

Only A Handful

“AS far as our foreign policy is concerned” the Prime Minister, Mr. Nehru, is reported to have said in the course of a speech at the meeting of the All India Congress Committee held last month in Bombay, “apart from a handful of persons who might disagree on some small matter here and there, there is no opposition, as such, to it. In cities like Bombay, there might be some who bring out pamphlets and journals criticising our stand on some issue or the other. But, broadly speaking, there is only agreement with our foreign policy. I am aware that there are some people who feel we are in the Communist camp and should be more friendly to the Americans. But then there are others who feel we lean far too much on the Americans and should cultivate the Soviet Union more. These are but the opinions of a handful of individuals. The country, as a whole, however, endorses the foreign policy.”

The Prime Minister did not mention any names and it is not known whom he had in mind. Since, however, the Democratic Research Service and *Freedom First* have from time to time criticised the Indian Government's attitude to some issue or the other of foreign policy, we may count ourselves as being among “the handful” mentioned by the Prime Minister. Perhaps this provides an appropriate opportunity to restate the issues on which we are critical and which divide us from the uncritical supporters of India's current foreign policy.

Let us state right at the outset that we have no quarrel with the policy of non-alignment. We are as keen as any that our country's foreign policy should be independent, leaving us free to judge each issue on its own merit. We realise that, faced as we are with immense problems relating to the economic and social development of our country, we should concentrate our attention on the solution of those problems. Many countries have in the past followed that policy in the early years of their nationhood and

have profited by avoiding entanglements in quarrels and fights which did not immediately concern them. Times have no doubt changed and no country can now afford the luxury of complete isolation. Yet it is not necessary that India should tie herself down to any particular group of nations.

If, therefore, we are not always happy with the stand taken by our Government it is because while we agree with the general principles of the policy, we are unhappy about the way it is applied.

We do not believe that the policy of non-alignment involves any refusal to decide between right and wrong or compels India to close her eyes to the moral issues involved in international problems.

There is a moral issue involved in the struggle over the preservation and extension of human rights. Wherever and whenever human rights are denied or destroyed or human dignity is trampled upon, it is the duty of every nation and every group of men to raise their voice of protest. Such a protest may or may not be effective, but diplomatic considerations cannot be allowed to stifle it. Indeed it was none other than the Prime Minister Nehru who when addressing the Congress of the United States during his last visit to Washington, made the historic declaration that where issues of freedom and justice were involved, “we cannot and shall not be neutral.” In the light of the experience of the past six years, can it be said that the Prime Minister's pledge has been honoured?

Our foreign policy is vociferous in condemning colonialism and other evils which exist in Western countries. But when it comes to arraigning Soviet Russia and other communist regimes for their denial of civil liberties, for the terroristic regimes set up by them, for their massacre of peasants, for their liquidation of ethnic groups, for their regimentation and brain-washing, for their judicial murders on trumped up charges of prominent public men, for their slave labour camps and other heinous offences, our foreign policy lapses into a strange silence. And not only is it the Prime Minister and other representatives of the Government who are affected by that silence, but others, including the press, are also expected to close

their eyes to those malignant characteristics of communist regimes in consideration of our policy of neutrality and non-alignment.

We have no desire that the Prime Minister "should be more friendly to the Americans." We want him to be friendly to all *peoples*, including the Russians and the Americans. It is a pity that the Prime Minister puts on the same level persons who want him to join the communist camp and those who out of their concern for individual freedom and democratic liberties desire closer association with democratic nations of the world. We do not want him to condone the blemishes of American life or the mistakes of her foreign policy. But we are opposed to the adoption of double standards, one standard to judge the actions of Western democracies and an entirely different standard in the case of communist regimes. Human life, rights and dignity are as precious behind the Iron Curtain as they are outside it. The systematic suppression of human rights and the savage destruction of human life which take place in communist countries should arouse our anger many times more than the receding colonialism of Western democracies or the treatment of Negroes in the Southern States of U.S. But curiously enough, we get furious with the latter, while we ignore the former. An article by Mr. G. S. Bhargava published elsewhere in this issue gives numerous examples, if they were needed, of the way in which this double standard is being practised by us.

That is our quarrel with the way in which our foreign policy is being implemented. We are not against neutrality, but we are against neutralism which refuses to distinguish the grey from the black. We can see the faults and the deficiencies of the democratic societies as they exist in the United States, the United Kingdom and other European countries, but at the same time we sharply distinguish them from communist regimes which deny the very basis of democracy and freedom. The two cannot be equated nor can the minor drawbacks of one be held to justify the major denial of human rights and dignity which takes place in the other. "A plague on both your houses" is hardly an attitude which a discerning student of history can adopt and those who use that quotation might do well to trace it to its source, where as pointed out by an Indian writer in a recent issue of *Encounter* they will find that the man who uttered that thought was slain by Tybalt, the aggressor in the quarrel and not by Romeo. Besides, can it truthfully be claimed that ours has been an attitude of equal indifference or must it be conceded that it is an attitude of positive antagonism towards one side and of sneaking sympathy towards the other?

The Prime Minister stated in his speech that those who differed from him on issues of foreign policy were only a handful, as if it proved that the handful must therefore be wrong. As it happens, however, the implication that the majority is always right is very questionable history. Often in the course of man's history, it is only a handful who have upheld

or discovered the truth. We shall not go further back than three years for a relevant example.

When Stalin died, the Indian Government and press sang his praises and the Prime Minister described him as a man of peace beloved of his people. Parliament and State Assemblies except that of Bombay — whose Speaker bravely objected — adjourned in honour of the memory of the dead dictator. Those who expressed a differing view and attempted to depict Stalin in his true colour, were only a handful. The Democratic Research Service was among them. Only three years have passed and it is now established that the handful were right and not the many who lauded to the skies one of the most malevolent figures in the grim history of Russia. Today, the handful of 1953 have become the many and the many admirers of Stalin have shrunk to a silent handful!

The Munich surrender provides a similar example. It was applauded by a large majority when Chamberlain and Daladier effected it. It was only a small minority which denounced it as appeasement of the blood-thirsty Nazis. Only a year had to go by before the minority was proved correct in its characterization of the event.

