LOOKING BACK AT THE 1940S: NATIONALISM AND INTERNATIONALISM, LOST OPPORTUNITIES AND FUTURE POSSIBILITIES

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INTRODUCTION

We should go back to the 1940s in India—not for a nostalgic and romantic trip to a past of heroic political struggles, international solidarity of various progressive movements, exciting experiments in arts and literature, among other things that were happening then—but for deriving inspiration from them for our present struggles. The forties should not be frozen into a legend in the archives. Let us look at that decade from the present perspective—as a living source of inspiration to confront the current challenges, as also a cautious warning against the pitfalls that marked that trajectory. The 1940s saw a world-wide inter-connectivity between streams of mass protest—ranging from the solidarity movement behind the Spanish people's struggle against the Fascist ruler Franco, and the war against the Nazi Germany-led axis powers on the one hand, to the mobilization of global public opinion in support of the independence struggles of the colonial people in Asia and Africa on the other. Today also, we are witnessing various mass upsurges ranging from demonstrations against dictatorships in the Arab world and predatory corporate interests in countries like India, to protests by the growing ranks of unemployed and underprivileged in the capitals of the Western world. The present era can, thus, be described as the rightful heir to the 1940s.

But let us also recall—there was another decade which too can claim the legacy of the 1940s. The 1960s—both in India and world wide—saw a similar upsurge of mass movements ranging from the Vietnamese national liberation war to the armed struggles in Latin America and South Africa, from the Naxalite uprising in India to the civil rights agitation and anti-war campaign in the US. The 1960s, thus, revived the spirit of the 1940s.

Let us, therefore, look at the 1940s as a precursor, which inaugurated a multi-faceted tradition of a confluence of revolutionary struggles, popular movements and their consolidation on a global scale in the field of politics,

and adventurous experiments in the field of culture seeking a similar international fraternization with writers and artists all over the world. This is the lasting contribution of the 1940s—a tradition that needs to be revived in today's world.

Yet, the vision that was evoked by the 1940s did not fructify. As quite rightly described, it was an 'almost revolution'—a halfway house of sorts. By the end of the decade it became fragmented—with the anti-colonial struggle ending with the independence of the sub-continent through a bloody partition, and the renewal of hostilities on the global scale as reflected in the Cold War between two super-powers. This new form of war also vitiated relations between the two new states in the sub-continent—with Pakistan being incorporated by the US in its military strategy of fighting Soviet influence in south Asia, and India trying to walk a tight rope in relations between the two super-powers. The political struggles for a just order, the international solidarity movements, and the creative experiments in art and culture that accompanied them and enlivened the 1940s in India dissipated soon. They could, thus, be described in the words of Maurice Marleau Ponty, the French philosopher, as 'a truth which missed its chance'.

INTERNATIONALISM AND NATIONALISM IN THE 1940S

This article seeks to examine the causes of this failure while exploring the interface between internationalism and nationalism in some of the important political and cultural spheres in India. India in the 1940s became a major site of such inter-connectivity due to two factors—one, an indigenous exciting political atmosphere of anti-colonial mass upheavals, and two, the exogenous factor of India's being drawn into the allied forces' World War II campaign against Japan in south-east Asia, which exposed its people to the vagaries of a world war. This paper tries to explore both the responses of the Indian intelligentsia to the world political developments as well as their impact on the general masses.

To begin with, the spirit of internationalism that marked the activities of the Indian intelligentsia can be traced back to the last years of the 1930s, on the eve of the outbreak of the 2nd World War. These were the years when the rise of Hitler in Nazi Germany, the Spanish civil war and fascist Italy's aggression on Abyssinia aroused the conscience of intellectuals all over the world. In September 1936, the World Peace Congress was held in Brussels under the auspices of Romain Rolland, to which Rabindranath Tagore sent a message. Earlier, in April that year, Tagore welcomed the efforts of young writers to form the Progressive Writers' Association (PWA). The first conference of the Association was held in

