from hinduism. And that they have a right to do so.

(Source : The Times of India, New Delhi 12 August, 1990)

RSS-VHP-BJP and Hinduism

...Hinduism has always had a "great tradition" and "little traditions". But there has never been any clash between the two. There is a symbiotic relationship between popular Hinduism, the Pandit's Hinduism and the Yogi's Hinduism-between mantra, tantra and yantra; between philosophy, mythology and ritual. Ordinary Hindus do not argue, but they understand....

Hinduism has innumerable aspects. Its followers tend to relate to that aspect of it which matches the circumstances at a given point of time...

Today, Mahant Avaidnath, successor to the hallowed seat of Guru Gorakhnath, seems to identify Hinduism with shakti as represented by "Rama, Shivaji and Guru Govind Singh"...

...It is significant that every Hindu god, with the solitary exception of Brahma, has a wife, a vehicle and a weapon!

The traditional Hindu approach to religion is inclusive. The BJP, RSS and the Vishwa Hindu Parishad are not bothered by any non-existent 'contradiction' between the great tradition and the little traditions...

The RSS has followed a national, integrative approach. There was a time when Sanatanis and Arya Samajis used to carry on acrimonious debates in Punjab and elsewhere. But the moment RSS arrived on the scene...soon the old controversy was over. The BJP has inherited this integrative tradition and so has the VHP.

It can be argued that while the traditional Hindu approach is integrative, and not confrontationist, the VHP attitude favours the latter... In any case, the VHP is not only Mahant Avaidnath; it is also Kanchi Maharaj and Chinmayananda, Deoraha Baba, Ashok Singhal, V.H. Dalmia and Rajmata Scindia.

...The Indian intelligentsia has been less than fair to the RSS-and to itself-in seeing the RSS as solely anti-Muslim... The reality on the ground is that RSS has brought all castes, classes, sects and language groups together on the same platform. It is true that the RSS has not yet brought non-Hindus to this platform, But I have no doubt that this can be done.

(Source : K.R. Malkani's letter in Times of India, New Delhi)

SRI AUROBINDO ON HINDU-MUSLIM UNITY, 23 JULY, 1923

...You can live amicably with a religion whose principle is toleration. But how is it possible to live peacefully with a religion whose principle is "I will not tolerate you"? How are you going to have unity with these people? Certainly, Hindu-Muslim unity cannot be arrived at on the basis that the Muslims will go on coverting Hindus while the Hindus shall not convert any Mohammedan.

...Your cannot build unity on such a basis. Perhaps, the only way of **making the Mohammedans harmless is to make them lose their fanatic faith in their religion.**

...That (can) be done by education. Not by the kind of education they receive at Aligarh but by a more liberalising education....

....It is no use ignoring facts; some day the Hindus may have to fight the Muslims and they must prepare for it. Hindu-Muslim unity should not mean the subjection of the Hindus. Every time the mildness of the Hindu has given way. The best solution would be to allow the Hindus to

(Contd. on page 39)

Prospects for Hindu and Muslim Population Stabilization.

A Research Study by Malika B. Mistry, Gokhale Institute, Pune

6.1 Hindu-Muslim Population Growth Differentials-

The cultural, social and religious differences between Hindus and Muslims, their relative economic conditions and the political situation of the country make the Hindu-Muslim fertility differntials a contentious issue. The present Hindu-Muslim fertility and population growth rate differentials are not large and are likely to narrow down in future. If the present growth differentials continue without change over a long period, the question arises whether Muslims can even become a numerically dominant community in a reasonable time span in India. To find whether a minority can become dominant numerically we have simulated a model. This model demonstrates that a minority can become a majority only when three conditions are jointly met: The minority constitutes a significant proportion of the total population, the popultion growth rate differential is large and the duration is long.

An observation of the Indian scene reveals that the differential annual growth rate of Muslims and Hindus is around 0.005 currently, at national level Muslims constituted only 11.4 pr cent of India's population (excluding Assam) in 1981 and the pockets in which Muslims constitute 25 per cent or more, whether rural or urban, are few. The model shows that, at the country level, Muslims cannot attain numerical dominance in the near or far future. In certain areas, they may become numerically equal to Hindus after 200 years if the present growth differential persists. But 200 years is a long period of time and already changes are taking place in the country towards a reduction in the difference between Hindu and Muslim growth rates and a convergence of the growth rates.

...The Indian census figures for the period 1881 to 1941 show that in 1941, Muslim constituted 24.3 per cent of total population of undivided India and 20 per cent in 1881. Thus over a period of 60 years, the proportion of Muslims in undivided India increased by 4.3 per centage points. This would correspond to an average annual Hindu-Muslim growth differential of 0.0046 over this period. In post-Partition India (excluding the State of Assam where the 1981 Census was not taken), Muslims were 11.4 per cent l of the total population in 1981 and in 1951 they were 9.6 per cent. During these 30 years, the percentage of Muslim population had increased by 1.8 and the annual growth differential has been 0.0067. Even if the differential does not decline (an unlikely contingency), Muslims can not become a dominant group in India in the foreseeable future.

The recent growth differentials between Hindu and Muslim populations show a declining trend. If this trend continues the Hindu-Muslim growth differential may be expected to narrow down in future. Also an analysis of the long term growth differentials between Muslim and non-Muslim populations suggests a narrowing trend in growth differentials....

6.2. Demographic Transition of Different Religious Groups in India

In India, religious groups are undergoing the demographic transition at varying paces. Mortality has declined significantly for all religious groups whereas fertility decline is in different stages...

Parsees with low death and birth rates are already in the final stage of establishing a new demographic equilibrium. The Christian community is reaching this stage. Fertility of urban Hindus too has fallen significantly. Likewise Muslims would reach the final regime of demographic transition with low levels of fertility, mortality and population growth so as to adapt themselves to a modern industrial society.

6.3 Hindu-Muslim Fertility Differntials

There is no data on Indian fertility before 1872. Both Hindu and Muslim fertility behaviour was normative... We have concluded that historically there might have existed no significant fertility differentials between these two communities...

...Kingsley Davis examined Hindu-Muslims fertility differentials for the period 1891-1941, using the child-woman ratio as no other fetility rate was available for this period. This was the only study based on census data which showed that Muslim fertility was somewhat higher than Hindu fertility. In the post-Independence period, only from 1971, information on fertility was collected. The fertility data available from the Censuses of 1971 and 1981 show that Muslims had higher fertility than Hindus. In 1971, Muslim fetility exceeded Hindu fertility by 11 per cent in rural areas and by 20 per cent in urban areas. Even when controlled for education, Muslims showed higher fertility than Hindus.... According to 1981 Census data .... the adjusted fertility differential increased to 21 per cent.

