

SHIV SENA

The Fascist Menace

Behind the Pseudo-Maharashtrian Mask

by
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PREFACE

A few months ago, I wrote a pamphlet in Marathi, entitled 'Bal Thackeray and His Bread-Givers'.

It was very well-received and soon it went into a second edition.

It was read among others by many a young Shiv Sena activist and set them thinking.

Bal Thackeray first tried to ignore it; but then denounced it in his own style. There were threats of murder too! So the little pamphlet is really serving some good purpose.

After its appearance in Marathi, there was a persistent demand that there should be a pamphlet in English and also in other languages.

Mere translation of the original Marathi pamphlet was not enough. Hence this one in English.

Some portions which had topical interest only for the Marathi readers are omitted or abridged; while some new sections are added.

I am extremely grateful to Com. S. G. Sardesai for his valuable suggestions. I am also indebted to Comrades G. D. Sane, Krishnan N. Aiyar and Umakant Mokashi for their help and co-operation, without which this pamphlet could not have come out so soon.

I would welcome suggestions and criticism from readers including the Shiv Sena apologists.

Bombay, 3-2-'68

Prabhakar Waidya

I. THE FASCIST MENACE

Launched during the general election campaign of 1966-67 as "the champion of the just rights of the Marathi people against the South Indian invasion of the city of Bombay", the Shiv Sena has now emerged as an undisguised, unashamed, terroristic, fascist organisation opposed to all democratic forces in the city with its spearhead directed against the Red Flag, the working-class and democratic movement and the Communist Party.

Calling the Shiv Sena a fascist movement and organisation is not indulging in rhetoric language. The organisation has developed all the characteristics of a fascist movement, given the peculiar economic, social and linguistic features of our country.

Under the garb of protecting the interests of the Marathi people, particularly in respect of employment and housing, the Shiv Sena whips up mass chauvinistic hysteria among Maharashtrians, mainly the middle class employees, youth and workers. This is done with the unconcealed object of diverting their legitimate anger against the employers and the Congress Government and directing it against their compatriots and class brothers from the South.

Inciting one linguistic, religious or racial community against another with the aim of covering up the crimes of the monopolists and their government and dividing the forces of the working-class, democracy and socialism by raising the bogey of communism, is the hallmark of fascist movements all over the world.

The Shiv Sena openly pits worker against worker, whether manual, skilled or intellectual, instead of the united working-class against its exploiters and the government which supports them.

IN THE IMAGE OF HITLER

Bal Thackeray, the self-styled *Pramukh* and *Senapati* of the Shiv Sena, declared in a recent speech, "Yes, I am a dictator. Why should we have so many rulers? It is a Hitler that is needed in India today." (*Nawa Kal*, 19-8-67) In yet another speech he said, "Why should India want a democracy? We must have a Hitler here." (19-8-67)

Thackeray does not stop here. In another speech, he declared, "Whoever gives bread and employment to the Maharashtrians, is ours, be he a Tata, a Birla, or any other." *Hatred for co-workers and servility towards the monopoly capitalists* run like a red thread through all the writings in *Marmik*, the official weekly of the Shiv Sena edited by Thackeray. Already, it has published life sketches glorifying industrial magnates like Bajaj, Kirloskar and others.

From its very inception, the Shiv Sena took resort to the typical, deceitful and confusing demagogy of a fascist movement. It opposed Dange, P. K. Atre, George Fernandes, Gokhale and Krishna Menon in the general elections, supporting such notorious reactionaries as S. K. Patil and Shantilal Shah and the industrial magnate Harish Mahindra (what wonderful friends of Maharashtra and the Maharashtrians!) That, of course, was to be expected.

But the chicanery lay in this that day in and day out, Thackeray lumped together Krishna Menon, South Indians and Communists in his demagogic agitation. In fact, he always refers to South Indians contemptuously as "loongiwallas". Very reminiscent of the ill-fated Hitler for whom Jews and Communists were identical because Marx was a Jew.

Throughout the career of the Shiv Sena, its mass rallies have been followed by the Shiv Sainiks attacking South Indians and Udipi (Kanarese) restaurants and shops, and more recently, offices of the Gimi Kamgar Union and the Communist Party.

Thackeray has no compunction in combining together mass appeals in the name of Shivaji and the heroic traditions of Maratha history with the filthiest slander of South Indians and Communists calculated to incite the most vulgar passions

of his followers. Here is a specimen from one of his election speeches: "All the lungiwallas are criminals, gamblers, illicit liquor distillers, pimps, goondas, beggars and communists."

At the same time, in one meeting he had the shamelessness to say, "I want the illicit liquor distiller to be a Maharashtrian, the goonda to be a Maharashtrian, the mawali to be a Maharashtrian." (31-10-66)

No wonder that, while large sections of Marathi youth, harassed by unemployment and a bleak future and lacking the traditions of the freedom movement, are temporarily taken in by Shiv Sena promises of jobs and housing, Thackeray has also gathered Bombay's notorious underworld around him. And such elements being "pure" goondas, they also loot Maharashtrian shops and molest all women without discrimination when they are on the rampage.

TATA-BIRLAS—THE BREAD-GIVERS

From where does the Shiv Sena get the vast financial resources for its provocative campaigns and hooliganism? No "material" or secret proofs are needed.

Thackeray openly calls the Tata-Birlas his "anna-data" (bread-givers). He is cheek by jowl with Ramakrishna Bajaj. He has an open alliance with the Swatantra Party and its local leader, Madhu Mehta. Recently, his followers "indiscreetly" disturbed a meeting addressed by S. K. Patil. Immediately, the latter issued a press statement *warning the Shiv Sena "to use the funds given to it by 'somebody' for the proper work."* There was no further disturbance in his meetings while very soon the Shiv Sainiks raided the Gimi Kamgar Union at dead of night and destroyed all the furniture, type-writers etc. looted the cash box in the office. The meaning is clear.

The *Maharashtra Times* (Jain Group) and the *Loka-Satta* (Goenka Group) have discovered new virtues in the Shiv Sena. The *Current* weekly serialised the whole pamphlet *Shiv Sena Speaks* in six issues, stating that while it did not subscribe to all the views of the Shiv Sena, they deserved consideration. Needless to say that the presentation of the Shiv Sena "case" in English has been done with a veneer of respectability which

has nothing in common with the yellow journalism of the *Marmik*.