Lucknow on April 10, 1936, and was presided over by the veteran writer Munshi Premchand. In fact, the origins of the PWA had international roots. It was conceived in London in 1935 by Indian expatriates like Mulk Raj Anand and Sajjad Zaheer. As Mulk Raj was to write later of the mood of those days:

> The only thing that seems to have accrued from our diagnosis of the diseases of greed, hatred and fear which caused the Armageddon was that everywhere there were left some humanists who still believed in decency, friendship and the imagination. And, without any fanfare of trumpets, a one world culture became emergent, based on the belief in coexistence and codiscovery, a kind of vague universalism, which recognized the variety of ways of living but defined itself as the search for the unity of man in diversity.[1]

It was this 'vague universalism' that crystallized into a firm ideology of internationalism among the Indian intelligentsia by the end of the 1930s, which enabled them to create a vibrant cosmopolitan culture that drew inspiration from both their indigenous roots as well as from the contemporary global scenario of arts. Recalling Prem Chand's presidential address at the 1936 PWA conference in Lucknow, the veteran Communist leader E.M.S. Namboodiripad was to say later (in 1985 during the Golden Jubilee of PWA) that it integrated "the best in Indian and world culture, Indian patriotism with international humanism." He then added: "Mulk Raj Anand, Sajjad Zaheer and their comrades were not importing into India something that was alien to her culture, but that our own soil was fertile enough to accept and nurture the seeds thrown all over the world by such giants of world literature as Maxim Gorky, Romain Rolland, Henri Barbuse and so on…."[2]

In the sphere of performing arts also, the 1940s saw the flourishing of a vibrant cosmopolitan culture in India that could be traced back to the end of the 1930s. We, thus, find Uday Shankar sharing a platform with the famous Russian ballerina Anna Pavlova in a dance performance—the former as Krishna playing a flute and Pavlova in the role of Radha. A few years later, the same Uday Shankar was to build a cultural centre at Almora which attracted the best talents from all over India—musicians, dancers, actors—many from among whom were to join the IPTA in the 1940s. His experiments in ballet were creative innovations that combined Indian classical and folk forms with modern Western styles. The best exposition of his experiments was his film *Kalpana* that was made in 1948.

In the literary scene, we find a new generation of Indian poets and writers drawing inspiration from their English counterparts who laid down their lives in the fields of Spain fighting Franco in the dying years of the 1930s—like Ralph Fox, Christopher Caudwell (whose 'Studies in a Dying Culture' influenced the thoughts of radical Marxist intellectuals in India

in the next decade of the 1940s). The need for opposing Nazism and the axis powers brought them together on a common platform—in the shape of PWA and the IPTA (Indian People's Theatre Association) along with the other anti-fascist agitations mainly carried out by the then undivided Communist Party of India. But, peculiarly enough, the works of contemporary French writers like Albert Camus and Jean Paul Sartre, who were active in the anti-Nazi resistance movement in German-occupied France in the 1940s, seemed to be less known to Indian intellectuals in those days. They came into prominence in the Indian literary horizon in the post-World War phase in the 1950s. The news of the killing of the French Communist cultural leader Gabrielle Peri by the Nazis, however, reached India and moved the Indian Communist intellectuals to write about him.

The Second World War also exposed these Indian intellectuals to a different type of British army people—who were Communists. One of them was Clive Branson. He volunteered for the International Brigade to fight Franco in Spain and then joined the British army in 1941 to fight the Nazis. Clive Branson, in the course of his military assignment, arrived in India in 1942. He died on the Burma front during the war in 1944. In the meantime, he had written letters to his wife from India, which were later published by the Communist Party of Great Britain (CPGB) as a book entitled *A British Soldier in India*. In one of his letters, he described his experience in these words: "Never will any of us who have come to India for this war forget the unbelievable, indescribable poverty in which we have found people living wherever we went and in millions… this state of affairs is maintained in the name of the British… How can I tell the people of Nine Elms (a poor district of London at that time) that their condemned houses are palaces, compared with Indian slums? They just wouldn't believe me—would think me a liar…" People like Clive Branson and ex-army personnel who returned to their homes in Britain contributed to some extent in influencing public opinion and political rulers in their homeland in favour of granting independence to India.