A number of fertility surveys were conducted in different parts of the country from 1950 onwards. Religion was one of the variables considered. A review of these survey results reveals that the religious differentials in fertility were not strong upto 1960s. We may conclude that Hindu-Muslim fertility differentials were weak before Independence or even upto late 1960s as the Indian fertility remained at a stable but high level. Increasing Hindu-Muslim fertility inset of fertility decline in India as Hindus have entered the demo-

graphic transition earlier than Muslims.

6.4 Hindu-Muslim Differentials in Nuptiality Patterns

Two major proximate determinants of fertility are nuptiality and contraception. Contraception has an impact on marital fertility level of the population. Socio-economic factors such as education, income and status of woman affect fertility directly, and indirectly by affecting nuptiality patterns and contraception.

Among Hindus in north India, an essential condition for marriage is that the bridge and groom should not be blood relatives.... The practice of polygamy is rare. Child and adolescent marriages are also observed. Divorce is rare but becoming more frequent in urban areas. Remarriage of widows and divorcees is not common.

Among Muslims cousin endogamy and group endogamy is practised to some extent... Practice of polygyny is rare among Muslims and there is no evidence that the percentage of polygynous marriages is larger than for Hindus. Child and adolescent marriages are present but less prevalent than for Hindus. Divorce and remarriage of widows and divorcees are present but the extent is not known....

Age at marrige does not differ much between Hindu and Muslim women. In 1981 there was not an appreciable difference in the mean or median age at marriage of Hindu and Muslim women...

The proportion of currently married women in reproductive ages did not differ much between Hindu and Muslim women in 1981. The ratio of currently married to even married women in 1981 for the two communities, both in urban and rural areas, does not vary much....

....Modernization, education and the secular forces are similarly affecting the family system of Hindus and Muslims. Among Indian Muslims, an educated middle class is as yet minuscule and so the Muslim family size and functions continue largely unchanged. On the whole, nuptiality patterns do not adequately account for the differences in fertility except that relatively easier divorce and widow remarriage among Muslims may result in a slightly higher fertility level than for Hindus.

6.5 Hindu-Muslim Differentials in Family Planning.

Differences in family planning use between Hindus and Muslims are important in explaining the marital fertility differentials between the two communities....

The first all-India (1970-71) and the second all-India (1980-81) family planning surveys conducted by Operations Research Group, Baroda, found that the ideal number of children was higher, son preference lower and the proportion disapproving family planing was higher for Muslims compared to Hindus. The practice of family planning was lower among Muslims largely due to the relatively low acceptance rate for terminal methods. Between the two surveys the proportion approving and pracising family planning had increased but the percentage point increase was greater for Hindus.

Data on sterilization and IUD acceptance for India by religion from official sources from 1968-69 to 1979-80 reveal that family planning practice was proportionately less among Muslims. Terminal methods have been less popular and spacing methods more popular among Muslims as compared to Hindus.... Some studies have found that 'the level of education and socio-economic status have a positive association with family planning practice among both communities.

A lower educational level, lower socio-economic status, lower female work participation and Purdah, besides some degree of opposition on the grounds of religion and less acceptance of sterlization are the main factors accounting for a lower acceptance rate of family planning among Indian Muslims... The resistance to family planning on the grounds of religion is declining among the younger generation of Muslims. Compared to Muslims in most other countries, Muslims in India have relatively higher sterilization and abortion rates.

6.6 Socio-Economic Conditions and Status of Muslim Woman in India

The family planning programme alone cannot bring about a decline in fertility though it is an important component of a wider spectrum of measures embracing many programmes for ameliorating difficult social and economic conditions. Socio-economic conditions and the status of woman among both Hindus and Muslims have to be improved.

Educationally Muslims are three to four times behind other communities according to some indicators. More than 80 per cent of Muslims are small and marginal farmers, artisans and related workers. The lower status of Muslim woman in India is due to her lower educational level, consequent lower participation in economic and social activities and observance of Purdah. Unless socio-economic conditions and the status of woman improve among Muslims, their family planning practice will not increase and marital fertility will not fall. Therefore, general welfare programme to raise the socio-ecoonomic status of Muslims should also be emphasized.

6.8 Prospects for Hindu and Muslim Population Stabilization

...The family planning programme [illegible] in fertility. Socio-economic conditions, especially of women, among both Hindus and Muslims, have to be improved. Changes in social institutions such as marriage and the status of woman have to be brought about in a sustained and cumulative manner. Then only will all the communities of this pluralistic society complete the demographic transition, attain population stabilization and adapt themselves to technological changes.

British Press on the Battle of Ayodhya

....The desparing events from India attracted widespread editorial comment. It seemed almost all foreign correspondents covering South Asia and most television and radio networks were at Ayodhya on October 30th..... The accounts were varied and extensive.

One eyewitness account appeared in the Independent (London) whose correspondent marched with the kar sevaks:

..."The police protecting the mosque were also sickened. They disobeyed orders and waved the sadhus in through the main gate....

The Observer's (London) correspondent, Peter Hilmore in an article sought to analyse the situation running dangerously out of control with the muscular Hinduism unleashed by events at Ayodhya and as feuding politicians jockeyed for position. The writer wondered at the reporting codes adopted in India. "There is a strange convention, dating back to Partition, that prevents the media from actually spelling out the cause of the violence. The papers report the death as a result of 'communal violence', but never tell you which communities were involved, how many of the dead were Hindu, how many Muslim, never describe who went on the rampage. But it fools no one.

The Guardian's Derek Brown viewed the convulsions in the subcontinent as a whole and wrote: "In his unceasing manoeuvers to broaden his electorol base, the PM (V.P. Singh) has uleashed two of the most dangerous forces in Indian society: Casteism and communalism. Mr. Singh's proposal to extend the reserved job system.... has provoked a storm of protest. Some of it is genuine outrage at the institutionalising of caste: a lot is old fashioned bigotry...."

The Financial Times' David House go in, an extensive analysis titled. "Turmoil Erodes the Nehru Legacy" warned that democracy in India is sorely tested by communal unrest, political instability and separatist movements. "What does seem clear is that the 'old order' — the India of Nehru's vision with the priorities on maintaining a secular, democratic and unified national framework is facing its most serious challenge since India became independent in 1947."

(Source : The Times of India, New Delhi 11 November, 1990)

STATEMENT OF WORLD MUSLIM LEAGUE, KARACHI

...The Motamar Al-Alam Al-Islami .... strongly condemns this wild and heinous act and the display of religious intolerance....

The Motamar urgently requests the Indian Prime Minister.... to take all necessary, emergent preventive measures to contain this fanatic... onslaught on a place of worship... The Motamar earnestly appeals to the justice-loving people of he world to support the protective measures... to safeguard the sanctity of this historic Mosque as well as the their influence to deter the extremist Hindu fundamentalists from their nefarious designs of demolishing Babari Masjid, a historic mosque. The Motamar also requests Mr. V.P. Singh to had over this historic mosque to the control of the Muslim of India and not be blackmailed by the terrorist Hindu gangs or extremist Hindu parties.