Such is the open and clear big business support behind the Shiv Sena. It should be recalled that all the big industrialists and bankers of Bombay (including the Tatas and Sir Purshottamdas Thakurdas) had opposed the inclusion of Bombay city in Maharashtra (when Bombay was a bi-lingual state) in a memorandum submitted by them to the States Reorganisation Commission. The main point in the memorandum was that the city was cosmopolitan and should not be included in a uni-lingual state if the interests of the non-Maharashtrian language groups were to be protected!

And now these very millowners and tycoons have performed a right about turn and become the champion supporters of "the interests of the Marathi speaking people of the city against the invading loongiwallas."

Any stick is good enough for the moneybags to attack democratic and working-class movements with. Anything that is anti-communist is virtuous, moral, just and what not.

They care two hoots for the Maharashtrians or the non-Maharashtrians. Anything that provokes one against the other and disrupts the multi-lingual unity of the common people of the city is to be backed and financed, such is the ethics of the profiteers and black-money barons.

And the *Current* weekly, of course, does not mean only Indian big business. It means the Americans, as is known to everybody. Recently, Thackeray fell out with one of his supporters. Promptly, an American lady correspondent of the *Life Magazine* met him and appealed to him to make up with his "Pramukh" and not disrupt the Shiv Sena.

Behind the Shiv Sena are the money masters of Bombay, and behind them again, hand in gloves with them, looms the C.I.A.!

Such is the mind, the body and the face of this "innocuous, non-political, volunteer organisation" (as Bal Thackeray claims it to be)! The Hindi proverb speaks of "the name of Rama on the lips and a dagger hidden in the armpit." Here we have Shivaji on the lips and the poisoned dagger of fascism

in the fist. And now it is so brazen that it no longer cares to remain hidden.

After the attack on the G.K.U. office Bal Thackeray issued a public statement saying, "I am proud of the Shiv Sainiks who fought the Reds on Friday." (*Free Press Journal*, 30-12-67). Thackeray thus openly owns up the dastardly attack by his henchmen on the Union, when not a soul was in the office.

And yet, why does the Congress Government of Bombay and the Police Commissioner not take any action against the gangsters? That is the next question.

II. WHY THE SHIV SENA?

To treat the Shiv Sena as a chauvinistic movement of misguided and frustrated Maharashtrian youth is to equate the symptom with the disease. Worse still, it is to condemn the victims of the movement, as the Maharashtrian youth really is, while letting off the crafty designers of the movement who are the real criminals that must be brought to book.

The task is to expose the dark forces of reaction, the vested interests who operate as the conspirators behind the scene, and to convince the young people who are their dupes that the very last thing that the Shiv Sena movement is going to do is to secure a bright future for them. The misguided youngsters need explanation and sympathy, they need guidance on the true solutions of their problems. Just condemning them is to drive them deeper into the net spread out for them by Bal Thackeray.

WHY SHIV SENA JUST NOW?

The real question is, why have the big bourgeoisie of Bombay and their stooge, the Bombay Provincial Congress Committee, and of course, the Swatantra Party in the city, swung over from "championship" of the linguistic minorities of the city to the support of rabid Maharashtrian chauvinism? Why this *volte face*? Allied to it is the question as to why the leadership of the Maharashtra Pradesh Congress Committee, Shri Yashwantrao Chavan, Shri Vasant Rao Naik and Shri Vasant Rao Patil (President of the M.P.C.C. and also of the INTUC

Textile Union in Bombay) have become the clandestine patrons of the Shiv Sena.

It is necessary to cast a glance at the development in Bombay and Maharashtra during the last decade to get the correct answer to these questions.

The Samyukta Maharashtra movement of the mid-fifties and early sixties got an extremely broadbased and powerful mass support in the city of Bombay, apart from the districts of Maharashtra.

This was due both to the just and democratic nature of the demand for the formation of linguistic states, similar to the movements for Andhra and Kerala, but also to the fact that the multi-lingual trade union movement in the city under the leadership of leftist parties (mainly the C.P.I., the P.S.P. and the S.S.P.) gave full support to the struggle for Samyukta Maharashtra.

More particularly, the large numbers of Telugu and Malayali workers in Bombay (industrial as well as middle class) were fully aligned with the Samyukta Maharashtra movement since similar movements were simultaneously going on in their states as well. A number of conferences of the Telugu and Malayali citizens of Bombay took place during the period which declared their support for Vishal Andhra, Aikya Kerala and Samyukta Maharashtra together.

The Hindustani speaking worker was all along very sympathetic towards Samyukta Maharashtra. Open fraternisation between the Samyukta Maharashtra Samiti and the Mahagujerat Janata Parishad (mutual delegations addressed mass rallies in Bombay and Ahmedabad) had a very good impact on the common Gujarati people in Bombay.

Innumerable trade unions and their conferences thus fully supported not only the demand for Samyukta Maharashtra but joined in Satyagraha actions and organised protest strikes in support of the demand.

On the other hand, the Samyukta Maharashtra Samiti, dominantly composed of left parties, also gave full and official support to innumerable strikes of textiles, engineering, automobile, pharmaceutical, municipal, B.E.S.T., hotel and other workers, again including bank and insurance employees, for their econo-

mic and trade union demands. It is a fact too obvious to need mention that the working-class in all these industries in Bombay is multi-lingual. The Samiti also actively assisted the unification of left trade unions in certain industries.

In passing, it should be mentioned that powerful mass struggles of landless labourers for land, extending over whole districts in Maharashtra, were also sponsored and supported by the S.M.S.

It is well known that the S.M.S. fought the general elections not only on the issue of Samyukta Maharashtra but also on the platform of socialism. In fact, one of the rousing and ringing slogans of the S.M.S. was "Socialist Maharashtra in Socialist India."

The Samyukta Maharashtra movement thus helped to bring about a very close and fraternal cooperation, a fusion, to a certain extent, between the multi-lingual trade union movement in Bombay and the general democratic struggle of the Marathi speaking people.

