

Editorial

Violence devastates India Change achievable through protest, disobedience

"Nonviolence and cowardice go ill together. I can imagine a fully armed man to be at heart a coward. Possession of arms implies an element of fear, if not cowardice. But true nonviolence is an impossibility without the possession of unadulterated fearlessness." — Mohandas K. Gandhi

It is truly depressing to see the violence in India today, 36 years after the death of Gandhi — his words and leadership faded altogether too fast.

He was assassinated by a religious fanatic. Two Sikh guards shot Indira Gandhi, daughter of Jawaharlal Nehru, who was one of Gandhi's closest disciples and India's first prime minister.

India has lost another great leader. Indira Gandhi was loved and hated in her country, and although some of her actions were questionable, such as the attack on the Sikh Golden Temple at Amritsar, she was a unifying force in the world's largest democracy.

She was assassinated Wednesday by two of her own body guards. True to Gandhi's theory, that act of violence begat more violence. Since the attack about 1,100 people, mostly Sikhs, have been killed. The looting and rioting has stopped traffic across the country — Sikhs control much of the country's industry, commerce and transport. The attacks by Hindus on Sikhs could have devastating effects on India's economy.

Both the Sikhs who shot Gandhi and the Hindus who are attacking Sikhs are taking the downward path — the easiest path, as Gandhi would have said. The true brave would fight for justice through nonviolent means: protest, civil disobedience and noncooperation.

Gandhi's success in quelling violence through fasts and his success in ousting the English colonialists through protests and civil disobedience are testament of the validity of his words. Change can be achieved without force.

But there are always extremists, martyrs, and their acts do not achieve their goals. The attack on Indira Gandhi has only fueled prejudice and hatred of Sikhs in India. The group as a whole will long be paying the price for the murder of India's prime minister.

It would be ideal if India's new prime minister and the Sikh leaders could achieve peace through nonviolence. Rajiv Gandhi, Indira's son, is desperately trying to quell the violence with riot police, but as of Monday an end was not in sight.

"It is no nonviolence if we merely love those who love us. It is nonviolence only when we love those that hate us. I know how difficult it is to follow this grand law of love. But are not all great and good things difficult to do? ..."

— Gandhi



Four years to next fix for political junkies

We are entering that brief period in public life characterized by the absence of any political campaign. Once again our television commercials will focus on the essentials of human existence: beer, well-conditioned hair, and dental adhesives. Once again, the newspapers will be full of corruption, murder and ten ways to insulate your attic.



Ellen Goodman

For most Americans, this post-election hiatus offers a welcome respite from pros and cons, Democrats and Republicans, images and issues. But we here at the National Mental Health Center know the dark side to this story. According to our research, an estimated ten percent of the population has been tragically hooked on politics over the last decade. These people are about to be plunged into a difficult period of withdrawal.

The political junkies, we have learned in our well-funded studies, are not like the rest of Americans. They are citizens who have known all the Democratic can-

didates featured in the New Hampshire primary. They can list the names of six pollsters along with their margin of error, match at least three advertisers to candidates and four campaign managers with their hometowns. They have spent, lo, these many months strung out on daily doses of poll statistics, and increasing their tolerance for rhetoric and hyperbole.

If we are to reintegrate the political junkie into the normal pattern, the next few weeks are critical. So for those of you who have a husband, wife, boss, friend or significant other who shows the telltale signs, we here at the center are sharing our helpful hints for recovery.

First of all, we must state as a matter of principle that we abhor the inhuman tactic known as cold turkey. The most hardcore politicians, campaign operatives and journalists have spent the last six to nine months on planes, buses and cars. By now it is absolutely normal for them to wake up sweating and mumbling that they have missed "baggage call."

We recommend that during the first post-election week, family members hand these sufferers a mimeographed sheet

telling them exactly what city they are in and what the daily activities are. It may also be useful to brief some of them on the names of their children — especially if there have been any new ones — and these children's ages.

The candidates will have unique problems. They will have to relearn communication skills, since they have only exercised the ability to debate or to address a crowd. A sensitive family might set a microphone before the candidate's place mat until he or she feels comfortable with such a small audience. Do not take it personally if the former candidate comes to your dinner party and tries to raise funds. Be tolerant if he attacks your remarks on the need for antifreeze in the car by labeling them "ill-informed, and dangerous in the nuclear age."