(Source : The Muslim World, 10 November 1990)

HINDUS AND MOHAJIRS DISTINGUISHED

A Letter in the Muslim, Karachi, 22 July, 1990

... The Sindhi Hindus living in Sindh have been living there since time immemorial.

(They have immenselv contributed to the province of Sindh. Their cultural, economic and political contribution can be seen even now. The schools and colleges they have built, the hospitals, public rest houses, even water troughs for animals....

(What is) ... the difference between the Sindhi Hindus and the Mohajirs? Why one is accepted and the other is not? The reason is that the Sindhi Hindus respected the majority Sindhi Muslims from the very start. The Sindhi Hindus proudly assimilated with the sindhi Muslim by speaking his language, by accepting his culture, poets and saints. And above all, they never looked down on the Sindhi Muslims. While the Mohajirs who came to Sindh, like the Arab's camel, looked down on the Sindhis, their culture, their language, even their dress. They could not forget India from where they were driven out, because of their unacceptable domineering behaviour. They wanted to ram Indian culture down the sindhi throat. They wanted to force Urdu and Chooridar pyajamas.

The Sindhi Hindus do not need any certificate of loyalty or patriotism from the non-Sindhi Muslims, specially the Punjabis.

(Courtesy: POT, New Delhi)

(Contd. from page 36)

organise themselves and the Hindu-Muslim unity would take care of itself, it would automatically solve the problem. Otherwise, we are lulled into a false sense of satisfaction that we have solved a difficult problem, when, in fact, we have only shelved it.

(Source : Sri Aurobindo's "Evening Talks" 27.3.23)

(Courtesy : Organiser Weekly, New Delhi)

(Contd. from page 30)

Christians, Bahai's and Ahmadis all will have a respectable co-existence in the new commonwealth of Indian communities.

As regards the Muslims of Pakistan and Bangladesh, they need not see in the proposed re-union abolition of two Muslim-majority States of today. Thirty-five crore Muslims in a united India will be a force to reckon with... A trully secular State will surely make them more comfortable.

(Source: The Hindustan Times, Patna, 11 July, 1990)

Amnesty International on Human Rights in India Summary of Document: ASA20/21190 Oct., 1990

The document describes Amnesty International's current concerns in India and the reasons why existing legal safeguards, which fall short of international standards, fail to protect victims of human rights violations.

Established legal guarantees have been suspended in response to increased armed opposition facing the government in several parts of the country, notably in the states of Punjab and Jammu and Kashmir. Several minimum safeguards in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights do not apply to people tried under the Terrorist and Disruptive Activities (Prevention) Act, 1985 or to people... (detained) under the National Security Act. The Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act, which a--pplies in several northeastern states and now also in the state of Jammu and Kashmir, gives the security forces powers to make arrests without warrant and.... to shoot to kill and grants the security forces immunity from prosecution. Amnesty International believes that the law facilitates extrajudicial executions of people suspected of opposing government policies.

Legal safeguards that do exist are often not applied in practice. This is especially likely when poor or underprivileged people are being arrested, or when arrests are made on political grounds. In such cases detainees are often not brought before magistrates within 24 hours of arrest as Indian law requires, and access to lawyers and relatives is denied to detainees held incommunicado, circumstances in which they are liable to be tortured.

Indian courts have rarely granted compensation to victims of human rights violations and any such legal proceedings have been subject to long delays. Rather than facilitating investigations into reported human rights violations, officials and members of the security forces have sometimes actively impeded them by harassing and intimidating witnesses. In an increasing number of cases reported from Punjab and Jammu and Kashmir, the legal remedy of habeas corpus has proved ineffective in obtaining the court appearance of detainees, a number of whom are kept in unacknowledged detention or have "disappeared".

Hundreds of extrajudicial executions are reported each year. In those cases where official inquiries have been instituted, the results have often not been published. Very few of those committing human rights violations are ever held accountable, even in those few cases where the courts have awarded compensation. Although a judge, in a report of May 1986, identified 21 police officials in Punjab against whom there was prima facie evidence of torture, none of them are known to have been tried and convicted to date.

Of the several hundred people reported to have died in police custody as a result of torture during the last five years, Amnesty International knows of only one case in which police officials responsible have been tried and convicted.

In replying to the concerns raised by the United Nations Special Rapporteurs on Torture and on summary or Arbitrary Executions, the government either simply referred in general terms to Constitutional freedoms, or dismissed allegations of torture out of hand, saying that they were made to "discredit the police". The government failed, however, to respond to the specific allegations made.

(Source : PUCL Bulletin, December, 1990)

ON UP HARIJANS EMBRACING SIKHISM

Radhika Ramaseshan in Sunday, Calcutta 18-24, February, 1990

Harijans in UP are seeking refuge in Sikhism. A wave of conversions swept Nangla Hareru village, near Meerut city, on 26 January. On that day, 35 Harijans adopted Sikhism in the face of stiff opposition from the Shiv Sena. ...

But why Sikhism? According to Dharm Singh, a local advocate, "Our great messiah, Dr. Ambedkar, became a Buddhist, but in today's ambience, Buddha's principles of peace and non-violence have become irrelevant. Nowadays, everything rests on a tit-for-tat policy, and Sikhism preaches just that." Adds Om Singh : "Now we can answer our adversaries with talwars and kirpans."

A Sikh mission, located close to Nangla Hareru has, undoubtedly, served as a source of inspiration. But Darshan Singh strongly denies that money has ever been used to influence people's decisions. He recalls Giani Meher Singh of the mission had told them not to expect any financial gift packets in return."...

The majority of the converts at Nangla Hareru are minors. One child in almost every Harijan family in our village and the neighbourhood is a Sikh," reveals Om Singh. A makeshift gurdwara has been built in the village and the construction of a permanent one, be completed soon.

Predictably, some of the converts have incurred social wrath and even ostracism, compelling them to forsake their new faith. The single biggest deterrent is the Hindu backlash, pointed out Om Singh. "Where were these proponents of the great Hindu rashtra when we Harijans were tortured and massacred? Now that we have taken on a faith and new names they have come to us in a show of solidarity. But for us there is no looking back," he asserts.

US and UK : Systemic Discrimination Against Blacks
A Report by Kai Nicholson

...Though official attitudes towards the American black and the New Britons has changed drastically during the past 20 years, the general social climate has not improved at the same pace. Acceptance by the Anglo-Saxons of a man with a black skin as his equal can only be termed as a vague generalisation. The recurring race riots in Britain's larger metropolitan areas such as London, Birmingham and Wolverhampton have now become a constant feature of a "British way of life" ... The tensions between black and white have always remained high.

Indeed, there are extreme cases of violence in America, between people of two colours of skin. All this reveals that multi-racialism has still not moved beyond the debating clubs... Black-on-black crime is far more than average than violence done by blacks on white or vice versa. For example, murder is the main cause of death among black men under 40, and the life expectancy of males in Harlem, New York, is lower than in Bangladesh...