The Second World War also brought to the shores of India a new wave—news of the Chinese revolution led by the Communists. The messenger was the famous American journalist Edgar Snow. His book *Red Star Over China*, written in 1936 after his visit to China and meeting with Mao, had reached India by the 1940s. In 1942, the *Saturday Evening Post* sent him abroad as its correspondent. On his way back, he halted in Calcutta. He was invited by Indian Communists to address gatherings of intellectuals and students in the city, where he narrated his experiences of the on-going war in China where the Communists were successfully combining their own nationalist strategy of guerilla warfare against the

Chiangkaishek-led autocratic Kuomingtang regime on the one hand, with the internationalist strategy of armed resistance against the Japanese aggressors on the other.

Interestingly enough, the contemporary Indian political scene too was marked by several initiatives to express solidarity with nationalist movements in other parts of Asia. As early as 1938, Jawaharlal Nehru and Subhash Bose, on behalf of the Congress, sent a medical mission consisting of Indian doctors to China to render help to those fighting the Japanese aggression there. As is well known, the 'one who did not come back' (the words from the title of Khwaja Ahmad Abbas' famous book) from among these doctors was Dwarkanath Kotnis, who stayed back to treat the Chinese soldiers, joined the Chinese Communist party, married a local comrade, and died there at an early age in 1942 (his wife, Guo Qinglan, who maintained her ties with India, died in China in July 2012).

Still later, just before the Independence, on January 21, 1947, students under the auspices of the Communists came out in the streets of Calcutta to express solidarity with the embattled Vietnamese people who were fighting the French colonialists. The police, still under the control of the British colonial administration in Calcutta, opened fire upon the demonstrators, killing two students.

Parallel to this current of internationalism, there was a flood of strong nationalist mass movements that cascaded over the domestic scene at the same time—the peasants' upsurges in Bengal and Telengana, the working class strikes in industrial areas and the rebellion of the cadets of the Royal Indian Navy (RIN) in Bombay. The 1940s, thus, saw a spirit of identification with the worldwide anti-Nazi campaign that blended with the concurrent anti-colonial and anti-feudal mass upsurges within India. The then Communist Party of India played an important role in blending these two currents. The CPI's general secretary P.C. Joshi set up a central cultural squad which brought together writers and performing artistes from different parts of India from among the party's followers and sympathizers. Along with the CPI's political functionaries, these cultural activists spread out among the common people—helping victims of the 1943 famine in Bengal, participating in the Tebhaga and Telengana peasants' movements, bringing out peace processions to halt communal riots in 1946. This Leftist intervention in national politics and civil society was an important complement to its internationalism.

ROOTS OF DISSENSION AND MISSED OPPORTUNITIES

But this political and cultural platform of international solidarity and radical nationalism was a rostrum with a fragile base. It was threatened from

within. The platform collapsed under pressures from a triangular conflict. The first conflict stemmed from the 1942 Communist strategy of supporting the war efforts of the British government to defeat the fascists, as a gesture of solidarity with the global anti-fascist movement. This was in conflict with two streams of the contemporaneous Indian nationalist resistance to British colonial rule. The resistance was acquiring two different forms—the Gandhi-led non-violent 'Quit-India Movement' of 1942 and the Subhash Bose-led INA (Indian National Army) armed intervention during the Second World War years. There were tensions within the Indian middle-classes and the political intelligentsia between the anti-colonial nationalist sentiments on the one hand, and the anti-fascist internationalist solidarity on the other. At one level they were fighting their British rulers within India, while at the global level they were required to support these same British rulers in an international alliance against the more threatening Nazi-led axis powers. More distressing was their dilemma in reconciling their repugnance with Nazi atrocities on the one hand and their admiration for Netaji Subhash Bose on the other. Bose, in his search for an alternative path of national liberation through armed struggle, sought support from Hitler, and later Japan—another partner of the axis.

