

sentenced to 15 years in jail, for supposedly committing financial crimes, constitutes an affront to Human Rights, especially the rights of an older citizen in the twilight of his life, because it is established that the tendency of contemporary Criminal Law is to abolish sentences that permanently deprive one of freedom, except in highly exceptional circumstances, which, everything indicates, do not apply in the case of LaRouche, a U.S. citizen, as it presents political connotations.

It is necessary, in my view, to review the process which led to the sentence, and to adopt, ahead of time, measures which such a revision might require, eliminating the barrier [to a fair trial] posed by alleging that certain documents are secret.

It is necessary, on the other hand, that we fight for a universal new legal order so that truly democratic world legality be created, founded on the inalienable rights of man, which place him on the highest level.

With the certainty that Your Excellency will pay special attention to the LaRouche case, thus contributing to his freedom, I am respectfully yours,

Hermann Assis Baeta  
Former President, Brazilian Lawyers Association  
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil  
August 29, 1991

### From Barbados

I write in support of the complaint filed with the [OAS Human Rights] Commission on July 30, 1991 by Mr. Lyndon LaRouche and a number of his associates. I have followed very closely the cases and their background and am deeply disturbed by the outcomes. On three counts:

Firstly, at the apparent jettisoning of elementary principles of natural justice.

Secondly, that it should have happened in the United States, held up both by its Constitution and its public pronouncements to be the exemplar of fundamental freedoms.

Thirdly, recent events in Tiananmen Square, Tbilisi, Panama, and Iraq indicate a regression into savagery on the part of governments of diverse persuasions which are quite frightening.

What hope is there for the peoples of the world if the conduct of their role model—the United States of America—lays itself open to charges of violations of human rights?

I urge the Commission to act swiftly in this case to restore the faith of mankind in the possibility of justice, freedom and respect for the individual as a spark of God.

I write a weekly column for *The Nation* newspaper in Barbados, on topics varying from local and international politics, education, and language.

Yours faithfully,  
Gladstone Holder  
Barbados, West Indies

## Rao's visit improves Indo-German ties

by Ramtanu and Susan Maitra in Delhi and Mary Burdman in Bonn

Indian Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao's three-day (Sept. 5-7) visit to Germany, which concluded with the opening of the six-month long Festival of India in Bonn, has, according to official reports, helped to generate "a climate conducive to the flow of more investment and high technology to India." Although the German government pledged economic aid of DM 400 million for the current year which, in total amount, is about the same as that of last year's, Chancellor Helmut Kohl categorically stated that his country would "remain fully committed to our development cooperation with India" despite Germany's heavy financial commitments elsewhere. India receives the largest portion of German development aid.

At his Bonn press conference Sept. 7, Prime Minister Rao emphasized that at this "very important moment," with "momentous changes" taking place in Europe, he could not confine his attention just to the Festival of India. India has just come out of a very "traumatic experience," the assassination of former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi. India also had to face, he said, a "very grave economic situation" in the first two to three weeks after his minority Congress Party government took office after being out of power for almost two years. India, for the first time in its independent history, was in danger of defaulting on its foreign debt.

### German-Indian bridge

But now, India's leaders want "to assure our friends abroad" that India is now back on a "normal course of development and back to playing her rightful role in international affairs. . . . Definite and clear-headed decisions have seen us through these very anxious days." His visit to Germany, the prime minister said, was to ensure that India's friends abroad understand the breadth of the "sea change" made in opening up India's economy and dismantling its bureaucracy, and that these changes are "irreversible." To communicate this with authority, he said "is the duty of the prime minister of India." The developments mean, he said, that "in two to three years, India will be able to play a very important role."

Prime Minister Rao's trip was a logical followup to the

visit to India last March by German President Richard von Weizsäcker. At his Bonn press conference, Rao strongly affirmed that the perspective von Weizsäcker had described of India as Germany's key partner and "bridge" to the nations of the South, had been again discussed with Germany's leaders in Bonn.