Besides, are we such a handful confined to Bombay as may be made to appear? Are there not numerous other journals all over the country in English and Indian languages who are also critical of certain aspects of our foreign policy? Didn't the *Times of India* only recently say in an editorial that "where democratic liberties are concerned a refusal to take sides is the equivalent of condoning their suppression."

There are many in the Congress Party, in Parliament and even in high government office who do not see eye to eye with the Prime Minister on several issues of his foreign policy, but who for one reason or another practise a degree of conformity. Can it be that the Prime Minister has over-looked the spontaneity and the volume of applause that greets him when occasionally he makes an attack on communist activities in India at meetings of the Congress Party, in Parliament and elsewhere? If all this unexpressed body of dissent were taken into consideration, the endorsement of the present foreign policy and its various

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Notes

"He Who Supps With The Devil Needs A Long Spoon"

THE Yugoslav Communist leaders have been expressing the hope for some time now that they would be able to persuade the Russian Communist bosses to follow their example in breaking away from Stalinist rigidity.

While they might claim recent changes in the Soviet Union as being induced partly through their influence, signs are not lacking of a converse process by which they themselves might be sucked back into the orbit of monolithic terror from which they had escaped in 1948. There are several straws in the wind which provide cause for legitimate concern to those socialists and others who have shown their appreciation of the brave stand made by Marshal Tito against Stalinist imperialism in 1948 and of the break with reactionary State Capitalism expressed through a system of Workers' Management in Yugoslav industry.

As if to compensate for the removal of Molotov from the Foreign Ministership on the eve of Tito's arrival in Moscow, the persecution of Milovan Djilas former vice-president and one of the most popular men in Yugoslavia, has recommenced. Among Djilas' crimes has been that of denouncing Soviet imperialism in the clearest terms and it would appear that the hounding of this valiant figure may be a *quid pro quo* given to the Kremlin in return for the purge of Molotov.

The Yugoslav journals *Borba* and *Politika* have launched a vicious attack on Djilas almost at the same time as Tito was fraternising with Khrushchev and Bulganin in Moscow, accusing him of seeking to keep alive the enmities of the cold war period. This series of attacks is the culmination of cruel pressure that has recently been exercised on the deposed leader. For some time now, it has been known that Djilas and his wife have been harassed by police agents, his home has been under constant watch, his friends have been intimidated and he has been asked to leave his present apartment for another in a house not yet constructed!

These deplorable activities have provoked Mr. Morgan Philips, General Secretary of the British Labour Party, to draw attention to the shabby treatment being given to Djilas. "Indeed it is painful for me to have to write to you a letter of such content", wrote Philips to Marshal Tito. Expressing the fear that Yugoslavia might "slip back into the evil paths", he ventured to hope that "in your relations with individuals, you can show to the world the basic superiority of a socialist social system."

Djilas has written three articles published in this country by the *Bombay Chronicle* on June 14, 15, and 16, drawing attention to the new dangers that threaten

the world from the Kremlin. "This new period" he writes "may be more dangerous than was the Stalin period."

Analysing recent changes in Moscow, Djilas draws the conclusion that they do not mean "that a new form of personal dictatorship cannot arise.....It may take three years for this to happen. But when it does, Khrushchev will be top man and he will be a far harsher and rougher ruler than he is today..... We cannot expect any new ideology from the new leaders and that means in turn that we have reached a period of decadence in communism."

Asked by the *Time* correspondent in Belgrade what he thought the regime wanted of him, Djilas replied: "They want me to just admit I was wrong and ask forgiveness." Would he do this? "No, I will not," replied Djilas, over whose devoted head hangs a suspended sentence of eighteen months in prison.

Just as ominous as this turning of the heat on Djilas is the way in which the Yugoslav Trade Unions expelled from the World Federation of Trade Unions in 1948, have ignominiously smuggled themselves back into that fold. The World Federation of Trade Unions has announced that the Yugoslav Trade Unions have been re-affiliated with it and it is known that Mr. Marian Vivoda, Secretary of the General Council of the Yugoslav Trade Unions, has again taken his place in the WFTU.

It is yet too early to say whether, as cynics allege, Tito has rejoined the international communist apparatus precisely at the same time that the Cominform has been ostensibly dissolved at his behest, but it will be a sad day for the people of Yugoslavia and the peace of the world should these fears prove in time to be justified. Friends of Yugoslavia abroad will hope that, in their treatment of Djilas and otherwise, Marshal Tito and his advisers will act in a way which will prove these fears to be groundless.

Trotsky On The Vengeance Of History

THE dramatic attack on the semi-divine status of Stalin by his successors during the 20th Communist Party Congress is a startling fulfilment of the agonised prognostication of Leon Trotsky. Speaking of Stalin and the fulsome worship accorded to him, Trotsky had said:

"Nero, too, was a product of his epoch. Yet after he perished, his statues were smashed and his name was scraped off everything. The vengeance of history is more terrible than the vengeance of the most powerful General Secretary. I venture to think that this is consoling."

The posthumous dethronement of Stalin by his erstwhile henchmen (and trembling servitors) has naturally evoked a demand for the vindication of the victims of his unjust decrees.

The chief of them was Leon Trotsky whose widow has sent a telegram demanding a review of the unjust trials of her renowned but unfortunate husband and son. The following is the text of the telegram:—

"Taking note of declarations of the Congress establishing falsifications in the history of the revolution

and the party and false condemnations of the leaders of the revolution and the party accused as enemies of the people. Among them my late husband Leon Trotsky and my son Sedov. As practical consequence of these declarations I demand a review of trials with view of public vindication of the memory of the victims."

Who Is Shepilov?

ON the eve of the B & K visit to this country, a letter was received by the Politbureau of the Communist Party of India from Moscow. It laid down a new line which the local fifth column was to carry out and which was ultimately ratified at the Palghat Congress of the CPI. That letter was signed by Dmitri T. Shepilov, editor of *Pravda*, who has now replaced Molotov as Foreign Minister of the Soviet Government.

Only a week earlier, the liquidation and execution of M. D. Bagirov, former Premier of the Azerbaijan Republic and three other top officials of that Caucasian Republic had been announced, giving the lie to the naive assumption that purges and bloodshed as a means of solving disputes within the Soviet leadership have come to an end.