Take the trial of three black youths accused of the rape and attempted murder of a white jogger in New York's Central Park... in Arpril, 1989.

....There are weaknesses in the prosecution's case. There is an almost complete lack of scientific evidence linking the three youths to the crime... To most blacks the trial is a matter of shame and humliation. But to an increasingly vocal black minority, the jogger case is a racist show trial... Black America's most popular tabloid, The Amsterdam News, called the whole sordid affair a form of "legal lynching". William Tatum, the daily's editor said: "Whether guilt or innocence is proved in this case is no longer important. What is important is that blacks have once more been criminalised by a judiciary that works against us". Tatum made it clear that the "truth of the matter is that there is a conspiracy of interest.. that someone black must go to jail for this crime against the (white) jogger, and any black will do."...There is a racist bias in the media," said black filmmaker Spike Lee. In May (1989), a month (later).... a black mother was raped... and thrown off a roof in a Brooklyn neighbourhood. Needless to say, she did not receive anything like the media attention bestowed upon the young (white jogger)... This is the type of media discrimination that "hurts us blacks most". And as the large and local networks are controlled mainly by the whites, there is little chance of a fair coverage.

A member of Los Angeles' white surburbia described his black fellow citizen as an alien. Moving down to the sprawling city's black dominated South Central District, it would be difficult to write off this statement as absurd. Heavily armed white policemen in patrol cars control the outlets of this ghetto of doom. A most brutal terminology would be that South Central is a disorganised concentration camp minus the gas chambers. There is a total lack of hope among us," says Clyde Johnson, president of the.... Black Employee Association "You have to have hope to have frustration and after years... of gang warfare on the streets, unemployment as high as 80 per cent and no education, many of us just do not feel they are part of any country any longer, and so they don't even think of attacking the white authorities in any way. There is no incentive to identify ourselves with the rest of America. It is apathetic." Johnson adds that the black ghettos have now joined the Third World in terms of poverty and social destitution. Local church organisations distribute food for 50,000 "down and outs" every month. "And more than often", despairs Johnson, "grandmothers look after the kids because their mothers have either abandoned them, or are out on the streets, selling themselves for five dollars a time."

The Los Angeles police department does not share Johnson's view of apathy and despair.... The police... estimates that there are 70,000 gang members who control the South Central district armed with AK-47 rifles, Israeli Uzi submachine guns and sawed-off shot guns. "Not only is their arsenal impressive, but they know how to use it." (Police) expects another massive outbreak of violence like the one in 1965, when, after a week long gun battle between the police and armed blacks, the body counts showed up more than 50 dead and 1,500 wounded naturally all blacks. "The time is ripe for rebellion," says (Police) "We have to contain these people in their ghettos."...

It would be wrong to blame white societies in Britain and the USA entirely for the breakdown in social communication. Governments in both countries have invested much energy in trying to curb discrimination, which is deep-rooted in Anglo-Saxon communities... The British have always tended to be insular. Their dislike for foreigners dates back into the Middle Ages, and it was not directed against any specific type of outsider, but at foreigners as a whole. Colonial expansion and the philosophical idea of empire nurtured race superiority. Intermingled with Britian's duty to civilise pagan societies in African and Asia were social-Darwinism and Evangelicalism. The latter two ideologies paved the way for racial intlerance. The United States, basically Anglo-Saxon in its culture... acted similarly when expanding westwards. Subjugation and humiliation were com-

(Contd. on page 43)

Pran Chopra on the Ghost of Pan-Islamism

No inconsistency occurs when Indian Muslims, like other Indian or democratic people anywhere else, demand respect for democratic and human rights for any community anywhere, be it Muslim or not. And it would occur even less if Indian Muslims also, like all othrs, raised their voice (which unfortunately they do not do as much as they should) against terrorism and senseless killings of any kind and not only elsewhere but in Kashmir also. But they are invited to incur an inconsistency when they are invited by Islamic countries in the name of Islam to support Kashmir's accession to Pakistan on the ground only that like Pakistanis Kashmiris are also Muslims.

As they sift the material of their history, the Indian Muslims encounter many rocks and stones of which some are mere impediments and some useful for the social structure they need to build for them selves. Apart from their present numbers and their former status as rulers, seven of their specific experiences are of greater relevance than the rest. These are: the attempts made in some periods of Muslim rule to evolve a composite Hindu-Muslim culture; the overthrow of Muslim rule by British invaders; the interaction between Indian nationalism and Pan-Islamism; the Khalifat movement and what the Turks themselves did to the Calphate and what that did to Pan-Islamism; the partition of India and its aftermath; and the adversorial relationship between India and Pakistan....

The composite culture, especially as it came to be in the times of Akbar the Great, is among the richest of Indian experiences. But it had some serious limitations as the building material for a joint national home of Hindus and Muslims....

First, it remained at the level of the courtiers and their works and like much else that shaped the court in those days it did not influence the Hindu and Muslim mass mind very much. Second, at the elite level, as M.R.A. Baig points out in his..... **The Muslim dilemma in India** (Vikas), "culturally a lot of Muslims, Mahrattas, Rajputs, Jats etc.' (remained) imitation Arabs and Persians". Third, even at the level of the court, the composite culture included very little out of the pre-Muslim period of Indian history, and so excluded what to the Hindus is the golden period of their history....

Thus the Indian Muslim political elite neither had an anchorage in the non-Muslim ocean which surrounded them nor in the history of the land they inhabited. Their main anchor.... was in their position as rulers. Therefore, they were particularly defenceless against the psychological trauma... upon losing empire and power. They also did not acquire the alternative anchor of nationalist resistance to a foreign invader. In fact, further estrangement between them and their Hindu neighbours occurred because of the difference between the attitudes of the two towards the intruding.... British.

...The Muslim did not oppose the intruder because the latter had displaced him but because he was a non-Muslim... and in general further accentuated the Islamic rather than the Indian identity of Indian Muslims.

A cascade of consequences followed. Muslim presence declined and Hindu presence increased in the institutions of the new higher western education; therefore also in the new jobs in the new professions which were opening up but required the new education; the estrangement between the two communities was aggravated by new jealousies; the modernist reformers among the Muslims, such as Sir Syed Ahmed, responded by encouraging higher education among the Muslim elites further moved away from the nationalist movement, which became more and more Hindu, under a leadership drawn more and more from Hindus in the new learned professions and from the newly expanding urban middle classes...

When mass-based politics came the differences only increased. The nationalist goal now came to be a fully independent and democratic India. This was construed by many Muslims as rule by a permanent Hindu majority and the removal of a countervailing British presence. This became the seed from which the partition was to spring.

... More concretely it was reinforced by the first mass event of the freedom movement, opposition to the partition of Bengal into what would have become a Hindu majority West Bengal and a Muslim majority East Bengal. The Hindus saw it as a nationalist event, to prevent the partition of he nationalist movement in Bengal or religious lines. The Muslims saw it as an attempt by Calcutta based Hindu landlords to hold on to their zamindaries in East Bengal.....

