

Namboodiripad's Defiance

Adam Adil

INSPITE of his defiance of the Essential Services Maintenance Ordinance promulgated by the President of India just before the proposed strike by the Central Government employees on September 19, Mr. E. M. S. Namboodiripad, Chief Minister of Kerala, has sought to prove that there is no question of any breakdown of the constitutional machinery in the State and that the State Government has not committed any violation of the Constitution.

It is quite obvious that right from the time the Ordinance was promulgated, Mr. Namboodiripad has been trying to confuse the issue. The plain question is whether the authority of the President of India or the writ of the Central Government extends to Kerala or not. If it does, can the Government of Kerala deliberately act in a manner so as to violate the authority of the President or the writ of the Central Government? The commonsense answer, apart from a legalistic one, would be that no State Government can go counter to the specific orders of the President or of the Central Government. If it does, it violates the Constitution and deserves to be treated accordingly. No amount of indulgence in jugglery of words can hide this fact.

The Union Law Minister, Mr. Panampilli Govinda Menon has rightly highlighted the issues involved in Kerala Government's defiance of the Centre on the strike issue. He has rightly stressed that the Kerala Government has violated the Constitution although he has given no indication of the action the Union Government contemplates taking against the Namboodiripad Ministry. In view of the seriousness of the situation, Mr. Namboodiripad's objections to the "frequent" visits of Mr. Panampilli Govinda Menon to Kerala in the wake of the strike and to giving expression to his views on Centre-State relationship have an air of flippancy.

It is needless to stress that if the Kerala Government succeeds in defying the Centre the whole question of Centre-State relationship will be in the melting pot. It will be a strong incentive to other State Governments to violate the writ of the Centre and get away

with it. This will set in motion a chain reaction which will ultimately jeopardise the unity and solidarity of the country.

Mr. Namboodiripad's defiance of the Centre must be viewed in the context of the political attitudes adopted by Marxist Communists in India and in Kerala in particular. A few days ago, Mr. A. K. Gopalan, Secretary of Kerala Communist Party (Marxist) stated that all those government employees who did not abide by the decision of the State Government on September 19, in other words, who loyally carried out the orders of the Centre would be penalised. Will the Union Government allow the penalisation of its loyal employees in Kerala and sit with folded hands if it happens? Again, if Mr. Namboodiripad is allowed to have his way, it is bound to be interpreted as an indication of success of the ideology of the Left Communists who make no secret of their extra-territorial loyalties and their lack of faith in parliamentary democracy and the democratic way of life which the Indian Constitution enjoins upon the people. Any impetus to Left Communist ideology in this manner would have dangerous consequences on the future of democracy.

It is therefore legitimate that the opposition leaders in Kerala have made a strong representation to the Union Government demanding the dismissal of the Namboodiripad government and imposition of President's rule. It is clear that by their failure to implement their election pledges to the people of Kerala, by their tendency to blame the Centre for their own weaknesses and lack of creative effort to improve the lot of the people, by their connivance at the violence indulged in by Left Communist workers against peaceful citizens, by their instigation of workers to hamper production by resorting to illegal strikes and violent methods which result in unemployment, by their failure to check the breakdown of law and order in the State, by their policy of penalising those government employees who are loyal to the Central Government, by their attempt to isolate the people of Kerala from those of the rest of the country the Namboodiripad Government has forfeited the confidence of the people of Kerala.

It is, therefore, imperative that the Union Government must deal with the Kerala Government in a firm manner. This is not to suggest that it must be dismissed forthwith. But it must be told firmly and unequivocally that it must mend its ways and make adequate amends for its violation of the authority of the President. The Prime Minister as well as the Union

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Without Comment

Russia "Biggest Colonial Ruler"

China's Chief of the General Staff, Gen. Huang Yung-sheng described the Soviet Union as the biggest colonial ruler and exploiter in eastern Europe.

Speaking at a rally in Peking in honour of the visiting Albanian delegation, led by the Defence Minister, Mr. Bequir Balluku, the Chinese military leader accused Moscow of using the Warsaw Pact and the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance to maintain its control over the communist nations of Europe.

Politically, the Soviet Union interfered in the internal and external policies of East European countries, economically it plundered their material resources and militarily it used armed threats and occupation to maintain its control, Gen. Huang said.

The Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia had fully exposed Moscow's "social imperialism and social fascism" features.

Gen. Huang praised Albania for withdrawing from the Warsaw Pact and said the move would be a tremendous encouragement to the people of East Europe who were opposed to the Soviet Union. He assured Albania of China's support in case of aggression.