While Molotov's demotion, long foreshadowed, and Shepilov's promotion to this key position as a protege of Khrushchev is part of the same primitive struggle for power that led to the executions in Baku a few days earlier, it may be interesting to recall the contents of the notorious Shepilov letter of a few months back in order to help us in assessing what kind of a man the new Soviet Foreign Minister is and what weight may be attached to his words. As reported in the January issue of *Freedom First*, Shepilov's letter made three main points:

- (1) The Communist Party of India should do nothing that would act as an irritant or interfere with the major diplomatic operation of taking India in tow on which Soviet Russia and communists are engaged.
- (2) The Communist Party need not be unduly perturbed or panicky at the ardent courting of the Indian Government by their mentors in Moscow and Peking nor take their public professions at face value.
- (3) The Communist Party must prepare for the time which must inevitably come when it will be possible for the communists within and without India to settle scores with the present bourgeois Government of India.

Recollection of this cynical advice should be helpful in preparing people in India for the kind of diplomacy that the new Russian Foreign Minister may be expected to practise.

Algeria And The Nehru Plan

THE problem of Algeria is complex mainly because there are over a million Frenchmen who have settled down in Algeria and regard the country as their own and because France regards it as her inter-

nal problem in which she will not brook any interference of outside agencies.

In the meanwhile, the struggle in Algeria is becoming fiercer and fiercer. Daily there are reports of clashes between French troops and nationalist forces and the figures of casualties on both sides are mounting. The world at large has to look on helplessly while killing, burning and sabotage go on increasing from day to day.

In this situation the five-point plan suggested by the Prime Minister, Mr. Nehru, holds out a ray of hope. The Prime Minister has suggested direct talks between the Government of France and the leaders of the nationalist movement. On the one hand he suggests that France should recognise the "national entity and personality of Algeria", while on the other hand he insists on the racial equality of all peoples resident in Algeria. The former should satisfy the nationalist demand for independence while the latter should set at rest the doubts of French settlers regarding their status in independent Algeria. Mr. Nehru has also demanded that the resort to force should be abandoned and a peaceful solution of the conflict should be sought through direct negotiations.

This is, indeed, a statesmanlike approach. It has shown a keen appreciation of the difficulties of the French Government without compromising in the least the demand for self-determination. It stipulates that Asian or African countries must after attaining independence accord equal rights to all those who may be settled in the land regardless of their race or colour. This is an enlightened attitude which, if adopted by all, will prevent the war against colonialism from degenerating into a war against Europeans or the West.

U Nu's Resignation

IT is hardly ever that the leader of a political party, which has secured a clear victory at the polls, retires from his office soon after the results are declared. U Nu, the Prime Minister of Burma, has taken that unique step.

U Nu had declared on some earlier occasions his anxiety to relinquish office and to devote himself to the propagation of the Buddhist faith. By nature he is a shy and retiring person who can never be happy in the hurly-burly of politics. It was an accident of history, the assassination of Ang San and others, which forced him to walk into the lime light and accept the responsibilities of Prime Ministership. But he was always harking back to his quiet life and religious studies.

As Prime Minister, U Nu was eminently successful in restoring law and order, in suppressing the communist rebellion and in placing his country on the road to progress. He came to office when Burma was passing through a very critical period, when communist traitors were knocking at the gates of Rangoon. He saved the country from that predicament and on retirement he is leaving to his successor an established State and a stable administration.

After retirement, U Nu is going to devote himself

to reorganising and strengthening his party, the Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League. There have been speculations regarding the reasons for his decision to retire. One of the reasons suggested is the failure of his neutralist policy and his concern about political activities of diplomats from communist countries. *The Manchester Guardian* has referred to the "suspicions, well or ill-founded, of too much activity by the communist Embassies during the General Election." Asked specifically about these charges, U Nu promised to investigate them personally.

A few days later U Nu was more specific. In the course of an appeal to his party to set its house in order he stated "Our country has a liberal sprinkling of these stooges and hirelings. If political power were to pass into their hands we are in for a fate more dreadful than the loss of our independence and the ordeal will have to be faced by the AFPFL members more than by others. Even now AFPFL members are singled out for ruthless massacres in areas over which stooges and hirelings hold sway." It is obvious that the stooges and hirelings U Nu referred to are the communist agents working in Burma and it is they, it is now clear, who are responsible for his resignation.

• The Face Of The Devil

THE All India Congress Committee passed at its last meeting held in Bombay an emphatic resolution denouncing the use of violence. The Prime Minister was equally emphatic and he declared: "The Congress and the Government will combat and crush the spreading violence." He said: "We shall not bend before this show of force and recourse to mean and despicable methods of agitation."

In the light of the ugly situation that has developed in the country in the wake of the proposals for the reorganisation of States such an emphatic assertion of the determination not to be cowed down by violence was necessary. The very basis of our democracy was being undermined by the violence that was erupting in some of the popular movements developing in the country. A stern warning had to be issued to the organisers of those movements that violence would not pay and would be suppressed.

Nobody, including parties in opposition, could have taken exception to the resolution as it did not hold any particular party responsible for the violence. But the Communist Party has jumped to the conclusion that it was directed against it and has adopted a long resolution condemning the Congress and the Government. As the Prime Minister has stated, "it was a case of guilty men feeling that, the charge was directed against them." The resolution holds the Government and the Congress responsible for the outbreaks of violence. Commenting on the resolution, the Prime Minister remarked: "The devil has shown its face in the form of this resolution." It is to be hoped that the Prime Minister and his colleagues in the Government and the Congress will always keep in mind the face of the devil and will not forget it the moment it puts on a smile.

New Discovery Of Old Truths

DR. RADHAKRISHNAN, the Vice-President, admitted that he was disturbed when he found that the Soviet press had published only abbreviated versions of the two speeches that he delivered on his arrival in Moscow in the course of his tour of East Europe and West Asia. The press omitted some significant remarks of the Vice-President, such as his references to "strict control" and "suspicion" in Russia and the need for the relaxation of both. The Soviet press did not also mention his remarks about concentration camps and the need for real democracy.

The words and sentences that were omitted are very significant and without them the speeches as published must have given to Soviet readers a wrong picture of what the Vice-President said. It is clear that, in spite of all the changes that are taking place, the communist rulers still retain a strict control over the press and allow the Soviet people to read and know only what they choose.