This is not to say that no chauvinistic sentiments were ever expressed from the platform of the S.M.S. or that no undesirable incident ever took place in the course of the movement. *But the dominant course of the movement, the dominant consciousness of the people participating in it and the guidance of the dominant leadership of the movement were throughout democratic and healthy.* Innumerable "Bundhs" took place in Bombay between 1956 and 1966. They took place on trade union, linguistic and general democratic demand. Invariably they were *united* actions of *all* the working and common people of the city. Not one of them was ever marred by inter-lingual or inter-religious conflict.

Looked at from the other extreme, it was precisely because of the extremely comprehensive popular unity brought about by the movement that big business in Bombay was throughout dead against the movement, and failing to drive any wedge in it, attempted to suppress it by sheer police repression (with Morarjee Desai's thoroughness).

As can be easily understood, during the same period, the Congress-sponsored and employer-backed INTUC lost heavily in the city and its mass support shifted towards the militant

trade unions organised by the left political parties in the Samiti.

The biggest headache of the Bombay millowners, the B.P.C.C., Shri S. K. Patil, the INTUC in Bombay, and Maharashtra Government and reaction in general, during the last ten years, has naturally been how to break this extremely broad class and democratic solidarity of the citizens of Bombay. Confronted by such a solid, mass phalanx, the reactionary vested interests could make no advance without first disrupting the popular unity that faced them.

At first, they attempted to separate the minority linguistic groups from the Marathi people by coming out as the protectors and defenders of the minorities as against the S. M. Samiti which was attacked as being against the minorities. This cut no ice since the accusation was simply false. Besides, the main, active political force of a city has naturally got to be the local people. Outsiders cannot and do not play that role.

It was in this context that the general economy of the country began to stagnate and decline since the middle of the third Five-Year Plan, around 1964. Industry began to face new problems arising from the rampant profiteering of the preceding years as also because of the crisis in the import-export trade, foreign exchange position, supply of raw materials and spare parts, etc., resulting from the misguided policies of the planning authorities of the country.

Since 1965-66 began the offensive of the employers against the workers in the form of closures, lay-offs, retrenchment, refusal to grant bonus, cuts in dearness allowance, and so on.

But very soon they realised that no major offensive was possible so long as the powerful working-class movement in the city, more particularly, the trade unions of the textile, engineering, bank and insurance, transport and municipal workers, etc. were broken. The Bombay working-class was far too united and militant to tolerate any major attack on its living standards.

The minorities would not walk into the trap of the Congress rulers and the INTUC was blunted and had lost all its capacity for strike-breaking. What was to be done? That was the problem and the headache for the tycoons and reactionary

politicians in the city, for the Congress Government in Maharashtra.

It was then that they decided that only by inflaming a Maharashtrian chauvinist movement, a movement that could claim to be "more Maharashtrian" than any other, could they disrupt and destroy the unity of the common citizens and workers of Bombay.

It was thus that the Shiv Sena was born. Who its patrons, supporters and arch-designers are has been explained already.

An additional factor in the situation has been that the Maharashtra Congress leaders have wanted for long to get a foothold in the Bombay Congress. They have their own conflicts with Shri S. K. Patil. That is how Balasaheb Desai (then Home Minister of Maharashtra) and Yeshwantrao Chavan were the early patrons of the movement, though nominally they kept at a distance from it, even expressing some occasional disapproval.

All the same, Thackeray knows which side is capable of buttering his bread better. That is why he is drawing closer to S. K. Patil while, of course, his anti-Trade Union and anti-Communist crusade is backed both by the BPC and the MPCC.

Why the fury of the Shiv Sena is now mainly directed against the Girni Kamgar Union can also be understood in this entire background. The textile workers are the most advanced and the most militant section of the trade union movement in the city. Generally they set the tone for the entire movement. And they are mainly Maharashtrian. Naturally, unless the Shiv Sena settles accounts with the G.K.U. all its anti-Communism, all its claims of championship of the Marathi people, do not make much headway.

In this effort, of course, the Shiv Sena is counting without its host. The amazing manner in which the textile workers of the city have been roused to indignation during the last month, the manner in which all the G.K.U. and Communist cadres and militants have jumped into the fray, is a truly inspiring development. Two generations of Red Flag workers are not going to take it lying down. They have gone into battle

and the Shiv Sena will soon learn to its cost, what it means to challenge the Red Flag in Parel.

After the preceding narration, not much explanation is needed as to why the Shiv Sena has the support (and this is not, in the least, an exaggeration) of the Maharashtra Congress Government and the city police.

The recent mass attacks of the Shiv Sainiks equipped with lathis, acid bulbs, daggers, petrol tins etc., on trade union and Communist Party offices have taken place in full presence of the police. Not only have the police taken no action against the gangsters and incendiaries, they have prevented workers rushing to defend their offices from performing their self-imposed duty. The Chief Minister and the Police Commissioner have made statements that they are "impartial in the conflict between the Shiv Sena and the Reds." Impartiality indeed, between the robber and the robbed, between the cloak and dagger gangsters and the victim of the attack!

A WRONG IMPRESSION

One more point should be clarified to complete the narration of the genesis and character of the Shiv Sena.

There is a feeling, even among progressive elements, that the Shiv Sena is the child and logical continuation of the Samyukta Maharashtra movement. This totally mistaken notion is based on a very inadequate knowledge of all the facts relevant to the question.

We have already explained earlier how the Samyukta Maharashtra movement, far from accentuating linguistic frictions or bitterness, actually brought the multi-lingual trade union movement and the general democratic movement in Bombay into a common, fraternal stream.

The Samyukta Maharashtra movement was throughout democratic and anti-big bourgeois. It consistently fought against the anti-people economic and repressive policies of the Congress Government. Throughout, it was directed against reaction and the vested interests.

The trick of the Shiv Sena lies precisely in this that while it also speaks in the name of the interests of the Marathi peo-

ple, *its character is fundamentally the very opposite of the movement led by the S. M. Samiti.*

There is not a single sphere of the social, economic, cultural and political life of Bombay in which the Shiv Sena does not blatantly support the vested interests, the Congress rulers, etc., against the interests, not only of the linguistic minorities, national unity and democracy in general, but of the true and genuine interest of the Marathi speaking people themselves.

The proof of the pudding is in the eating and birds of the same feather flock together.