But the roots of this Muslim view of nationalism go much deeper, into the Islamic world view held by Indian Muslims.

This world view was expressed very pithily by Mohammed Ali of the Khilafat fame who..... (said) in 1931.... "We are not nationalists but super nationalists, and I as a Muslim say that god made man and the Devil made the nation." In practise of course there is a contradiction here and has always been, because it means that Muslims of the Muslim majority countries can be nationalists without ceasing to be Islamic, because their nation is Islamic, but this reconciliation between Islam and nationalism is not available to the Muslims in countries in which they are in minority because in these

countries the majority, and therefore, the state, may have a different faith, and faithfulness to such a state might be good nationalism but.... bad Islamism.

This compounds the problem of the Indian Muslim because, as weighed down by the fact that while once they were the rulers they now looked like becoming a permanent minority, Indian, Muslims tried to find solace in the political philosophy of the Islamic world view. As eleborated by the poet Iqbal, it preaches that national frontiers are irrelevant to the Muslim nation, which is world wide and has only one centre, the Holy Mecca; and since courtry-based nationalism "as a political concept relegates Islam to the background as a 'private opinion' (Baig) it is nationalism that the Muslim should relegate to the background.

This comforted some sections of Indian Muslims in three ways during the freedom movement. It told them, first, that even though they were a minority in India they were, nevertheless, part of a far flung and once very powerful nation, the Ummah; second, it offered a rationalisation to those Muslims who were out of sympathy with or even opposed to the Indian nationalist movement; and third it gave the cushion of a belief to the Muslims of the Hindu majority provinces who knew that most of them would have to remain in India and yet, in an act which would be illogioal without this belief, were more ardent in supporting Pakistan than say the Muslims of Punjab or the Frontier Province.

But these props did not obscure the uncomfortable fact, uncomfortable alike for nationalist Hindu and Muslims, that as the freedom movement grew in force and size, so also grew the gulf between the Hindus and Muslims on each of the three main issues of the independence movement: freedom, unity and democracy. So also grew the wedge which the pan-Islamic view of nationalism was driving between large sections of the Hindus and Muslims.....

The Khilafat movement.... did draw more Muslims into a political movement than anything else had before. But the nature of the movement itself was such that it only made the Muslims.... only more romantically inclined towards pan-Islamism as an internationally fraternal Muslim force. And it made more Hindus more aware that more Muslims were so inclined.

(Contd. from page 34)

community is 'the diverted rage of people who see that economic forces that they cannot fight are conspiring to bring about their inevitable end....

...The Hindu chauvinist upsurge... needs to be taken seriously because at its base lies the battle for survival of a substantial threatened economic class. This this threat will not only not go away but deepen. Since Indian economic growth is slow and since policies are heavily biased towards creating more and more small and insecure entrepreneurs, the numerical strength and economic muscles of this class will continue to grow. The threat to democracy and to... unity will therefore get more and not less serious. It can only be fought if the danger is recognised early and all democratic and secular forces, which have a vested interest in the continued pluralism and in political decentralisation, come together to crush the BJP at the polls... Postponing elections is a recipe for disaster, for it discredits the democratic forces while giving the VHP time to continue its mobilisation.

(Souce: The Hindu, Madurai, 17 November, 1990)

* Our politicians should tell the Muslim leaders that the time has come for them to respect Hindu sentiments. The Hindus are in no mood to compromise.

— Ashok Singhal, VHP Leader

(Contd. from page 41)

mon aspects where white settlers and their soldiers dealt with native Indians and Hispanic colonists.... It took a civil war to free the black man from bondange. The victorious North removed the chains from the black man's ankles, but it imprisoned him in the factory floors of Chicago, Detroit and elsewhere. The black left his hovel in Alabama to live in a bleak tenement in Michigan. The move by black men to re-group and seek a new identity in the continent of their origin has proved a dismal failure....

In the 1960s, Martin Luther King Jr. and Prediident Lyndon Johnson's Great Society Programme did much to free the black from the bondage of discrimination and deprivation. Johnson's legislation opened doors to black men and women in the white man's domain. The acceleration towards integration lapsed after the Johnson era, and by the time Ronald Reagan took over... the dividing line between the two communities became more visible once again.

Despite all setbacks, the blacks in the USA are on their feet once more. "For too long we have tolerated many of our boys making the passage from boyhood to manhood by defining manhood as toughness, antagonism and hate," said William Oliver, a black professor of criminal justice at the University of Delaware... "Ultimately we have got to save ourselves." Save ourselves as blacks or Americans? That Oliver could not answer. And this is also a question that black Britons will soon have to think about.

(Source : The India Week, 10-16 August, 1990)

* We are waiting for the day when a saffron flag is unfurled at the Lal Quila.

— V.K. Malhotra, BJP Secretary

* I am not against **Muslims of India.** I am against **Muslims in India.**

— Bal Thackeray

Arun Shourie : Religion in Politics
Rafiq Zakaria : The Struggle Within Islam
A.A. Engineer : Communalism and Communal Violence in India

Review by Siddhartha Dubey in the Sunday Weekly, Calcutta, 8-14 July, 1990

Arun Shourie, editor of the Indian Express, sets out to analyse the crucial political issue of conflict between religious communities in India...

In Shourie's world-view, all Muslims, including today's minority Indian Muslims, are driven by the fun-damentals of hate and bigotry that he says are written as absolute truth in the Koran. This night mare vision of an "evil empire" Islam is shared by many in India and the West. Shourie writes, "If the traditions or doctrines of a religious prescribe duties that are not compatible with the principles of a secular state—for instance, if our religion ordains, as Islam does, that we must either convert the one who adheres to some other religion or slay him—those duties must be jettisoned and not the principles of a secular state." Shourie pursues this argument through 462 interminable pages of poor prose.

But being an eminent editor and winner of innumerable awards for defending the freedom of the Indian press and public, Shourie must disguise his bigotry with words that speak of liberalism. So, Shourie makes much of his secular credentials. he argues that non-Muslims must be free to criticise and reform Islam and non-Hindus to reform Hinduism. He appeals to the most hallowed tenets of the freedom of expression. "The moral is clear," writes Shourie. "In examining a religious text or the life and teaching of a religious leader, we must examine the proposition per se, the deep per se. That the proposition is urged in the Koran rather than the Bible, that the deed is of Krishna rather than of Moses, must make no difference to our assessment of it... Correspondingly, when we come across a critique of a religious text .... We must weigh it on its own. That a Hindu or a Muslim has written it must make no difference to our assessment of it." Shourie is literate enough to know how to make all the right noises.