The 1940s brought to the fore this tension between the nationalist aspirations of the colonized people and their internationalist compulsion for a temporary compromise with the same colonizers in a joint struggle to resist the onslaught of the more dangerous fascist forces which would destroy their basic democratic rights that they still enjoyed under the bourgeois democratic regime of a colonial power. The Indian Communists chose to prioritize the internationalist need to fight fascism over the nationalist demand for an all out opposition against the British imperialists. The conflict came out in the open during the 1942 Quit India movement, when the Communists opposed it on the ground that it would hamper the war efforts against the Nazi Germany-led axis. A few years later, it was aggravated by the Communist response to Subhash Bose's policy of aligning with Nazi Germany and Japan to liberate India. The Indian Communists denounced him as a quisling—recalling the name of Vidkun Quisling, the Norwegian army officer who collaborated with the Nazi occupying forces in ruling his country from 1940 to 1945.

The second source of conflict was rooted in the terrain of Hindu-Muslim relations. Despite heroic efforts by the Communist and the Left forces to unite the two communities in the final battle against the British colonial power to win independence, they lost out to the more pervasive and powerful political leaders—both Hindu and Muslim—who wielded control over their respective religious constituencies. The outbreak of communal riots in Bengal in 1946, soon after the mass demonstrations of

Hindu-Muslim unity in the Tebhaga movement, and industrial strikes in Bengal in the mid-1940s revealed that the vast majority of the peasant and working classes could be swayed by the promises made by their community leaders—rather than by their class leaders (the Communists) when it came to the issue of building a nation-state. In a divisive move, the Congress and the Muslim League hijacked the anti-imperialist popular agitations by convincing their respective followers (primarily Hindus in the Congress fold, and the Muslims in the Muslim League) that the partition of the sub-continent was the best solution for the perpetual Hindu-Muslim tensions. Outwitted by the explosion of communalism that fractured its class base, the CPI displayed utter confusion in its policy on partition. It went through several twists and turns. From 1942 till 1945, it continued to lend full support to the concept of Pakistan on the false premise that Muslims constituted a separate nationality, and therefore deserved a separate nation state.

It, however, realized its mistake later and tried to correct its stand on the identification of 'nationalities.' The third source of conflict was embedded within the Indian Communist organization and its practices—the tensions at different times between the urban and the rural, the intelligentsia and the activists, the political leadership and the cultural artistes. P.C. Joshi, as the general secretary of the party during these tumultuous years of the 1940s, played a key role at various levels. At the cultural level, he was instrumental in bringing together on a common liberal humanist platform some of the best talents in literature and performing arts (through the PWA and IPTA)—thus enhancing the Left influence in civil society. But at the political level, his role as a leader is controversial. He did, indeed, inspire thousands of his party activists from all over India to come to the aid of the victims of the 1943 famine in Bengal, and again to resist the 1946 communal riots and organize relief camps for the victims in Punjab and Bengal. The Tebhaga movement and the Telengana armed struggle during his tenure as the general secretary also constituted success stories. But his party's stand under his leadership on the 1942 Quit India Movement, Subhash Bose, and the later issue of Pakistan, was flawed to a large extent by poor understanding of the Indian reality. It was during his tenure that inner-party contradictions broke out over the decision to withdraw the armed struggle in Telengana and the Tebhaga agitation in Bengal in 1947. But his successor, B.T. Ranadive, who became the general secretary of the party in 1948, did not show any better understanding of the public mood in the post-Independence situation. His call for urban armed insurrection failed to find any echo either in the industrial working class or the middle classes. Further, the sectarian policies followed by the party commissars under his leadership

in the cultural field alienated many artistes and writers from the IPTA and PWA. By the end of the forties, the Joshi-era ambience of pluralistic experimentations had disappeared from the Leftist cultural field.