From the very beginning Thackeray has been denouncing (and in the most indecent, vulgar, abusive terms) Dange, S. M. Joshi, Atre, George Fernandes, the CPI, the SSP, the PWP and so on as the enemies of Maharashtra, as "fellow travellers", as the supporters of the "loongiwallas", and so on. And, of course, Shri Krishna Menon. For, Menon's crime is two-fold—that he is a progressive and he is a loongiwalla! Besides, he commands a big following in Bombay. That also explains why Thackeray gets the sole contract for conducting the election campaign against Menon. And that is how Thackeray becomes the darling and hero of all the reactionaries in Bombay.

Equally from the very beginning, all the sworn enemies of the Samyukta Maharashtra movement, the millowners and bankers of Bombay, the BPC and S. K. Patil, the Swatantra Party and so on, have befriended and supported Thackeray and he has openly declared them to be his patrons and supporters. The Jana Sangh in Bombay also helped the rise and growth of Shiv Sena. The only left force which, because of its blind anti-communism, has gone over to the Shiv Sena, is the PSP in the city.

It would be the limit of superficiality and lack of objectivity to deny the clear import of these massive and gigantic facts because of the apparent and deceptive similarity between the issues raised by the Samyukta Maharashtra movement and the fraudulent claims of Bal Thackeray.

III. THE QUESTION OF DISCRIMINATION

It is necessary to deal with certain specific questions raised by Bal Thackeray and the Shiv Sena. For here too, right in the

Goebels style, they cook up a brew of half-truths, distortions and falsehood whose one purpose is to incite worker against worker, Indian against Indian, one section of the common people against another, all for the glory and the endless plunder carried on by the money-bags and the black-market kings.

For obvious reasons, the most vital task is to convince the Marathi youth that the Shiv Sena is nothing but a *Pootana Mai* for him, his own deadliest enemy masquerading as his saviour.

The general question which the Shiv Sena raises is the one of discrimination against Maharashtrians, the sons of the soil, in favour of the "loongiwallas" (whom he also calls the rootless outsiders) in the matter of jobs, housing, trade facilities and so on. Week after week, the *Marmik* publishes names of factories, offices and similar establishments where the officers and bosses are Southerners and where, according to Thackeray, Maharashtrians are planfully kept out. That is his constant refrain.

We will go more fully into this question in subsequent sections. Even the so-called facts of the case have to be examined from various aspects.

But it is not necessary to deny the existence of a certain amount of discrimination to deal with the question.

DISCRIMINATION AS A POLICY

Capitalist employers all over the world, in India, and even specifically in Bombay, have always resorted to *discrimination in the matter of giving employment and promotions as a conscious policy for dividing working-class unity, pitting one section of workers against another, and thereby continuing to rule the roost.*

The fifty year old organised trade union movement in Bombay has had to fight against such sinister discrimination, time and again. Indeed, the movement has been built up in the struggle against discrimination as the most vicious instrument of the employers for implementing their policy of divide and rule.

It is not possible here to go into the details of this history. But in the earlier years of the movement, the employers

deliberately brought in Muslim workers to replace Hindu workers when they went on strike. The Red Flag successfully fought against the communal riots engendered by this criminal policy and forged Hindu-Muslim unity in action. Muslim workers realised that they were thrown on the streets as soon as the employers' purpose of strike-breaking was served. The Hindu workers realised that not the Muslim worker but the employer was the crafty enemy. They realised that all workers were brothers, irrespective of religion.

The same practice was pursued by the employers by restricting untouchable workers to the spinning department and keeping them out of the weaving department. Again, it was the Red Flag that united the touchable and untouchable workers in their common struggle against the capitalist exploiter.

"Ghatis"* were pitted against the "Konkanis",* and at one time, the Maratha worker was incited against the "Brahmin" leaders of the early trade union movement. All these vile and dirty tricks have been tried by the employers at one time or another. In the end, they have all been defeated and the class solidarity of the workers has come out more and more cemented.

Only such solidarity cutting across differences of religion, caste, region and language has enabled the workers of this city—industrial and intellectual—to secure maximum employment for all, minimise retrenchment following from rationalisation and automation, secure better housing and higher wages, reduce working hours and in general, to improve their conditions of work.

Unless the new Marathi youth sees and assimilates this simple and vital truth, this truth which has been the life-breath of the working-class movement built by his preceding generations at the cost of immense suffering and sacrifice, unless the new youth sees this, he will not only be fighting his own class brothers from the South, he will actually be cutting his own throat in the bargain.

*"Konkanis" hail from coastal Maharashtra and "Ghatis" come from the eastern districts of Western Maharashtra like Satara, Sangli and Kolhapur.

This applies to all the young people, whether they seek employment as skilled or intellectual workers, in industry, business offices or in Government service.

There are industrial centres and factories in Maharashtra where almost the entire employed workers are Marathi. And yet, the employers (often Maharashtrians themselves) are throwing them out by retrenchment, closures and lay-offs. There is no "South Indian outsider" in many of these centres. How is the Shiv Sena going to fight for their jobs? It has no solution for it; it will not fight its patrons, the employers.

The Shiv Sena is talking of reserving this and that percentage of employment for the Marathi people. The stark problem in Bombay today is that all the employers are drastically reducing the total number of employed. Thirteen textile mills in the city and outside, almost totally manned by Marathi workers, have already been closed down. What percentage reservation is going to bring solace to these Marathi workers when the employers are not prepared to give employment to any of them?

But the Shiv Sena will not organise all the unemployed to compel the employers and Government to reopen factories closed down because of the speculative deals, embezzlement and squandering practised by the employers. How will it? The employers are its "bread-givers"!

In the banks, insurance and other business offices computer machines threaten to throw out both Marathi and non-Marathi workers. No percentage there is going to save the Marathi educated employee. On the contrary, if he pits himself against the South Indian clerk or typist, automation will come down on both of them so much the faster. Only the unity of both can beat back the offensive of the bosses to replace the clerical staff by automatic machines.

This is the first and primary fact, the real truth, that the Marathi youth has to see and understand. This is the first lesson he has to learn to save himself and his future.

IV. LOP-SIDED DEVELOPMENT

It is true that people from other parts of India flock to Bombay seeking jobs. But why is it so? Let us see some figures.