But behind the veneer of high-minded reform, Shourie's true intent remains glorifying Hinduism — which for him is more "humanist" and "secular" than all other religions -- and castigating fanatical religions that pose a threat to Hindu India. At one point Shourie writes, extraordinarily, "The example to follow is that of Buddha and Jesus, not of Elisha and Mummammed"

Thankfully, there are such writers as Asghar Ali Engineer and Rafiq Zakaria to counter the easy prejudices and stereotypes regurgitated by Shourie and his like. Zakaria's The Struggle With Islam is masterful protrayal of Islam as a complex religion used divergent ends in its 14 centuries of history by political and religious leaders. A major strength of Zakaria's work is that he shows well that religiosity is not always opposed to secular politics. The communal problem is the misuse or religions in politics, and this is as often done by non-believers as by those labelled religious fundamentalists.

Thus, Zakaria, a lawyer and .... politician, details how influential Indian Muslim theologians opposed Jinnah's "two-nation" theory in pre-partition days. Zakaria writes of the Jamiat-ul-Ulema-i-Hind, the premier organisation of Muslim divines, that "though fundamentalist in their religious outlook, they were secular in political affairs. They cooperated with secular Muslims and opposed their denigrators". In contrast, Zakaria notes that secularists "have, in many cases, exploited Islam for political gain. The outstanding example of this school is Jinnah, a Shi'ite, who never followed the rites of Islam, but whipped up a religious frenzy among Indian Muslims for a separate homeland of their own."

Like all other religions, Islam has been used by rulers to validate their rule. Zakaraia writes, "There is no gainsaying the fact that the whole basis of Islam is democratic; in it kings and dictators do not fit in. Unfortunately, neither the classical nor the modern jurists, by and large, have done anything to enforce it. On the contrary, quite often the democratic principle has been overthrown and even the theologians have quietly complied with the dicates of the ruler.... And the Ulama have rarely hestiated to accord legitimacy to kings and dictators....

The legitimacy comes at a price. Zakaria's analysis of Pakistan... politics shows that interference by religious leaders is particularly strong when a weak political leader asks for legitimacy. According to Zakaria, Pakistan's political leaders were essentially secular and sidetracked the demands of the fundamentalists right uptil Zulfikar Ali Bhutto found his rule threatened in the mid-Seventies. "Taking advantage of the popular unrest, the fundamentalists demanded full Islamistation," writes Zakaria. "In desperation, Bhutto gave in. He declared Friday instead of Sunday a holiday, prohibited the imbibing of liquor, banned cabarets."

Zakaria's book is essential reading for those who wish to get beyond the Zakaria's book is about Islam and the situation of Muslims across the

world. Asghar Ali Engineer's Communalism and Communal Violence in India is a good companion study for those interested in Islam's particular history in the sub-continent and the violence that has marred Muslim-Hindu relations.

Unlike Arun Shourie, Engineer.... is a serious scholar. Where Shourie purposely overlooks the significant details that would question the myth of a monolithic, menacing Islam, Engineer focuses on the complexities of communal and ethnic conflict.

Engineer counters the easy generalisations made in this country about the fanaticism of Muslim—and now Sikhs — and the....liberalism of Hinduism...

Engineer says that Hinduism is as a religion certainly less doctrinaire than Islam and Sikhism. However, this does not make Hindus behave differently from Muslims and Sikhs in the affairs of the world. ..... He notes.... "Communalism is fundamentally a political and socioeconomic phenomenon, religion being only an instrument of political and socio-economic interests, as and when it suits them."

The author correctly emphasises the importance of making this essential distinction between doctrinal religious differences and communalism. "It should also be understood that communalism is not inherent in, or integral to, any religion or religio-cultural group," writes Engineer. "Contrary to popular belief, it is not the function of the incompatibility of any two religions — as for example, Hinduism and Islam – but it is essentially the function of the dynamics of the socio-economic development and sharing of its fruits by different religious groups or communities. The grievances, though economic and political in nature, are wrongly perceived as being integrally related to religious communities and their solution also perceived in terms of religious communities although its solution could only be economic or political."

In a later chapter titled, Social Attitudes, Prejudices And Stereotypes, he adds, "It is to fly in the face of empirical facts to maintain that community's socio-politicial conduct is primarily governed by its religious ideals, whatever the ideals might be Even the past history, let alone the present situation of the developing society, does not seem to support the claim that Hindus have always been tolerant and non-violent and Muslims the aggressors,"....

Engineer emphasises that from the late 19th century "Islam and Hinduism, principally for political reasons, were made to appear not only as separate but also as hostile religions. "This was a conscious attempt at emphasising separateness and purging "Islam of Hindu elements and Hinduism of Islamic elements'. Engineer notes that this went against the reality of there being greater similarities between lower class Hindu and Muslim communities within a region than between elite and lower class co-religionists....

...The aim of the elite's ideology of religious separatism is to weaken the links that unite the greater mass of the public and to replace shared identities with prejudices and negative stereotypes,

Such stereotypes are the stuff of communal politics.....

Perhaps the most sobering gart of Engineer's book is his assessement of the Muslim minority's situation today in the country. Engineer notes correctly that the continuing poverty of the bulk of Indian Muslims since Partition has made the community insecure and conservative."....

...Engineer writes, "Communal leadership hardly ever concerns itself with grievances. It exploits, more often than not, issues with high emotional potency... playing a confrontationist game .... Confrontation, let it be noted, has dangerously lowered the threshold of violence and is largely responsible for Meerut and Ahmedabad."

(Contd. from page 25)

country that no compromise will be made about the integrity and sovereignty of the nation, whatever the consequences... The Government of India is not so helpless. And if the Government of India ;is sitting helplessly, there is no right for any of us to remain here, even for a minute. It is not the question of prejudice. It is not the question of challenging anybody. It is the question of discharging our duty...

...I cannot be a puppet. I have not seen a person who can use me as a puppet... But.... I am not going to condemn those people who have come to support me, to help me in an hour of crisis, not my crisis, but the crisis of the nation and those who stand up to support me. I am grateful to them and I acknowledge that support... If occasion comes, I shall go to the doors of my worst critics. But I assure you, whether you are a critic or a supporter, don't try to remove me from the path which I have charted for myself... To use an Urdu complete...:

"मेरे कदम के साथ है मँजिल लगी हुई, मँजिल जहाँ नहीं बहाँ मेरे कदम नहीं!"

...I know my destinatin, I know my goal. if I cannot go to the goal, I am not (taking a) path just for the courtesy of a walker walking all alone.

... Societies move forward only because of dissent and protest. If... dissent and protest (are) not allowed,.... the society will stagnate and stagnation means... death. When we see that something is going basically wrong and the whole country is being taken towards disaster, it is our national duty that we should dissent, that we should protest, and I am proud that my colleagues on this side protested.... I crave the indulgence of all (the) Members. I ask for your support in this great endeavour, in this great task which is ahead of us in order to give this country the glory and prestige that it deserves....

CHRONOLOGY OF THE MONTH

16 November — 15 December, 1990.

NATIONAL POLITICS

17 Nov : Insaf Party extends support and cooperation to Chandra Shekhar on effective initiatives to solve national problems,

: Amir, Jamaat-e-Islami-Hind and President, Jamiat-ul-Ulema call on P.M.