President von Weizsäcker's visit came at a crucial juncture following the end of the Gulf war where the U.S. and its allies had emerged as total victors and the United Nations was left totally compromised. Dr. Weizsäcker had expressed his country's willingness to cooperate closely with India in the international arena and particularly in the U.N. where, he said, it was the responsibility of countries like India and Germany to introduce subjects of grave importance. Weizsäcker had listed the hunger and poverty ravaging the developing countries and the continued confrontation between the developed and developing nations which the U.N. had failed to tackle.

Dr. Weizsäcker's reference to the inadequacy of the United Nations, particularly in the shadows of the recent Gulf war conducted with U.N. blessings, struck a chord in India. Former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi, who was assassinated on May 21, had earlier expressed dismay over the U.N.'s role vis-à-vis the Gulf war and called for re-instituting the U.N. according to the spirit of San Francisco after the Second World War.

During Prime Minister Rao's visit to Germany, he told newsmen that at the political level, his talks with the German chancellor, held without the presence of aides, were very detailed. He said that every aspect of international relations, including the unsettling situation in the U.S.S.R., in India and its neighborhood, and the Middle East was discussed. Though Prime Minister Rao did not mention whether the talks also included the United Nations, it is assumed that they did.

### Meeting with industrialists

Besides convincing Germany's economic officials, Prime Minister Rao held extensive talks with the captains of German trade and industry, including Siemens, BMW, and Deutsche Bank, which he termed "very fruitful." He assured them the government was determined to stick to the economic reforms in order to ensure greater economic relations with Germany, among others. In Bonn, the prime minister said that after his meeting with the industrialists, there was "reason to believe that India's capability to become an effective partner with Germany" in many fields, will be realized.

Judging by the response the Indian prime minister succeeded. Dr. Heinrich Weisz, president of the Federation of Germany Industries, welcomed the economic reforms that India is in the process of implementing. Chancellor Helmut Kohl also spoke glowingly of the Rao government's performance during the luncheon hosted by him in honor of the Indian premier. Kohl said: "Within a few weeks, you have

succeeded in consolidating your country's policies and in showing the way to reforms, especially modernization of the economy. . . . This will make it easier for the international community to assist you to quickly overcome difficulties."

Bonn has confirmed that previously arranged East German-Indian trade deals, primarily in chemicals, fertilizer, and machinery, will go ahead, with 90% export guarantees from the German government. The *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* reported Sept. 5 that Gert Vogt, board member of the Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau, said that India had in the 1970s cultivated a trade relationship with East Germany, which now can be the basis of new connections. Investment in India would not be a one-way street, Vogt said. India has repeatedly proposed participating in the development of the new German states with the affiliate of the development bank in Berlin.

The Festival of India will also play a role in this process. The festival was developed by Rajiv Gandhi and by Mr. Rao when he was culture minister. India is also opening a cultural center in Berlin, Germany's new capital, the prime minister announced. The festival will visit cities in both the old and new German states.

One indication of the strategic importance Germany is giving to its relations to India, is that at the time of Weizsäcker's visit, one of Germany's top-level diplomats, Hans-Georg Wieck, was made ambassador to India. Dr. Wieck has been ambassador to Moscow and for five years was head of Germany's foreign intelligence service, the BND.

If Prime Minister Rao's visit assured the German government that his minority government is perfectly capable of making far-reaching and irreversible reforms in the economic sphere, he also had to assuage German apprehensions about India's growing defense expenditures. However, although the *New York Times* in early August reported that German Minister for Economic Cooperation Carl-Dieter Spranger said that Germany will be "looking closely at the level of spending for arms and also at factors such as human rights and economic freedom" in dispensing aid, none of these issues was even mentioned at Mr. Rao's press conference. In his discussions, he made the point that in the future India's defense spending will depend upon the security environment in the subcontinent.

There is little doubt that if India sticks to its economic reform program, Indo-German economic and technological cooperation will grow significantly. More significant perhaps is the fact that by choosing Germany as his first foreign venue, Prime Minister Rao has broken the tradition in which Indian premiers' first foreign trip was invariably to either Washington or Moscow. It is generally assumed that by choosing Bonn over both Moscow and Washington, the Indian prime minister has sent a message. Perhaps Rao is pursuing what veteran political analyst Pran Chopra prescribed recently: "What India needs is a political bridge with Germany at the highest level."