

Ramblings Of A Pakistani In New York

ONE of the most remarkable of cities and the largest in the world—New York does not only boast of the biggest in everything numerically, but they also have Wall Street, the Financial Capital of the World; the Empire State Building—the highest in the world, 102 storeys high—and the biggest theatre in the world, The Radio City Music Hall which has 6,200 seats. The population of New York City alone exceeds the entire population of many of the other states put together.

The Waterfront is 650 miles long and its piers can berth as many as 400 ships at a time. There are 236 miles of subways and 523 miles of bus routes, 5,449 miles of mains and pipelines carry into the city one billion gallons of water daily, even the traffic lights must be the most, there seemed one too many as you do nothing but stare at them on the roads saying STOP,

WALK — all the time blink, blink.

ONE likes to be lost in thoughts while walking but at every street crossing you are disturbed by these lights and some years back the statistics were there are 17,800 traffic lights in New York City. . . . You cannot help but become statistics-minded in America; everything American I find very easy to catch their virus, their accent.

Back home we just forget to pronounce our R's and here you can't go on eating your R's as there are so many tasty looking, nutritious things to eat all the time. Their music is catchy, their style of writing, reading answering the phone, singing their commercials . . . all very easy.

Trained Voices

BACK home you can remember one voice from another on the phone; here the trained voices of the telephone operators, receptionists, secretaries and every single girl you talk to on the phone working at different

offices and schools have the same mass produced tone. It is a wonder how the men don't make blunders over the phone with their dates, I mean the girl friends;

Most New Yorkers recognise people from the so-called underdeveloped countries when they see them, but with a war on they realised that there was a country called Pakistan, too, and that every sari-clad woman was not an Indian!

They are continuously surprised by the fact that we know an international language besides our national language and the sign language.

They wondered which country was less underdeveloped between Pakistan and India, but having met us they would have no doubts left except, of course, if they had visited the Indian pavilion at the World's Fair, (they had spent so much displaying everything that was manufactured in their country that they forgot to grow enough grain at home.) But then the

Pakistan pavilion looked about as impressive as ex-Premier Shastri before President Ayub Khan.

Jack In The Box

NEW YORK is like a Jack in The box— you do not know what surprise is going to pop out next. We started apartment hunting on arriving here and a movie . . . no, sorry, they are not in the news anymore . . . a T.V. star had so many apartments she didn't know what to do with. So she was going to rent it to us for a small fee, especially when you think of the conveniences the apartment offered.

It had an electric door opener, electric watch, electric frig, electric can opener, electric cooker dish washer, an electric elevator took us to the 40th storey and an electric escalator took our car to the 4th storey in the garage which opened up the sub-way station, which would run an electric sub-way to any part of New York.

Well, we thought our luck was still with us. First a trip to New York and now this fabulous apartment for something within our budget. . . . we would sign the lease the next morning. We didn't know that the night be-

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Adventures In New York

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fore the morning of the day after was going to change our lives.

Biggest Blackout

THE biggest city in the world had the biggest blackout in its history! People were left suspended on the 90th storey of the Empire State Building seeing each other instead of the most

beautiful view on earth.

People were left dangling on the escalators, crouched or straphanging in the subways; the claustrophobians three levels underground in the subway stations; the meekest executive with the most ravishing secretaries atop the skyscrapers, the most jealous wife left alone with her imagination as massive as the blackout; the henpecked husband could sneak off back to town right from the corner of his home with the best alibi for a free night's fun; a night when the poor overused television sets got the first paid leave . . . they were about to form a union . . .

Talking of unions, the second Jack popped out of the box a few days back. The Transit Workers' Union is on strike paralysing the city's business what with its four million workers commuting to work in the 8,756 trains which make 27,000 trips every twenty hours.

The new Mayor of New York City who stepped into this mess a few hours later has all the support of the people and, as requested by him, they stayed away from work, they walked to work, or they came four in an automobile instead of one.

I think it must be a very brave man who even considered running for the Mayoral seat, though I am told that the Mayor of New York City is "an office of executive proportions second only to

the Presidency of the United States".

If for nothing else then at least for the new Mayor who seems a very promising man I hope that the Mayor comes out with flying colours against the uncouth angry old head of the Transit Workers' Union.

Cold, Selfish. . . .

THE New Yorker, every stranger is warned—all the young girls and men who come to seek their fortune in this opportunity laden city, will tell—is a cold selfish, pampered person who only thinks of himself even as though every produce of daily consumption is made specially for him, but boy, you get the biggest surprise when you see he always has a smile for the foreigner, warm interest in his country, never leaves without wishing you good luck, and in time of crisis riss to the occasion!

Like a child who appreciates his devoted mother and instead of becoming a spoilt brat returns the devoted years by rising to the occasion in need, the New Yorkers have shown marvellous self-discipline, generosity, patience, perseverance, wisdom and unity in all their crises.

Besides the Radio and Television personnel and the try personnel every single New Yorker has worked with efficiency and calmness in these major crises in the Jack in The Box City.