: In his first broadcast to nation, P.M. appeals for separation of religion and politics and for reconciliation and mutual understanding.

19 Nov : CPI(M) criticises PM's remark on superiority of Hinduism over other religions.

: Rajiv Gandhi attacks BJP and calls upon youth to fight communalism.

20 Nov : UP C.M. Mulayam Singh Yadav wins vote of confidence in UP Assembly, with Cong(I) and BSP supporting, JD & BJP opposing and CPI and CPI(M) abstaining. BJP ascribes Cong(I) support as intended to avoid poll.

22 Nov : Bihar C.M. Laloo Pd. Yadav wins vote of confidence, with Cong(I), BJP and JD rebels opposing.

: Minister of State for Railways Bhakt Charan Das accuses BJP of anti-national activities.

23 Nov : Former PM V.P. Singh hints at JD-Left alliance and ascribes goal of theocratic state to BJP.

: BJP G.S. M.M. Joshi calls CPI & CPI (M) anti-Hindu for supporting 'mass-killing' at Ayodhya and suggests national debate on secularism.

: Cong(I) G.S. Jaffer Sharief accuses BJP of inciting youth to violence.

25 Nov : Advani rules out BJP support to Chandra Shekhar government.

29 Nov : Advani demands President's rule in UP and fresh polls.

30 Nov : Advani attacks Chandra Shekhar Government and demands fresh polls.

: V.P. Singh reiterates electoral alliance between National Front and the Left and opposes Kar Seva II in Ayodhya.

: JD(S) opposes Advani's demand for President's rule in UP.

1 Dec : M.M. Joshi wants face-to-face negotiations between VHP and Babari Mashjid Movement.

9 Dec : V.P. Singh demands dismissal of Chenna Reddy Government in Andhra Pradesh.

BABARI MASJID

17 Nov : PUCL demands judicial inquiry in use of force against Kar Sevaks.

18 Nov : JD leader George Fernandes criticises Mulayam Singh Yadav and BJP and suggests construction of Mandir by a local Committee.

19 Nov : Advani visits Faizabad and Ayodhya to tumultuous welcome, extols the sacrifices by Kar Sevaks, warns Muslims.

: Left Parties denounce VHP's plan for Kar Seva II.

20 Nov : All India Babari Masjid Action Committee (AIBMAC) demands removal of idols from Babari Masjid and total prohibition of Kar Seva. Threatens to defend Babari Masjid, if Government and secular forces are reluctant.

21 Nov : BJP MP Pramod Mahajan states terms for accepting judicial finding on the historic question of fact.

23 Nov : Insaf party demands ban on J.K. Jain's video cassette on Ayodhya.

24 Nov : AIBMAC reiterates opposition to Kar Seva.

: BJP extends full support to VHP's plan for Kar Seva and rejects suggestion to maintain status quo as on 15 August, 47.

: BJP extends full support to VHP's plan for Kar Seva and rejects suggestion to maintain status quo as on 15 August, 47.

: Supreme Council of Ulema and Khutaba (India), a Shia organisation, calls upon religious leaders to resolve the dispute.

: MOS for Home Affairs S.K. Sahay affirms that Shilanyas site is disputed and Kar Seva will not be allowed.

25 Nov : N.T. Rama Rao opposes demolition of Masjid.

26 Nov : Janata Dal reaffirms commitment to judicial verdict.

: IUML suggests 'give and take' provided mosque is retained.

: VHP rules out change in site-plan.

27 Nov : CPI(M) opposes Kar Seva on Shilanyas site.

: Babari Masjid Movement Coordination Committee (BMMCC) demands prohibition of Kar Seva.

: Shia leader S.M. Moosavi rules out demolition or shift of Babari Masjid.

: Cong(I) dissociates itself from Tiwari's formula.

28 Nov : VHP organises Asthi Kalash Yatra in Delhi and other places.

: VHP rejects PM's appeal to postpone Kar Seva on 6 December.

: PUDR demands prosecution of BJP/VHP leaders.

29 Nov : Advani addresses massive rally in Lucknow.

30 Nov : UP C.M. calls on Abdullah Bukhari.

: Justice Krishna Iyer submits his proposal to P.M.

1 Dec : AIBMAC holds face-to-face talks with VHP, in the presence of CMs of UP, Maharashtra, Gujarat and Rajasthan; issues joint appeal for peace.

: VHP reiterates Kar Seva as scheduled.

: Rajiv Gandhi conveys his formula to PM for appointment of commission of inquiry consisting of Supreme Court Judges to inquiry into the historic question of fact.

: PM Confirms Shilanyas site as disputed.

: AIBMAC reacts favourably to Rajiv Gandhi formula.

: V.P. Singh describes Kar Seva as Violation of judicial order.

2 Dec : BJP G.S.K.L. Sharma suggests concocted 'Gandhi

formula' to PM.

3 Dec : AIMPLB meets in Delhi and defines the status of Babari Masjid.
: Advani announces Satyagraha, and not Kar Seva, on 6 December.
: VHP Delegation calls on PM to give archaeological evidence.

4 Dec : AIBMAC and VHP meet again and decide to exchange documentary evidence by December 22 and to have third meeting on 10 January.
: BMMCC generally welcomes and gives conditional support to Rajiv Gandhi Formula.
: PM meets JD(S), CPI, CPI(M), JD and Cong(I) leaders.

5 Dec : Cong(I) appeals to VHP to put off Kar Seva and dissociates itself from latter's views.
: RSS G.S. Seshadri asks Muslims to respect Hindu sentiments.
: VHP-BJP reject appeal. Government okays Satyagraha.
: Delhi police bans audio-cassette of Sadhvi Ritambhra.
: BMMCC calls on P.M.

6 Dec : VHP holds peaceful Satyagraha in Ayodhya to secure rights to perform Kar Seva; nearly 2000 court arrest; minor communal disturbances in Ayodhya.
: UP C.M. expresses readiness to build temple in Ayodhya.
: BMMCC questions propriety of exchange of documents under official auspices and cautions against bypassing judicial procedure.
: AIMPLB delegation meets P.M.
: Chandra Swamy visits Ayodhya and meets Mahants. VHP denounces visit.

8 Dec : Left parties disinclined to support Rajiv Gandhi formula.
: Shahabuddin calls K.L. Sharma's 'Gandhi formula' a forgery.

9 Dec : Conspiracy to blow up Babari Masjid unearthed; 1 youth arrested.
: Kar Seva Samiti rejects Rajiv Gandhi formula.

10 Dec : BJP leaders play banned cassette in public in Delhi and court arrest.

14 Dec : VHP inquiry team accuses UP Government of violating religious rights and holds police firing unjustified.

15 Dec : RSS suggests referendum on Ayodhya issue.

NATIONAL REACTION

17 Nov : UP C.M. announces ex-gratia payment of Rs. 1 lakh for dependents of each person killed and upto maximum of Rs. 4000/- for the injured.