It is surprising how many persons, who so long refused to accept that Soviet Russia was a totalitarian police State, now admit the fact in their enthusiasm to welcome the changes that are taking place in Moscow. The other day the Prime Minister said in the course of a speech in New Delhi that the Soviet leaders had been following a wrong path, that by pursuing that path they had harmed themselves and that formerly whoever indulged in any criticism was liquidated. The Vice-President has also made many such significant admissions. These new discoveries of old truths are welcome, but it is to be hoped that having at last discovered the truth they will not again fall a prey to the New Look in Moscow.

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manifestations would not be as unanimous as it may appear to be.

As explained at the outset, there is no disagreement with the basic premise of our foreign policy, namely, that it should be independent and non-aligned with any particular nation or group of nations. But independence does not demand acquiescence in or silence over crimes against humanity perpetrated by any nation, howsoever powerful it may be. When such actions are committed, there should be no doubt in the mind of anybody regarding our sympathies and preferences. We may act neutral, but we cannot *think* neutral without being untrue to ourselves. The principles that we have accepted as the basis of the new democracy that we are building up demand that there should be no equivocation on such issues.

It is and will be the task of *Freedom First* to bring these departures to the notice of the public in order to urge that the foreign policy may be kept on the even keel of independence and devotion to the principles of freedom and democracy. It may be that not many are aware at present of these departures and only a handful are prepared to express their concern over them. But who knows that the handful of today may not become the large majority of tomorrow? It has happened before in history, both distant and recent.

The Double Standard In Action

by G. S. Bhargava

THE other day, I found a communist friend of mine listening intently to a selection of South Indian classical music. Surprised that an apostle of revolutionary utilitarianism should appreciate a traditionalist, "decadent" form of art, I asked him whether he enjoyed it. His reply was even more astonishing. He not only said that he did but argued that there was nothing inconsistent between what he called acceptance of one's cultural heritage and believing that art, like all human endeavour, should serve a social purpose.

This was not hypocrisy but a typical case of Indian intellectual schizophrenia. My friend is unquestionably a sincere communist and an ideological follower of Karl Marx. At the same time, his love of Karnatic music is deep-seated and genuine. Indeed, he shook with patriotic rage while defending it against the "slander" of Beverley Nichols, who, in his *Verdict On India*, had likened South Indian classical music to the squeals of a pig being beaten.

In varying degrees, most Indian intellectuals show the same ambivalence. Writers, professors, administrators and political agitators all betray this dualism. Vis-a-vis communism, they like to boast that they are "uncommitted"—some more so, some less. This dichotomy shows itself in many ways: in enthusiasm for an egalitarian society alongside glorification of the classical Hindu social setup, caste system and all; in an underlying fascination for dictatorship together with a deceptive overlay of democratic behaviour; in a deep-seated sense of inferiority combined with an intense nationalism.

As with my communist friend, this is not usually calculated hypocrisy; rather, it is foolishness and incapacity to see below the surface. Yet, the distinction between communist-style deliberate "double-think" and this unconscious dualism often seems blurred—especially from a distance. Thus, Ilya Ehrenburg's praise of the great Indian poet Kalidasa, during his recent visit here, may strike foreign observers as indistinguishable in moral quality from the avidity with which it was swallowed by Indian intellectuals. In reality, Ehrenburg was cynically carrying out a political mission; he knew that, even though few Indians had ever read Kalidasa in his original Sanskrit, they were as proud of him as of the Taj Mahal or Mahatma Gandhi. The Indian reaction, on the other hand, represented a rather naive inability to resist a foreigner's compliment.

Gullibility in the face of communist propaganda, coupled with skepticism toward the West, is perhaps the chief manifestation of Indian intellectual confusion. There is a tendency to draw a veil over communism's seamy side and cling to its myths, while simultaneously turning a harsh spotlight on every imperfection in democratic life.

Doubts about the ability of "slowmoving" democracy to produce speedy economic achievement are

widespread, and often lead to a kind of fascination with "benevolent dictatorship." Ironically, this feeling that only dictatorship brings efficiency is accompanied by a tendency to magnify undemocratic developments in the West. The denial of a U.S. visa to Charlie Chaplin and the removal of Dr. Oppenheimer's clearance by the Atomic Energy Commission made headlines, and a great deal of stress was laid on McCarthyism, but no one pointed out that such phenomena are being effectively fought. Few Indians seem concerned about the paucity of visas handed out by the Soviet Government, even to communists, or about the fact that a fall from grace like Dr. Oppenheimer's would mean death in the USSR. Yet, when Khrushchev recently made a gesture toward liberalizing the Soviet visa system, and when Malenkov was demoted without being shot, many Indians incongruously hailed this as evidence of Soviet "democracy."

The summary dismissal and execution of Soviet secret-police chief Beria in 1953 was treated by the Indian press with no more than a brief announcement, followed by a recital of the "heinous crimes" which he had committed. No attempt was made to analyse Beria's fall in terms of the struggle for power in Moscow; that sort of thing was a U.S. pastime unworthy of Indian newspapers.

Earlier, however, the same papers had carried lengthy reports on the execution of Julius and Ethel Rosenberg, their leave-taking from their soon-to-be orphaned children, their last message to mankind, and the gory details of their journey to the electric chair.

The Czech coup in 1948 was cursorily brushed off in the Indian press and any attempt to stress its significance was dismissed as American propaganda. By contrast, the overthrow of the pro-communist Arbenz regime in Guatemala two years ago was taken by many Indians as final proof that American democracy is a sham.

While there is a broad tendency to suspect any pro-Western individual or institution of being in the pay of Washington, the motives of those engaged in communist propaganda are never questioned. Thus, the sober New Delhi weekly *Thought* is commonly regarded as an unofficial mouthpiece of the U.S. Information Service, even by those in broad agreement with its views, and even though *Thought* and its staff are anything but affluent. On the other hand, the large-circulation Bombay weekly *Blitz*, which combines sensational sex stories with a shrill pro-communist, anti-Western bias, is never accused of having been bought up by anyone. A sincere anti-communist like M. R. Masani is sneeringly referred to as a "good American," while Mulkraj Anand and Khwaja Ahmed Abbas, who receive large sums from the Soviet Union in royalties, are subject to no reproach.