Thus, the vision of an 'almost revolution' that captured the imagination of the Indian political and cultural activists in the mid-forties in the backdrop of the popular upsurges in different parts of India, suffered from fractured visual disability from the beginning. It was pulled apart by different pressures: nationalist and internationalist, violent and non-violent, urban and rural, middle-class intellectual interests and the priorities of the labour classes. The vision evaporated in the midst of the fires of the communal conflagration and the Partition at the end of the forties.

MISSED OPPORTUNITIES

But, let us recall, there were also alternative opportunities and possibilities in the 1940s. It is necessary to remember that while the Congress and Muslim League leaders were negotiating a deal with the British rulers to gain independence in exchange of partitioning the Indian sub-continent, the CPI under its general secretary P.C. Joshi was campaigning to seek a democratic verdict from the people as to the future shape of the 'Union of India'. On the eve of the elections to the central and provincial legislative assemblies in November-December 1945, the CPI gave up its earlier position of supporting a separate state for Muslims, and issued instead an election manifesto announcing an `Indian Freedom Plan.' It envisaged the transfer of power to a 'real All-India Constituent Assembly', elected by seventeen 'sovereign National Constituent Assemblies based on the natural homelands of various Indian peoples, vis. Baluchistan, Pathanland, Sind, Western Punjab, Central Punjab, Hindustan, Rajasthan, Gujerat, Maharashtra, Karnatak, Andhra, Kerala, Tamilnad, Orissa, Bengal, Assam and Bihar…' The CPI wanted these seventeen National Constituent Assemblies to be elected by universal adult franchise in their respective states. It further stated: "Full and real sovereignty shall reside in the National Constituent Assemblies which will enjoy the unfettered right to negotiate, formulate and finally decide their mutual relations within an Independent India, on the basis of complete equality."[3] Elaborating on the manifesto's message, P.C. Joshi put forward the concept of a future independent India as a 'family of free nations'.[4] Joshi's categorization was primarily based on the linguistic and cultural identities of the various communities (by the term 'Hindustan', he probably meant 'Hindistan' or the central Indian area of the Hindi-speaking population).

But the CPI proposal was never included by the Congress and the Muslim League on their agenda of negotiations in the deal with the British

administration for the future shape of the Indian sub-continent. Thus, the possibility of an experiment in shaping a future Indian union of states on the lines of a multi-national federal structure and on the basis of popular choice (through adult franchise) was scotched by both the colonial administration and the two mainstream political parties with whom only the administrators chose to negotiate.

Yet, outside the framework of these mainstream negotiations, which by 1947 were veering round to the only choice—the Partition of India—alternative options were being offered by regional political forces in Bengal and the then North-West-Frontier Province (NWFP). Instead of joining either India or Pakistan, they called for the formation of their territories into independent states. The spring of 1947 was crucial for the future of Bengal in particular. Here, the Muslim League leader H.S. Suhrawardy and the Congress leader Sarat Bose jointly came forward with a plan for an independent Bengal—refusing to join either Pakistan or the Indian Union. While Suhrawardy in his meeting with the then British governor-general Louis Mountbatten on April 26 that year claimed that his central party leader M.A. Jinnah was willing to accept an independent, united Bengal, Sarat Bose along with the Muslim League secretary Abul Hashim, formulated a proposal for a free state of Bengal and submitted it to the press on May 22. It envisaged Bengal as a free state which would decide for itself its relations with the rest of India. Under the plan, a new coalition ministry would be formed in Bengal with an equal number of Hindus and Muslims, and a constituent assembly would be set up consisting of representatives from both the communities, as well as others. Significantly, a day after the press statement, Sarat Bose said that the signatories to the statement which included Congress and Muslim League leaders, wanted Bengal to be a completely free, socialist republic, and then added that socialism must be preached to combat communalism. But the joint efforts by the Bengali Congress and Muslim League leaders to maintain a united Bengal faced strong opposition from the Hindu Mahasabha (led by Shyamaprasad Mukherjee in Bengal) and a stone wall from the central Congress leadership, mainly Sardar Patel. He persuaded both Nehru and Mountbatten to reject the proposal of an independent Bengal.[5]

Meanwhile, the campaign for partition was gathering speed among both the Congress and Muslim League central leadership. Mountbatten fixed June 20, 1947 as the date by which the Bengal and Punjab legislative assemblies had to vote on the partition issue. In the Bengal assembly, at a meeting of members from the non-Muslim majority areas, most of them voted for partition. Curiously enough, among the supporters of partition were the two Communist members—Jyoti Basu and Ratanlal Brahmin.

