

## BANGLADESH TRAGEDY

CIVILIZED WORLD will be shocked by the recent events in Bangladesh culminating in the brutal massacre of the patriotic and respected political leaders responsible for the very freedom and independence of the country. The barbaric manner in which Mr Tajuddin Ahmed, Syed Nazrul Islam, Mansur Ali and Mr Kamaruzaman were bayoneted and shot in Dacca Central Jail by the inhuman army officers before fleeing the country heightens the poignancy of sorrow. Further news trickles down that apart from those named above, three former Ministers in the Cabinet of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman have also been killed in the same jail. Hardly eleven weeks ago, a set of disgruntled majors had perpetrated the heinous crime of murdering the Bangabandhu, father of Bangladesh, completely liquidating his family and seizing power. But they could neither consolidate nor settle down, as the movement lacked popular support. A counter-coup was, therefore, on the cards, sooner or later, and when Major-General Khaled Mosharaff went into action, the army of majors who had usurped power from Mujibur Rahman fled the country but not without indulging in an orgy of massacre. The harrowing tale of brutal murders reflects a low level of civilized

## On Men & Matters

— R. V.

behaviour and will be condemned by all men who cherish and value human freedom. That the new regime has effected an orderly succession of office and has not indulged in any vindictive measures is both commendable and welcome. It is however not clear how the murderous majors were able to commit the last minute atrocities and escape from the country. Whether the counter-coup represents a return to power of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's party or a mere capture of authority by another set of power-hungry generals is too early to say. It is said that the murderous majors who escaped to Bangkok have sought political asylum from Pakistan and the United States. It is a well-established principle of international relationship that political asylum is granted to rulers ousted by aggression or to persons who suffered persecution in their home country for their

faith, belief, convictions or non-conformity with or opposition to their governments. Murderers, cheats, criminals and delinquents, required to face charges or trials do not qualify for political asylum in any civilized society. Justice requires that the army men who had committed such gruesome and brutal murders in the Dacca Central Jail should be tried for their crimes and dealt with according to law.

We hope that no country will risk its reputation by offering asylum to those guilty of such inhuman crimes and thereby lend colour to the suspicion of complicity with an internal movement for subversion. Events in Bangladesh clearly demonstrate the instability of governments not based on popular mandate. When a government derives strength not from the people but from certain sections including the military, the stability of the government depends on the whims and fancies of the pressure group. If, in addition, the popular will cannot find expression because of restraints, the pressure group becomes emboldened to act in an arbitrary and tyrannical manner. India is anxious that a strong, stable and good government should be established in Bangladesh and trusts that that country will soon emerge from its difficulties as a free democratic nation.

### THE BLACK MONEY ORDINANCE (Continued from previous page)

ting rich-on-the-sly and the only method of inducing them to cough up taxes is to allow them mildly increased retentions of their earnings. The advantage of funds so taxed coming into the mainstream of the banking system far outweighs the marginal tax advantage the repentant assessee may get. The loss to the Exchequer is very notional, because such funds may never come into the tax net at all, but get dissipated through diffused spending in now familiar ways, that add an edge to inflation-induced distresses of the people. The Voluntary Disclosure Scheme has done well to recognize the importance of

proffering indemnity and abstaining from questions that call for self-incriminating answers.

### SPECIFIC ASSURANCES

The offer to issue Bonds that are non-negotiable is also a step towards realism. What is important is to remove awkward hesitations and the ever present dread of more punitive action—such as came in the wake of disclosures made under the Thyagi scheme. The receipts or chalans for money paid into treasuries must themselves spell out clearly both the indemnity and the assurance that questions as to "sources of funds" would not come up later like the hydra-headed monsters in Greek fable; that the discloser would not carry on his forehead

the brand of Cain, such as would prejudice his future income-tax assessments. It is not to be expected that the holder of unaccounted money would articulate his demands all that explicitly, but it is economic statesmanship to understand his unexpressed desire for comprehensive protection and to fashion the Government's assurances in a manner as will eradicate his residual misgivings.

### CASE FOR A REDUCTION OF PERSONAL I.T. RATES

We are now dealing with morbid swellings appearing in the Body Economic of India and administering medicines that would bring about a subsidence

(Continued on page 26)