New China News Agency

Dissident Intellectuals Exiled

A Soviet court ordered the provincial exile of three leading members of Moscow's dissident intellectual community for holding a protest demonstration against the occupation of Czechoslovakia.

The chief accused, Dr. Pavel Litvino, grandson of a former Soviet Foreign Minister, and Mrs. Larissa Daniel, wife of a jailed writer, were exiled for five and four years respectively.

A third defendant, 40-year-old linguist Konstantin Bakbitsky, was exiled for three years.

A student, 23-year-old Vadim Delone, was sent to a labour camp for two years 10 months and Vladimir Dremlyuga, 28, an unemployed worker, was sentenced to three years in labour camp.

The sentences, handed down at the end of a three-day trial from which foreign journalists were barred, were announced by Mr. Lev Almazov, deputy chairman of the Moscow City Court.

An exile is assigned to a small region which he cannot leave for the duration of his sentence. But he can live where he likes within the region and take whatever work is available.

Times of India

Polish Writer's Protest

THE Polish writer Jerzy Andrzejewski, author of *Ashes and Diamonds*, has written a letter to Professor Eduard Goldstuecker, president of the Czechoslovak Writers' Union, protesting against the invasion of Czechoslovakia.

Mr. Andrzejewski published his first novel in 1936 and was active in the anti-Nazi resistance movement. After the war he supported the communist government and wrote a book explaining the principles of socialist realism. By 1956 he had become disillusioned. He figured in the writers' revolt in that year and resigned from the party in the following year when the proposed new magazine *Europa*, of which he was to be editor, was refused permission to begin publication.

The text of his letter is as follows:—

Dear Mr. President—Full of respect and emotion, as well as deep anxiety about the situation in which the Czech and Slovak writers have found themselves as a result of the tragic and deplorable events, I am asking you, Mr. President, to convey to your colleagues the expression of my complete solidarity with them, words of a real fraternal feeling on the part of a Polish writer who, although he expresses only his own thoughts and emotions, believes, nay knows, that he has the support of a great majority of Polish writers for whom the words truth, love, loyalty, hope, patriotism and progress have not yet died or become a heavy burden.

I am addressing you so that you and all your colleagues should know that at the time of your creative search, so important for the future of the whole world, you have had in the Polish writers and intellectuals friends full of hope, and when you were going through particularly difficult days for you and your peoples, we were with you, although deprived of free speech in our own country.

You must know full well that the feeling of helplessness in the face of force and violence is the most painful of all human humiliations and that such a defeat becomes a particularly heavy burden when the best traditions of one's country become defiled, freedom of speech annihilated, and truth trampled underfoot.

I am aware that my voice of political and moral protest will not and cannot outweigh the odium incurred by Poland in the eyes of progressive opinion throughout the world. But this protest, born of indignation, pain and shame, is the only thing I can offer you and your friends and colleagues in the present circumstances.

Please accept it then, together with hope... Let us not talk about hope. Let us safeguard hope. Let us strengthen hope. Let us work for hope.

—JERZY ANDRZEJEWSKI, Warsaw, September, 1965.
The Times, London

How Will The Congress Fare?

A. G. Noorani

WHY is it that while the Muslim Leagues frittered away and needed buttressing by regimentation, the Congress is still going strong in democratic India? In retrospect, the regrets about the Congress not dissolving itself as Gandhiji advised or not splitting along ideological lines appear short-sighted. The Congress has been a great unifying force, and ideological splits weaken society without any compensating gain. Far better to have programmatic differences.

In the early years, after the initial conflicts were resolved, the Congress became an instrument of Nehru rule. Even if it was an instrument he never could, and never did, take it for granted. It is after him that the organisation has sought to make itself felt in vital matters of policy, with varying results.

Mr. Kochanek's book^{*} is a work of enormous labour. Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya's two-volumes were a history of the Congress till independence. Mr. Kochanek's book is a documented analysis of the Congress Party's working since, from three main aspects—the relationship of the Prime Minister and the Congress President, the functioning and the role of the Working Committee, and the problems of leadership — its recruitment and training. He has not only delved deep into the published material but has had access to, and made extensive use of, the unpublished papers of Dr. Rajendra Prasad, Dr. B. Pattabhi Sitaramayya and Pandit Ravi Shankar Shukla. It bids fair to rank as a classic.