Communist-front organizations like the Indian Peace Council, the Indo Soviet Cultural Friendship

Association, etc. are far from being regarded as agencies of foreign powers, and their members include highly placed persons like Sardar Panikkar. Groups devoted to exposing communism, however, are shunned like the plague as somehow unpatriotic; even the Congress for Cultural Freedom has a bad odour about it.

The revelation some time ago that the Government-run students' organization of China had passed a large sum of money in Czech currency to the Communist All-India Students' Federation failed to produce a ripple in India. The documentary evidence produced in various conspiracy trials that the communists received money from abroad, and the fact that the party today has assets valued at tens of millions of rupees and pays an exorbitant rent for its New Delhi headquarters, have also made little impression. Yet, when U.S. Socialist leader Norman Thomas declared in 1951 that his party would help the Indian Socialists, it was immediately denounced as "dollar aid."

The average Indian intellectual is astonishingly receptive to Soviet words and blind to Soviet deeds. The Russian occupation of Eastern Europe, the Berlin Blockade, the blocking of an Austrian peace treaty for nearly ten years, and even the Chinese conquest of Tibet on India's northern border made little impact. However, the Russian's expressed willingness at Geneva to discuss Germany, disarmament and other issues with the West was acclaimed by everyone. When the subsequent Foreign Ministers' Conference foundered, it made no difference whatever to Indian devotees of the "Geneva Spirit."

Indian intellectual's reading habits show the same bias and ignorance. The pro-Soviet books of Maurice Dobb are lapped up eagerly, while even the balanced anti-communism of Edward Crankshaw evokes skepticism among the few who read him. The only anti-communist book that made some inroads among Indian intellectuals was *The God That Failed*, but most had already been thoroughly conditioned by a long series of works like John Reed's *Ten Days That Shook the World*, Maurice Hindus's *Mother Russia*, Joseph E. Davies's *Mission to Moscow*, and Harold J. Laski's *Reflections on the Revolution of Our Time*. Books ranging from Edger Snow's *Red Star Over China* to Jack Belden's *China Shakes the World* have created a similar climate as regards communist China. Even today, undergraduates in Indian universities are brought up on books which influenced leftist thought in the west two decades ago but have long since been thoroughly discredited by events.

Many Indian intellectuals tend to dismiss anti-communism as a kind of religion unworthy of any thinking man. The opinions of ex-communists are dismissed out of hand as "biased," "embittered," etc. Men like Arthur Koestler are often brushed off as "Red-baiters," and two first-rate books by defectors from the British C P, Douglas Hyde's *I Believed* and Charlotte Haldane's *Truth Will Out*, went virtually unnoticed except for a few bad reviews. Victor Kravchenko's *I Chose Freedom* was treated as American propaganda; cited in support of this view was the

defamation case which the communists lost in Paris.

In view of the prevailing intellectual climate, political leaders and writers find it useful to open any discussion with a sort of ritualistic denunciation of the West, regardless of the subject under consideration. This is practised by the leaders of the Congress party, including Nehru. Even anti-communist Socialists or extreme right-wingers like the leaders of the Hindu Mahasabha and the Jan Sangh make a point of going on record against the West to take the curse off their anti-communism.

It is erroneous to suppose that India's intelligentsia would feel at home within the communist party. India's fellow-travellers differ from their European counterparts in that their sympathy for Chinese and Soviet communism rarely inclines them toward military party activity, espionage etc. Many of them might even side with Nehru in the event of a showdown with the communists either at home or abroad. Some, like the Congress party leaders who join front organizations promoting "friendship" with Russia and China, are strongly opposed to domestic Indian communism. Others tend to go along with the party during "soft" non-militant periods. Generally speaking the common denominator is sympathy for the Soviet Union and communist China.

A product of two disparate cultures, the Indian intellectual has long been a split personality. Unwilling to break with India's medieval past, he is yet thoroughly modernized in his ways of living; he looks back nostalgically on the glory that was India centuries ago, but at the same time clamours for the good things of Western civilization. He is half-rural and half-urban, half-Indian and half-British. He loyally serves the present system, as he did the British Raj, but he is emotionally weary of it. Hence his fascination for the "millennium" offered by Moscow and Peking and his hear-no-evil, see-no-evil, speak-no-evil attitude toward communism abroad. The local Communist party, on the other hand, brings up unhappy memories of past strife and is much too close at hand to be invested with any millennial quality.

Prime Minister Nehru's foreign policy can be largely explained by his belief that, to fight the communists effectively at home, he must take a pro-Soviet, pro-Chinese stand abroad. Moreover, the current rise in India's worldwide prestige—Khrushchev even recommended that she be formally acknowledged one of the Great Powers—tickled the vanity of Indian intellectuals, who suffer from a deep-seated inferiority complex. The intellectuals also enjoy being ranged with "progressives" the world over against the "reactionaries," and find this much more stimulating than such prosaic pursuits as the fight for economic and social reforms at home.

Many Indian intellectuals are also beset by a feeling of "two Americas" and "two Russias" one of which they accept and one of which they reject. It is this unresolved conflict that often makes them baffling, inconsistent and even infuriating in the present world struggle between communism and democracy.

—Abridged from *The New Leader*, May 28, 1956

Whither Algeria?

by Ida Dhami

ALGERIA is today undoubtedly one of the most explosive problems in the seething Mediterranean basin. People in France and abroad are astonished, if not indignant, at the failure of Guy Mollet's Government to apply to Algeria the same solution as to Morocco and Tunisia who, according to the recently signed protocols, have been granted what amounts to full independence. They point to the bitter lesson taught by the war in Indo-China and maintain that France cannot possibly afford another such sacrifice in terms of men and money.

Although the Government of France is now earnestly looking for a way out of this very complex problem, it has unfortunately inherited a situation from which it may not be able to extricate itself without a great deal of trouble and bloodshed. Militarily, it has to keep both the rebels and the extremist *colons* in check; but it cannot possibly hope to keep control of the situation without carrying out at the same time extensive economic improvement. The French economy, however, cannot sustain a two-fold offensive on such a large scale—Algeria being three times the size of France.

