

The New Indian Right

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India's entry into the new millennium has been marked by a series of dramatic ruptures with its post-independence settlement. The most insulated large economy of the capitalist developing world with the most autonomous bourgeois bloc has adopted a neo-liberal form of integration into the world economy. A rightwing Hindu nationalist and authoritarian force, the Bharatiya Janata Party or Indian Peoples Party has taken power, replacing the Congress Party as the centre of the political system. India has exploded an atomic bomb. Of the four Nehruvian principles that had officially guided India's modernizing project since 1947 – socialism, secularism, democracy and nonalignment – the first and last have been abandoned; the second has been redefined to accommodate Hindu nationalism, while the third, whose preservation was the great success story of an otherwise mottled record, is threatened as never before. It is the conjunction of a sharp neo-liberal turn in the economic sphere with a drastic confessional and chauvinist twist in the political sphere that singles out Indian development in the general panorama of the nineties. Here it is not the unction of the Third Way that is smoothing the path to an increasingly deregulated capitalism, but the intoxicant of a firebrand communalism. The government that is now pressing ahead with privatization of public assets, reduction of import barriers and facilitation of foreign investment, has risen to power amid scenes that are a far cry from quiet meetings in panelled rooms with the IMF.

The BJP of today owes its power in Delhi to two defining episodes of India's turn away from the Nehruvian Consensus. In the autumn of 1990, its then leader L. K. Advani set out around the country on a rath yatra, or 'chariot tour', to whip up Hindu indignation against the crime of Babar, the first Mughal Emperor, in destroying a temple - for which there is no historical evidence - marking the mythical birthplace of the God-King Ram, in the small town of Ayodhya in Uttar Pradesh, in order to build a mosque on its site. Advani's chariot, supposedly based on the horse-drawn carts of the Mahabharata – in reality, a decked-out Toyota van – paraded through nearly two dozen large cities and hundreds of small towns and villages for a month, leaving a trail of violence against Muslims in its wake. Advani was eventually arrested in Bihar, but soon afterwards a frenzied mob scaled the walls of the compound surrounding the Babri mosque and planted saffron flags on of its sixteenth century domes. No one was prosecuted for this criminal act, and the BJP vote rose substantially in response to it. Two years later, as police and paramilitaries stood by, a huge crowd stormed the compound and, for the next five hours, in full view of the TV cameras, set about the demolition of the mosque. The images flashed round the world: pick-axes, saffron scarves, shouting, rubble, dust. Murderous pogroms that night and in the succeeding days claimed over four hundred lives across north and west India, with some of the worst bloodshed in Bombay. In the traumatized aftermath,

Uttar Pradesh's chief minister, Kalyan Singh had to resign. But as the dust settled, the mosque was gone: what was once unthinkable had become historical fact. It was now widely accepted that 'Hindu sentiment' expressed the will of the majority and must be heeded - Congress competing to do so. Four years later the BJP became the largest party in the Lok Sabha. By early 1998 it was in power.

The Economy of the eighties

Such was to be the extraordinary political background to the neo-liberal turn of the nineties. A change of economic course was by then already in train. From the fifties through the seventies, India had followed its own distinctive version of the import-substitution industrialization model, more inward-oriented and state-regulated than elsewhere. The class character of the state was likewise *sui generis* - a dominant coalition comprising all sections of industrial capital, substantial landowners, and senior bureaucrats, in which state functionaries operated as overall coordinators¹. In the eighties, a maturing bourgeoisie more confident of handling external competition, and a burgeoning 'middle class' - actually an elite of mass proportions - hankering after higher levels of consumption, pushed for a cautious integration into global markets. After Rajiv Gandhi came to power in 1984, there was a decisive break with the import-substitution model, that prepared the way, but certainly did not dictate, the trajectory of the nineties. Between the anti-dirigisme of the eighties and the neo-liberalism of the nineties there lay a space wide enough to allow variant capitalist options. One possible path was the East Asian model of industrialisation that might have drawn on at least three lessons of Indian experience congruent with it: the need to mobilise under-utilised surplus labour through land reform and infrastructural works in the countryside; the importance of a high domestic savings rate; and the strategic role that state direction of credit and investment could play. The neo-liberal route was not pre-determined. What explains it as an economic direction, and how is it related to the political upheavals of the period?

The 1991 reforms

The elite-led industrialization strategy of the eighties attenuated the restraints on monopoly growth and diversification, reduced foreign exchange and trade controls, and weakened but did not disband the public sector. Its aim was to make the corporate private sector - even today amounting to only 10 per cent of GDP - the leading edge of the Indian economy. On the demand side, the aspirations of the middle class - in reality comprising the top 10 to 15 per cent of the population - were massaged with major tax reductions and considerable import liberalisation, which it was believed would stimulate exports sufficiently to overcome any balance of payments difficulties. The result was a consumption boom led by the durable goods sector, whose expansion surged from 8 to 22 per cent a year through the decade. Overall growth rates rose to 5.6 per cent, well above the old 'Hindu rate of growth' of 3.5 per annum in previous decades. But there was no pick-up in the pace at which poverty declined, while social and regional inequalities widened. What undid the model, however, was its inadequate export performance, leading to a burgeoning current account deficit, and the fiscal profligacy of the Central government². As tax receipts fell, the revenue gap was covered by higher and laxer government borrowing - more reliance on short-term commercial loans and volatile Non-Resident Indian (NRI) bank deposits. External debt nearly trebled over the decade, from \$23.8 billion to \$62.3 billion, with \$6 billion needing to be immediately rolled over, while the debt service burden rose from 15 to 30 per cent of export earnings and government interest payments from 10 to 19 per cent of total expenditure.

The inevitable result was massive capital flight in anticipation of a devalued rupee. Between April and June 1991 there was a net outflow of \$1 billion, to a point where foreign exchange reserves could barely cover two weeks imports. On the verge of a default that would have severely disrupted

the economy, New Delhi went for a strings-attached IMF-World Bank loan. Given its size and level of development, India could have negotiated reasonably easy terms. Instead, in the guise of a supposedly unavoidable Stabilisation and Structural Adjustment Programme, the Congress government of Narasimha Rao brought in a drastic and unexpected set of changes in trade, industry, foreign investment and technology regimes, public and financial sectors: a long term 'solution' to a short term balance of payments crisis.

