

True, there is a great deal that is sensational about the Kairon episode, and it is still too fresh an event to permit one to examine it with perfect objectivity. Yet two questions have to be answered in any case:

- (a) what consequences should follow so far as Kairon is concerned? and,
- (b) will the measures likely to be taken at the political level be sound and effective enough to serve the desired end?

Mr, Justice Das has said that it is for the authorities to consider and decide as to "what consequences (must) follow from such connivance" on Kairon's part. Shri G L Nanda has declared that "whatever has to follow will follow". That a Minister found guilty of such gross misdemeanour should be made to quit office is obvious enough. But should that be enough? Corruption cannot be controlled, much less eradicated, by adopting soft attitudes towards the guilty, however exalted their status. In fact, the rule should be: higher the status, severer the punishment. But reports have appeared that while the officials, who served as factotums at Kairon's beck and call, can and will be prosecuted under law, Kairon himself cannot be.

Amend the Law

There is no reason why law must remain an ass, if it has been so in the past. Why should it not be amended now? Enough dust cannot have gathered on the Santhanam Report so soon. If too much is to be made of legal formalities, we might as well stop talking of rooting out corruption. Shri Nanda has said that at least a part of his undertaking to root out corruption has been fulfilled. No, the task has just begun. The Das Enquiry was the first of its kind held in this country, and the opportunity should be used not only to remove the principal guilty from high office, but also to set healthy precedents for future incumbents to take note of.

But even if strict legal action is taken against Kairon, which is very unlikely, the political decision now in the offing seems hardly likely to be on the right lines. The Congress High Command's main purpose seems to be to win over legislators from the Kairon group and induce them to support someone else. Whoever the individual that comes to power this way, at least one thing is clear: he will have to adopt the Kairon technique to keep himself in the *gaddi*. For, the legislators are the same who kept back-

ing Kairon, knowing full well what was going on. They even passed a resolution in his favour after he had resigned under a cloud. If they have now to be won over by somebody else, he has, in plain language, to promise them suitable rewards.

From this point of view, it would appear that Kairon's exit would mean only a change of individuals, not a change in the pattern of Punjab politics. Thus Kairons may come and go,

Letter to Editor

Congress Party

I HAVE read with interest Ramashray Roy's comment (*The Economic Weekly*, May 2, 1964) on my paper on "The Developing Pattern of the Congress Party". While Roy has provided some useful insights in his comment, some of his ideas seem to me to be inconsistent with political realities and appear to emphasize points not much related to my main arguments.

No student of the politics of the developing countries would assume that democracy can be realised overnight in these countries. The establishment of effective democracy in these countries involves a basic change in the structure of their societies. However, this does not preclude one from making an assessment of the forces which hinder or promote the growth of democracy. Roy seems to think that even to make a beginning in this respect would be undesirable though the Congress Party has been in power since 1947 and that the pattern of Indian politics is now somewhat discernible.

Roy rightly points out that there is a constant process of interaction between the social environment and the Congress Party and that the society is reflected in the political structure in almost all aspects of politics. But Roy misses the central point of my argument which was to point out that the Congress Party, though it reflects society, does not reflect the real interests and issues of society. This takes us to the heart of the problem of Indian politics, viz, that of leadership in politics and the structure of political communication between the leaders and society. It is strange that scholars in the field of party politics in India should becloud realities, while the parties themselves admit the weakness from which they suffer. There was a frank admission of the problem of the growing cleavage between the Congress Party and the people by a number of partymen in the recent

but Kaironism must go on. This is dangerous and though the people at the moment are so exercised over the Das report, they will soon forget all about it. It is not the British public alone that looks ridiculous in one of its occasional fits of moral indignation. 'Ridiculous' is the operative word, in the sense that indignation, in India no less than in Britain, soon cools off to let the public revert to its commoner forms of behaviour,

AICC session held at Bombay.

With regard to the emergence of local and regional leaders, the question which I posed was not whether they are good or bad; the question I had in my mind was whether they help the process of modernisation and democratisation. It is true that they have a close relationship with society which gives them strength and endows them with political agility. Though they are contributing to democracy in India in so far as democracy must ultimately reflect the social constitution, the way in which they are functioning, as Roy himself admits, "seems to be at the moment to be disruptive of national unity, modernisation and democratisation". A close study of how institutions such as the universities, administration and local self-governing bodies are coming under the patronage of local political leaders would reveal the extent to which local influences and regionalism are undermining the standards of these institutions. It is strange that Roy does not show an understanding of the obvious dangers of regionalism. I did not imply that there is a natural dichotomy between the national party leaders and the local and regional party leaders. In their functioning at least they seem to be in conflict at the moment, though their mutual dependence for power is drawing them closer and the interaction between them may reduce the dangers of regionalism and enable the national leaders to gain a sense of what is possible.

As for my use of such terms as 'politicisation' and 'debureaucratisation,' they have accepted meanings and Roy should realise that an article is hardly the place where one can clarify the meaning of terms.

C N BHALERAO

Madras,
June 20.