Their leader P.C. Joshi's earlier plea for a multi-national harmonious structure of a future free India had by then been drowned by the rising crescendo in favour of partition by the vociferous mainstream politicians who were polarized on religious lines. The Communists willy-nilly joined the mainstream politics in supporting the division of India.[6]

At around the same time, in the north-west, voices for autonomy were being raised by the Pathans. The common bond of language and cultural heritage led to the growth of a Pakhtoon sub-nationalism among the Pushto-speaking people residing in the NWFP. Mountbatten proposed a referendum to ascertain whether they wanted to join Pakistan or India. While the central Congress leadership accepted it, the Frontier Congress led by the charismatic Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan (popularly revered as Frontier Gandhi) rejected it, and proposed instead that the Pathans should be given the right to choose—not between India or Pakistan, but a third alternative: a free state of Pakhtoonistan. Both the British administration and the two mainstream parties—the Muslim League and his own party, the Congress—dismissed the plea. The referendum was held in NWFP between July 6 and 17, 1947—with Frontier Gandhi's followers boycotting it. About fifty percent of the total electorate were officially recorded to have cast their votes—the overwhelming majority in favour of joining Pakistan. There were allegations of rigging and coercion by the Muslim League activists to turn the plebiscite results in favour of joining Pakistan. The NWFP was finally acceded to Pakistan. With half of the Pathan population being denied their right to choose independence, and forced to join Pakistan, the Frontier Gandhi ruefully described the plight of his people as 'thrown to the wolves'.[7]

In 1947, there could have been a plebiscite on these other options—proposed as alternatives to the plan of partition. The verdicts from such popular participation could have led to a more amicable settlement of the disputes, and to the formulation of the concept of a nation-state based on the autonomy of its various regional units. As the Indian political leaders failed to take such initiatives and Mountbatten was in a hurry to reach a settlement by August 15, 1947—the date fixed for the transfer of power—the Indian people were literally stampeded into accepting a bloody package deal that gave them Independence, while dismembering them through the partition. Hundreds and thousands were massacred, displaced from their homes, and went through traumatic experiences, in Punjab and Bengal—the two provinces which were partitioned. The warning sounded by Sarat Bose on the eve of the Partition, in his letter to an obstinate Sardar Patel on May 27, 1947, came to be true: "Future generations will, I am afraid, condemn us for conceding division of India and supporting partition of Bengal and the Punjab." In another statement,

issued soon after, he was more forthright in his criticism of leaders of his own Congress party: "What has surprised me most is that those who were until recently most vehement in demanding that India should remain one and undivided should have so readily supported division of India and even partition of provinces."[8]

On the other side of the border in Punjab, at around the same time, a Muslim poet, Faiz Ahmed Faiz, was expressing his anguish—summing up the reactions of his people to the announcement of an independent Pakistan, and the betrayal by their leaders:

" It's not the dawn we were looking for…
It's all changed, our leaders' struggling zeal;
Celebration is the order of the day, mourning
forbidden.
Yet anguish of the heart, unfulfilled desire,
Nothing is cured by this false dawn…" [9]

It is evident that the various alternative plans of building a multi-national independent India, which emerged from the stirring events of the 1940s (described as an 'almost revolution') and the numerous debates that followed, did not have a chance for experimentation in the face of the joint efforts of the powerful combination of British administrators, and Congress and Muslim League politicians to divide the country along religious lines. The June 3 Plan (of Partition) which was agreed upon by all the three members of the axis, imposed on Indian people the binary of the Islamic Pakistan and the secular, but unitary India, assuring them that this formula was the final solution of the communal problem. But the partition of a population along religious lines and the creation of two separate nation states have neither ended the tensions between the two communities in the sub-continent, nor led to progressive reforms within the communities. In India, Hindu-Muslim communal riots still continue. Among the Hindus, orthodox practices like child marriage, dowry, discrimination against dalits, still survive.