In order to secure an adequate assessment of the situation in Algeria, one must, first of all, consider its historical background. In contrast to Morocco and Tunisia which were until recently French protectorates, Algeria, according to a postwar Statute, has been considered an integral part of metropolitan France. The French who first entered Algeria in 1830 (several decades before settling in either of the two neighbouring countries), have pursued most vigorously a policy of effective integration of their adopted country with France. Algeria has been sending thirty deputies to represent it in the French Assembly and a number of senators to the Senate. But even the most conservative Frenchmen have to admit today that this policy of assimilation has turned out to be a failure. For Algeria, in spite of the assertion of French chauvinists, is undoubtedly first and foremost a part of Africa. Whatever their cultural and economic ties with their "mother country", 9 million indigenous Algerians (almost 90% of the population) consider themselves, regardless of their ethnological background, an integral part of the Arab world.

What about the remaining, approximately 10% of inhabitants in Algeria? It is really they—the more than one million French *colons*—who are responsible for the present impasse and for the rapidly deteriorating political and social climate of the country. For the settlers, most of whom make only a modest living, have consistently tried to seek compensation for their failure at making good in life by bearing down on the indigenous population. In order to maintain their precarious superiority—"racial" and social, if not economic—they will stop at nothing to retain their unequal political and social privileges. This "poor white" mentality—by no means a uniquely Algerian

feature—has, on the one hand, been responsible for the tension between "Europeans" and "Algerians," and, on the other, made it imperative for the *colon* to continue to consider Algeria his home, for, if he were forced to leave the land where he and his forefathers have been settled for several generations, he would immediately lose what little status he has been able to secure. It was because of the *colon's* opposition that all previous government efforts to integrate the North-African into public life and give him a greater share of administrative and managerial responsibilities have failed. And it is largely because of his opposition that the problem of Algeria cannot be solved in the manner of Tunisia and Morocco.

The *colon*, however, is not the only obstacle in the way of a speedy solution of the problem. Algeria, in contrast with Tunisia and Morocco, has hardly the framework within which a responsible effective nationalist movement can take shape. It has no royal dynasty or hereditary aristocracy, no very deep-rooted Moslem tradition, and little national unity or cohesion. Its long, thin coastline is inhabited largely by scattered tribal groups who have only been unified by foreign hands. East-West communications are of recent creation. As a result, nationalist leaders have been slow to emerge; they lack the assurance and rallying force of their counterparts in Tunisia and Morocco.

What about Algeria's political future? Unfortunately, few among the responsible French leaders have yet had the courage to make concrete proposals in this respect. Some are in favour of perpetuating the political status quo which is obviously unacceptable to the Algerians. Even so liberal a mind as Mendes France has not advocated a status of independence, but hopes to create conditions under which an Algerian Assembly, on the basis of nation-wide elections, would be set up to negotiate some form of federal link with France. Few if any of the responsible newspapers have hinted at the possibility of granting a political status equal to Morocco and Tunisia which might necessitate the splitting of Algeria into a loosely federated European and North-African part. And yet, judging from the statements made by Algerian and other North African spokesmen, Algeria may not be prepared to accept anything short of full independence. Once that is granted, it might agree to remain, together with Tunisia and Morocco, a member of a greater French Union, and, if invited may join N.A.T.O., the Council of Europe and other Western Alliances.

If, however, no settlement can be achieved, the situation in Algeria will not only deteriorate into extensive warfare, but will undoubtedly be exploited by Soviet Russia or Nasser's Egypt, or, more probably, by both. For Egypt is anxious to establish its hegemony over the whole of North Africa and Soviet imperialism is bent, in the words of Lenin, "to ruin Europe through the loss of Africa."

Can Socialists & Communists Cooperate?

by Adam Adil

CAN rapprochement and cooperation between the socialists and communists be possible?

This question has once again become a live one by reason of the P.T.I. report carried in the Indian Press on June 27 that talks had recently taken place between Mr. Jayaprakash Narayan, Mr. Asoka Mehta and Mr. Ajoy Ghosh, General Secretary of the C.P.I. to explore the possibilities of an electoral alliance against the Congress in next year's General Elections. The report was disturbing, though the subsequent statement of Mr. Farid Ansari, the Joint Secretary of the P.S.P. is to some extent reassuring. Mr. Ansari deserves to be congratulated when he declares: "There are fundamental differences between the P.S.P. and the C.P.I. in their outlook towards democratic methods and traditions, the purity of means and ends and ethical values. In view of these differences, there cannot be any electoral alliance between the P.S.P. and the C.P.I." In spite of this reassurance, it is necessary to analyse the origins and purposes of this attempt at a united front on the part of the communists, both in India and internationally.

Speaking at the 20th Communist Party Congress at Moscow on February 14, 1956, the First Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Nikita Khrushchev said, "Not a few of the misfortunes harassing the world today are due to the fact that in many countries the working class has been split for many years and its different groups do not present a united front. Yet, today, in our opinion, the prospect of changing this situation is opening up. Life has put on the agenda many questions which not only demand rapprochement and cooperation between all workers' parties, but also create real possibilities for this cooperation..... Cooperation with those circles of the Socialist movement which have views on the forms of transition to socialism differing from ours is also possible and essential."

Again, in a memorandum submitted to the Norwegian Prime Minister Einar Gerhardsen, (who is also the Chairman of the Norwegian Labour Party) when he visited Moscow recently, Khrushchev stated that history has shown forms of transition to socialism other than the Soviet one. Khrushchev said "It is probable that the forms of transition to socialism will become more and more diversified. • Moreover the implementation of these forms need not be associated with civil war under all circumstances." Explaining the point further, he said "At the same time, the present situation offers the working class in a number of capitalist countries a real opportunity to unite the overwhelming majority of the people under its leadership and to secure the transfer of the basic means of production into the hands of the people. The right-wing bourgeois parties and their governments suffer disaster with increasing frequency. In these circumstances, the working class by rallying around itself the toiling peasantry, the intelligentsia and all

patriotic forces, and resolutely repulsing the opportunist elements who are incapable of giving up the policy of compromise with the capitalists and landlords, is in a position to defeat the reactionary forces opposed to the popular interest, to capture a stable majority in parliament, and transform the latter from an organ of bourgeois democracy into a genuine instrument of the people's will."