Class configurations

By the standards of India's past the neo-liberal reforms under way since 1991 have been truly dramatic, even if by standards elsewhere their scope has been partial and uneven, and their implementation relatively slow. Differences over pace and sequencing exist, and there is widespread agreement that capital controls (which protected India from the fall-out of the East Asian crisis) will need careful phasing out. But in the political and intellectual arena, the ideological hegemony of neo-liberalism is currently overwhelming. Where does it come from? It is fairly clear that the 'new economic policy' (NEP) originated in the apex of the state bureaucracy, not the industrial or agrarian bourgeoisies. In the eighties, the upper echelons of functionaries in the Ministries of Finance, Commerce and Industry were increasingly drawn into the mental orbit of their counterparts in the West³. Closer contacts between top Indian bureaucrats and their opposite numbers in the IMF and World Bank, with many a secondment to Washington, created a pre-disposition towards purer free-market doctrines, that was greatly reinforced by the collapse of the Soviet Union. The general stampede by East European and Russian governments themselves to adopt neo-liberal remedies seemed confirmation to many that there was no alternative — only, perhaps, a risk of coming last. Prominent NRI economists working in British and American universities added their weight to the growing consensus. Though Delhi has paid lip service to the welfarist views of Amartya Sen, the first Indian-origin Nobel Prize winner in Economics — the content and spirit of the reforms have been much more in tune with the views of another NRI economist and Nobel aspirant, Columbia University's Jagdish Bhagwati, a life-long critic of Sen.

Initially, sections of Indian business organised in the 'Bombay Club' called for a continuing measure of protection against foreign capital, whose 'advantages' did not ensure a 'level playing field'. But these protests have petered out, as domestic capital prepares to settle for its share of a continental-sized market whose faster growth and smaller public sector should, so it believes, afford it new niches; while regional firms find the NEP more congenial than earlier centralized regulations that favoured 'national' companies. All sections of Indian industry now seek collaboration with outside capital as another route to self-enhancement, at home and abroad. This is not the birth of a comprador class, so much as the emergence of a variegated 'internal bourgeoisie' looking to gain from a more flexible range of associations with foreign capital than in the past, when outright dependence was considered the only or main option⁴.

Two developments within the dominant coalition, however, will bear close watching as the neo-liberal project unfolds. The agrarian bourgeoisie has not yet been much affected by reforms that have so far been confined to the urban sector, though trade liberalisation has had some impact on its costs. The economic weight of the agrarian bourgeoisie must continue to decline relative to its industrial counterpart, but in India its political weight - by reason of its electoral reservoirs - has always been greater. The logic of neo-liberalism pushes for an end to preferential treatment of this sector, but the traditional bias of the state towards it continues ó price supports for agricultural output, guaranteeing higher prices than would clear the market; massive subsidies for crucial inputs like power, water or fertilisers; low- or even zero-interest loans, not to speak of periodic debt write-offs. Is this agrarian bourgeoisie capable of buffering the WTO thrust? What is likely to be the response to neo-liberal pressures within its ranks, where small farmers, large landowners and rich kulaks coexist? Only the future can tell. Meanwhile, the steady entry of foreign capital - especially

international finance - will, beyond a critical point of accumulation, create a new situation in which sizeable sections of the industrial and commercial bourgeoisie become part of a more mobile bloc of transnational capital, no doubt capable of playing a hegemonic role in the ruling coalition, but generating its own tensions and contradictions with regional interests, agrarian lobbies and state functionaries alike.

Balance-sheet of the nineties

What has been the balance-sheet of the neo-liberal turn to date? The NEP has abolished industrial licensing (there are still a few exceptions), removed restrictions on monopolistic accumulation, and freed capacity-creation or extension, mergers and takeovers from the need for government approval. Formal restrictions on labour-shedding in the organized sector remain, but ruthless dismissals are in practice largely ignored. Export subsidies have been swept away and since 1993 a unified exchange-rate based on market signals has been in force. Quantitative import barriers were eliminated by April 1, 2001. Foreign majority participation in most Indian industries is now allowed and FDI encouraged. Portfolio investment is still confined to foreign institutions and some restraints on equity and debt instruments remain. In the public sector, disinvestment is the dominant theme - the state disposing not just of loss-makers, but prized undertakings: government holdings are projected to fall first to 49 and then 26 per cent in those enterprises where a minority stake is held at all. Only a few strategic and defence-related sectors will be exempt from a sale of public assets designed also to reduce the fiscal deficit. The nationalised banking system has so far escaped this logic, but it now has to function according to strictly commercial criteria, downgrading earlier concerns to provide credit access to priority regions, sectors, classes. Insurance is being more straightforwardly opened up to market forces.

What has been the outcome so far? The ideological character of the neo-liberal programme finds clear expression in the two macro-indicators it takes as canonical - overall rate of growth of GDP, and of decline in the fiscal deficit. The assumption is that high and steady growth, no matter how achieved, is sufficient to eliminate poverty. Targeting a fiscal rather than revenue deficit allows capital expenditure and 'unproductive' social - but not military - spending to be cut, while public assets are sold and tax receipts fall. The over-riding aim is to reduce the economic role of the state in the belief, repeatedly falsified by the Indian experience, that public 'crowds out' private investment. The Centre's capital expenditure fell from 6.8 per cent of GDP in the second half of the eighties to 4.6 per cent in the first half of the nineties and has continued to sink, along with social spending.

Yet the average growth rate in the nineties of 5.7 per cent shows no statistically significant increase over that of the eighties. More disturbingly, since 1997 the agricultural and manufacturing sectors - which together employ four-fifths of the Indian work-force - have grown at only 2.7 per cent and 4.7 per cent respectively, compared with 11.4 per cent in financial services and 14.1 per cent in communications. As the economy opens out further it seems rather worse placed to meet global competitive challenges. In 1999-2000, imports from China grew by 21 per cent and in the first quarter of 2000-2001 by 43 per cent. Fear of being flooded by cheap Chinese goods in a range of basic consumer items from textiles to toys is now real. India continues to rely on its traditional export package - agricultural, mineral, marine, worked gems and labour-intensive products - for its foreign exchange earnings. The only major exception is software, whose products and services grew at a rate of no less than 60 per cent a year between 1992-99, and now account for some 8 per cent of merchandise exports. Overall, imports and exports have doubled as a proportion of GDP since the eighties, currently standing at respectively 12 and 10 per cent respectively, making the economy much more vulnerable to external shocks. In the wake of the East Asian crisis the rupee slid from 35 to a current rate of 47.00 to the dollar, exacerbating the burden of foreign debt-service. If the US economy goes into a tailspin, dragging the world economy with it, the effects on India will be far

more serious.

