

blessing. If this is admitted we may be able to do more good and less damage. Even the Americans are not, I believe, consciously attempting to Americanize developing countries, but the belief (for example, in India) that this is the end result of Western aid is damaging to the relationship with people who wish to remain themselves in the process of acquiring the latest technology where and how they can.

But what, for an Indian, does it mean to be himself today? Does he know?

Modernization in India (as elsewhere) is proceeding by layers, both nationally and individually. Nationally the top layers are apt to be more enthusiastic "modernizers". However, they are complex individuals, usually Western in life style, open to technological innovation, with English as their main language and broad horizons on the world; but in their inner life, at home or with their guru, they remain wholly Indian. By comparison with their inner core, their modernization (in the sense of Westernization) is a surface layer. And this is surely as it should be in India. It is only the unregenerate Westerner who would wish it to be otherwise. If it were, the cleavage between the elite and the masses in India would be far deeper and more dangerous than it is. As it is, alienation, though not unknown here, is more a Western than an Indian phenomenon. It is we who more often need the psychiatrist.

The social-political counterpart of that proposition is that Westerners (including Russian communists) may tend to see in India a much more imminently revolutionary situation than in fact exists. When we see from outside a ship tossed in rough water, we do not know if it has a heavy keel to keep

it steady. Tradition in India is its invisible keel—not the tradition of sacred cows and sacred threads, but the tradition that accepts change within a framework of order (*dharma*), and that gives value and place to every aspect of life in its totality. When this tradition became externalized, it crystalized a caste system that the Indian modernizers are trying with some success to replace with a mobile hierarchy dependent on ability rather than birth. But the principle of hierarchy itself is attacked only by the Maoist Marxist fringe who want to modernize by first destroying everything.

With more education and more food for the masses there might be more intention and energy behind a revolutionary force of this kind. Reflecting on the density of human misery in a city like Calcutta, one cannot complacently set aside that possibility. The whole fabric of India could be rent from top to bottom by a Chinese style revolution before the turn of the century. War on any large scale in South Asia within this decade could leave the same heritage in its wake. But given peace and reasonable luck with its leadership, I see no reason why the essential India cannot survive and assimilate both the industrial and electronic technical revolutions without destroying itself or being destroyed. For thousands of years, she has survived previous "modernizations", assimilating them in her own way, and suffered nothing worse than temporary indigestion.

India, then, has the stability and resilience of bamboo, bending before the winds of change, while holding fast to her own soil. Yet we have only to look at the accelerating patterns of change around the world (and not least in India) to realize that no generalization

from historical experience can be a sure guide to what will happen here. It is only the antidote to what I would consider as a complete distortion—the view of those Westerners (most of whom have never lived in the East) that the Indian situation is hopeless, that aid is useless (the "bottomless pit" theory) and that not only Indian democracy but India as we have known it is likely to disintegrate before our eyes, i.e. in our lifetime. Big changes there will certainly be, perhaps including adjustments in Centre-State (federal-provincial) relations. But disintegration I do not expect. The tide is running the other way—Bangladesh notwithstanding.

There is far more than meets the Western eye holding this multi-lingual, multi-cultural mosaic called India together in a unity that has shown an almost unique ability to adapt and to survive. India is a balance of change and continuity, which is why she both needs help for a few more years and is worth helping.

If she makes it—and no parliamentary democracy of the developing world has a better chance—she will be not only the strongest power in this part of the world but the best example of a developing country that has modernized its social and economic structure without paying the political price of totalitarian countries. We tend to forget (as Pandit Nehru once pointed out to me in Ceylon) that the industrialized Western countries (including Japan) had carried through their economic transformation before the political pressures generated by universal education and suffrage made it necessary for a large proportion of the wealth of these countries to go towards the creation of the welfare state. India is almost

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