In the author's opinion "The durability of the Congress is attributable rather to its well exercised ability to adapt pragmatically to change, its highly developed skill in managing internal conflict, and its evolution of a decision-making process designed to aggregate the demands of a highly differentiated following." The book begins with the first major crisis about decision-making — the Kripalani episode. Differences arose between Congress members of the Interim Government and the Congress President over the consultative status of the latter. In a note prepared as early as July 15, 1947 and circulated only to Kripalani, Patel, Rajendra Prasad, Rajaji and Gandhiji, Nehru wrote "It is hardly possible for the Working Committee to consider them (policy matters) in any detail or to give us directions in regard to all of them. The point is that the Committee should realise what the Government will be faced with and should lay down a general policy as to how it should function with or without reference to it. A continued reference is of course, impossible.

Normally a Party executive lays down the broadest lines of policy and leaves it to the Government to work it out." (italics mine) Kripalani's eventual resignation reflected the acceptance of the Nehru doctrine by the party, a doctrine which, with some unfortunate concessions, still persists.

In order to dissuade the Socialists from leaving the Congress, Gandhiji recommended Narendra Deva as successor to Kripalani, "but Patel's anti-Socialist bias caused him to reject the proposal." Rajendra Prasad resigned his seat in the Cabinet to become Congress President for a short while.

The first real post-independence Presidential contest was between Pattabhi and Tandon when the former won to preside at the Jaipur Session.

The new President summed up the relationship between the Government and the Congress Organisation in his own characteristic manner. "The Congress is really the philosopher while the Government is the Politician. The latter has power and the former influence. Sometimes the influence which is moral overcomes power which is physical. Or shall we say the congress government is like a tactful and young daughter-in-law. All the power is in reality vested in the latter through the husband. Yet she attempts, not merely affects, to obey her parents-in-law while ultimately carrying out her own will." A significant parallel, indeed. The other metaphors he used were a barometer and "the brain trust" (sic). The less said about the latter the better.

Mr. Nehru met the final test in Tandon's election a year later. Like Kripalani's before him, Tandon's resignation fortified the Nehru doctrine. Only, unlike the Kripalani resignation, it fortified Nehru's own personal position as well. There followed a succession of approved Congress Presidents, Mrs. Indira Gandhi being among them. One President Mr. Sanjiva Reddy bitterly complained that he was treated as "Mrs. Gandhi's Chaprassi."

It was after Mr. Nehru's passing away that the Congress President came to the fore. Mr. Kamaraj supported successively Mr. Lal Bahadur Shastri's and Mrs. Indira Gandhi's candidature for the Premiership. In each case his prestige shook off the protection, after a while. The result is well summed up by Mr. Kochanek. "The power, prestige, and patronage of the Prime Minister has developed over the years to the point that Congressmen look to the Prime Minister, and not to the Congress President for leadership. Whatever authority remains in the office of Congress President depends largely on the stature of the person chosen to fill it. But the process

^{*} *The Congress Party of India: The Dynamics of Party Democracy* by Stanley A. Kochanek, Princeton University Press. Agents: Oxford University Press. 313 50

of selection, heavily dependent on the wishes of the Prime Minister, leaves the strongest Congress President at least psychologically in the position of vassal to lord. Therefore, despite its resurgence in recent years, the Congress Presidency has regained only a negligible portion of the power and prestige lost during the last two decades."

The Working Committee can hardly hope to succeed where the President has conspicuously failed. True, there are the numbers, but the strong men in the Cabinet are also strong men in the party executive. However, given a divided Central Leadership, the potentialities of the Committee are not to be underestimated.

What is deplorable is the Congress Government's use of the party executive for resolving inter-State problems instead of using the institutions ordained by the Constitution. Whether it was the knotty question of the bilingual Bombay, its bifurcation, the Goa issue, the Maharashtra-Mysore border question, or Assam's reorganisation, it is the Working Committee which was allowed to speak first, the Government seemingly following. This procedure was wrong on principle even in the days of the Congress hegemony. Today it is even more presumptuous and pernicious.

The Working Committee does operate as a check on government thanks to the split in the leadership. In George Rosen's striking phrase, "The Prime Minister no longer led the party he held it together." By the time he became strong enough to lead Mr. Shastri passed away. Mrs. Gandhi, after an initial bold attempt, panicked. The rest of her tenure has been fits of defiance followed by some abject retreats.

