

DISCUSSION

The discussion following Upendra Baxi's presentation of his paper, *Violence, Dissent and Development*, centered on the nature of violence in India, and the inherent conflict between Indian violence and the Gandhian philosophy. One participant argued that in spite of Gandhian philosophy, India is indeed a violent society. Lawyers, he said, must be interested in finding a solution which eliminates that violence. He felt that Baxi, in his presentation, had only identified problems and had not proposed solutions. What sort of laws should be enacted? If we pose the problem as Baxi had, then law becomes virtually useless.

Another discussant argued that the fundamental difficulty with Baxi's paper was that he promised, but did not provide a structural analysis. This participant asserted that most governments want repression without violence. This may happen, but Baxi had not outlined the conditions which are necessary for it to occur.

A question was raised with regard to the extent to which historical experiences in other countries might provide us with some insight into what may ultimately occur in India. To what extent is violence used as the quick solution? Is there a trade off involved between the need for rapid change and the desire to avoid non-violent action?

Discussion subsequently focused on the theory of change in history. Is change episodic and aberrational or is it structural and predictable? Baxi had provided a framework for change and violence. Is this realistic? The debate ended with this issue unresolved.