Foreign direct investment, meanwhile, rose from 7 to 33 per cent of total capital formation over the course of the nineties, while portfolio inflows more than trebled, to some \$5 billion. Compared with other Asian recipients, these are unimpressive amounts. Total FDI in the nineties was \$15 billion for India, while China received some \$34 billion in 1994 alone and \$238 billion between 1994-99. In the same period Malaysia got \$30 billion, Thailand and South Korea \$23 billion. As for the fiscal deficit, the stabilisation measures of 91/92 reduced it from 8.4 to 6.0 per cent of GDP in 92/93. But far from steadily declining since, it has stubbornly fluctuated between a low of 4 and a high of 7 per cent, while the all-important revenue deficit has hovered between 2.4 and 3.7 per cent. The consolidated fiscal deficit of the Centre and States combined actually rose from 9.5 to 11.5 per cent over the decade, as tax receipts fell to around 10.5 per cent of GDP.

What has been the consequence of this pattern of development for basic levels of poverty? The seventies, with a lower overall growth rate of 3.5% had a faster rate of decline in poverty than the higher growth pattern of the eighties and nineties. According to the most widely used measure, those below the poverty line fell from around 55 per cent in 1973/74 to 44 in 1983 to 36 per cent in 93/94. Since then, matters seem to have at best improved by a couple of percentage points, but in absolute terms worsened. In India where the difference between starvation and malnutrition is work, unemployment rates have never been high. But between 93/94 and 99/00 labour force participation fell from 444 to 417 per thousand in the countryside and 347 to 337 in the towns. These rates are the lowest since the late seventies when such data was first collected.

Income inequalities between states, classes and across the rural-urban divide have meanwhile mounted. Rural per capita income improved as a ratio of urban income through the seventies, and has since fallen. In 1996, about a million households - 80 per cent of them urban - enjoyed levels of consumption comparable to the European or North American middle class. This 'very rich' category has since risen fast - the number of Indians able to travel abroad quadrupling in the last years. Along with another 30-35 million households - some 175-200 million people - this is the class that is driving the current elite-led path of development pattern. In the private corporate sector, between 85/86 and 96/97 the share of wages in value added fell from 35 to 20 per cent, while in the shares of profits share (before tax but after depreciation and interest) went up by 15 percentage points⁵. As for regional disparities, of the fifteen States which together account for over 95 per cent of the population, a forward group of eight - Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Haryana, Karnataka, Kerala, Maharashtra, Punjab, Tamil Nadu - with 42 per cent of the country's population has been favoured with two-thirds of all investment proposals, domestic and foreign; while a backward group of seven - Assam, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Rajasthan, West Bengal - that contains 54% of the population has received just over a quarter of investment proposals. The per capita income of the poorest three States (Bihar, Orissa, Assam) was 43 per cent of that of the richest three (Maharashtra, Punjab, Haryana) at the start of the eighties; by the mid nineties it was down to 27 per cent. The two most populous States - UP and Bihar, with over a quarter of the country's inhabitants - have lagged further behind, while the two fastest growing States - Maharashtra and Gujarat - have pulled further ahead.

Neo-liberalism has favoured urban over rural populations, richer over poorer States, property owners and professionals over wage-earners and the poor. If the resistance to it has not been strong, it is because its impact on the various components of the industrial bourgeoisie has been diffuse, and it has not yet impinged much on the agrarian bourgeoisie. It has been strongly supported by the 'middle class'. Above all, there is no ideological alternative that has the same coherence nor any organized bloc of socio-political forces ranged against it.

The Rise of the Sangh

The Congress introduced the NEP. The United Front government (1996-98), a coalition of regional parties supported by the mainstream left of the Communist Party of India (CPI) and Communist Party of India-Marxist (CPM), carried it forward. Since 1998, the BJP has taken over the project. Historically, what has been the relationship between its form of religious nationalism and neo-liberalism? It would be wrong to see the rise of the BJP as merely the result of increased economic tensions. A more independent political dynamic, encompassing the failure of secular and centrist alternatives ñ above all, the Congress Party ñ has helped to clear the way for confessional advance. The erosion of the Congress was already well-advanced by the mid-seventies ñ the 1975-77 Emergency being Mrs Gandhi's calamitous attempt to stem it by an authoritarian coup de main. Over time, its historic link with the landed elite weakened, as rising expectations outstripped its capacities to distribute patronage and resources; forward castes and 'core minorities' (Dalits, Tribals, Muslims) started to desert it; backward-caste rural elites forged their own regional organizations; the young were not enthused. The party was degenerating from a once popular mass movement into an increasingly venal machine.

Electurally, this decline was at first reflected not in parliamentary minorities but in huge, alternating majorities that marked, and masked, underlying instability. Voters had become distrustful of the parties' larger programmatic claims: general elections were fought as referenda on single issues. In 1977 it was Emergency hatao, 'Remove Emergency', when the Janata Party under Morarji Desai swept into office on an anti-Indira vote. In 1980 Stability laonñJanata hatao, 'Bring Back Stability ñ Remove Janata', restored Congress to office. In 1984, following Mrs Gandhi's assassination, Desh bachao - 'Save the country' - put Rajiv in power. In 1989, in the wake of the Bofors arms scandal, Corruption hatao, 'Remove Corruption', ousted Congress and installed a National Front government under V. P. Singh, with the support of the BJP. The fall in the fortunes of Congress steepened in the course of the nineties, as minority governments became the order of the day. Congress seats in the Lok Sabha fell from 224 in 1991 to 136 in 1996, slightly up to 141 in 1998 and right down to 113 in 1999. The fate of the BJP has always been intertwined with that of the Congress. The hollowing out of the once great force that had led India to independence was clearly a critical proximate condition of the rise of the Hindutva. But the deeper question remains: why did the discredit of the historically dominant centrist party allow such a polarizing force as the BJP - rather than the Janata or some other mainstream alternative - to become the central reference point of Indian politics today?

