

A LABOUR OF LOVE

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TEXT OF THE SPEECH GIVEN BY

MR. S. K. KOOKA, COMMERCIAL DIRECTOR OF AIR-INDIA

AT THE ANNUAL CONVENTION OF THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF ADVERTISING AGENCIES

AT PEBBLE BEACH, CALIFORNIA ON NOVEMBER 3, 1963



At the American Association of Advertising Agencies Western Region Convention at Pebble Beach, San Francisco are: (l. to r.) Mr. S. K. Kooka, Commercial Director, Air-India; Mr. E. C. Arbuckle, Dean of the Graduate School of Business, Stanford University; Mr. John H. Hoefer, Chairman of the Board and President of Hoefer, Dieterich & Brown, Inc., San Francisco; Mr. William E. Steers, Chairman of the Board for both the A. A. A. and Needham, Harper & Steers, Inc., New York; and Mr. William Bernbach, President of Doyle Dane Bernbach, Inc., New York, (who handle the Volkswagen and Avis advertising in the U. S. A.).

A LABOUR OF LOVE

We didn't need an astrologer to tell us, three decades and more ago, that we'd never be the world's most experienced airline, the world's largest, or one with the biggest route mileage. We weren't the first to fly the Atlantic, Lindbergh was never on our payroll, no aircraft manufacturer tailor-made a ship to our specifications, and with bowed head we must admit that India's population continues to exceed our North Atlantic crossings.

My Chairman's grandfather didn't invent an oil drilling tool,* soaked in dollar bills, and his grandson, alas, was no ace in the war that preceded the last one, and as a result, we may have trouble getting rights between New York and Miami!**

Our Head Office in Bombay has not been constructed a hundred storeys high on top of Victoria Terminus, a vast railway station named in memory of a dear Queen of England. And so, unlike ***Mr. Juan Trippe, my Chairman, Mr. Tata, is far removed from the Almighty, and in no position to seek divine aid on how to sell winter space in the Siberian wastes of our New York/London Boeings.

The pioneers, the founders, the strong men, some of whom still head their Corporations, can no longer run their outfits like tribal chieftains or industrial warlords. They can't move without the support and strength of their Government.

And if the Government of the United States can tell their people to be patriotic, to see their country first — and then the rest of the world — in their Flag carriers; if the richest, the most powerful

* Invented by the grandfather of Howard Hughes, TWA'S largest stockholder.

** The reference is to Eddie Rickenbacker, President of Eastern Airlines who operate the very profitable route New York/Miami.

*** Chairman of Pan American Airways.

democracy on earth — yours — can ask its nationals to Fly American — to keep the gold at home, you'll appreciate the pace and the ruthlessness of the competition.

The members of IATA, the International Air Transport Association, total 100 airlines, sell 100,000 seats each day of the year, the swag, clocking seventy million dollars in the same period.

With every nation on earth determined to possess a National Airline, including those the size of a postage stamp, with the same resources in their treasury, the number of seats offered to the public slightly exceeds the demand. In 1964 on the North Atlantic, 5930 aeroplane chairs lacked each day the warmth of the human body. This is the equivalent of 45 large jets operating empty each day of the year. Each night of the 365 is the night of the long knives, for blood is spilled with every empty seat. Chairmen, Presidents and Executive Vice Presidents are as healthy as their load factors. And in recent years, the heads have rolled in major airlines like those of Hitler's aides in the bunkered finale in Berlin. The harbingers of bad news in balance sheets have left the premises with assisted take-off.

And this is because Governments regard their national carriers as parents did their daughters of 18 in days gone by, ripe, round and awfully vulnerable. Not only are prestige and honour at stake, but the financial considerations are considerable. Today, a national airline that loses money, loses both face and shirt. And so airlines are now the concern, not only of the Ministry of Aviation, CAB to you, but also of External Affairs, your Department of State.

And so ladies and gentlemen, we had to face facts when telling the world of our existence. It hasn't always been easy, as I shall endeavour to illustrate.

There were airlines who were much bigger than we were, they were also much longer in the tooth. They all had aeroplanes, commanders, pretty hostesses, sumptuous booking offices, all in excess of ours. Their aircraft were not better than ours, their hostesses not prettier than ours — but their advertising budgets were fatter than ours, so their voices could be heard above ours.