18 Nov : V.P. Singh demands probe in Delhi riots.

19 Nov : Independent Initiative (Convener Justice Krishna Iyer) seeks judicial probe in Ayodhya-related riots.

21 Nov : Abdullah Bukhari banned from entry in Ghaziabad.

22 Nov : Left parties demand arrest of BJP MP Uma Bharati.
: JD demands judicial inquiry in Bijnore riots.

3 Dec : Gujarat decides to set up special riot police.

5 Dec : RSS leader Nanaji Deshmukh pledges to work for 'positive secularism'.
: Coordination Committee of 7 political parties accuses UP C.M. of betraying movement against communalism.

8 Dec : MOS Subodh Kant Sahay announces formation of a composite force to deal with communal violence.
: Cong(I) accuses BJP and MIM of having a hand in AP riots.

9 Dec : Abdullah Bukhari condemns PAC action in Aligarh and demands induction of army; so does Asad Madni; Cong(I) delegation not permitted to enter Aligarh;
: CPM calls for communal amity.
: PM expresses concern over situation in Hyderabad.

10 Dec : Insaf Party demands withdrawal of PAC and restoration of places of worship and due compensation for loss of life; so do IUML and AIMMM.

11 Dec : MOS reiterates government decision to raise anti-riot force.
: BJP demands inquiry in riots in Gujarat, UP and AP.
: JD charges UP Government with failure and concealing facts.
: Insaf Party demands arrest of PAC personnel and ban on militant organisations.

12 Dec : Cong(I) denies role in AP riots.
: Muslim leaders demand protection for Muslims in a letter to PM.
: BJP flays idea of special riot force.

13 Dec : CPI calls for all party meeting.

14 Dec : Abdullah Bukhari calls for UN peace force to protect Muslims.
: BJP demands resignation of CM and President's rule in UP.
: VHP ascribes riots to anti-social elements.
: Arif Mohd. Khan undertakes 4 days fast for communal amity.

15 Dec : Nanaji Deshmukh supports Arif.
: BJP demands inquiry by Supreme Court Judge.
: CPI condemns Bukhari's proposal.
all-party

SITUATION IN KASHMIR

Nov-Dec 90 : Attacks by militants on security forces and counter attack by the latter as well as arrests continued throughout the month.

16 Nov : Farooq Abdullah urges P.M. Chandra Shekhar to take steps to restore confidence of Kashmiri people.
: Bandh called by separatists disrupts normal life in Valley.

17 Nov : Janata Dal (S) G.S. S. Patel demands removal of Government.
: J & K Cong(I) President Shafi Qureshi suggests

meeting of all parties of the State.

21 Nov : Militants attack Maulana Masoodi's residence.

22 Nov : Militants organisation bans smoking in the Valley.

24 Nov : Qadir Ali Shah and constable killed by militants.

25 Nov : Farooq Abdullah criticises militants for insensitivity to repurcussion on Muslims in other parts of India.

26 Nov : 72/day old J & K Government employees strike called off with Government agreeing to reinstate dismissed employees.

27 Nov : Governor Saxena claims he is largely containing militant activity.

1 Dec : Ban on smoking lifted.

4 Dec : Supreme Court issues notices on detention of political leaders.

: Legislative Council Chairman Hakim Habibullah's house bombed.

: Army called in Srinagar locality to flush out militants.

6 Dec : Life in Valley paralysed by 41-hour Bandh called by Hizbul Mujahideen to mourn the death of 22 militants in Kupwara.

: People's League rules out talks until government take cognizance of UN resolutions, offers security to Kashmir Pandits.

7 Dec : Political leaders including Lone, Abbas Ansari, Abdul Ghani, Shabbir Shah shifted to Delhi.

11 Dec : Students Liberation Front Chief Tahir Mir arrested.

13 Dec : Maulana Md. Sayeed Masoodi shot deat.

14 Dec : Mir Waiz criticises random killings by security forces.

15 Dec : Militants fire rockets in Jammu.

Misc.

22 Nov : Maulana Abdur Rahman, ex-MP, 68, passes away in Jammu.

26 Nov : CPI leader Md. Ilyas, 71, dies in Calcutta.

28 Nov : Ram Swaroop's book 'Hadith ke Madhyam se Islam ka Adhyan' banned by Delhi Administration.

: President's rule imposed in Assam.

: Prof. S. Hasan Askari, eminent historian, 90, passes away in Patna.

29 Nov : A.I. Masajid Council demands law to protect status of all places of worship as on 15 August, 1947.

: Press Council censures Organiser Weekly.

4 Dec : Ubaidullah Azmi, JD MP, calls upon Muslims to join Khaksar Movement.

5 Dec : Maulana Abul Lais Nadvi, former Ameer Jamaat-e-Islami-Hind, 78, passes away in Azamgarh.

10 Dec : World Congress on Human Rights inaugurated in New Delhi amidst demonstration by 13 human rights organisations.

COMMUNAL VIOLENCE

16 Nov.–15 Dec : Communal violence which had tapered down explodes all over UP and in Hyderabad and Ahmedabad in the wake of the Satyagraha at Ayodhya on 6 Dec and ware marked by hate and fury, raised by VHP's audio and video cassettes and Asthi Kalash Yatras, resulting in massacre of infants and minors, selective killing in trains and buses, burning of entire families and attacks by PAC. Major places of outbreak were as follows :–

UP

Aligarh : Minor incidents since 20 Nov.; major outbreak 7-9 Dec; train & buses stopped and passengers killed selectively. Army deployed; official toll 75; mostly killed by PAC. DM/SSP changed.

Buland shahr : Dibai town affected since 1 Nov.
Jahangirabad, 13 Dec, 13 members of 1 family burnt alive.

Kanpur : 10 Dec — 1 Hindu family of 1 mother and 3 children, killed in fire. Official toll 20

Agra : 14—17 Dec; Asthi Kalash Yatra diverted; PAC attack on Muslim mohallas; toll 20.

Meerut : 9 Dec — official toll 2

Gonda : 27 Nov — 1 killed.

BIHAR

Patna : Nov 28-30; toll 26 persons; several places of worship damaged.

Ranchi : Nov 22, toll 1 person.

Delhi : 14–17 Nov; toll 8 persons.

Rajasthan : Jaipur, Choru and Jodhpur under curfew for several days.

Assam : Silchar Nov 18-23; toll 12

GUJARAT

Banaskantha : Palanpur Town, Nov 23, Toll 5

Panchmahal : Godhra 23 Nov — 5 Dec., army called in Padra.

Baroda : Baroda city and Dubhol.

Ahmedabad : 9 — 15 Dec.; army called in. Toll 33.

ANDHRA PRADESH

Hyderabad : 6—15 Dec; major riot, said to be politically motivated. Army called in; C.M. forced to resign; BJP and MIM leaders arrested; official toll 144.

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