Hindu extremism is not new. Saffron currents have existed both within and without the nationalist movement since the twenties at least. What has changed over the past decade is the sudden mass receptivity to such ideas. This is part of a global phenomenon, of course. In the postwar period, the social and psychological costs of modernity's relentless revolutionizing of everyday life were been made livable by collective hopes of amelioration: a shared belief that change would be for the better, that happier times lay ahead. With the general eclipse of that Enlightenment promise of progress in the last decades of the twentieth century has come a spate of new transformations: speed-up, monetization, outsourcing, lean production. Neoliberalism itself provides no solace for the social disorientation it brings, for loss of dignity and (typically male) self-respect ñ only the exhaustion of perpetually striving after consumerist goals and the anxiety of never seeing them fulfilled. In this vacuum, aggressive cultural self-assertion, religious or ethnic, becomes a form of consolation, whose affirmations of virility offer a balm for social despair. In the West, where deindustrialization and marketization have undermined the relative safeties of long-term employment and stable welfare provision, such strains have emerged primarily as anti-immigrant xenophobia ñ often covertly fanned by the policies of the Centre Left. In the former Communist countries, ersatz brands of ethnic and religious nationalism have flourished amid the wreckage of utopia. In the Third World, virulent new strains of old religions have taken the place of earlier dreams of national progress.

The promise of post-independence India ñ the 'socialism, secularism, non-alignment and democracy' of Nehruvian stamp ñ had offered one of the most durable versions of these visions. 'Socialism' here was to be understood as a national commitment to industrialization and social welfare (certainly not as the expropriation of the bourgeoisie); secularism as the pledge of a religiously impartial, non-denominational state; non-alignment as the sign of a proudly independent foreign policy, enabled by the existence of the Soviet Union; democracy as the functioning of a Third World parliamentary system, embracing the world's largest electorate. It was the fading or tarnishing of these ideals, as Congress and its rivals sank ever deeper into a sump of cynicism and corruption, that eventually made muscular bigotry and chauvinism seem a more attractive alternative.

Saffron assets

For in a context of deepening crisis and uncertainty, this was the one force prepared to pursue a politics of sustained mass mobilization. Only fifteen years ago the BJP was still considered beyond the pale of Indian politics, with just two Lok Sabha seats. Its parent organization, the extra-parliamentary Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, or National Volunteer Corps, was regarded with even deeper suspicion, as were the two other 'non-political' organizations - the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (World Hindu Council) and Bajrang Dal (Lord Hanuman's Troops) - grouped in the parivar, or family, of the Sangh. The BJP's connection to the RSS gives it an unparalleled infrastructure of ideologically-motivated, highly disciplined cadres available for electoral and extra-electoral campaigning. Today, the RSS far outstrips the Left in numbers (estimated at over 2 million), organised strength in civil society (40,000 shakas or branches), and morale. It runs thousands of schools and has a plethora of front organisations for all sections of society, from housewives to pensioners to retired military personnel, unmatched by any other force. Its nervous system is a saffron brotherhood of pracharaks, several thousand supposedly celibate, spartan, full-time organizers, incorruptibly devoted to the pure Hindu Rashtra of their dreams. The all-male local shakhas are animated by a powerful ethic of loyalty and obedience, with an emphasis on physical culture and body-building through calisthenics and drill. Neighbourhood implantation is strong: as guardians of wisdom, the shakha will only allow a boy to attend with the consent and daily knowledge of his family. The campaign against the Ayodhya mosque, the greatest in scale and depth since the National Movement in India, would have been impossible without the unparalleled local infrastructure and unified central command of the RSS.

At the same time, the BJP has been well placed to take advantage of Congress decline in the north and west, offering the rising upper echelons of the backward castes, avid for cultural acceptance as well as political power, the chance for recognition within a militant Hindu identity. It has been adept, too, at exploiting the mosaic of differentiated caste and regional alliances ñ conceding to local demands in exchange for a free hand at the centre ñ thus extending its leverage far beyond its own core upper-caste support (see Tables 1 and 2). This flexibility has even included alliances with the Dalit Bahujan Samaj (Downtrodden Masses) Party, whose members' objective interests are in total opposition to Hindutva. Here as elsewhere, the BJP has known how to benefit from the social ambitions of sectoral leaderships, if not their venality.

Table 1: Support for Parties by Social Categories

Support for Parties by Caste and Religion in the 1999 General Elections (Percentages)

-	Cong(I)	BJP	BJP Allies	Left	BSP	Regional Parties
Hindu Upper Caste	21	46	14	7	1	2
Hindu Dominant Peasant Caste	31	30	22	4	1	10
Hindu Upper OBC	35	21	23	2	2	12
Hindu Lower OBC	35	19	23	10	1	6
Adivasi (Tribals)	49	19	12	7	0	3
Dalit (Downtrodden)	40	12	10	11	13	5
Upper Muslim	59	6	9	9	1	14
Lower Muslim	58	2	9	12	3	11
Sikh	17	9	44	0	1	4
Christian	64	10	14	9	0	0

Based on the electoral outcome and findings of a nation-wide post-election Survey carried out by the Centre for Developing Studies (CDS). Source: Communalism Combat, Mumbai, September 2000.

Table 2: Class basis of Congress and BJP support:

-	Cong(I)	BJP	BJP Allies	Left	BSP	Regional Parties	All
Upper Strata	34	69	49	28	13	39	45
Lower Strata	66	31	51	72	87	61	55

Centre for Developing Studies, Communalism Combat, Mumbai, September 2000.

Above all, however, the ideologues of the Sangh have been extremely skilled in manufacturing a collective sense of Hindu grievance, over and above internal differentiation by caste. This has been a vital move. Caste in India is a more powerful signifier than religion itself: without the threat of an external enemy, it would present insuperable obstacles to Hindu unity. Islam is the obvious candidate for this enemy Other. But it is hard to portray Indian Muslims ñ only 12 per cent of the population, and overwhelmingly working class ñ as the chief oppressors or exploiters of the vast Hindu mass. Instead, the Sangh has proved adept at telescoping history to make present-day Muslims responsible for the Mughal rule of centuries past. Like white racists in the West, they have been expert at exploiting a sense of majority indignation at supposed government favouritism towards minorities. The campaign against the Ayodhya mosque was the perfect chance to present an ancient, if fictional, Muslim iniquity as a deep insult to Hindu sentiment, exposing the Congress government's grant of priority to legal procedures over the claims of faith, appeasing Muslims and denying Hindus the freedom to worship in their very own country! Such was the unmasked meaning of Indian secular nationalism and its anti-majority (because anti-Hindu) so-called democracy.