Similarly, the Muslim community is plagued by Shia-Sunni conflicts and obscurantist Shariat laws that violate the democratic rights of citizens. In Pakistan, these traditional laws continue to rule over modern juridical norms. As for the Indian state, it pretends to be secular, while allowing the majority Hindu militant outfits to terrorize the religious minorities. While Pakistan had gone through bouts of military dictatorships and weak civilian governments (which had led to violation of human rights within the state, and the state's unscrupulous patronage of Islamist religious fundamentalist groups), the Indian state despite an uninterrupted tradition

of parliamentary democracy, had failed to curb the right-wing Hindu fundamentalist groups, and prevent the majority Hindu community's assault on the minority Muslim and Christian communities (the worst manifestations being the riots following the demolition of the Babri Masjid in 1992, the massacre of Muslims after the Godhra train incident in Gujarat in 2002, and the killings of Christian villagers in Orissa).

It is again the 1940s that we have to go back to trace the roots of the present crisis. To a large extent, it was the pressure from the right-wing religious forces within their respective communities, that led the Hindu and Muslim political leaders in 1947 to come to the crucial decision of partition. It is these same leaders and members of the political parties of the 1940s who graduated to the position of ministers in the new governments that were formed in the two independent states. Their legacy of religious divisive politics, corruption in public life and murderous outrages in society, continues to rule India and Pakistan today.

But while looking back at the forties as an era of lost opportunities that ended with premonitions of a dark future , we can also draw inspiration from the mixed experiences of that decade as a source of future possibilities—deriving lessons from the successes and mistakes of that past. After all, the current struggles by the dispossessed in India against the neo-liberal economic order that is being imposed on them (e.g. anti-POSCO agitation, Narmada Banchao Andolon), as well as the mass upsurges in different parts of the world (e.g. the struggle of the Palestinians for an independent state, the Arab Spring against dictatorships, the Occupy Wall Street movement in the West against the capitalist order) are echoes from the 1940s—more resounding than before. They hark back to the words with which Faiz Ahmed Faiz ended his poem :

"Keep moving, keep moving !
We have not arrived !"

NOTES

1. ADAM International Review. Nos. 355-360. 1971. University of Rochester, New York.
2. THE MARXIST. 1986. Vol. 5, No. 2, April-June.
3. CPI Manifesto. 1945. pp.105-06.
4. P.C. Joshi. 1945. *For the Final Bid for Power*. Bpmbay: People's Publishing House.
5. For an exhaustive description and analysis of the 1947 campaign for an independent Bengal, see Leonard A. Gordon. 1990. *Brothers Against The Raj: A Biography of Sarat & Subhash Chandra Bose*, New Delhi: Viking Penguin Books. Suhrawardy's role had been rather controversial during this period. As the chief minister of Bengal, he presided over the notorious 'Direct Action Day' (called

by the Muslim League on August 16, 1946 in support of Pakistan) which led to widespread communal riots in Calcutta and other parts of Bengal. Yet, a year later, he changed sides and joined Sarat Bose in demanding an independent Bengal. Later, after Partition, he moved to East Pakistan, became a leader of the Awami League there, and groomed Mujibur Rehman as his successor, who later led the independence movement that created Bangladesh.

6. Op.cit. p. 586.
7. Amit Kumar Gupta in his seminal work 'North West Frontier Province Legislature and Freedom Struggle, 1932-47' has dealt exhaustively with the tensions between the long-term interests of the Congress central leadership and the urge for autonomy among its followers in the Congress in NWFP.
8. Quoted in Leonard A. Gordon, op cit. p. 581 and 585.
9. *The Penguin Book of Modern Urdu Poetry*. 1986. Mahmood Jamal (trans.) Middlesex, England: Penguin Books, p. 31.