If you have a bank account that is not soft-spoken, the readers of newspapers and magazines can be bludgeoned into being aware of your existence, even if they don't approve of it.

So we've tried to be wistful, we've tried to be gay, we've tried to be different. We've made fun of ourselves, of our chairman, our directors, our countrymen, believing, that by doing so, we could take a few liberties with those we love — our public.

And our Chairman has a sense of humour. And being awfully human himself, and allergic to the straightforward and the obvious, he's given us a great deal of rope, some of which, we find around our neck, and then, bless his heart, he's by our side, scissors in hand.



We have an emblem. It's this. We call him our Maharajah for want of a better description. But his blood isn't blue. He looks like royalty, but he isn't royal. He portrays hospitality and service. We like him, because he's so typically Indian, he can't be copied by the opposition. But that hasn't prevented enterprising countrymen of ours from registering him as their trademark! So we've had to fight for his honour in court.



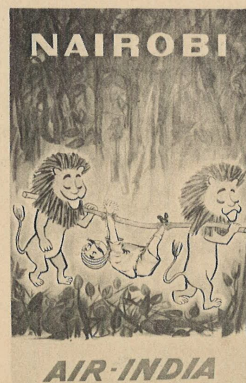
He lends himself to situations. He's capable of entertaining the Queen of England and splitting a bottle of beer with her butler. He's a man of many parts. Lover boy, Sumo wrestler, pavement artist, red Indian, Arab, Chinese, and even pregnant, and he's done it all without turning a hair.

We had a poster with the Mona Lisa painting him! And in his African poster, two lions carried him, his feet tied to a pole, with the four-footed licking their chops.

He's reasonably healthy now, but there have been times in the past, when his pulse beat has caused us concern. Sourpusses in our land denounced him as a relic of the feudal system, an insignia not in keeping with a Corporation, the owners of which are our Government.

We were reminded, that when the country has "kaput" the Maharajahs, Rajahs, Nawabs, Princes and Zamindars, why should this undemocratic symbol portray a false image of our country.

We prayed that reason would prevail, and it is comforting to know that the little fellow has now passed more than muster.



In the old days, before the seats were numbered, the airlines had Seat Occupied cards which you placed on your chair at transit stations. Ours had a coloured drawing showing our Maharajah comfortably ensconced, with a lovely Indian girl sitting happily on his lap — and another young lady — looking on, jealous and irate. The lettering on the card said "A thousand pardons — this seat is occupied".

The Minister for Communications saw this card and wrote to our Head Office — saying that the drawing was against the traditions of Indian womanhood — and we duly received orders to withdraw the card from circulation.

No one bothered to ask dear Indian womanhood how she felt. Given the time, the place and the right partner — who's to say that dunlop cushion, horsehair and springs have no substitute, when the moon is high and the scent of jasmin in the air.

In February of 1960 when our first Boeing was expected to arrive in Bombay on its delivery flight, we had a hoarding at Kemp's Corner, Bombay, which showed our Maharajah in appropriate



feminine attire, sitting on a rocking chair, knitting, with the calm serenity of a woman about to have a new born. The caption was — Can You Keep A Secret?

The British Deputy High Commissioner in Bombay telephoned the British No. 1 of our advertising agency, and the conversation went like this. Like everything else I'm saying today — this is a true story. I say, Fielden, your company handles the Air-India account, yes, was the answer. Then I think it's a pretty poor show. What is — asked Peter Fielden. Your hoarding at Kemp's Corner. It's in awfully bad taste you know. And why do you say so, asked Fielden? Well, you know, who's expecting a child, don't you, commented the Deputy High Commissioner testily, now both impatient and annoyed. No, I don't, was the reply. Well then you should — The Queen is — and I think your ad's in damn poor taste, saying which, Her Majesty's representative in Bombay hung up.