Secular default

The Congress has been fatally weakened in its response to this demagoguery by the inadequacies of its own version of secularism — a deep underlying problem of the Gandhian tradition as a whole. The secular is not defined here as a sphere distinct from religion, let alone as a principled critique of it. Instead, secularism is presented as if it were 'religious tolerance', itself portrayed as the enduring spirit of India's ancient — i.e., Hindu — civilization. This is a delusion: historically false and strategically disastrous. It is nonsense to claim that Hinduism's multiplicity of gods and goddesses make it essentially more tolerant than monotheism. Doctrinal pluralism is no guarantee of social practice. Within modern Hinduism, polytheistic religious ritual provides the basis for the caste system — an elaborate social hierarchy which by any comparative standards is viciously intolerant. Apologists for the Semitic faiths, however exclusionary, at least pretend that all believers are equal under God.

In any event, tolerance as a political concept, like pluralism, is a creation of modernity, the product of an age which could conceive of individual rights. It cannot simply be projected back onto ancient agrarian societies that were segmentary and decentralized, where social life was governed by kinship and ritual, and a segregated religious coexistence was of an essentially passive sort. Plant life, as Sudipta Kaviraj has pointed out, is plural: it is not thereby tolerant; nor can the pre-modern civilizations of the sub-continent be described as such⁶. Gandhian 'tolerance' fails to recognize — in fact, seeks to deny — the impact of modernity on religion, the changes wrought by the dislocations and speed-up of industrial capitalism and mass society, in India as elsewhere. Nor can it admit the ways in which that experience has opened up new vistas of possible and actual progress, reinforcing social and scientific explanations at the expense of cosmic ones. The consequences are all too evident. In practice, Congress secularism has meant not the abstinence of the state from religious affairs but a continuous, 'impartial' involvement — actively balancing favours to one community with accommodations to the other: a strategy of all-round appeasement which actually encourages competition between different religious groups. Once put on the defensive politically, such a stance is more likely to capitulate before a communalist assault than to combat it.

One shameful result has been the absence of even the option of a uniform civil code in India — a concession to a Muslim fundamentalism determined to uphold the sharia. In 1986 the Rajiv Congress overrode the Supreme Court's ruling that an elderly Muslim divorcee, Shah Bano, be granted maintenance under Indian law, surrendering to patriarchal demands for a Muslim women's bill. This sordid manoeuvre sparked mobilization by Hindu militants and counter-mobilizations by Islamic groups, turning what was essentially an issue of women's rights into a communalist battleground. It was to offset this concession to reactionary forces in the Muslim community that the Congress government lifted the locks on the disputed site at Ayodhya later the same year, allowing the supporters of the Sangh their foothold. The drift was accentuated under Narasimha Rao, whose 'pale saffron' cowardice and opportunism did much to clear the way for the destruction of Babur's mosque — but nothing at all to halt the decline of Congress.

An Indian fascism?

Influential voices on the Indian Left have pointed to the authoritarian structure of the RSS, its exclusionary doctrine, its use of mass spectacle, and the shakas' combination of ideological indoctrination with the cult of masculinity, to describe the Sangh as a fascist formation. Such an approach draws primarily on liberal definitions of fascism, ticking off the list of accepted ideological and organizational characteristics of the fascist movement to see if they 'match'. Classical Marxist analyses — Trotsky's above all — have focussed instead on the overall dynamics of capitalist society, viewing fascism as a solution of last resort to which ruling classes may be driven in a situation of intense economic and social crisis — above all, when faced with the threat of a revolutionary labour movement, as in Italy or Germany between the wars. The attempt to portray neo-liberal restructuring as such a crisis, and the Sangh as a fascism 'to fit our times', ignores the obvious fact

that Indian capital can hardly be said to confront a revolutionary challenge from below. Rather it faces, with the decline of Congress, a problem of political stability. The BJP, if it can provide the basis for a new political centre in India, may prove a useful instrument; it is not required as a solution of last resort. Today's neo-liberal restructuring can be housed in a variety of political regimes: Centre-Left or Centre-Right in the West, more or less populist or authoritarian elsewhere. Although 'fascist' as a term of abuse will doubtless endure, the real nature of the Sangh is better grasped outside that paradigm (7). To characterize the BJP as a fascist threat not only grossly underestimates the true import of historical fascism, it encourages ñ in the name of anti-fascism - strategic alliances by the Left with bourgeois forces no less committed to neo-liberalism. It also, paradoxically, underestimates the nature of the Sangh's distinctive rhythms and activities: the Hindutva phenomenon is more deep-rooted and more difficult to destroy. Fascism in power had one key instrumentality ó the state. Hindutva has two ó the state and the RSS as the 'skeleton' (and soul) around which the anatomy of the 'new India' is to be built. The ultimate defeat or retreat of fascism from state power signalled its dissolution. This is not so for the Sangh.

From the point of view of capital, domestic or foreign, the BJP's commitment to the NEP is praiseworthy, but does not distinguish it from other bourgeois parties in Delhi. Rather the critical question is can it establish itself as the best vehicle for Indian neo-liberalism today? To do so, it must show the requisite political capability - to remain the preferred option of the Indian 'middle class' and to ensure stability of rule. Stability, not democracy, is the central requirement. If that is compatible with a steady communal-authoritarian drift in civil society, or can survive the institutionalization of a softer (or harder) version of the Hindu state, so be it. But if too aggressive a pursuit of Hindutva undermines stability, the BJP will be judged wanting in the responsibility expected of a 'normal' party of capitalist power at the Centre. The difficulty for the party is that it is here that the differentia specifica of the Sangh lies. Other bourgeois parties may be pragmatically communal, but they are not programmatically so. It is only the Sangh that systematically pursues the long-term transformative project of Hindu Rashtra. The BJP in power is not the simple equivalent of a conservative right-wing party like the Christian Democrats in Europe, only more Hindu than Christian Democracy is Christian. Its record in office makes this clear.