In view of these statements of Khrushchev, the latest policy of the Communist Party of India of extending its hand of cooperation to the Indian National Congress is not surprising. Obviously, the Indian communists were ordered by Moscow to adopt this line. It will not be surprising again, if the Indian communists begin to talk of an election alliance with the Praja Socialist Party, the Socialist Party of India (Dr. Lohia's) and other such parties. It will be a tragedy however, if, while the Congress labour leaders like Shri Khandubhai Desai, Vasavada and others have shown a keen sense of realism with regard to the communist tactics, the PSP and SP leaders fall a prey to the communist machinations. As it is, I reliably understand that a top PSP leader sees no harm if an election alliance is effected between the PSP and the Communist Party during the next General Elections!

Fortunately, however, the Council of the Socialist international, which met in Zurich, Switzerland, on March 14, 1956 has promptly rejected Khrushchev's bid. In a statement issued after the meeting, the Council said in part "The change of communist tactics which emerged at the recent Party Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union are not adequate proof of a genuine change in the principles and policies of the Communist dictatorships and therefore provide no ground for departing from the position taken up by Democratic Socialism, which firmly rejects any united front or any other form of political cooperation with the parties of dictatorship."

Again, on April 7, 1956, the Bureau of Socialist International in a communique, issued from London, stated: "Socialism and Communism have nothing in common. The Communists have merely perverted the very idea of Socialism. Where they are in power, they have distorted every freedom, every right of the worker, every political gain and every human value which Socialists have won in a struggle lasting several generations."

"We believe in democracy, they don't. We believe in the rights of man, they mock them. This is not changed by the refutation of Stalinism. Repudiation by those who—whether in fear of their lives or in genuine complicity—previously helped in Stalin's crimes and praised his sins has not fundamentally altered the character of the Communist regime. Even with collective leadership it yet remains a dictatorship, and what they now call "Leninism" is nothing but an earlier edition of the misconceptions and

misdeeds of Stalinism....Where Socialist Parties in Russian-dominated part of the world have cooperated with them (Communists) they were crushed out of existence, compulsorily merged or otherwise eliminated by the ruthless methods of a dictatorship which ironically calls itself People's Democracy....Recent changes of Communist tactics provide no grounds for departing from the position taken by the Democratic Socialism, which firmly rejects any 'united front' or any other form of political cooperation with the parties of dictatorship."

Although the Asian socialist have not met to demonstrate their reaction to Khrushchev's recent overtures, their line too has been quite clear. They too are unanimous in their opposition to any kind of "united front" or "popular front" with the communists. In January 1953, the Asian socialists, meeting for the first time in Rangoon, stated in a resolution:

"Communism as practised today in its totalitarian form in the Soviet Union and its satellites has degenerated into a regime of complete subordination of the individual and the group to the centralised power of the leadership of the ruling party.

"Under the Soviet system, state power imposes absolute domination and exacts blind obedience.... Communism therefore stands for the negation of all concepts of freedom, individual self-expression and genuine mass responsibility, which are the very breath of democratic socialism."

A few years ago, in fact, the Indian socialists had formed a united front with the communists. But soon the socialists were disillusioned and compelled to break away from the communists. The painful experience of the united front was well described by Shri Jayaprakash Narayan, in his pamphlet *Socialist Unity and the Congress Socialist Party*. He wrote:

"In the course of time as more and more Communists entered the (Congress Socialist) Party, disturbing notes began to be heard....Reports kept reaching the Executive that the Communists were doing "fraction work" within the Socialist Party and trying to capture its organisation.....The situation steadily deteriorated, and the (Socialist) Party feeling itself increasingly paralysed.....This policy of drift, which was daily delivering the Socialists into the hands of the Communist Party, drove some of the leading members of the Executive to resign....This was welcomed by the Communist Party."

•Why are the communist leaders trying for a "united front" or "popular front" with the socialist and other progressive parties of the world? The reason is obvious. It is obvious from the record of the communist working in such 'united fronts' or 'popular fronts.' Only a naive person will imagine that communist intentions are genuine. Experience, throughout the world has proved that the embrace of the communists is the embrace of death. No one has so far escaped from that embrace of death, and no one can escape. This is a stark reality. The latest attempt once again purports to capture free governments and parliaments by means of popular fronts and to ultimately wreck them for the establishment of the communist dictatorship. Communists themselves have made no secret

of their intention and techniques. The former Hungarian communist Minister of Interior, Lazlo Rajk, (later denounced and liquidated as Titoist) once explained:

"If you have four enemies and you want to get rid of all four of them, the thing to do is to make an alliance with all the four, assuring them of full co-operation. After a while, start to persuade the three that the fourth is a menace to the whole alliance and get their help in having him removed. After a while persuade the two that the third is a menace to them all and while assuring them of the very sacredness of the common aims, get their help in removing the third and so until there is only a single remaining enemy to be dealt with."

Czechoslovakia provides the most obnoxious example of the communist capture of power through united front. Referring to this Mikoyan himself admitted, "In the favourable situation which arose in Czechoslovakia after the war, the Socialist revolution was fulfilled in a peaceful way. The communists came to power after having entered an alliance not only with the parties of the working people which were close to them, but also with bourgeois parties which had supported the common national-front. The people of Czechoslovakia won a victory by a peaceful development of the revolution".

And what was the result of the "peaceful revolution"?

On February 25, 1948, President Benes bowed to the communist *fait accompli*, and the great free Czechoslovakia became a Soviet satellite. Less than a month later, Jan Masaryk, Minister of Foreign Affairs and the most respected leader in Czechoslovakia after Benes, committed suicide—or was murdered. And six months later, frustrated and heartbroken President Benes died.

So when the communists talk of united front, their aim is, in the words of Khrushchev, "to capture a stable majority in parliament, and transform the latter from an organ of bourgeois democracy, into a genuine instrument of people's will," that is, in other words, destruction of democracy and establishment of communist dictatorship.

How can, therefore, democratic socialists be ever prepared to commit the crime of abetting in the nefarious design of world communism?

QUEST

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To The Editor

Sir:

Your note in the issue of "Freedom First" of June 1956 on the right to strike is likely to give the erroneous impression that the I.N.T.U.C. has been thinking in terms of giving up the strike weapon. It also wrongly mentions that the Union Labour Minister advised the workers to give up their right to strike.