Long years ago when my world was young, our Government, immediately after independence, asked us to take Madame Pandit to Moscow on a special flight, as India's first Ambassador to the USSR. External Affairs, solicitous over the welfare of Mr. Nehru's sister — insisted that she be accompanied by a bodyguard of 3 fierce stalwarts, outsize in gents, in any language. It was a leisurely 5 day

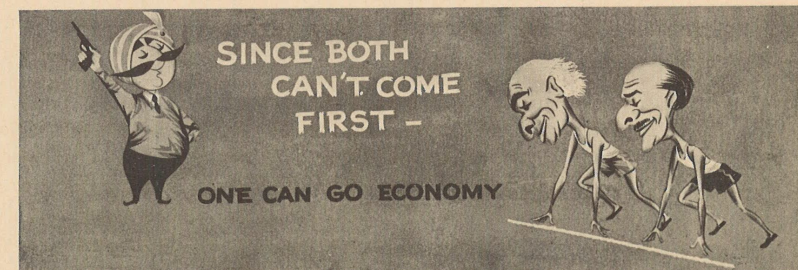
flight via Karachi, Basra, Baghdad, Teheran, Baku and Stalingrad. On arrival at Moscow, the 3 gorillas were carried horizontally out of the plane. Strict vegetarians, no one realised that they hadn't eaten for 5 days and nights!

We received special permission to fly the Indian Flag on the aircraft, because officially, India had yet to receive her independence. At Moscow airport, our Commander was set upon by a gesticulating horde of buxom women who gave him a hero's welcome. Loving and admiring hands stroked and caressed Capt. Gazdar, and this took some time, because Capt. Gazdar was a big man. Hours later we realised they were rummaging customs officers.

The trip was a great success. Madame Pandit, urbane and sophisticated, took to Moscow like a fish to a six mile walk.

All this and more, I faithfully reproduced in a newspaper article on our return to India. Copies found their way to Moscow and Madame Pandit wrote my Chairman a long letter, the gist of which was, that "at a time when our two countries were endeavouring to get close together, Kooka's activities can best be described as those of a scurrilous buffoon."

In February 1962, a most important Parliamentary election took place in Bombay. The contestants being the then Defence Minister of India, and a leading member of the opposition, a one time President of the Congress Party. Our artist put both in sprinting pants, at



the get-set-ready-go stage, spikes and all. The caption was "Since both can't come first, one can go Economy". There was a blinding flash, and we were heard to scream "we've been hit". One of the sprinters was Mr. Krishna Menon, Defence Minister, whose pants, for some unknown reason, the artist drew in the one colour he should have run a mile from — red!

And this is what an irate Menon fan, a Member of Parliament, wrote in the leading newspapers: "I and every self-respecting and patriotic Indian have been shocked and scandalised to see your new poster at Kemp's Corner. We did not know that a National Concern like Air-India could descend to this level of humour in a serious matter like the General Election, and at the expense of a revered leader like Mr. Menon who is the Defence Minister of our country. The choice of the red colour for the running shorts he is made to wear in this cartoon, is only an addition to the current slanders that are being used against the Defence Minister. In view of all this, I seriously request you to immediately withdraw (he split his infinitive) or cover up this poster, otherwise I will be constrained to call upon other patriotic Indians to have it removed.

Please treat the matter as urgent".

And needless to say, I received orders from my Head Office to remove forthwith — or else!

The man who wrote that letter is now my buddy. He made Time magazine, which mentioned me too, so who am I to bear a grudge! He's now the Minister for Tourism in the State of Kashmir. You can help him by telling your friends and relations not to scatter and avoid visiting us at the first whiff of grapeshot.

I met Mr. Krishna Menon a short time ago at Palam Airport, New Delhi. He asked me, "Kooka, in trouble again?". My reply was "not more than usual, Sir", upon which he commented "the trouble is, our Members of Parliament have no sense of humour". I made the appropriate noises.

We had a hoarding at Delhi some time ago. Our artist drew a most lovely Godiva on her usual form of transport. Her flowing

tresses couldn't hide a loveliness that left one breathless. We ran some very blank verse as copy — Were Lady Godiva to ride again, she'd have more sense — she'd take a plane etc.

The Minister was asked if he had seen the Air-India hoarding which showed a naked Indian lady riding a horse. And if so, what the reaction of the Minister was.

There were sighs of relief when the Minister explained that she was not Indian but English, and muted approval, when the Minister added that the lovely creature was a woman of good virtue — who had agreed to remove her Jodhpurs as a barter deal, to secure a reduction in taxation.