The Record in power

Economically, the Vajpayee government has intensified the neo-liberal drive of the NEP. This year's budget handed out tax give-aways of around Rs. 5,500 crores, and listed no less than 27 public-sector enterprises for privatization, including Air India - a dramatic acceleration of disinvestment, in the teeth of worker resistance. To increase labour market flexibility, firms with 1,000 employees or less no longer need government approval before firing workers. On the expenditure side, military outlays jumped another 13.8 per cent, after last year's biggest ever increase of 28 per cent. Politically, the first cautious steps - essentially, legitimizing discussion of major changes to the Indian Constitution - have been taken. Since constitutional amendments require a two-thirds majority in the Lok Sabha, this is a long-term effort. The party's student body, the Akhil Bharatiya Vidhyarti Parishad, has floated plans for a new structure in which the Lok Sabha and Supreme Court would be subordinated to a nominated Guru Sabha, or Council of the Wise, with special weighting for religious leaders, and the Indian Army would acquire institutional autonomy; but this is wishful thinking. Vajpayee's own proposals to the newly created Constitutional Review Commission have been more modest: a 'presidential system of governance' with a fixed tenure of office, so that minority governments cannot be ousted by votes of no-confidence; and a new 'indirect' electoral system that would sever the links between the supreme legislative body and universal suffrage. None of this is practical politics as yet, but the parameters of what is thinkable have been shifted.

More tangible objectives lie closer to hand. In a spirit reminiscent of Thatcher's first term, the BJP has concentrated on parachuting 'its own people' into strategic posts in the home, education and information ministries. Within the social sciences, for example, Hindutva ideologues have been put into the Indian Council of Social Science Research, the Indian Council of Historical Research, the Indian Council of Philosophical Research and the Indian Institute of Advanced Studies. Any notion of giving greater autonomy to government-owned radio and TV channels has been effectively buried. Education has been a special target for attention, as Sangh members have taken over the National Council for Education, Research and Training, which once produced outstanding texts for Indian schools, but has now brought out a highly ideological National Curriculum Framework. In the states under BJP control—Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat and, earlier, Rajasthan—elements of Vedic science and mathematics have been introduced, and the history and social studies curricula amended on Hindutva lines. Schools have been instructed to subscribe to RSS literature and Sanskrit is systematically promoted. The Centre has just declared that 'defence studies', exalting militant patriotism, will be introduced into schools for the children of armed-forces personnel, and may be extended to other schools. In UP over 2,000 RSS-controlled shishu mandir schools have been incorporated into the state network. Revealingly, the government has also declared that it will be setting up undergraduate and MA courses in astrology; some seventy universities so far are said to have responded positively.

It is at this level that Hindutva is progressing. In civil society, there has been a systematic campaign of Sangh intimidation against rural and small town Christians, especially in Gujarat, with 113 attacks recorded across India since 1997, more than in all the previous three decades⁸. If large-scale urban communal violence alienates the middle classes and undermines business confidence, the same cannot be said for attacks on the poor in the countryside and mofussil areas. The temporary shift in focus from Muslims to Christians is deliberate, and there is more behind it than competition between the Sangh and Christian churches for converts in tribal areas. Though Christians are no more than 2.5 per cent of the population, some 25-30 per cent of all NGO charities are Christian controlled. Operating in the fields of health, education, and social work, in practice these are strongly secularizing institutions, whose services are open to all. Since some of the best schools, colleges and hospitals in the country are Christian institutions, they exercise a disproportionate influence within the elite at large. Equivalent Muslim institutions are far fewer and overwhelmingly confined to their own religious community.

Nuclearization

The collapse of the Soviet bloc not only triggered the neo-liberal project, it also signalled the redundancy of an Indian nonalignment that had balanced a strategic list to the USSR with an economic tilt to the West. Indo-Russian 'friendship' continues to be given lip service by both sides, but the value of the connection is now essentially confined to Russian arms supplies. From 1992 onwards New Delhi and Washington repeatedly spoke of the desirability of a new 'strategic partnership'. But the enormous asymmetry of power between the two countries makes arrival at mutually acceptable terms difficult. At a minimum India has wanted the US to shift away from its traditional attachment to Pakistan. It has sought to sell the virtues of such a strategic reorientation by stressing the economic value of its large domestic market, the political value of an alliance between the 'two largest democracies', and the strategic value of a potential counterweight against China.

The US has listened, but for all the claims - loud in India, barely audible in the US - that Clinton's visit in Spring 2000 inaugurated a new era in mutual ties, it is not yet willing to carry out any major change of policy. Washington has too many options and India's actual status in the international

order does not warrant a significant shift. The US benefits from being at the apex of a triangle, in which Pakistan and India compete to woo it. Pakistan, however, remains a reliable ally that has long served American interests and can continue to do so in both Central Asia and the Middle East, where the strong Islamabad-Riyadh connection reinforces the Saudi leg of the informal tripod organised by the US - whose other legs are Israel and Egypt - that assures American supremacy in the region. To be sure, Washington is worried by the growing Talibanisation of Pakistan. But the point is that if there is going to be a strategic break with Pakistan in favour of India it will be because of an independent US reassessment of its strategic priorities and perspectives and Pakistan's place in them and not because of the imperatives of adjustment to a supposedly growing Indian power. On the other flank of the subcontinent, East Asia remains of much greater importance to Washington than South Asia. The Bush Administration may entertain growing reservations about China as a future rival, but the bird-in-the-hand reality of a complex Sino-American relationship that needs to be handled carefully will not be jeopardised for the bird-in-the-bush possibility that the US might at some time welcome a strong Indian counterweight to China. For all its current posturing, India is unlikely to become the 'great Asian power' realist logic predicts it soon should.

The nuclear test explosion of May 1998, intended to give the country global status, has not strengthened either its bargaining power or its security. What it has done, however, is to clinch the BJP's bid to represent a more belligerent and ambitious elite nationalism. The Sangh was the only force to demand that India acquire nuclear weapons, from the early fifties - when the Chinese, let alone Pakistani, nuclear threats did not exist - onwards. Right up to May 11 1998, all other Indian parties - including the Left and the wider 'security establishment' - stood for the post-1974 position of ambiguity, neither exercising nor foreclosing the nuclear option. Keeping its coalition partners in the dark, the BJP sprang a sudden political coup by taking India across the nuclear threshold. Once again, it showed its ability to redefine the terrain of bourgeois politics. Presented with the fait accompli, Congress and every other mainstream party was forced to adjust to it. Acceptance of nuclearization is now consensual barring the left. The BJP has gained no direct electoral mileage out of it, since the bomb does not touch the everyday concerns of the masses, but its command of the issue is a formidable example of its ability to hold the ideological initiative at elite level.

