

## One Year Of Failure

by Dinu Randive

IN April 1957 Kerala made history and eyes of political observers all over the world were turned on that tiny problem State of the Indian Union. Communists came to power securing 35% of the total votes polled. This accession to power through ballot box was an unprecedented event in the history of world Communism. It took place with the help of the so-called "bourgeois constitution" which they had sworn to wreck.

It was a surprise to the Communists themselves and the confusion amongst them was worse confounded. Why this confusion? The Communist Party was paying so much attention to Kerala that it had issued a special manifesto for that State giving their panacea for all the intractable problems of the State. But they never expected that they would be called upon to form a Ministry and would have to work within the democratic framework of the Constitution. They were not mentally prepared for it.

On assuming power, the Chief Minister E. M. S. Namboodiripad reiterated that his Ministry would stand firm by the Party Manifesto and that it would work on the basis of public opinion in the State. But the executive head of the Communist Party of India, Ajoy Ghosh, declared that Communist rulers of Kerala would implement the Congress programme! Another senior leader of the party, S. A. Dange, declared that "the people in Kerala were fed up with corruption and mal-administration and, therefore, the Communist Ministry would try to be a fitting reply to this state of affairs." Namboodiripad, though aware of the limits of the Constitution, wanted to "bend the Indian Constitution at its elastic points" to give the Keralaites a clean administration and improve their living conditions.

Judging from all developments in Kerala during the last twelve months against this background even staunch supporters of the Communist regime are bound to feel disappointed. None expected spectacular results within such a short span of time. But what has happened under the Red regime drives one to the conclusion that all the tall talk of the Communists of welfare of the people has turned out to be hollow and the high hopes it had created in the minds of political innocents have been belied. One expected that the Reds would work with care and efficiency, since many in the world were watching this novel

experiment of "constitutional" and "democratic" communism and co-existence, but the Communists have failed miserably!

The Communists appeared to be so impatient to emancipate the masses that they began their rule with an Ordinance staying all eviction proceedings against squatters on private as well as Government land. This Ordinance on the face of it appeared quite beneficial but it was essentially a political manoeuvre. All the squatters on any piece of land for any period of time prior to the proclamation of the Ordinance were to be treated as protected. But just two or three days prior to the proclamation of the Ordinance, quite mysteriously, people on a very large scale had encroached on Government lands. Most of them were activists or sympathisers of the ruling party. It is quite obvious that a word about the Ordinance was passed on to the ruling party workers in advance which enabled them to take the maximum advantage of the provisions made in the Ordinance.

Even after the proclamation of the Ordinance it was not enforced impartially. Forty families occupying Government lands in the suburbs of town Chavara, were given notice to vacate them in the public interest. Many people, including women and children, were arrested, their huts were demolished rendering them homeless, and cases were registered against them. No public interest could have been served by this action. The only sin of those poor people was that they were followers of an opposition party led by Shri Shrikantan Nair, a former M.P.

The Communists made another gesture at the beginning of their regime and released many political prisoners. Many of them were Communist Party workers who were imprisoned for their insurrectionary and violent activities, like murder of police officers, attacks on police stations and police men during the period when the Communist Party was engaged in an underground violent movement. Many criminals undergoing imprisonment got advantage of the remission of jail sentences and the pending cases against many others were withdrawn. It is alleged that most of them were Communists. This large scale release of prisoners who had been convicted after due processes of law naturally shook people's confidence in the rule of law and it had its adverse impact on the law and order situation in the State. The forces of violence and revolt were given a new lease of life which only resulted in endangering public peace and tranquility in the State. Added to this, Communist Party workers in the first flush of their enthusiasm started taking law and order into their hands and committed many excesses against their political opponents.

The police were abused and neutralised by Communists as a result of which the field was left free for Communists and their sympathisers to indulge in unbridled acts of hooliganism against their opponents. Few months ago the Secretary of the Kerala Communist Party had to admit publicly the prevalence of lawlessness in the State. He even offered to refer all cases of alleged violence to an impartial inquiry committee, but to this date no such inquiry has been instituted in spite of the repeated allegations of increasing violence by Communist workers.

This partiality and party interference in the administration and other fields have plagued the State since the beginning of the regime. This has many evil repercussions and the chief among them is the insecurity that is threatening its social and political life. Law and order situation is far from satisfactory. There are many cases of beating or assault on political workers, of violent clashes between different political groups—mostly Communist and non-Communist, and in many places there is an evidence of mounting tension. There are repeated allegations of increasing lawlessness and crime in the State—especially in plantation areas. Political murders are on the increase. Even the Law Minister of the State had to admit in the State Assembly that crime in Kerala has increased during the past one year and that “political differences and land disputes are among the causes contributing to the rise in the crime.” Cell courts are not just political propaganda. Communists are striving to assert their power especially in rural areas. Photostat copies of writs and summonses issued by cell courts have been published by some of the papers in Kerala and even the Law Minister was forced to admit that a few specific instances of cell courts were brought to the Government’s notice. Lawlessness and indiscipline are most widespread in plantation areas and the United Planters’ Association of South India has more than once issued official statements listing specific instances of violence, threats, unruly behaviour and criminal trespass in plantation areas. It would, of

course, be an exaggeration to say that law and order have broken down in the State. But all the same, systematic attempts are being made at loosening the fabric of law and order and strengthening the Communist Party by all cunning devices, and to undermine and destroy overtly and covertly all democratic values and conventions.

Being unable to curb the mounting unrest, the Communist Government has sought refuge in repressive measures. Severe lathi charges have occurred not less than six times during the year. There are many other instances where police have used force in a “masculine manner,” to quote the Kerala Law Minister. Failure to stem the tide of rising discontent has bred intolerance. The Communist Ministers are now openly asserting in the Assembly that their Government “is not allergic to the use of force.” The Law Minister unequivocally stated in the State Assembly: “We must and will use force—lathis or even worse tear gas or firearms if necessary.” Gone are the days when the Communist would accuse a ruling party of brutally suppressing mass movements. Now it is their turn to do that. There is no longer the sweet tone of appeasement towards opposition parties. On the contrary opposition parties are being accused day in and day out of pursuing a “deliberate policy of provoking clashes with the police to expose the present Government,” or making efforts to “discredit and oust” the Communist Government. Not only that. The Communist Ministers have now devised a new category of political crime. Opposition parties are branded as “enemies of the State.” Similarly Communist leaders have adopted their own Salami tactics to divide the opposition by crudely exploiting social tensions. They have undertaken measures calculated to create hatred among communities. Their main target for the present is the Catholic Christian community which constitutes a substantial minority in the State and which is a thorn in their flesh. The Education Bill was primarily intended to bring Christian missionary schools under Government management. Soon after passing of the Bill the Government came out with an eight-year-old police report of the Sabarimala Temple-burning Enquiry Committee wherein vandalism by some Christian has been hinted at. This report was published just before the time when several lakhs of Hindu pilgrims were on their way to their holy shrine Sabarimala! And now the Christopher organisation is under constant fire. The Christophers are being dubbed as a menace to Kerala. Vague charges of hatching insurrectionary plots are being levelled against them and even their loyalty to the country is being openly questioned by Communist Ministers in the State Assembly!