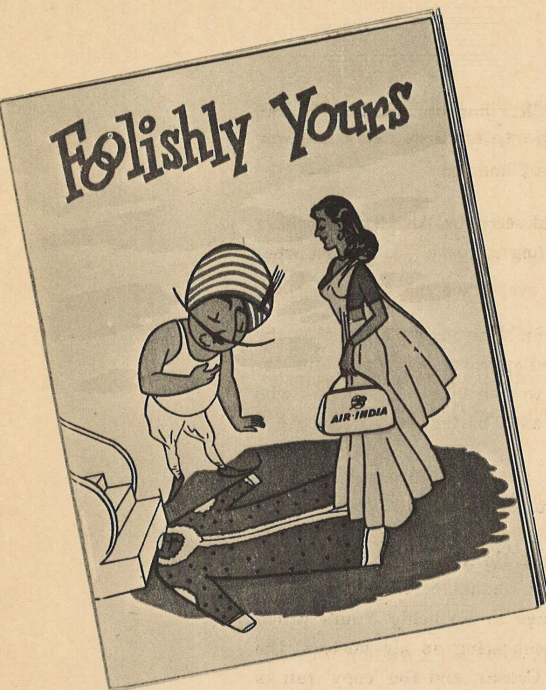
But nevertheless we received orders to obliterate Godiva.

But our critic was not to be silenced. He then asked the Minister whether it was correct that Air-India should portray Indians as thieves. The reference being to a page in Foolishly Yours which showed a rotund Indian passenger embracing an air hostess, the paragraph was titled Rendering unto Caesar, and the 'copy' ran as follows:— "True to the traditions of Eastern hospitality, thy Hostess will embrace thee at destination. It helps your ego ^{and} us ^{to} cut our losses. Whilst you're thanking Providence for the Heaven in your arms...she's recovering our cutlery from your Pockets."



Were Lady Godiva to ride again
She'd have more sense-she'd take a plane
She'd cut her hair-she'd wear the sack
She'd fly a Boeing-there and back!

AIR-INDIA



We duly received orders to make the Indian passenger un-Indian. We changed his cap, ^{removed his dhoti,} ^{put him in trousers} and there was peace, and for us a reduced quantity of honour.

Odd's life. In Bombay the tourist has to get a permit to purchase his liquor, but the Kamasutra, the Hindu book of love is a free for all. It's been the book of the month ever since the first American tourist landed in India!

And the exquisite and exciting, erotic sculptures of Kajuraho, deep in the jungle of Madhya Pradesh, have no red-banner across them.

Poor Godiva belongs to romantic history and not to art, and so her naked loveliness is not permitted the light of day. But the blood-warming reproductions from Kajuraho we could use and no one could say us nay!

You might well ask me gentlemen, what am I waiting for!

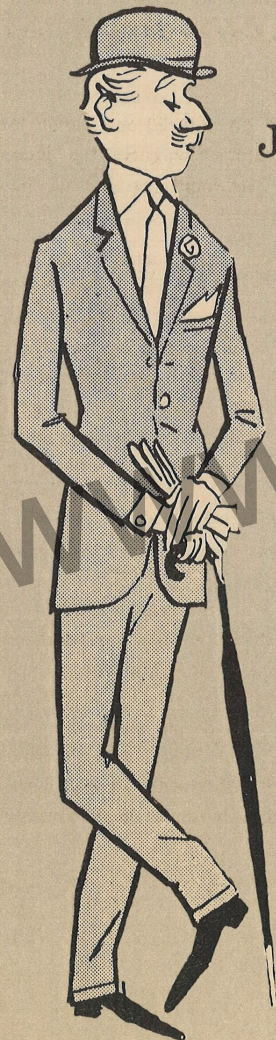
But trouble can also come from unexpected quarters. Some time ago, we ran a series of ads depicting a bowler-hatted, cavalry-moustached Englishman carrying gloves, tightly wrapped umbrella, ~~4-buttoned~~ jacket and drain pipe trousers. The copy talked, clipped nonsense about the Cholmondeley family's ties with India.

Everything was fine until we received a letter from our Manager at Singapore, telling us that an Englishman walked into his office, announced himself as Cholmondeley and threatened to sue us forthwith unless we stopped this series. He stated that there were only four Cholmondeleys in the world, and wanted to know how we had managed to secure his photograph, since the drawing in our ads

resembled him more than superficially. To make matters worse, our Manager admitted he looked the spitting image of our Cholmondeley.

Our solicitors quoted chapter and verse from a case in the House of Lords and warned us of the hazards of involuntary libel.

We buried the Cholmondeley series.



Jolly Good Company

...the Compaign. For us Cholmondeleys.
East India Co., John Co., John Kampani,
and all that. '57...all finished.