Internationally, the upshot of India's nuclearization is another matter. Officially, its principal justification was the threat from China. By forcing China to factor India into its strategic calculations, New Delhi has moved a long way towards transforming a potential rivalry into actual hostility, with no gain to its security. Still more dangerously, the BJP's nuclear coup has triggered emulation in Pakistan, leaving the subcontinent as the only part of the world where a continuous hot-cold war of 54 years duration (with no signs of abating) persists between two adjacent powers, each now equipped with weapons of mass destruction. It is simple common sense that South Asia has become the most likely flashpoint for a nuclear war anywhere on earth today. The rise of right-wing religious extremism in both countries has led to a new level of mutual demonization. A minority in the elite of each society - a stronger one in India, for obvious reasons of size - no longer really believes in long-term co-existence, but assumes that the security of one country ultimately requires the break-up of the other. The catastrophic consequences of this dynamic for the peoples of the subcontinent should be plain to all but the blind.

The Path to Hindu Rashtra

In the short-run, the first serious blow to the BJP regime has been in its own way symbolically appropriate: a corruption scandal linked to the military complex. Tehelka, an investigative web-site - its name means Sensation - set out to test the probity of the Ministry of Defence. Starting at the bottom of the hierarchy, two of its journalists equipped with spy-cameras offered to sell fictitious

'thermal binoculars' in exchange for bribes. They soon found their way right to the top. Tehelka broke the story in March. The world's internet users could click to watch BJP chairman Bangaru Laxman's fingers closing round a 100,000-rupee wad of notes, while asking that future payments to be made in dollars. 'The company will get a fair hearing', Jaya Jaitley, the companion of George Fernandes, the Defence Minister, and also president of the Samata party, assured the pair in another clip taken at the Defence minister's residence, even as another senior functionary of the party was taped pocketing twice that sum. Laxman ñ a long-standing RSS member ñ and Fernandes as well as Jaitley were obliged to resign, and the West Bengal Trinamul Congress bolted the coalition.

The opposition does not have the numbers to call a no-confidence vote in the Lok Sabha. But the BJP has been seriously damaged, as its claim to be 'the party with a difference' - purer because more religious ñ became laughable. The RSS at first tried to play both sides, demanding an energetic clean-up while reaffirming its faith in Vajpayee, then called for a purifying reassertion of Hindutva as an antidote to - and diversion from ñ Tehelka. Within the Sangh, the balance of forces has undoubtedly moved away from the BJP towards the RSS. Within the coalition, however, the shift has been in the other direction, with the BJP under pressure to moderate its stance to prevent further discontents. The main concern of foreign and domestic capital is that the government not be blown off-course in pushing through 'the most valuable' elements of its economic agenda, as The Economist put it - privatizations and labour reform⁹. There is little chance of this. Tensions undeniably exist between the virulent cultural nationalism of the RSS, traditionally associated with protectionism, and the BJP's current pursuit of neo-liberal objectives. But they are containable, as the two wings of the Sangh operate a tactical division of labour: the BJP does not compromise too much on Hindutva; the RSS restrains itself on the NEP.

What are the political prospects for India, as the Vajpayee government enters its third year? The dominant feature of the present landscape is a cumulative communal and authoritarian drift in civil society and the state alike, despite the uncertainty over the BJP's electoral fortunes. If the party has become the largest 'national' force, breaking out of its base in the Hindi cow-belt with inroads into regions - Goa, Assam, West Bengal, Kerala, Tamil Nadu - where it never existed before, in the key state of UP it is also on a downswing, that could have wider repercussions. In office, the BJP can hope to balance gains against losses. But to lay the structural foundations of a Hindu Rashtra, the Sangh must achieve the strategic goal of an absolute or near-absolute legislative majority. Another Emergency is not a serious option. In 1975 Congress actually had a parliamentary majority, but once bitten twice shy: any attempt to repeat the experience would meet with massive opposition on all sides, including from the BJP's coalition allies. The chances of pulling off such a coup are too low to square off against the certainty of fatal political discredit in the event of failure.

The best bet for the Sangh is to adopt a two-stage approach, aiming as a first step to become the sole fulcrum of successive coalition regimes, as for decades Christian Democracy was in Italy. Once 'indispensable' for normal bourgeois government, the BJP would possess a real launching pad (though still no guarantee) for lift-off towards its final goal. For there to be any chance of reaching the first stage, Congress must remain mired in its current trough. The second would require Congress to suffer a further dramatic decline, or even to break up altogether. BJP hopes remain inseparable from Congress fears. The Sangh must, simultaneously, weaken Congress as much as possible; secure alliances with regional parties, accepting where necessary very junior status outside the cow-belt as a spring-board for future breakthroughs; and pursue geographically differentiated policies ó a cautious, mild Hindutva where weakly implanted and dependent on partners of different ideological persuasion, an aggressive and forthright Hindutva where more strongly entrenched. At present, to restore lost ground in the North, the BJP is contemplating a campaign to build a huge temple in Ayodhya. Provoking communal violence is a double-edged weapon which can backfire, but

it is an option that the Sangh always retains.

Nevertheless, the BJP faces an electoral impasse of sorts. For although it is no longer just a Brahmin-Bania (priestly/trading castes) formation, it remains a party of the upper castes and classes. How can it attract other strata? Its leadership is well aware of the need to do so. Before his disgrace, Bangaru Laxman -himself of Dalit origin - publicly declared that the BJP is not even against Muslims and wants to protect their interests. In India some kind of centrism has always seemed the natural locus of power. From the fifties to the early eighties, it was always said that the problem facing the Sangh was how to combine the contradictory demands of creating a 'Great Hindu Rally', while at the same time moving to the centre to become a more 'national' mass party.(10) Confounding this apparent logic, the BJP grew in the eighties by shifting aggressively rightwards and pulling the centre of gravity of Indian politics along after it. Still, the tension between two potential identities - the party of a Hindu rassemblement and the country's dominant mass party - remains.