According to the *Annual Survey of Industries* 1961, Vol. I,

the *total productive capital* (fixed and working) invested in the factory group of industries in 1961 is Rs. 2,374.15 crores. Of this, the largest single amount, Rs. 537.20 crores or 22.62 per cent is invested in Maharashtra alone. West Bengal comes second with Rs. 519.35 crores or 21.87 per cent. The four Southern States of Andhra Pradesh, Kerala, Madras and Mysore together account for Rs. 365 crores or 15.37 per cent.

What is the position of *factory employment*? In 1961 there were in all 2,738.7 thousand workers employed in the factories covered by the *Annual Survey of Industries* 1961. Of these, 600.1 thousand or 21.91 per cent were employed in Maharashtra while 571 thousand or 20.84 per cent were employed in the factories of the four Southern States.

The disparity is glaring when we see the total population. Maharashtra with a population which is 9 per cent of the all-India population, has more than 22 per cent of the total capital invested in India, while the Southern States with a population of 25 per cent of the total population, has only 15 per cent of the total capital invested.

In other words, *the capital invested per head of population in Maharashtra is Rs. 135, while that in the four Southern States is only Rs. 33!*

Further, according to the Indian Labour Statistics issued by the Labour Bureau, the provisional figures of the average estimated daily employment in all factories for 1963 show that, of the total number of working factories (57,404), 28.72 per cent are in Southern States whose estimated average employment is 23 per cent of the all-India figure (4,362,000). The corresponding figures for Maharashtra are 15.96 per cent and 20 per cent.

These figures show the unevenness of industrial development in India. This unevenness of development is a characteristic feature of capitalism.

V. UNPLANNED EDUCATION

Now let us turn to another side of the employment picture. While in the matter of capital invested, number of factories and the workers employed therein, Maharashtra stands first, what is the situation with regard to education? For, to run these industries educated workers are required. The natural expectation

is that Maharashtra, which is leading in industries, should be leading in the field of *technical education* too. But let us see the figures of the Kothari Commission on Education appointed by the Government of India in 1964:

STUDENTS REGISTERED IN UNIVERSITIES (1964-65)

State	Total Students	Science Students	Engg. Students
Andhra	78,691	37,083 (47.5%)	6,169 (7.8%)
Kerala	83,452	40,978 (49.1%)	4,008 (4.8%)
Madras	88,278	41,673 (47.2%)	6,580 (7.2%)
Maharashtra	166,334	51,632 (31.1%)	5,781 (3.5%)

Though in Maharashtra the total college going students are more than in any of the other three States, the proportion going to Science and Engineering courses is less than any of the other States. In the matter of engineering education Madras and Andhra Pradesh are ahead of Maharashtra even in absolute figures.

This is not the fault of the students. It is the educational policy of the Maharashtra Government that is responsible for this, as shown in the following figures:

State	No. of Engg. Colleges	No. of Teachers	No. of Poly-technics	No. of Teachers
Andhra	8	266	19	472
Kerala	6	249	14	322
Madras	9	382	25	446
Maharashtra	8	210	21	395

Thus the number of teachers in the engineering colleges and polytechnics is low in Maharashtra compared with the other three States.

VI. WHO IS RESPONSIBLE?

So first there is unevenness in the industrial development of the country with a couple of States leading and the others lagging. But in the field of technical education there is an inverted unevenness, so to say, that is, the leading industrial states lagging behind in technical education, while some of the

industrially undeveloped states are leading in technical education. *This imbalance in industrial development after two and three plans has resulted in migrations of huge sections of population from industrially backward regions to the big industrial centres like Bombay, Calcutta, etc.*

One more pertinent fact about this "advanced" character of Maharashtra must be mentioned here. When we say Maharashtra is industrially advanced, what is really meant is that *only the Bombay region in Maharashtra is advanced. The fact is that except the Bombay region (and a small belt like Poona), almost the entire Maharashtra is perhaps as backward as any of the backward states in the country.* And the hunger for employment in vast Marathi regions like Vidarbha, Marathwada and Konkan is as acute as say in Kerala or Eastern U.P. And in parenthesis, we may add that when the Shiv Sena appears in Bombay, right on its heels appear a host of other Senas speaking in the name of the backward Maharashtra, i.e., Konkan Sena, Vidarbha Sena or Nag Sena and so on.

And if Thackeray persists in his attempts to dub the loongiwallas as foreigners or as outsiders, the day won't be far away when a Maratha from West Maharashtra will be dubbed an outsider say in Vidarbha or Marathwada (and vice versa!)

In the wake of Shiv Sena, and following its crude logic, will emerge Senas not only on linguistic or regional basis but also on the basis of castes or sub-castes.

And one more factor; that of the hundreds of thousands of Maharashtrians residing in other states like Gujerat, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Andhra and Tamilnad. It is calculated that about four millions of Maharashtrians have migrated to these states for reasons historical, economic and cultural. *If Thackeray persists in driving non-Maharashtrians out of Bombay, then he alone will be responsible for turning these four million Maharashtrians into "outsiders" in the states in which they have happily settled not only for decades but even for centuries.*

Thus, if Thackeray has his way and he succeeds in throwing out every one of the twenty lakh outsiders in Bombay, by his own logic he will have to receive back all the Maharashtrian migrants in other states! By simple arithmetic, the ranks

of Maratha unemployed and homeless will be swelled by more than a million, and the miseries of migrations and emigrations of millions in the bargain!

This is really the monstrous absurdity which Thackeray's hate logic leads to!

Such is the true picture of the industrial development of the country, its unevenness not only in different states but within a given state as well. The solution suggested by Thackeray is really no solution; in fact his magic "cure" is worse than the disease.

Thus, as stated earlier, it is the characteristic feature of capitalist growth viz. uneven and lop-sided development, that is at the root of the miseries of the unemployed Marathi youth (as also of other sections of Indian youth in general).

Who is responsible for this situation? Neither the Marathi job-seeker nor the migrant. The real culprits are the capitalists and their ruling party—the Congress, which is in uninterrupted power for over twenty years (both in the Centre and in all states, including Maharashtra). The Congress in Maharashtra is now alarmed at the anger and frustration of the people and the rising crescendo of the popular struggles against its rule. Hence its attempts to divert the anger of the Marathi people away from itself to their brothers from other states.