Cholmondeleys all over the place.
Henry John C., reprimanded for riding
Skinner's horse. Augustus Fortescue C.,
acfin' Jancy in Jhansi. Octavius James C.,
acclaimed Mouse of the Punjab.

But no Compaign. No prospects.
Went home. Couldn't stand it. Went back.
Couldn't keep away from India.

Who can? Not me.
Forever flyin' back to the dear old place.
Another jolly good company this Air-India.
Essence of Indian hospitality and what-
have-you. Service rates the best chitti.
Eatin's fabulous. As a
Cholmondeley one expects
things to be pukka.
And they are. On Air-India.



AIR-INDIA



Our troubles have not all been indigenous. We recently won a world competition for airlines posters. It featured our Maharajah dressed as a suspicious looking Frenchman-cum-beret, his jacket slyly open, revealing post-cards of our Maharajah as himself. The caption was "Psst — Naughty Pictures!"

It wasn't long before we heard from the Ministry of Cultural Affairs, the Louvre, Paris. "I was very badly surprised as a French Citizen to see that an Air-India poster inviting Indians to visit Paris advertises for "nasty pictures", which is not a sympathetic way to represent a country. Furthermore, this poster is presented in a very American style which is far from the truth, as if the erotic sculptures of Kajuraho were to represent all by themselves the Indian art. All the French people from my group and others met in India were sad to see such an awkward publicity. Awaiting your reply".

I'd like to quote one more example of French laissez faire.

We had a poster on Paris, and the letter I read was from the Head of the French Department at Osmania University, Hyderabad: "Your poster induces travel to Paris by Air-India. The word "Paris" is drawn in such a way that it represents female legs in different dancing positions. As a Frenchman, I was deeply shocked by this limited way of summing up my Capital. This poster was not meant to be insulting, but it is not uncommon to associate France with a sort of amorous background. It would be better to avoid stressing

the myth of France, the country of Love and of gay Paris. I would appreciate if you could help destroying myths by deciding to discard this poster on Paris".

P.S. I could suggest the following ideas for a new poster on Paris—

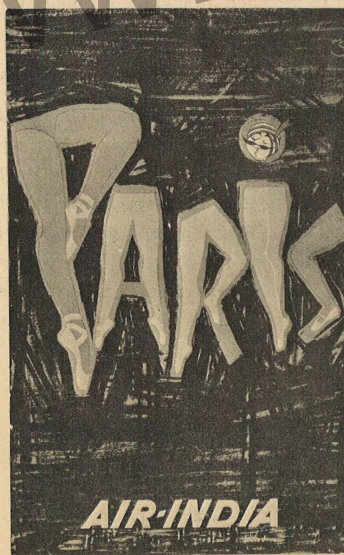
- (a) The Eiffel Tower
- (b) Notre Dame de Paris
- (c) The Castles of the Loire
- (d) Montmartre, the Centre for French Painters
- (e) Versailles.

He certainly used his imagination!

The letter is on schedule. The snake charmers of India, the Italian organ grinder and monkey, the can-can dancers of France, the belly dancers of Egypt, the restaurant keepers of Greece — the rickshaw pullers of China — they're all embarrassments, all unwanted, hide 'em in the closet quick we have a visitor.

Forgetting of course, that all this is what the visitor wants to see, and not your Five-Year Plans, your Export Figures, your Hydro-Electric Dams and your Milk Colonies all of which Joe Doakes has back home, King's size.

And after 6 hours of Versailles or the Louvre, few men wouldn't settle for the legs Lautree loved to see!



We fared no better with Greece. In Foolishly Yours, we had a paragraph which began — "Mistrust Nick the Greek when he brings you gifts, but remember, we're different."

It wasn't long before our Vice Chairman received a letter from the Greek Ambassador to New Delhi, in which the diplomat bemoaned the fact that Air-India should ridicule his countrymen, inspite of the close ties of friendship and goodwill that prevailed between his country and ours.

Who were we to tell him, that the wooden horse was not our idea, and furthermore, that Alexander the Great and his hordes did not enter India in 325 B. C. with tourist visas.

But of course, we were asked to remove the offending lines.

For our Nairobi baggage label we had the Maharajah rubbing noses with a delightful African Chief — complete with spear, shield, a lovely smile and enough clothing to get by. It wasn't long before an African dignitary wrote in to ask if we couldn't conceive of a more fitting description of emerging Africa.