The Sonia Congress

Still hoping to recover its fortunes as the natural party of government, Congress remains the principal reserve of Indian capital, should the BJP seriously falter or misfire. It is a major player in the States of Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Karnataka and Gujarat, and has reasserted itself in Kerala and Assam. But it no longer has an assured geographical or social base of great weight or size. Today the party of Gandhi and Nehru has no real idea of who to appeal to or how, and appears incapable of forging any clear programmatic identity. It vaguely feels it should stand for a less confessional and more social alternative to the BJP, but if this implies distancing itself from even a 'soft' Hindutva and seriously questioning neo-liberalism, there are hardly any takers within the current Congress leadership, whose one claim to special distinction with the middle-class is to have initiated NEP. To revive its fortunes, Congress has instead pinned its hopes on the power of charisma. The assassinations of Indira and Rajiv Gandhi bestowed upon their clan a halo of martyrdom, not just among party members or supporters but also a wider public. Sonia Gandhi and her daughter Priyanka are the legatees of this dynastic cult. Adrift politically, Congress clings all the more compulsively to the family totem-tree as its last substantial asset. The more it does so, the less chance there is of it regaining any democratic vigour. Sonia Gandhi's lack of any leadership skills, let alone animating vision, only compound such bankruptcy. Political nullity, however, does not automatically mean electoral perdition. The pendular movements of Indian democracy holds out the promise of bringing the Congress, however transmogrified, back to power sooner or later. The results of the latest May 10 assembly elections in four states will certainly come as a morale-booster to the Congress. Its regional ally, the All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AI-ADMK) has swept Tamil Nadu displacing the BJP's ally, the DMK; the Congress-led United Democratic Front has displaced the Left Democratic Front in Kerala in the standard pattern of regular alternation; while in Assam the Congress has similarly displaced the BJP's regional ally, the Asom Gana Parishad. Only in West Bengal has the newly forged alliance of the Trinamul Congress (the main regional opponent of the CPM) with the Sonia Congress failed to dislodge the CPM-led Left Front government from a historic sixth consecutive term in power. In many ways the ideal political order for Indian capital would be alternation between two steadily less distinguishable bourgeois parties, each committed in its own fashion to the free market laced with supernatural mystifications - the American (and increasingly European) model, adapted to subcontinental conditions. But that is still some way off.

Regionalisation

For no country in the world comes close to matching the incredible climatic, topographic, ecological,

racial, cultural, social, ethnic, religious and linguistic diversities of India. Strong regionalism and federalism should be a natural expression of the Indian genius. In practice, two political measures of the fifties and late sixties respectively played a crucial role in assuring them of the linguistic division of States, and the de-synchronisation of Lok Sabha and State Assembly elections. Over time, increasing disarray at the Centre could thus be offset by the growth of a vibrant regional politics, with the emergence of new parties, the establishment of two or three-party competitive systems in most States, and a rising clamour of demands on the Centre of all ways in which the macro-system has been made more accountable to the population. Obvious testimony to the mounting strength of regionalism is the formation in the last two years of three new states carved out of parts of UP, Bihar and Madhya Pradesh.

Such increasing federalism is not incompatible with neo-liberalism - among whose strongest supporters, indeed, have often been regional industrial elites. But it is fundamentally at odds with the centralizing, authoritarian dynamic of Hindutva. Short of a new Constitution, even the restoration of single-party rule at the Centre cannot undo the ongoing federalization of Indian politics. But clearly it is coalition rule in New Delhi that provides the greatest opportunities and advantages for the regional parties. In the 1999 elections almost half of all seats in the Lok Sabha went to non-Congress, non-BJP regional parties. These are provincial formations which cannot match the ideological or organisational coherence of the Sangh. They may stand as obstacles to the growth of Hindutva, but they lack the ability to offer any national alternative. Regional allies of the BJP may warn it not to push the Ayodhya issue too hard, and rebuke it for 'excesses' against Christians, but they will not precipitate a break-up of the Vajpayee government if they can help it. The overall result is a certain room for the BJP to plough its ideological furrow, with due care, even as it bides its time.

Can the play of living political forces reverse the dual advance of neo-liberalism and Hindutva in India? To answer that question would require a consideration of the state of the Left, and of social insurgency, for which there is no space here. Subjective assessments of these will no doubt differ. But the objective structural complexities of Indian society and polity have had a way of repeatedly deflating the expectations of progressives and reactionaries alike. All that we can be sure of is that surprises lie in store as India moves into a new era.

END NOTES

(1) See my *Painful Transition: Bourgeois Democracy in India*, London 1990, pp. 18-26.

(2) The Centre's expenditure rose from Rs. 22,000 crores (crore = 10 million) in 1980/81 to Rs. 82,000 crores in 1989/90, and a small surplus on revenue account became a whopping deficit of 9.0% of GDP in 1986/87.

(3) Manmohan Singh, the Finance Minister who introduced the reform package of 1991, widely seen as its 'architect', was a one-time critic (former head of the South Commission) turned believer. A more important figure behind the scenes, with an earlier neo-liberal commitment and stronger association with Washington, was Montek Singh Ahluwalia.

(4) The term 'internal bourgeoisie' was coined by Nicos Poulantzas (see *Classes in Contemporary Capitalism*, London, 1975) to capture new features of imperialist implantation in the Third World, soon after the breakdown of the Bretton Woods system. It may be conceptually even more pertinent in today's conditions of neo-liberal globalization.

(5) R. Nagaraj, 'Indian Economy since 1980: Virtuous Growth or Polarisation?', *Economic and Political Weekly*, August 5 2000, pp.2831-9.

(6) 'Political Culture in Independent India', *Teaching Politics*, Vol VII, Nos 1-2, 1989.

(7) For a detailed critique of this mistaken approach, see my *Furies of Indian Communalism: Religion, Modernity and Secularization*, London 1997, Chapter 5, and 'Reply to Pizzo, in 'Symposium on "Functional Substitutes for Fascism" in the Era of Globalization': forthcoming issue of *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East*.

(8) See 'Unofficial White Paper', Indian Social Institute, New Delhi 1999, prepared by Christian Activist John Dayal from police files and other publicly verified sources, so-called because the BJP government refused to publish a detailed list of such incidents. Terrorisation and intimidation through beatings, bible-burning, church and property destruction is the main aim. Except in rare cases — Australian missionary Graham Staines and his two under-teens sons were murdered by Bajrang Dal leader Dara Singh in Orissa where Staines had set up a leper colony ó killings are avoided.

(9) 'India's Corruption Blues', March 22 2001. The Economist was particularly concerned that Brajesh Mishra and N.K. Singh, two key neo-liberal aides to Vajpayee, should survive the scandal. The rabidly nativist Shiv Shena was calling for their heads.

(10) For this, see Bruce Graham, *Hindu Nationalism and Indian Politics: The Origins and Development of the Bharatiya Jan Sangh*, Cambridge 1990.

P.S.

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