The Communists have proved most vulnerable where they were least expected. Corruption, both at individual and party level, has become all pervasive and surprisingly many of the Ministers are directly involved in corruption cases. There is the Andhra rice deal in which names of the top ranking communist MPs and party dignitaries are being openly mentioned. There are cases of Ministers and their supporters by-passing

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# Communist Party Of India— A Transformation?

by V. B. Karnik

**I**T is being incessantly propagandised by the spokesmen and other apologists of the Communist Party of India that the organisation is undergoing a transformation. It is being represented that the Party is assuming the shape and colour of an ordinary political party and will hereafter work in the country like other political parties in a peaceful and constitutional manner. Kerala is being held forth as an example—and it is suggested that, learning from that example, the Party as a whole will now eschew the path of violence and revolutionary action and rely on parliamentary methods and the ballot box for the attainment of its goal of socialism.

The Party is in the process of adopting a new constitution. A draft was prepared last year. It was going to be formally adopted in January at a special conference. But it encountered some difficulties and State conferences could not be held in time to secure their prior approval. The special conference was therefore postponed to April 1958. During the last couple of months a number of State conferences were held to discuss the draft and it is clear from the resolutions that were adopted in those conferences that the special conference will be held as scheduled and that the Party will be given the new constitution prepared for it by its leaders. It is this new constitution which is regarded as a positive proof of the transformation that is taking place in the Party. The draft of the constitution as finally approved by the Central Committee is published in a recent issue of *New Age*, the weekly journal of the Party.

According to the new constitution the basic objective of the Party is defined as "socialism through peaceful means". The inclusion of the clause "through peaceful means" has astonished many. Some of them have construed it to mean that the Communists have now abandoned violence and that they would hereafter resort only to peaceful and lawful means. The General Secretary of the Party did not, however, allow them to harbour that illusion too long. In the course of a speech in Vijayawada he warned those wishful thinkers that "the peaceful transformation also depended on the ruling party." Explaining the position, he said: "Extremely reactionary circles when confronted with the danger of losing power might attack democratic forms of government and try to establish a Fascist regime." He added, "Such moves will be resisted." Significantly enough he did not add "through peaceful means." The position therefore is that the Communist Party has to imagine and assert that extremely reactionary circles are trying to establish a Fascist regime and the way will be open to the Communists to resort to other than peaceful means.

The General Secretary, Mr. Ajoy Ghosh made a similar statement at a special conference of the West

Bengal Party held in Calcutta from January 28 to 31. As reported in the party journal *New Age*, he stressed the point that "the nature of the transition, peaceful or otherwise, would depend in the main on the attitude taken by the bourgeoisie." The meaning of the statement is very clear. It is that, if non-communist parties and organisations, which in communist parlance are "the bourgeoisie", will hand over power to the communists on a platter, they will not fight and will be very peaceful. But if they choose to be not so obliging, then naturally the Communists cannot guarantee that the transition will not be otherwise than peaceful. The "peaceful means" are not therefore a matter of conviction or creed or policy, but is just a matter of tactic. If one can get one's objective peacefully, who would like to resort to force or violence to attain it?

Mr. Asoka Mehta hit the nail on the head when he pointed out that even Hitler came to power through peaceful and constitutional means but that after coming to power he made it impossible for any other party to exist and vote him out of power. The crucial question therefore is, as pointed out by him, whether after coming to power through peaceful and constitutional means, Communists would be prepared to be voted out of office. The record of the communist ministry in Kerala, he explained, did not hold out any hope in that direction. In other countries the record is much more explicit. As soon as the Communists get into power, they destroy all other political parties and organisations. They drown in torrents of blood all attempts to unseat them. If the attempt is very vigorous, they do not mind even inviting foreign troops to suppress the people's revolt. What happened in Hungary in November 1956 provides an object lesson.

Another fact which is seized upon in support of the theory that the Communist Party is undergoing a transformation is its reported decision to develop itself as a mass party and to abolish the cell system. As has been pointed out by the General Secretary of the Party, Ajoy Ghosh, in his article "Towards A Mass Communist Party" in *New Age*, there is nothing new in the Communist Party trying to be a mass party. He says, "in every country and in all stages of development the Communists have considered a mass party the essential condition for revolution." He has mentioned in that connection the decision taken by the Bolsheviks as early as 1912 of "transforming the party of cadres into a real mass workers' party". So long the Communist Party of India was a small organisation. It now proposes to expand itself and become a mass party. That makes the Party more dangerous and not less.

The decision to abolish the cell system is not of much significance. A party counting its members in

laks cannot be organised on the basis of cells. That is why, according to the new constitution, the primary unit of the Party will be a Branch organised on a territorial basis. It has provided, however, that "a Branch may be divided into Groups of convenient sizes." A "Group" may be another name for a cell. Whatever, however, the name, the primary unit does not enjoy any rights in the communist organisation. It has always to obey the directives from the top and has only to serve as a recruiting ground. Article XXVI, Clause 8 of the constitution makes the position amply clear. The first function of the Branch is defined as "to carry out the directives of the higher committee". Other functions are to win the masses, to build up mass organisations, to organise sale of party journals, to collect membership fees, and to help the "higher committees in day-to-day organisational and educational work." Another important function is "to draw in sympathisers and militants in the Party and educate them."