And Israel was no different. This is what Naomi Robinowick of Hayarden St., Tel Aviv, wrote to say: "Is it true or conducive to the brotherhood of man, to have such stereotyped caricatures of Jews in your little booklet depicting bargaining? Otherwise my flight was satisfying in every way".

I have not replied to her, but I am going to. I shall say to her, "Naomi, my dear, you know as well as I do, that haggling is the oldest pastime in the world. Kings do it. Prime Ministers do it. Big business does it. The east loves it, and would be sick and forlorn if you banned it — for it is a way of life. When you go to a discount house, what are you doing, Naomi? Of course you're haggling — ask the retail shops! And if the figures on Page 8 of our booklet have skull caps, long noses and garments reaching down to their ankles, tell me — are these the monopoly of the 12 tribes of Israel? You've been to the Muski in Cairo, and the bazaars of Basra, Baghdad and a hundred other cities of Middle Asia. Come, come, Naomi — I'll haggle with you any day of the week!

How comforting it was to realise then, that there was one country with a sense of humour that never died — England. A poster we had on London depicted row upon row, of black-suited, bowler-hatted, heavily overcoated, grim, old men, reading The Times. They might have been waiting for their bus or underground, or just waiting for the weather to clear. It wasn't long before the General Manager, Mr. Lickorish, of the British Travel and Holidays Association, wrote to our London Office.

"Our Manager in Australia has drawn my attention to a poster published by Air-India headed 'London' and depicting a group of bowler-hatted Englishmen standing behind a symbolical figure reading The Times, which paper has a headline 'London Smogbound'. Apparently this poster has been distributed in Australia, where it is our interest to attract visitors to Britain at all times of the year. We do have an agreement with all the other National Tourist Boards, that international travel promotion should be positive, and should not include unfavourable references to any particular country. I would be grateful if you would consider this matter and particularly the suitability of distributing this poster outside Britain".

We were silly not to realise that Mr. Lickorish was on a ticklish wicket, selling England.....with emigration to Australia hitting a new high!

But all these were pleasantries compared to what happened to us in the German part of Switzerland — Zurich, to be exact.



*The Gth. Uelwa - learned
1) elevation to 30,000 ft. in 10
inner
concentration
and
dissociation
from
disturbing
external
influences.*

Last year, our advertising agents on the Continent of Europe thought it would be a good idea to appeal to the intense, fanatical, devotees of yoga, by running an ad in which a turbaned sikh, with piercing eyes and beard the colour of night, told his audience "I can teach you the secret of levitation." It appeared all over Switzerland. The copy had four paragraphs, two of which I quote.

1. **step or Hatha Yoga:** The way to inner equilibrium by dissociation from all disturbing exterior influences. This step of my method elevates you 10,000 meters above the earth where isolation from car queues, machine noises and telephone bells is guaranteed.

2. **step or Karma Yoga:** The way to inner extasis or "entasis" by interhuman relations. In this step of Manager Yoga — which still takes place at a height of 10,000 meters — you are approached by graceful, soft-eyed Indian girls in saris of green and gold, who start to smooth away the wrinkles of sorrow which might still remain on your forehead.

The interesting thing about this whole affair, is the fact that our European Director had certain doubts about the reaction of the German speaking people of Switzerland to the German translation of this particular ad. He, therefore, went back to our advertising agent and asked him to change the German text. The agent, a fanatic himself, had his own views on when to obey his client, and so, the ad appeared in its original form. And although it was winter, where we were concerned, Zurich was 120 degrees in the shade!

Our offices were besieged day after day with telephone calls and callers and streams of vitriolic letters were received from the German speaking canton. They called us names we'd never heard of. They swore never to fly Air-India. We were accused of having disgraced our country. We were told that true yoga was for the West a message of High, Holy feelings from the ancient land of India, a message which went back thousands of years into history.

I can sum up the emotions in these letters by reproducing the 4 lines received from Hermann Joder to our Zurich Manager.

Regarding your ad in today's issue of Neue Zuercher Zeitung, your disgusting advertisement "Manager-Yoga" could not be worse, Vivekananda would most probably have given the correct reply to this. I can only say — be ashamed, you bastard!



"I can teach
you the secret of
levitation."