In the desperate situation *the ruling party tries to use the very condition it creates to attack the unity and militancy of the toiling people. Unemployment is the sole creation of capitalism; but they use the very situation created by unemployment to divide, disrupt and attack the people.*

VII. HOUSES AND HUTMENTS

This much about unemployment. The other problem which Shiv Sena tries to exploit is that of housing. The situation as regards housing is no doubt desperate; and the solution suggested by Thackeray is as desperate, ridiculous and in fact, suicidal.

Like unemployment, the housing problem is also the sole creation of the monopolists and their ruling party, the Congress.

What is at the root of the acute housing shortage and the hell-like hutments in Bombay?

Even before the second World War, Bombay was a city of slums. During the war the then British Government allowed the industrial growth of the city without providing for proper housing, water supply, sanitation, transport and other essential conditions of life. It simply went on issuing licences for new factories and establishments, with the result that at the end of the war, the population nearly doubled with practically no addition to housing and essential urban services. With the issue of one industrial licence a thousand jobs were no doubt created; but these thousand workers were thereby condemned to live without proper housing, sanitation, water supply and transport. In short, they were condemned to the hell called hutments. *Along with Bombay the Beautiful grew the other Bombay, the hideous, the ugly!*

On the eve of the transfer of power, the then Government had passed a resolution banning the issue of any new industrial licences in the City of Bombay. But during the twenty years of independence, the Congress merrily went on issuing hundreds of fresh licences for new factories and establishments.

During these twenty years, the population of Bombay increased by about 20 lakhs without any appreciable addition in housing and municipal services. The Government and the Congress-dominated Bombay Municipal Corporation, which were absolutely indifferent to providing even the barest necessities of animal existence to their citizens, could easily provide cheap electricity, water, roads and building materials to the industries in abundant measure!

This criminal policy relentlessly pursued by the Congress Government over two decades is really the root cause of the miseries of the five million Bombay-men (irrespective of whether they are Marathi, loongiwallas or others).

Out of this is born the hell of hutments. The Government did everything in its power to aggravate this problem. The Government (both Maharashtra and Central), the Municipality, the Port Trust and other public sector institutions are the biggest single employers in Bombay and they are responsible for providing housing for at least a million people. They

have not met even a small fraction of their responsibility. Then come the big monopolists. Despite solemn decisions and resolutions, the Government failed to compel them to build houses for their employers or to levy housing cess on them.

LAND SPECULATION

On the other hand, the Government and the Corporation did everything in their power to *turn housing into a paradise for unscrupulous speculators, profiteers and plain racketeers and criminals. Land has been converted into a medium whereby black money can easily be converted into white money!* Land prices have become speculative; land which was worth a few rupees per square yards a few years ago now costs a few thousand rupees—the Maharashtra Government itself leading in this speculative rise! Then comes the flourishing black market in building material, with the result that *decent housing has become the luxury reserved for the top two per cent of the population, mainly connected with black money.*

PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING

The Government maintains a few show pieces in the form of Housing Board Colonies, which can provide housing for not even one in a thousand, and that too at rents beyond the reach of the majority of wage-earners. The private sector provides housing only for the income groups of over Rs. 2,000 per month, and that too with exorbitant deposits and *pugrees* which only the black money can afford. Over and above this, the Government and the Municipality deliberately allows existing houses to decay and dilapidate, thus driving the poor tenants into the streets so that the owners can build spacious luxurious flats over their ruins! Lakhs and lakhs of people are thus driven out of existing houses and out of South and Central Bombay into the sprawling hell of hutments in the suburbs.

This is really the true situation of housing in Bombay, a subject picked up by Bal Thackeray for his special care and treatment.

THACKERAY'S TWO SLOGANS

Thackeray has two slogans by way of solution to the problem. One—eighty per cent of tenements for Marathi people.

As stated above, this solution is no solution because, even if implemented in full, it will take at least a hundred years more to provide housing for all Marathi people, considering the snail's pace of the Housing Board construction and its rising costs and rents. The rate of decaying and dilapidating houses is so alarming that practically all Marathi wage and salary earners will be thrown out of their shelters during the next five or ten years!

"Demolish the Hutments"

The second slogan of Thackeray is still more deceptive and dangerous. "Demolish and burn all the hutments," shouts Thackeray; because, according to him they are all dens of bootleggers, gamblers, criminals, prostitutes and so on—because they are infested with the wretched loongiwallas! According to Thackeray there are not even 30 Marathis in a thousand hutments! The fact is that the biggest and the most important single linguistic group in the million hutment-dwellers is Marathi. Thus, if Thackeray's wonderful solution is implemented, the first and the biggest victims will be the Marathi people! (Thackeray had the practical experience of demolishing a few hutments by order of the Thana Municipality dominated by Shiv Sena — and the result? The Marathi victims were four times the cursed loongiwallas!)

As for the hutments being the dens of crime and vice, the simple fact is—*crime and vice know no language except that of the devilish desire to make profit out of crime!* And crime is no monopoly of any linguistic group; but in Bombay, crime and vice are fast turning into big business controlled by Thackeray's bread-givers! Hence his shameless slogan—the goonda must be Marathi goonda—may he operate in bootlegging, gambling, smuggling and vice!

But Thackeray's slogan of destroying and burning the hutments has one more sinister significance, in which his bread-givers are very vitally interested. It is this: the hutments occupy big stretches of lands which are prospective gold mines for land speculators and luxury flat builders. For the last few years these gentry have been trying their hardest to demolish and burn these hutments with the help of the Municipality, the police and plain goondas and hired incendiaries. But the

hutment dwellers have again and again rallied round their zopadi sanghs; thousands of families, including women and children, have put up heroic resistance, braved police and goonda brutalities, offered mass satyagrahas and have successfully defended their huts. During the course of these long and bitter fights have emerged powerful united zopadpatti organisations, mainly under the leadership of the left parties. In these mass organisations are united the multi-lingual toilers of Bombay, led mainly and jointly by the Marathi and the loongiwallas together!

Over the years, these lakhs of people have become a big force in the city, next in importance only to the multi-lingual trade unions. Along with the trade unions, these zopadi sanghs have become the mainstay of the left parties and have inflicted severe defeats on the Congress in successive elections. No wonder the hutments have become a thorn in the side of the ruling cliques and the monopolists.