The constitution has made it clear that the party is organised in accordance with the principles of "Democratic Centralism." Article XIV has given the following elucidation of democratic centralism: "Democratic Centralism means, central leadership based on the full inner-party democracy and inner-party democracy under the guidance of centralised leadership." Clause B of sub clause 1 provides the following further elucidation: "(b) the minority shall carry out the decisions of the majority; the lower Party organisations shall carry out the decisions and directives of the higher Party organisation or committee; the individual shall subordinate himself to the will of the collective. All Party organs shall carry out the decisions and directives of the Party Congress, and of the National Council". Elections throughout the organisation are indirect except in the case of the primary unit, the outgoing group of officers always possessing the right of proposing for election a panel of candidates prepared by it. The leadership also enjoys the right of refusing to renew the membership of any member. The membership in the party is subject to annual renewal. The provision for annual renewal of membership cards places enormous power in the hands of the National, Provincial and District leadership; it can, at its will, refuse to renew the membership of dissident elements.

The General Secretary, Ajoy Ghosh, has been at pains to point out that, even after the adoption of the new constitution and even after becoming a mass party, the Communist Party will not become just an ordinary political party. He has issued a stern warning to his members against the tendency towards the obliteration of those features which demarcate a communist party from the parties of the bourgeoisie, the petty bourgeoisie and the parties of social democracy. It should be clear from this that even after the so-called transformation the Communist Party will continue to retain all its special features which have so long demarcated it from all other legal and constitutional political parties.

The Preamble of the constitution throws a flood of light on the character of the Party. It has made clear that the Party is guided by the philosophy and

the fundamental principles of Marxism-Leninism. The Preamble states further: "Working out its policies on the basis of concrete Indian conditions, the Communist Party draws on the rich experience of the International Working Class Movement, extending over more than 100 years, on the experience of the Soviet Union, China and all countries of People's Democracy as well as of all Communist and Workers' Parties." This should prove that the omission of the usual clause in the constitution of all communist parties, viz. that the party is an integral part of the international communist movement is only a formality.

In order that there may be no doubt on that score, the General Secretary, Ajoy Ghosh has declared in his article: "We are a part of the international Communist movement. We are a part of the great fraternity of Communist and working class parties which leads the battle of humanity for peace, democracy and socialism. He has also used: "The programme put forward in the Manifesto adopted by 64 parties in the momentous Moscow Conference has to be carried to our people and made the basis of a powerful mass campaign."

It will be clear from all this that, whatever the constitution and whatever the declarations, the Communist Party is and will remain an organisation wedded to the principles of Marxism and Leninism. A Central Committee directive enunciated the basic character of the Party as follows: "We have to build not merely a mass party, but a mass Communist Party, a mass party of the working class, on firm ideological foundations, in the spirit of proletarian internationalism and in conformity with the principles of Marxism-Leninism." It is the principles of Marxism-Leninism and the spirit of proletarian internationalism, which is a euphemism for the tutelage of Moscow, which will always determine the actions and policies of the Communist Party of India. Once this fact is realised, it will be found that there is hardly any scope for harbouring illusions or indulging in wishful thinking.

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# The Background Of Indonesia's Crisis

by Sutan Sjahrir

THE national situation is very chaotic.\* In the political field what is especially seen and felt is the existence of tension and political differences. The economic situation, too, is apparently getting from bad to worse.

In the Army, there also appears unrest which has created difficulties for the state. In various regions armed gangs are still at large marauding and revolting against the state. Several regions have taken arbitrary steps without considering whether or not those steps are in the interest of the state and nation as a whole. The state has been declared in a state of war and siege these last few weeks. Apparently this step was taken in order to strengthen the position of the government, with respect to the various problems and difficulties now faced by it.

• It is also undeniably true that since the attainment of independence, the nation has gone through a process of split or disintegration in all fields. This is especially noticeable when compared with the time when we were still fighting for independence by staking our lives on all—from 1945 to 1949. The 1945-1949 period, when the nation was united, feeling that we were all of one lot, when every fruit of the struggle was a pride to all, is now regarded as a thing of the past, as a "lost dream." Our self-respect, which was so strong during the revolution and war against the Dutch, apparently has been dimmed and weakened by prevailing disappointment or feelings of failure felt by most of our people. The feeling of being one lot is lost and there seems to be no more achievements which may be regarded as common pride.

Let us try to understand the present situation as a problem in a broad framework. What is it that causes confusion in our minds and in our spirit now? Is it not due to lack of direction and that we have lost our compass in facing these difficulties as a nation? What is the compass that can surely show us the direction, steadfastness and consciousness with respect to our life as a nation?

While we were under the yoke of colonialism, our aims were to attain independence and have an honourable life, viz., be free from disgrace and servitude. In order to attain national independence, we were guided by the spirit of the nation, the spirit of independence as well as the spirit of humanity and democracy which we highly valued. All this became of definite value to the nation at that time. Common aspirations, common aims of life and common values and norms based on national consciousness led us to a strong unity and sense of being one nation.

These values based on nationalism became our definite directive and guide in facing an opposing colonialism and in rejecting the ways, norms and val-

ues of life prevailing during the days of colonialism. The values and norms emerging from nationalism were regarded as new criteria which were to bring us to a new life—free from disgrace, colonialism, pauperism and stupidity.

However, it is apparent now that values and norms that spring from and are based on nationalism are not sufficient as a guide or sure direction for the present national life.

Self-respect born out of nationalism, especially after this nationalism wins and attains most of its aims and ideals, evidently can develop in a wrong and dangerous direction. It can develop into a passion for position, power and riches. Some of our people apparently wish to prove that they are equal in standing with those who exploited us by imitating or surpassing their ways of life in a material sense. Seen from a psychological point of view, this is of course natural. It is a kind of compensation for what was experienced and felt during the colonial days.

Victory also created the feeling that we could do away with our poverty immediately and become rich and powerful as colonialism vanished. With what was available after the attainment of independence only a very small part of the population was lucky, viz., a part of the intelligentsia, many of whom were leaders or heroes in the struggle for independence. The race for riches, Government posts and positions among the lucky few was conspicuously pursued. They used all means, both abominable and legal, in order to get riches and positions. Then these riches and positions were used to obtain influence and power, which were in turn used to increase their riches and power. Parties and the state were used to achieve their aims in the competition. Often, all this was carried out in the name of the nation (under disguise of the national interest) and as if it were prompted by national consciousness, so that the positions of the former colonizers be occupied by our own people. Or that the living standard of the nation be equal to that of those ruling over us before in a material sense.