While it is certainly not my purpose to defend the I.N.T.U.C., yet as one present at the Surat Convention of the I.N.T.U.C. I am compelled to point out the following in fairness to the I.N.T.U.C.

The resolution on Industrial Relations welcomed the call given by Prime Minister Nehru to "avoid strike and lock-outs" during the Plan Period. The amendment moved by the Secretary of the Bombay Nurses Union sought to "nevertheless assert that the strike weapon, which is the only instrument in the hands of labour against oppressions of managements both Public and Private, shall not be given up, but utilised judiciously and as a last resort."

This amendment evoked considerable controversy among the delegates making the otherwise drab proceedings of the I.N.T.U.C. rather lively.

However, even while opposing the amendment, none of the I.N.T.U.C. leaders nor even the Union Labour Minister went to such an extent as to say that the "right to strike" should be given up. Of course many of the delegates wished the leadership and the ministers were more forthright about the right to strike. The fact that considerable discussion was allowed to take place on this amendment—without resorting to the guillotine—was in itself a welcome tendency.

The only regrettable thing was the tendency of the I.N.T.U.C. leaders to associate Central Cabinet Ministers in the serious delegates' sessions and discussions of a Trade Union organisation.

Therefore, I am sure you and your readers will agree with me that while truly enough there are signs in our country to subordinate everything to THE PLAN, your unconscious characterisation of I.N.T.U.C. as a willing tool to this process is not correct. As to what the future trends will be that of course is a different question. Today the I.N.T.U.C. still has a very hopeful Free Trade Union potential, and it *does not* stand for giving up the right to strike.

Yours Sincerely,
S. R. Mohan Das

Bombay, June 5, 1956

[We are glad to be assured that the I.N.T.U.C. does not stand for giving up the right to strike. The reports that appeared in the press gave a contrary impression. We are grateful to our correspondent for removing the wrong impression.—EDITOR]

I. C. C. F. NEWS

Mr. James T. Farrell, the celebrated American novelist and the Chairman of the American Committee for Cultural Freedom, was in Bombay for five days, from June 2 to June 6. Under the joint auspices of the P.E.N. All India Centre and the Indian Committee, Mr. Farrell delivered a public lecture on June 4 at the Durbar Hall, Town Hall, Bombay. The subject of his lecture was "Some Observations on the 20th Century American Novel." Prof. G. C. Bannerjee presided. Madame Sophia Wadia welcomed the distinguished speaker and Prof. A. A. Kanekar moved the vote of thanks.

On Tuesday, June 5, Mr. Farrell had a meeting with Marathi, Gujarati and Hindi writers, where he discussed with them a number of problems relating to literature. Prof. A. A. Kanekar presided.

Amongst other functions organised for Mr. Farrell was a reception at the Cricket Club of India, organised by the India Book House, the distributors in India of Mr. Farrell's books. The Marathi Sahitya Sangha organised a music recital in his honour. The Indian Committee entertained him at a dinner where he was able to meet a number of distinguished citizens of Bombay.

From Bombay Mr. Farrell went to Delhi, where he had discussions with prominent government officials and some Ministers about the Second Five Year Plan. Mr. Farrell met the Prime Minister in Bombay and had a long interview with him. Mr. Farrell left Delhi for Karachi on Sunday, June 10.

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'Tis not too late to seek a newer world."

—Tennyson.

Our own experiences have been too bitter, and we have seen too clearly the meaning of communism, the methods it uses and the diabolic skill with which its propaganda operates not to react to the latest events in Moscow with scepticism.

—Dr. Konrad Adenauer, *The Times of India*, June 12.

From our point of view it is as inevitable as night follows day that the capitalist system will be replaced by the socialist system.

—Mr. D. T. Shepilov, *New York Times*, June 3.

War has moved from the days of Napoleon's nation in arms, when God was on the side of the Big Battalions, through the Industrial Revolution, when God was on the side of the Big Factories, to the Technological Revolution, when God might be said to be on the side of the Big Bang.

—Mr. Hanson W. Baldwin, *New York Times* June 3.

Surely bases cannot be said to exist, like beauty, merely in the eyes of the beholder.

—The *Daily Telegraph*, London, June 12.

China's claim to Tibet is no stronger than Portugal's to Goa. Both are based on conquest.

—*Mysindia*, June 10.

There is need to end the nearly forty-year-old divorce between men of wisdom and men of action. The I.C.C.F. can play a leading role in bringing about this reconciliation. Indeed, no other institution even seems to be aware of this need.

—*Thought*, June 9.

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Mr. Nehru described the Second Five-Year Plan as a horoscope, the horoscope of Free India.

—Mr. Nehru quoted in *The Times of India*, June 4.

"The question arises," he said, "could it be possible that nationalistic tendencies grew so much that there was a danger of Georgia's leaving the Soviet Union and joining Turkey?"

—Mr. Khrushchev, *Evening News of India*, June 5.

The Russians now know what a social democrat is.

—M. Guy Mollet, French Premier, quoted in
the *Economist*, May 26.

Nehru needs a powerful Communist Party as a pressure group.

—Blitz, May 26.

Communism is, in the deepest sense, a gigantic failure.

—Mr. Eisenhower, *Times of India*, May 26.

Sometimes, Nehru has a tendency to lose sight of the essential dynamism of communism.

—Premier S. W. R. D. Bandarnaike of Ceylon,
Shankar's Weekly, April 29.

There is no fundamental incompatibility between America and India.

—Mr. Morarji Desai, *The Current*, May 30.

The three main dangers to the Indian State in the near future are inflation, infiltration and impatience. The inflation is of prices, the infiltration is by the communists, external and internal, the impatience is about independent and impartial advice.

—Vidura, *The Times of India*, May 29.

✓ It is true that the cult of personality is very developed in India in relation to Mr. Nehru.

—Mr. Ajoy Kumar Ghosh, *The Times of India*,
May 28.

It is a silly idea of a ceiling on income, a blend of 1% of ideology, 75% of jealousy, and 24% of bone-headed stupidity.

—Ditcher, *Capital*, May 24.

Those who cry "a plague on both your houses" should trace the quotation to its source where they will find that the speaker of the line was slain by Tybalt, the aggressor in the quarrel and not by Romeo.

—Narie Oliaji, in *Encounter*, June 1957