And therein comes the necessity of breaking the zopadpatti organisations, of destroying the hutments. If this is achieved, *the land monopolists will get their speculative prices, the black marketeers will get their luxury flats, and the Congress and the Swatantra reactionaries can hope to weaken the left parties.* So far, their attempts have failed in the zopadpatties as they have failed in the trade unions. Now, when Thackeray has come forward to break the trade unions with the slogan of 'hate loongiwallas and love Tata-Birlas (the bread-givers)', he naturally comes with the other slogan—'destroy the zopadis; hand over the land and housing to the speculators'. The twin problem of employment and housing is in fact the two facets of the same phenomenon—the class struggle in Bombay, the struggle of the multi-lingual united working class battling against the monopolists, the bread-givers of Thackeray.

Just as the workers can defend their existing jobs and working conditions and fight unemployment only by united struggles against their class enemies (the monopolists and their Government), so also can they get their housing and other civic amenities only by united struggles against the vested interests in land and housing. And in both these struggles the multi-lingual wage-and-salary earners have to fight the disruptive agencies like Thackeray.

The Street Vendors

Thackeray has picked up one more enemy — that is the feriwallas (street vendors). No doubt there are thousands of them; but they are not all loongiwallas, as Thackeray pretends. In fact, the biggest chunk are the Marathi, next come Sindhis and Uttar Bharatiyas and last come the Tamilians and Keraliyans.

If Thackeray's slogan of rounding up and deporting these street vendors is implemented, again the main victims will be the Marathi vendors!

But the real problem is: why the street vendors and in such large numbers? There again, the main culprit is the Government and the Municipality, which has miserably failed to provide the minimum markets and shopping centres even for the barest necessities of life. It is estimated that *at least 500 new medium-sized markets are required to eliminate the street vendors.* But the Government and Municipal authorities, who can easily find ample space for petrol pumps at every street corner, can't find enough space for markets! The result—the citizens are driven to purchase their necessities in the streets, which only the vendors can provide.

Smugglers?

Thackeray tries to brand all the vendors as so many smugglers. No doubt, smuggling in certain costly items is rampant; but who finances and masterminds their vast network? Not certainly the petty vendors. They are the big captains of smuggling industry who operate not in lakhs but in crores. As is well known, the main market is the black market; its chief patrons are linked with the big monopolists and top bureaucrats who in turn are linked with their counterparts in the capitalist world. Bombay is one of the major international centres of these nefarious, criminal operations. These operations form an integral part of the import-export trade and its adjunct—the invoicing rackets. The small items in smuggled goods that appear on the street are but a trickle in the ocean of smuggling and black-marketeering, which drain the public exchequers to the tune of over a hundred crore rupees.

When Thackeray brands small street vendors, he is just making a scapegoat of them with a view to shield his own

bread-givers, the big black-marketeers and the ring of international smugglers.

This much about the main operative slogans of Thackeray on which he bases his hate campaign.

VIII. THACKERAY'S CULTURE!

Now let us briefly deal with some other topics touched by him during the course of his activities.

Thackeray parades as a champion of Marathi culture and does everything in the name of the Great Shivaji.

MARATHI NOT MEDIUM OF EDUCATION FOR THACKERAY

So let us consider his love of Marathi culture.

First the Marathi language. One would expect that Thackeray would base his campaign slogans on the basis of love of Marathi language. Far from it: he does not even advocate the use of Marathi as the medium of instruction! Item No. 2 in his Charter of Demands plainly says that "*English* should be the medium of instruction from primary to the highest university stage"! His idea of the quality of education is illustrated by his demand that "marks should be liberally given to the candidates at the S.S.C. examination and that there should not be too much stringency in granting the higher class to the Marathi pupils"! Why? So that Marathi boys should stand well in competitions with the others (i.e. the enemy—loongiwallas!)

This exposes Thackeray as a champion of two per cent loyal servants of His Majesty's Government and as an enemy of the Marathi and the self-respecting mass of Marathi people.

What else could one expect of a despicable agent whose sole ambition is to provide loyal servants to his bread-givers! But then, he shouldn't speak in the name of Shivaji whose first edict under his swarajya was the introduction of Marathi as the language of administration in place of the foreign Persian. He ordered the compilation of Marathi dictionary of administrative terms (the *Rajya-Vyavahar-Kosh*.)

LOW, VULGAR, DEGENERATE

Now, let us see how Thackeray exhibits his love of Marathi culture in his written and spoken campaign.

About Prime Minister *Indira Gandhi* he says, "Only old

senile men run after Indira; she doesn't appear in my dreams"! Then, one of his cartoons is captioned: "Please, darling, won't you give me Indira touch?"

He refers to *Jayaprakash Narayan* and *Achyut Patwardhan* (the '42 heroes) as "women in their monthly course"! *S. M. Joshi* is called Dange's agent, assassin of democracy, as Rasputin and what not? Many of his choicest epithets about Krishna Menon, Dange, P. K. Atre, appearing in cold print in his weekly *Marmik*, are simply unprintable. One of his pet metaphors, appearing again and again, fondly refers to venereal diseases!

PETTY EGOTIST

Then finally the petty egotism of this upstart—he allows references to himself as 'the greatest man after Shivaji'! He prints numerous letters in his own papers extolling himself as saviour—as god—and what not. Recently, he published the 'blessings' of a reader who says, "Be famous as Hitler—Be a Chatrapati King like Shivaji and rule over us"! In his rallies he gets acclaimed and cheered as the 'Senapati'—the Commander-in-Chief! One of his stooges while introducing Thackeray as Senapati, made a contemptuous reference to the venerable veteran freedom fighter, *Senapati Bapat*: "Since Senapati has become old, we must have a new young Senapati. I introduce the new Senapati—Thackeray."

But this new Senapati always bows in reverence to Tatas-Birlas (because they are the bread-givers!) Every week the *Marmik* shamelessly publishes eulogistic panegyrics of the 'Captains of Industry'!

Shivaji in his days fought the bread-givers and strove for the establishment of Hindvi Swarajya; Thackeray and his Shiv Sena, three hundred years later, fight the common-man and teach the ideology of licking the boots of the bread-givers!