This measure of nationalism, in contrast to the nationalism during the colonial days, especially during the struggle and war of independence, which was used as a positive and pure stimulant and a strong directive for the nation, now creates disappointment with and doubt towards this nationalism.

It has lost its glory, especially since nationalism has often been used to cover crimes such as extortion, graft and other actions that are detrimental to the state and the public in general. Is it any wonder, then, that since the attainment of independence, nationalism has apparently changed colour?

What shall we do? How shall we regain that unity? What is our directive? What shall we use as a further guide? The need for a directive and guide seems to be the most essential need of our people. This need

\* The article was written long before the outbreak of the civil war which is now raging in the country.

causes some of our people to return to the old norms and criteria.

What is most generally felt now is the lack of justice for the common people and lack of a sense of responsibility on the part of the intelligentsia, the rich, and those in power for the lot of the common people. There is also felt a lack of humanitarian feeling toward the common people who live in poverty and ignorance. As a part of the upper class of our people only think of their own interests and pockets, tensions and splits come about between the group of lucky people and the common people whose lot is still bad. Accordingly, the national aim should be to attain a just, prosperous and peaceful life.

Justice can only be realized when poverty among the nation can only be achieved when the interests of a group of our people do not run counter to those of another group. The interests of a small group of well-to-do rich people should not run against the interests of the poor common people. We want all to enjoy justice which is based on prosperity and happiness. By this, we would like to pay all men due respect, irrespective of their position or standing. This was the common ideal of the nation during the war of independence. However, after the attainment of independence we seem to have forgotten it—at least the group in power forgot it.

In order to be able to realize democracy and social justice in our society, we should be able to achieve prosperity as its basis. Prosperity should be evenly enjoyed in accordance with democracy and social justice. It should be enjoyed by all layers of society. To achieve such a prosperity should be the aim of the nation. In this respect the failure of our nation has been clearly seen ever since the attainment of independence. And this is one of the main reasons for the disappointment of our people in general.

Prosperity of the nation cannot be achieved unless we pay attention to economic conditions and laws. For this, we have to make use of what is called ratio. To manage the people's or nation's economy, we have to make calculations and comparisons, and after that we have to make a choice and begin to work. To bring prosperity to the people and nation, we need the leadership or guidance of the state as of a man who heads a construction unit—we need, for example, plans and organization, and from the common people we require preparedness and ability to work earnestly in accordance with the necessary order.

In order to be able to carry out the plans for society and the country, there is a need for objectivity, since what is available must be taken into consideration, for example, natural resources, capital, means of production, the ability of labourers, etc.

All this must be put down in figures on which the plans are to be based. Nor can we regulate the people's economy and prosperity without paying due attention to ratio as a valuable thing in the life and needs of the people. We can never direct the people's prosperity and economy if we reject Western objectivity and rationalism.

In the upper circle, among the ruling class of our people, there seems to be an inclination to be influen-

ced by emotion. Therefore, there is too strong a tendency for them to overlook or evade facts. With such a spirit, it is indeed difficult to manage the people's prosperity and economy, especially if such a spirit is considered to be of a higher value than the ability to think rationally.

Decades ago economic experts and even Western philosophers were of the opinion that it was impossible to estimate the living standard of our people in terms of money. It was also impossible to understand the significance and extent of unemployment. Money, which has been used as an important standard of measurement in Western economy, is of little or nearly of no value in determining the economy of the country. They were also of the opinion that the economic motive they used as a key to understand their enterprises played a very little role, or seemed to play no role at all, in the life of the greater part of our nation.

Such an opinion and view was reasonable forty or fifty years ago. It is contrary to the facts which we now face every day. The greater part of our daily life can now be stated in figures and in terms of money. Now the relation between increase and decrease of the price of our farm produce in the market and the increase or decrease of the farmers' activities can be shown. This is true of coconut produce, rice and other products. It is now true that the "economic motive" has become more apparent in the economic life of our people. All this may be cited to show the changes of attitude, views and spirit of our nation compared with their state forty or fifty years ago.

The causes of the present chaotic and unsatisfactory situation in the nation must be eliminated. One of the main causes, as I have tried to point out, is that our nation at present has no definite aim or goal and therefore no definite directive and guide. Nationalism has apparently failed to prevent this condition. The norms we have used hitherto have become dim. We feel the need of a new spirit. Humanitarian feelings must be strengthened. The constitution contains human rights and duties. It is now up to us to revive them and light the national spirit thereby.

We must also convince our people that humanitarianism, democracy as well as social justice, can only be realized perfectly, if our society is based on joint prosperity enjoyed by all layers of society. Therefore in order to achieve a prosperous society, our nation must lay the foundations of prosperity for the new society. Economy and economic activities must be given great importance in the national life. Economic reconstruction should be able to spur and fill the nation with a new spirit. National economic reconstruction must be understood and carried out as the enterprise of the whole nation, according to plan.

In order to be able to do this, we must convince our people of the conditions, values and norms which are necessary to carry out large scale economic reconstruction. We must be prepared to work hard. We must be able to think and act rationally. We must be able to improve the national standard of living and other norms to insure the future of our nation.

—Reproduced from *The Socialist Call*, New York.

# Kerala Under Communism

**A**FTER their assumption of office the Communist Party was faced with the complicated task of fighting for political power in its usual way on the one hand, and, on the other hand, tackling problems arising out of the assumption of office in Kerala through democratic process. Realisation of this responsibility led the Kerala Communist leaders to shed their revolutionary pretenses and come down to the solid earth to face the realities of the situation. Consequently, instead of talking in terms of the 94 promises contained in their Manifesto, they started promising the Kerala people to implement the present Five-Year Plan more efficiently and expeditiously and to provide a stable, cleaner and more efficient administration. "We have no plans for any revolution here," admitted the loquacious General Secretary of the Party. But, for that matter, he would not even call his Ministry in Kerala a Communist Ministry. At one of his news conferences he described it as "Communist-led" Ministry of the "common people."