As for the civilian addicts, or citizen addicts, we have experimented with some behavior-modification ideas that have been remarkably successful. Since most of these political junkies get their fix from the media, our treatment is centered around television. Allow the victims to watch post-campaign analyses, but re-

ward them if they refrain from switching channels to catch all the commentary.

Encourage them also to expand their interests. Researchers now believe that the best bridge to a politics-free existence is, curiously, through reading public-opinion polls. This familiar activity can be a bridge, to transfer their attention from political statistics to such equally fascinating questions as how many Yuppies in major Sunbelt cities prefer kiwi fruit to fresh figs.

There are, of course, aversion techniques. We recommend re-running tapes of the presidential debates as often as necessary. Not even the most strung-out political junkie can watch all three debates consecutively without breaking.

Finally, we here at the health center remind you of the urgency of this cause. There is very little time left to help these cases. If you listen carefully, you can hear some lost soul, around the corner and inside the television set, pushing the longest lasting, most enticing high of them all: the Campaign of 1988.

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Opposition economists say overregulation causes monopoly

Economics, like politics, makes strange bedfellows. It is indeed an odd curio when two completely diverse intellectual traditions can produce agreement on some important phenomenon.

I came across such a surprising event recently as I read two books written by authors from diverse academic backgrounds. One is a Marxist (or neo-Marxist) economist and the other is a Libertarian



Jim Rogers

economist. They agree that the state, rather than the free market system, lies at the root of the development of monopoly capitalism.

The traditional, popular idea about the relationship between big business and the state is that they are antagonistic toward one another.

That is, on the one hand, that big business loathes government intervention in the economy and, on the other hand, that government intervenes in the market against the interests of big business. These two economists challenge this traditional belief.

The similarity of the assertions are amazing. For example, at one point Marxist economist James O'Connor, in his intriguing work "The Fiscal Crisis of the State," writes that "the first basic thesis presented here is that the growth of the state sector and state spending is functioning increasingly as the basis for the growth of the monopoly sector and total production. Conversely, it is argued that the growth of state spending and state programs is the result of the growth of the monopoly industries. In other words, the growth of the state is both a cause and effect of the expansion of monopoly capital."

Compare the above statement with that made by Dominick T. Armentano in his book "Antitrust and Monopoly." Government and not the market, is the source of monopoly power. Government licensing, certificates of public convenience, franchises, patents, tariffs, and other legally restrictive devices can and do create monopoly, and monopoly power, for specific business organizations protected from open competition. Abusive monopoly is always to be associated with governmental interference of production or exchange, and such situations do injure consumers, exclude sellers, and result in an inefficient misallocation of resources. "There is now solid historical evidence

that a number of American industries welcomed government intervention in an attempt to restrict and restrain competition, and in order to preserve positions of wealth and power within the industrial order."

Although these individuals obviously disagree on many other points of political economy, this one similarity intimates that some ideological blinders are worn by conservatives and leftists which, if removed, would enrich both traditions substantially.

First, for the conservative, the entrenched big business is simply the result of open and voluntary competition in the freemarket. Consequently some right-wing "thinkers" such as Ayn Rand ridiculously term big business "America's persecuted minority."

However, if O'Connor's and Armentano's claims are correct — and I think they are — then state action, not competitive success, undergirds the supremacy of monopoly capital in the U.S. economy. Indeed, the growth of monopolization almost could serve as a proxy to measure the growth of state intervention in the economy.

On the other hand, for the neo-Marxist — understood as a radical who rejects the historical determinism of traditional Marxism — the implications of this type

of thought are almost as striking as for the conservative. Namely, the Marxist must examine the notion that only in a limited or "minimal" state, one incapable of being used to advance business interest at the expense of the larger population, is the basis for a truly just and humane society laid. For it is the large modern state which causes and is caused by monopoly by monopoly and the plethora of problems associated with its rise. This vision of the limited state stands in stark contrast to the massive and unwieldy state usually posited by leftists as the solution to the problems associated with large aggregations of capital.

Harvard philosopher Robert Nozick posits for us the basis for a realistic, neo-conservative political economy — one which recognizes the problems associated with the rise of monopoly capital and avoids the big business naivete which has been the bane of modern conservatism. In "Anarchy, State, and Utopia" he writes that "although to introduce socialism as the punishment for our sins would be to go too far, past injustice might be so great as to make necessary in the short run a more extensive state in order to rectify them." It is precisely at this point, then, where there is room for the development of a relevant conservative social theory.