IX. SHIV SENA AND THE POLITICAL PARTIES

It is interesting to examine the relations between Bal Thackeray and the political parties in Maharashtra.

CONGRESS PATRONAGE

In his inaugural rally on 31st October, 1966, Thackeray openly and repeatedly praised his main patron, Shri Balasaheb Desai, the then Home Minister.

In the same rally the Communists and their fellow-travellers like Menon, S. M. Joshi, Fernandes and the entire trade union and zopadpatti movement were declared to be the main enemies; the loongiwallas were double enemies because they were all suspected Communists. Menon was declared a loongiwalla and a Communist. No wonder, Thackeray was given the overall command of the Congress election campaign, placing vast financial and propaganda resources and an army of trusted gangsters at his disposal.

Shri Yashwantrao Chavan himself was his first patron. He inaugurated his *Marmik* and blessed him again and again. Even very recently (October, 1967), Chavan is referred to as "the leader of Maharashtra, who is firmly entrenched and has deep roots." And a fervent plea is made to strengthen his hands. Chavan is exhorted to "tighten his grip over Maharashtra"!

The M.P.C.C. President, Shri Vasant Rao Dada Patil was the chief guest of the last annual function of the *Marmik* and is repeatedly referred to as a Maharashtra leader who still "smells of the soil"!

Thackeray always avoids a clash with the Congress even when he has to make some occasional stunts to satisfy his fire-brand followers. A couple of months back, he repeatedly announced demonstrations against the Prime Minister; but then, called them off after he was promised an interview for a few minutes!

This much about the Congress leaders. But the attitude of the Maharashtra Government is much more revealing. Thackeray frequently visits top leaders and bureaucrats and repeatedly gives out the impression *that he is acting under the patronage of the Maharashtra Congress and the Government*. This impression is again and again strengthened by utterances and actions of the men in power—particularly the high-ups in the Bombay Police. They connive at the provocative and criminal activities of Thackeray and his gangs, even when they indulge

in the grossest hate campaign against the minorities, when open threats of murder are daily uttered from the platform of the Shiv Sena, when gangsters shouting Shiv Sena slogans frequently attack non-Maharashtrian shops, forcibly occupy tenements, burn houses and offices, loot properties, attack the opponents with knives, acid bulbs, iron bars, soda-water bottles and petrol cans! The police authorities show exemplary promptness in proclaiming the innocence of Thackeray's gangsters. And to top it, they frequently harass and intimidate the poor victims of the goonda attacks.

Thackeray is also used as a willing stooge by the Maharashtra Congress bosses not only against their political opponents but even in their internal factional fights.

P.S.P. — ANTI-COMMUNIST ALLY

The Praja Socialist Party has adopted an extremely opportunist attitude towards the Shiv Sena. It accepted the Shiv Sena leadership during the election campaign against Menon and the Samiti candidates. Many PSP leaders presided over the Shiv Sena rallies. They failed to condemn even the hate campaign and goonda attacks against the minorities. They always acted as apologists of the Shiv Sena. The PSP theoreticians sought to evolve some justification for the Shiv Sena excesses, with the result that most of the PSP cadre was actually affected by the Shiv Sena virus. Hundreds of PSP activists became Shiv Sena activists. And finally, the PSP has entered into an unholy alliance with the Shiv Sena in the Bombay Municipal elections and is now campaigning from the same platform. They justified this piece of unprincipled opportunism as a necessity in its fight against Communism. (For all-India consumption the PSP National Executive had no qualms in describing the Shiv Sena as "a manifestation of malignant regionalism" !)

Jan Sangh, likewise, accepted Shiv Sena leadership in the election campaign against Menon and the Sampooran Maharashtra Samiti. In the process they lost some cadres to the Shiv Sena. But recently they seem to take a feeble stand against Shiv Sena for purposes of all-India consumption, and also with the instinct of self-preservation!

The Swatantra Party and the notorious *Current* weekly, have throughout been the champions of the Shiv Sena. They did their utmost to gloss over its cruder absurdities and make Shiv Sena as much respectable and acceptable as possible. They acted as brokers to sell Shiv Sena to its rich patrons — both local and foreign!

Such is the attitude of the Congress, Swatantra, Jan Sangh and the PSP, towards the Shiv Sena. These parties together are responsible for the rise and growth of this virus in the body politic of Bombay. All these all-India parties supported and patronised the Shiv Sena as a disruptive agency, as a force against the left parties and the militant mass organisations in Bombay. But for the patronage of these parties, especially the Congress and its Government, Shiv Sena could never have made any headway.

The American lobby and the various agencies patronised by them played no mean part in promoting Shiv Sena and providing it with financial and material resources in its criminal activities.

LEFT PARTIES

It must be said to the credit of the left parties and the militant trade union and mass organisations that they firmly stood their ground and accepted the challenge posed by the Shiv Sena. It is they who are upholding the glorious traditions of the national and working class movements — traditions of national unity and solidarity, of protecting the rights of the minorities, of preserving the democratic and progressive values of public life — in short, the great traditions which made Bombay the proud capital of the revolutionary national and working class movement in India.

UNITY WILL PREVAIL

Happily, there are signs that the people of Bombay are waking up to the fascist menace. They are rallying together in greater numbers and in broader unity to fight Shiv Sena and its bread-givers.

Sections of Marathi people who were first taken in by the promises of jobs and homes, are now realising the true

nature of Shiv Sena as a disruptive agency created by the Tatas and Birlas and their foreign partners. The misguided youths who first rallied round Shiv Sena, now see that its main activities have nothing to do with securing jobs and homes for them, that Thackeray wants to use the Maratha youth as a strike-breaking and disruptive agency working under the orders of their exploiters. The non-Maharashtrians likewise are now disillusioned with the Bombay Congress and its gangster boss who for years posed as the champion of the minorities. Now they see his double game in promoting the Shiv Sena as a gangster force against the non-Maharashtrians and then trying to offer them protection! They clearly see the hand of the monopolists behind both S. K. Patil and Bal Thackeray. The day is not far off when the democratic unity of the multi-lingual people of Bombay will be fully restored and the ugly sore that has disgraced the fair name of Bombay is finally removed.