The Communist Ministry has not proved in any way remarkable as compared to the previous ones. If anything, it has proved worse. It has not succeeded in toning up the administration and giving a better performance. Even the Kerala State Committee of the Communist Party was constrained to criticise the Communist Ministry for its failure to tone up the administration. The Chief Minister Namboodiripad had to admit in the Assembly that out of the allotment of Rs. 17.90 crores for the second year of the Plan, the Kerala Government was able to spend only Rs. 4.21 crores in the first seven months of the year! No wonder then, that the Ministry had abjectly to admit, in the Governor's prepared speech to the Budget session of the Assembly this year, that "In Kerala's development plans the lag between targets and fulfilment is deplorable." And this is the same Party which promised the people to increase the allotments to the State's Second Plan from Rs. 87 crores to Rs. 200 crores!

But this failure to tone up the administration is not the only or even main failure of the Ministry. Nor is the maladministration quite accidental. It is the result of a purposeful policy. The root cause of the maladministration in Kerala is the party interference in the administration as part of a pre-meditated strategy. Soon after the Communists came to power Communist dailies in Kerala commenced an organised campaign against the police in general and the then Inspector General of Police, Mr. Chandrashekar Nair, in particular. Every day very serious allegations against police were being made and leading articles written making out a case that "the continuance of democracy in the State" demanded the removal from office of Mr. Chandrashekar Nair. Some of the Kerala Ministers also attacked the police in public speeches emphasising the need to transform the police into a "democratic force" serving the cause of the people

as against that of the "vested interest" served previously. Thus the police in general were abused and neutralised and became nervous even in performing their normal duty of maintaining law and order. Subsequently Communist cells assumed the powers of the police and the judiciary, and anti-social elements utilised this opportunity to spread insecurity in the land. Ultimately, even the Secretary of the Kerala State Committee of the Communist Party had to complain in May that the police in the State were refusing to take cognisance of cases of thefts, assault, and petty crimes even when complaints were lodged. But this "deliberate neglect" on the part of the police he attributed to a "planned conspiracy" to oust the Communists from power in the State!

Unable to continue in his post any longer the Inspector General of Police proceeded on leave prior to retirement in December. Immediately thereafter the Communist Government decided to bifurcate the functions of the IGP and to create a special post of IGP in addition to the existing one. This was done, it was claimed, to impart efficiency to the work of the department. But it was openly alleged even by such an independent paper like the largest circulated Malayalam daily, *Matrubhumi*, which was till then supporting the Communist Ministry, that it was being done to suit the Party's convenience as "the lawful incumbent to the post may be one who refuses to dance and sing to the tune of the ruling Party." The paper further alleged that "our administrative machinery is being pulled to pieces and reconstituted from village officer level to that of the Inspector General to suit the convenience of the Indian Communist Party."

This technique of creating more than one departmental head in one single department is not confined to the police department alone. The Communist Government is dividing functions of each department and appointing new heads of department. Thus in the Education Department there are now no less than six Directors of Public Instruction where there used to be only one Director previously. Similarly in another department there are now two Directors of Industries where there was only one formerly. As a result of this change the former Director resigned from his post.

At the lower level also partiality and interference in administration are now common occurrences. There are reports of Communists threatening a magistrate, or a police party including a sub-inspector being detained, while on duty, by a group of men led by a Communist M.L.A., or Communist Partymen openly defying orders of the court. Many similar reports are appearing frequently in Kerala newspapers and it is not unoften that the cases registered against culprits in such cases are withdrawn by the Government. Moreover this party interference is not restricted to the governmental sphere alone. Only recently the Kerala branch of the Indian Medical Association protested against the "increasing political interference" in medical affairs and in the discharge of the routine duties of

medical officers in the State. Another such example is the powerful library movement in the State which is not under the Communist control. The Kerala Government is now trying to bring all the libraries in Kerala under the Social Education Department. This move has been widely resented and recently in many elections to the Library Association Communist candidates were utterly routed.

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Another method the Communist Government has devised is the introduction of the well known do-it-with-a-committee technique in many branches of the administration. Here the accent is ostensibly on the the "people's co-operation" to speed up the administration's job and the elimination of corruption, wastage and bureaucratism "now prevalent" in the administration and making it more "democratic". But the result is the tightening up of the Red grip over the administration. There are "people's committees" in each ward for proper distribution of food; there are similar committees at the division and sub-division levels for the Public Works Department. More such committees are to be set up in other branches of the administration. They are advisory committees to supervise the work of the executive. Similarly "work committees" with "public spirited local men" will soon be established for each development project in Kerala. It is alleged that out of 13,000 members on the roll of the 1400 such "people's committees" appointed by the Government no less than 10,000 are Communists or their fellow travellers. The members of these committees are entitled to sitting fees, travelling allowances and other emoluments. At the higher levels, there are other types of committees. An expert committee is to report on the reorganisation of the services. Another committee is to preside over the redistribution of lands that may come into the hands of the Government after its land reform measures are implemented. There are other committees like the Industrial Advisory Board, Coir Board, Industrial Relations Committee, Transport Committee and so on. These committees are stuffed with Communists and are rapidly becoming instruments of the Communist Party for injecting the influence of the Party into the executive. Besides, the Party, it is alleged by responsible persons, is being helped by pouring money into hundreds of these committees stuffed with Communists and their fellow-travellers. Thus the Communists and their fellow-travellers are given the opportunity to indulge in corrupt practices by making it impossible to get anything done by the Government except through Party Units.

These numerous committees and the proliferation of administrative posts are constituting a drain on the finances of the State. Austerity measures introduced by the Government have not produced substantial results in saving public money. Lavish expenditure is being incurred on administration. Over 52 per cent of the State's revenue is being spent towards the salaries and allowances of the Government servants. The cost of administration during the Governor's rule was Rs. 94.32 lakhs. It has gone up to Rs. 125.33

lakhs during 1957-58 and will come up to Rs. 128.09 lakhs during 1958-59. No wonder then that the surplus budget miraculously produced last year ended as a deficit budget of Rs. 20 lakhs. The real deficit was something like 300 lakhs or more. But many budgeted amounts were allowed to lapse and allotments from the Centre increased by about Rs. 2.5 crores on account of the Finance Commission's recommendations. It is in spite of these windfalls that the surplus budget of Kerala ended in a deficit one. All this shows the gloomy condition of the State's economy under the Communist Government. Charges are openly being levelled by responsible leaders in the State Assembly that in this year's budget many facts are kept deliberately hidden and many other items and figures are manipulated to show the precarious financial position of the State in a more favourable light.