By Sardar Chhatarpal Singh Khurana

Remember the rope trick? It is typical of the traditional Indian approach to levitation — the art of floating or defying gravity. A more formidable challenge is the levitation of humans. A group of my compatriots has devoted to this task for the past 32 years, and by now they have actually practised upon millions of persons. Levitations of approximately 150 people at a time to a height of 32,000 feet are by now regarded as normal.

Far from causing discomfort, the technique rather induces a state of mind that can best be described as euphoric. This sensation is increased by the presence of attractive, art-clothed Indian maidens. Succumbing to the obvious commercial implications of our achievement, we began to issue (pardon the expression) tickets. You may obtain one from your travel agent by specifying

AIR-INDIA

Daily to New York. Daily to the East. Air-India Airways fly westwards daily for New York, 10 eastwards daily to Bombay — continuing from there to Australia or to Bangkok, Hong Kong and Tokyo. Air-India serves the following cities in Europe: Paris, Frankfurt, Geneva, Rome and Prague. Also convenient connecting flights from all other major European cities to London. See your IATA Travel Agent or your local Air-India office.

If any of you are interested in Yoga, read what the Encyclopaedia Britannica has to say. I quote an extract from this noble tome:

"This requires an intense development of the will, so that all the automatic processes of the body are brought fully under the control of the mind, and the Yogi can control the rhythm of his heart beats at will, live for days without food and water, and survive for an appreciable length of time even without breathing"

Were we relieved to see this! Our conscience was off the hook. That bright boy who refused to change the German text was still running around with his flag up.....he was available for hire.

It was a great consolation to know that he could live for days without food or water!

Once upon a time, when it was not a crime to be rich, with you, dear listeners, now perhaps the only exception on earth, the potentes we flew, would charter our aircraft, for to fly as an ordinary passenger was worse than death. It was non-U.

At the end of the flight, the VVIP would bestow upon the Commander, the kind of loot, Drake and Raleigh brought home to their Virgin Queen.

The old Aga Khan and the Nizam of Hyderabad presented wondrous ware to our captains.

And so, when Chou En lai chartered our aircraft, in the days when chop suey was our national dish, all in Air-India were sick with envy at what his captain would collect.

And the likely heir to the throne of massive China, was pleased to present his commander with a History of the Fight of the Peoples of China against Tyranny, appropriately bound in pigskin!

Tell me, have you observed the insignias of the airlines? They're good for character reading.* The abundance of eagles is significant. Now an eagle, you'll agree, can be made to look benign without resembling the dove. But this bird of prey, when an emblem of an airline, is frightening to behold.

Then there are dragons — amphibious at that; winged tigers if you please, one airline goes the whole hog, with a tiger shark — jaws-a-dripping with blood. Predators all, I'm convinced that with the violent changes in top Management, fresh orders are issued to the art department, to make the eyes of the eagle more cruel, the talons even longer — the beak well and truly honed — that sales be snatched from the mouths of babes and sucklings,

But don't be beguiled by the show of innocence on the part of the crafty ones. Pegasus, albeit beautiful, could, I am sure, kick like a mule when required. The Shamrock, what sweet-scented malarkey do the leaves contain? And the Sea Horse has teeth carnivora would be proud of, and the Goose, weighing all of 12 pounds, could conceivably mistake you for the gent's room.

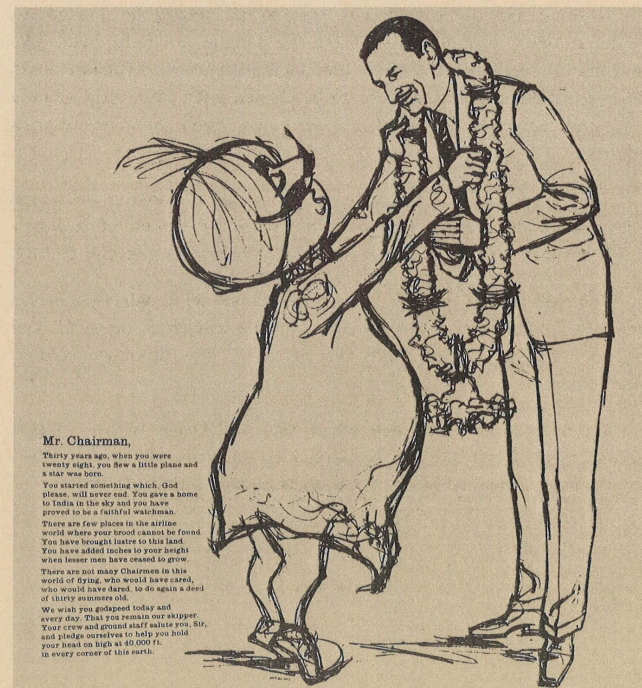
* South African Airways have the Pegasus, Aer Lingus, the Shamrock, Air France, the Sea Horse, Canadian Pacific have the Goose, Middle East Airlines the Cedars of Lebanon, BOAC, the Speedbird. The reference is to BOAC's advertisement in Time and Newsweek with Marlene Dietrich reclining in a VC-10 chair.