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People expected at least uncorrupt and clean administration from the Communists. The Keralites were fed up with the former corruption-ridden administration and the result was that the present rulers occupied the seats of power. But to the utter disappointment of the people the Communists have proved within a year's time the most corrupt rulers breaking some of the past records, both on party as well as individual levels.

The Law Minister has disposed off a major part of his big landed property just while drafting the Land Bill to escape from its consequences.

There is the notorious Andhra Rice deal due to which the State was defrauded to the tune of Rs. 30 lakhs. The Government purchased rice from a firm in Andhra by the name of Sriramulu and Suryanarayana Company with which, according to newspaper reports, brother of Com. P. Sunderayya is connected. Besides, this firm had no record of dealing in rice before. No tenders were invited by the Government and the rice was purchased at a rate higher than prevailing market price. The prevailing market price was Rs. 34 per mound. But the Kerala Government purchased the rice at Rs. 37 per mound. This price, as was specifically pointed out by the Central Deputy Food Minister in the Lok Sabha, was very much above the price fixed by the Central Government. The commission paid to the firm was 31 nP per bag for the purchase. This self-same firm, it is reported, when quotations were later invited for rice purchase and rate of commission called for, quoted only 7 nP per bag as against the 31 nP it received earlier.

Three press notes have so far been issued by the Kerala Government on the subject. The quantity of rice purchased was first put at 5,000 tons; then it became 15,000 tons and the third version accounted for 21,000 tons. Besides a telegram to the Kerala Government sent by Com. Gopalan in this connection was said to have been discovered by the Comptroller and the facts have been, it is reported, notified to the State and Central Governments. Moreover, according to newspaper reports, secret documents relating to this Andhra Rice Deal have been found missing for quite a long time.

This deal took place to meet no emergency in the

State. The rice did not reach the State in the famine months of July-August. Nor was it available for the festive months of Chingam (September). And at last when it reached the State it went in the buffer stock! Besides what kind of rice did they purchase? It is a variety called "Dalva" which is deserted by the Keralites!

A plot of land belonging to a prominent Communist leader Com. Ishwara Iyer, M.P. has been purchased by the Government for Rs. 3 lakhs. The same plot was offered by the same M.P. to the P.S.P. Ministry at Rs. 50,000 only.

In another instance, the Government gave Rs 3.5 lakhs to purchase a five-acre plot in Trivandrum. This plot was purchased from the Travancore Maharaja a few months before by a "private party" for Rs. 37,000 only.

There are allegations of corruption regarding the book-supply contract worth a lakh which was given to the Education Minister's son without inviting tenders.

Another story centres round the Transport Department of the State. It is alleged that the Communist Party in collusion with the Transport Workers' Union, which is dominated by the Reds, has been swindling the Transport Department for the last few months by printing false tickets and pocketing the collections while the real and genuine tickets are lying moth-eaten. It is pointed out in support of this allegation that from the figures published by the Government itself instead of a corresponding increase in the takings of the department by reason of the increased mileage and the increased number of passenger buses plying on the road compared to previous quarters, the collections had shrunk and dwindled to a mere 65%. Added to this, the stopping of the practice of publishing quarterly statistics of this and previous year's collections, it is pointed out, is a significant pointer.

These are a few cases of corruption in the Communist regime. Besides there are many other cases of favouritism and nepotism in which even Ministers, including the Chief Minister, are involved.

The Communist rule has brought affluence to many Party dignitaries even in villages which is inexplicable by ordinary logic. For instance, a number of Communist MLA's are building good *pucca* houses. Some others are purchasing landed properties. The Deputy Leader of the Communist Party in the Lok Sabha, Comrade A. K. Gopalan, according to newspaper reports, has burdened himself with the ownership of a 300 acre plot in Malam Amson, Cannanore District. He has gone partners with the Hosdurg Kisan Sankam Secretary, Shri Achu Nair who sees to the improvements being effected there while Comrade Gopalan is away in Delhi championing the cause of the poor. The place is being now feverishly planted up with rubber in order to keep it outside the scope of the coming Land Bill.

Food shortage and unemployment amongst the educated—these are the two most pressing problems

of the state and no responsible government in Kerala can afford to ignore them. But nothing positive has been done in one year to solve these problems. Rice, which is a staple diet of Keralites, has become all the more dearer and the Government there could do nothing to check its soaring prices. In this regard the Government wanted to escape from all responsibility by making the Central Government the scape-goat. Propagandists par excellence as they are, the Communists say that because of the Central Government's non-co-operation they have not been able to do anything on the food front. But it may be recalled that during 1957 out of the Central Government's food grains allotment of 5,45,000 tons for the whole India, 2,28,000 tons and food subsidy to the tune of Rs. 3 crores were given to Kerala.

With regard to the unemployment problem, the situation has actually deteriorated. No less than 7,413 employment seekers got themselves registered at the employment exchanges in Kerala in January 1958, increasing the size of the State's Live Register to 68,155. Employment opportunities are actually decreasing. Industrialisation is one of the solutions, but the record of the Kerala Communists of speaking with different voices at different times and places has made the situation worse. There are two voices in Kerala Communist ranks, one Ministerial and the other familiar Marxist-Leninist-Stalinist. After the initial Communist threats of nationalising tea plantations in the State the Communist Government has piped down on it and now it is holding out baits for private entrepreneurs. They too, after all, are honourable men! Industries in private sector, the Government has promised, are to be encouraged. "As an agency for planned national development" says its Industrial Policy Statement, "the private sector will have an opportunity to develop and expand." Making a virtue of necessity it has revised its stand on the theory of class conflict: it "does not consider the role of entrepreneurs and the working class as self-contradictory." The Government, therefore, will do its utmost "to develop peaceful relations between employers and employees."

But alongside the Ministerial voices uttering honeyed words the strident Marxist note is being continuously struck by the Kerala Communists in the State Assembly and in Parliament.

Last year the Government promised to start eight new industries in the State in one year. But not a single industrial unit could be set up during the year. For this failure, the Kerala Finance Minister had this strange explanation to offer in the Assembly: "There are many practical difficulties in the way", he said, "that men with technical skill did not have the capital while those possessing capital did not have the technical skill and the two were not prepared to come together." But surely this is not the complete explanation.

The truth is some of the policies followed by the Government have so frightened prospective investors that those who were considering possibility of starting new industries in Kerala later backed out. Other reason is that there are certain pre-requisites for industrial progress in any region, and one of them is

social and political stability. This is lacking in Kerala for many reasons for which the Kerala Communists themselves are responsible. The Kerala Governor pinpointed this in his Republic Day broadcast when he referred to the "somewhat exaggerated reputation" of his State for "labour unrest".

But the Communist Government does not admit that there is such a thing as lawlessness and insecurity existing in the State. On the contrary, it is accusing the opposition of making attempts to prevent industrialists from making investments in the State by making allegations that insecurity and lawlessness existed in Kerala. Mr. K. P. Gopalan, Kerala Industries Minister, declared in the State Assembly that "whoever make such attempts would be enemies of the State and enemies of the accepted goal of socialism."—In short they would be "saboteurs".

Negotiations are under way between the Communist Government and Mr. L. N. Birla for the starting of a paper mill at Nilambur in Malabar.

There were many reports of lathi charge being resorted to by the police in Kerala during the last year. Replying to a question in the Kerala Legislative Assembly, on March 6, 1958, the Law Minister Krishna Iyer said that "according to reports received from district authorities there were two instances of lathi charge since April last year. One was at Kattampalli and the other at Kizhupilly." He however admitted that there were allegations of lathi charge at Killikolloor and further said that "the report of the enquiry conducted into the incident at Killikolloor in November last, has revealed that police resorted to lathi charge there unnecessarily."

However there were instances of lathi charges at Kozhikode, Aralam village in Cannanore district, Calicut port, and many other places. The recent example was the lathi charge at Ernakulam on students in the last month.

The Kerala Government does not admit that these instances can be called lathi-charges. As the Kerala Law Minister stated in the Assembly: "Every single blow with lathi given by a policeman does not constitute a lathi-charge." Replying to a question by an opposition Member: "If you beat with lathis and if people get wounded, are we to understand that it is not a lathi charge?", the Law Minister frankly stated, on March 6, 1958, the view of his Government: "Even granting that the police beat with lathis I am not prepared to recognise it as a lathi-charge" The same Minister, on March 18, 1958, unambiguously stated in the Assembly that the Communist Ministry is "not allergic to the use of force. . . . We must and will use force—lathis or even worse tear gas or firearms—if necessary."

The policy of the Kerala Government with regard to these lathi charges is interesting and worth studying. The Government ordered an inquiry into the lathi charge at Killikolloor after issuing a press note that there was no lathi charge at Killikolloor! The inquiry was ordered when the Communist Party-men made the demand.

Similarly there was a severe lathi charge at Kozhikode which was at first denied by the Government. It however later submitted that lathis were used by the police, but argued it could not be called a lathi charge in the technical sense!

On November 20, 1957, an official press release from Trivandrum said that "on the 19th Nov. 1957, about 300 persons trespassed into a private land at Aralam in Cannanore district. . . . The magistrate then ordered a lathi-charge to disperse the crowd." In spite of this press note, the Kerala Government does not consider that it was a case of lathi charge!

Dr. K. B. Menon, the P.S.P. leader, asserted on 23 Dec. 1957, in his press statement that "during the last two months, there had been 37 lathi charges in the State." It appears from the study of the Kerala newspapers that not all the lathi charges taking place there are reported in newspapers outside Kerala.

The following are the results of a few local elections held during the last two months. They show the trend of public opinion in Kerala:

1. The PSP Congress United Front set up candidates for 7 seats of the Board of Directors of the Shree Moolam Handloom Co-operative Society. All of them defeated their Communist rivals including one Communist MLA, Mr. P. R. Nair.

2. In Taluk Union election of the Keraia Grantha Sala Sangham held in Kottayam Public Library, not one of the 16 candidates put up by the Communist Party came out successful.

3. In the Calicut and Cannanore Teachers' Associations elections the Communists were crushed.

4. Taking the State as a whole, the Communist influence in the leadership of the Teachers' Association has been practically eliminated.

5. The Congress Party has been victorious in the Alleppy District elections. (Alleppy had been a stronghold of the Communists.)

6. The Communists got only one seat out of 16 in the elections to the Kerala University Senate from various electoral colleges formed separately by the panchayats and the municipalities in all the eight districts of the State. The lone seat annexed by the Communists was the municipalities seat from Trivandrum district. An independent got the seat for the municipalities in the Cannanore district and the remaining 14 seats from the panchayats and municipalities in the other six districts of the State went to Congress and PSP which put up a joint front.

7. PSP and Congress have retained their seats in two by-elections to the Trivandrum and Calicut municipalities respectively by defeating their Communist opponents.

8. In Trichur, the constituency of the Health Minister Dr. A. R. Menon, in Municipal by-elections 4 Congress candidates were elected. In all the 4 wards Communists were at the end of the poll.

9. Mr. D. V. Namboodiripad, Congress candidate, was elected defeating Mr. Achutha Kurup, Communist candidate, by a majority of 634 votes in the Kozhikode

Municipal Council by-election. Mr. Namboodiripad secured 1498 votes and Mr. Kurup 864.

10. In the Library Union elections at Cannanore, nine candidates were elected for the Library Union Working Committee and four candidates for the Central State Committee. In these elections all the Communist candidates were defeated.

11. Congress Candidate Kumari Malik won the seat in the Municipal by-election at Quilon defeating in a straight fight Shri S. Assiz supported by a united front of R.S.P., P.S.P. and the Communist Party.

12. Two candidates of the Democratic Front of Congress-PSP were elected to the Palghat Town Panchayat Court defeating two communist candidates. The Democratic Front candidates secured 174 and 189 votes. The Communists got only 13 and 15 votes.

13. In the Vattiyarkaru Panchayat by-election the democratic parties put up Shri Paramesharan Nair to represent them. The communists supported a fellow traveller candidate Shri Sivashakaran Nair, but he ultimately withdrew his candidature, thus former being returned unopposed.

14. The by-election for the 8th ward of the Madapilly Panchayat went to the Congress, its candidate getting a walk-over, Communists backing out of the contest.

When the Communist Ministry took office the world was told that these Ministers believe in simple living, in people's service etc.; they would live a Spartan life and move about on cycles; while the Congress Ministers drew high salaries the Reds will take only Rs. 350. But what is the reality?