And as for the dear Cedars of Lebanon — where is witchcraft if not in the woods?

And finally, for sheer contrast, the little speedbird now sits in a corner, sobbing its heart out. And a deep-throated female voice, with a slight Germanic accent, consoles it with the words.

Never wanted to
What am I to do
I can't help it.

I have a Chairman. He started this airline. He flew the first service in 1932. And 3 years ago, when we were 30, he decided to re-enact his inaugural flight. We scoured the land for a De Havilland Puss Moth, and finally located one that had no zest for flying. Loving hands made her whole again, for her burden was precious to us. There were those who said — surely there are other ways of getting rid of a Chairman! But Mr. Tata is still in one piece, and to him I owe gratitude, for he has allowed us great latitude and Christian charity.



Mr. Chairman,

Thirty years ago, when you were twenty eight, you flew a little plane and a star was born.

You started something which God please, will never end. You gave a home to India in the sky and you have proved to be a faithful watchman.

There are few places in the airline world where your brood cannot be found. You have brought lustre to this land. You have added inches to your height when lesser men have ceased to grow. There are not many Chairmen in this world of flying, who would have cared, who would have dared, to do again a deed of thirty summers old.

We wish you godspeed today and every day. That you remain our skipper. Your crew and ground staff salute you, Sir, and pledge themselves to help you hold your head on high at 40,000 ft. in every corner of this earth.

This advertisement is a small token of gratitude, respect and regard for a Chairman, from those in Air-India, who are privileged to work for him.

Time and again, we've involved him. I'm using the royal plural, for I'd hate to take all the credit! Ambassadors, Ministers and Secretaries to Government have written to him, often in sorrow, sometimes in anger.

All of us know that the advertising image of a product is as interesting or as lethal as the Chairman of that Corporation. Having heard so much about William Bernbach, and now having met him, I'd give a lot to take a look at Mr. Avis and Mr. Volkswagen, for isn't good advertising like making love, — a partnership?

And if I have said the obvious, tell me, why are these two campaigns singled out, talked of, discussed, admired and treated as exceptional?

If more than half the world's advertising is dull, uninspired and forgettable, is this not a fair description of the men who sit at the head of the product company!

May I be permitted to say that the prose in 'copy', so seldom sees the stars. The goose pimples are just not there. You don't read the words again and again, with a glow within you.

A story has to be told, but the words should be looked at, pondered over, weighed, rolled on the tongue, lovingly held, like precious stones, one at a time, just as the master craftsman seeks the perfect setting. Each piece to be chosen with care, as a woman selects her perfume, her jewellery, her gown, when she goes out with her man.

There's precious little wine in the general cooking of words and a preponderance of starch. They're in too much of a hurry to tell their dreary tale, in too much of a hurry to ask you to buy.

Commercial art has an odour for those who call themselves artists. Ask 'a name' to write copy, and he will cross himself! And so copy writers, remain, like the grave of the unknown soldier, anonymous.

Maybe a time will come when this will cease to be. When famous men of letters, will be persuaded to write the poetry that 'copy' could conceivably be, with their name inscribed below.

Would this result in less noise from the cash register? I am not so sure.

And now I come to the end of my story. I am grateful to King Harris for inviting me to Pebble Beach, with so much charm and so much kindness.

For me this has been a wonderful experience, for I have come to school and I have come to church.

I have learned a great deal and I have heard words of wisdom from men who were names of fame to me. For me it has been a labour of love.

I pay my homage to the great country that is America. In war and peace, may he, who sits in the left hand seat, give you courage and wisdom.

I am grateful to you for listening to me and I thank you for being such a generous audience.



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