By the Payment of Salaries and Allowances (Amendment) Bill, 1957, the Communist Government decided to reduce the salary of Ministers from Rs. 700 to Rs. 500. The consolidated petrol allowance for a Minister was also reduced from Rs. 250 to Rs. 100 per month. In addition they are now entitled to Dearness Allowance of Rs. 65 per month. Formerly Ministers were also entitled to halting allowances for journeys performed within the State. It was considered by the Communists that it would be more rational to provide for road mileage for journeys performed within the State instead of a halting allowance. The Ministers now instead of getting a halting allowance are entitled to an allowance at the rate 50 nP (Rs. 0.50) a mile when they travel for official work in government vehicles and at a rupee a mile when they travel in private cars. The new system adds up to more than the old consolidated allowance and the total salary of a Minister now exceeds the salary which Ministers were entitled to under the former system. Thus the approximate average income of a Communist Minister would be Rs. 1,585 per month.

It will be interesting to compare the salaries of the Communist Ministers with those drawn by the Congress and PSP Ministers. The Congress Minister drew salary of Rs. 700 per month. He took Rs. 75 as Dearness Allowance, plus Rs. 250 Travelling Allowance (fixed), plus Rs. 120 as Halting Allowance. His total emoluments amounted to Rs. 1,145.

The PSP Minister's salary was fixed at Rs. 500 per month. He drew Dearness Allowance Rs. 65, plus Halting Allowance Rs. 120, plus Travelling Allowance Rs. 250 (fixed). His total income was Rs. 935.

Thus the Communist Ministers would be drawing more than what PSP and Congress Ministers ever earned. In point of fact, between April 5 and June 10, 1957, E. M. S. Namboodiripad, the Chief Minister, received Rs. 3,301.34 nP by way of salary and allowances which is more than what his Congress or PSP predecessors had drawn during the same period. This year's Kerala budget bears out the hollowiness of the Communist claim to austerity. According to the budget figures, the estimated expense on Ministers for 1957-58 was Rs. 2.50 lakhs. But the revised estimate is Rs. 4.26 lakhs. The proposed expense for the next year is Rs. 4.98 lakhs! Even the "wasteful" Congress Ministers in 1953-54 spent only Rs. 2.47 lakhs. The eleven Communist Ministers will now cost Rs. 4.98 lakhs, which means each Minister will cost not less than Rs. 45,272 per year or Rs. 3,772 per month.

Besides it is to be noted that the Communist Cabinet is the biggest the State ever had. The last time a Ministry functioned in Kerala, it was found possible to have a Cabinet of only five. The Communist Party in the State, however, seems to need more than twice the number, that is eleven Ministers, in order to be able to satisfy every claimant from among their ranks, who may be in a position to press his claim.

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## ONE YEAR OF FAILURE — (Cont'd from Page 2)

their Land Bill by prior transference of their properties to spurious private trusts. The Law Minister, who piloted the Land Bill created a private trust of his land and sold to a private limited concern a large plot of his land for several lakhs to circumvent the Land Bill. Then there is the book purchase scandal wherein a Minister's son is involved; another story is about the land purchased from a communist M.P. at Rs. 3 lakhs which was offered by the same M.P. to the PSP Ministry previously for Rs. 50,000. In another instance a Minister was stated to have favoured an intermediary getting about half a lakh as commission in an illimitable deal. Such cases can be multiplied indefinitely. When the Communists came to power they swore that they would put down corruption, nepotism and favouritism and now they are breaking records of all the previous Governments in this connection and within such a short period.

As regards the solution of urgent problems of the people the record of the Communist Ministry leaves much to be desired. The food scarcity has been staring the State for the last so many months. The State Government could have afforded some relief to the people by purchasing any quantity of rice at fixed price from the neighbouring Andhra Pradesh. But this opportunity was not utilised for the good of the State. In the past whenever Governments had to purchase rice from outside at increased prices they distributed it internally at subsidised rates incurring heavy financial losses. But the Communist Government, in spite of the promise contained in its Manifesto to reduce the price of rice, effected a complete cut of the State subsidy for the rice to reserve the amount for some other purpose! They have utterly failed to solve unemployment problem. Employment opportunities are actually decreasing. Several industries which many entrepreneurs had planned to establish in Kerala during the Governor's rule have been cancelled because of the unfavourable climate created by irresponsible

statements made by Communist leaders after assuming power and the atmosphere of general unrest and lawlessness prevailing since then. Attempts to start new industries on a large scale either in the private or in the public sector have not met with any success. Even the Communist papers in Kerala are admitting that their Government has not been able to live up to the expectations of the people regarding industrial progress in the State. Thousands of workers have been driven out from the existing industries and the major industries in the State like that of coir and cashewnut are still facing crisis. The Communist Party promised in its Manifesto 25% increase in wages for workers. But the Communist Government has failed to implement this even for workers in government-owned industries. On the contrary under the Communist Government bonus for plantation labour has been reduced from 12% to 10%. Though nationalisation of transport was one of their election promises, they are now most reluctant to pursue that policy any further as, it is alleged, some of the private bus line owners are the greatest supporters and financiers of the Party in the State.

Such is the dismal record of the Communist Government during the course of the last year. There is nothing inspiring about it. On the contrary it sounds a note of warning to those who are still wishfully thinking in terms of co-existence between two ideologies on a national scale. If anything, Kerala has amply demonstrated that the Communists have not renounced their totalitarian precepts and practice. On the very first day of their assuming office in Kerala last year, Comrade Dange openly declared that the Reds have not deviated from the cherished principles of Marxism, Leninism and Stalinism when they were sworn in at Trivandrum. The Communist Government has only proved the truth of this statement. But their attempts at undermining the democratic institutions and establishing a parallel party government have not gone unchallenged. The most encouraging thing is the consciousness arising in the people of the nature and character of the regime. They are not deterred by the increasing lawlessness or the repression. There is a new awakening and determination clearly visible in the people to face the challenge bravely. The non-Communist political and intellectual life is slowly getting closer together. As a result the political parties involved are coming closer to each other, in spite of local rivalries, mainly because of the pressure of public opinion.

Moreover many sincere and honest Communist workers are leaving the Party in disgust. This is something important and revealing. Uptil now the Indian Communist Party was not known for such defections. It was a monolithic party of disciplined and obedient workers who owed unquestioned allegiance to their Party. Even at the time of Hungary not a single case of defection could occur in the Party. But now in Kerala the direct experience of the Communist millennium has torn away the veil of illusion for many sincere Communists. It is the Communist myth that attracted them; now the Communist reality repels them.

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