The author takes a very favourable view of the new elite in the Congress! "The key to political stability no less than Congress dominance in India has been the Congress Party's ability to attract and absorb newly politicized groups and the Congress leadership's ingenuity in constructing meaningful coalitions able to accommodate the diverse communal, social and regional factions peculiar to each state. In most states the party system was thereby able to moderate social conflict by aggregating the diverse demands of otherwise conflicting groups."

After the disillusionment with the hybrid coalitions there was a swing in favour of the Congress. It is doubtful if the Party has much profited by it. Writing shortly after the results of the 1967 elections, Mr. Kochanek remarked "As for the party as a whole, its most important task will be to develop a more cohesive organisation with a more highly trained cadre to carry out the ideas of a new generation of Congress leaders. At the same time, it must never forget the importance of developing and maintaining a skilful articulation process by which a diverse party can be held together. It is not an impossible assign-

ment, but it will not be easy for the Congress to do all that it must do before 1972."

Few will believe that the Party has developed the desired cohesiveness. The chances are that the Congress will prosper, if it does, less by its own merit than by the failures of its rivals.

HE DIED FOR

[The following is from a letter that Sgt. Jeffrey A. Davis of Brownsburg wrote to his wife a few days before his death from the battlefield in Vietnam. It was to be opened only in the event of his death. It is reproduced from Indianapolis Star.]

IT is too bad I had to die in another country. The United States is so wonderful, but at least I died for a reason, and a good one.

I may not understand this war, or like it, or want to fight it, but nevertheless I had to do it and I did.

I died for the people of the United States. I died really for you; you were my one real happiness. I died also for your mom and dad so that they could go on working. . . . For your brothers that they could play sports in freedom without Communist rule.

I died for my parents that they could enjoy my dad's retirement in freedom, go on vacations and have fun. . . . For others also who enjoy this wonderful country and who appreciate what they have and thank God every day for it.

. . . I died for the guys with the long hair and protest signs. The draft-card burners, the hippies, the anti-everything people who have nothing better to do. The college kids who think they shouldn't have to serve because they are too good—I died so these people could have a little longer time to try to get straightened out in life.

God knows they need it. Yes, I died for the so-called "younger generation" of which I was a part but for some unknown reason I never became an active member. I guess I was a "square" or something with short hair, no police record, didn't drink or smoke (pot included) and volunteered for the service.

I died for the parents of these kids also, God forgive them. I died so these members, active members, of the "young generation" could have the right to do what they do. To protest, have long hair, go to the college of their choice, wear weird clothes, and run around mixed up, with no direction at all.

I died so they could protest the war I fought and died in. Without it, what would they protest? But I also died for the many thousands who died in this war and other wars before for these same reasons. For the men who fought gallantly on the many battlefields of many wars to keep this country free. I guess that in order to gain freedom there must be war. I died for the United States.

Dubcek's Role—A New Angle

Saadi

ALTHOUGH the armies of Russia and other Warsaw Pact countries have succeeded in suppressing the liberalisation movement in Czechoslovakia, they have obviously failed to crush the spirit of freedom of the Czechoslovak people. The way the people of Czechoslovakia reacted against the Soviet occupation, more non-violently than violently, bespeaks of their political maturity and moral stature. The Russians know as much as the world does that sooner than generally expected, the people of Czechoslovakia will liberate themselves from the shackles of Soviet colonialism. However, it is not merely the spirit of nationalism that inspired the people of Czechoslovakia to assert their independence from Moscow, but essentially it was their urge for democracy, for self-expression and for living a life in accordance to their own ideals. In other words, the stand of Czechoslovak people was as much moral as it was political.

Probably, it was not Dubcek on his own who initiated the movement for liberalisation and reforms. Dubcek, all these years, has been a loyal communist trained under Stalinist tradition, and that too in Moscow. He rose to prominence under a die-hard Stalinist, Antonin Novotny. During the entire period of his rise from a nameless communist to a communist with a name, Dubcek never swerved from official communist line. Then, why this sudden change of heart during the past few months? What made him take up a line which basically went counter to the fundamental tenets of totalitarian communism? What led him towards liberalism and reforms?

Could it be that the silent transformation that was coming over the people of Czechoslovakia forced his hands to be liberal and he could not have acted otherwise? Could it be that the urge for freedom which the people of Czechoslovakia themselves began to pulsate with, was the real motive force behind the events in which Dubcek had no alternative but to play a part?

It was quite clear that even before Dubcek made a determined bid towards liberalisation and reforms, the people of Czechoslovakia, particularly the intellectuals and students were astir with the spirit of freedom. Not only were they developing, slowly yet irresistibly, hostility towards political subservience of Czechoslovakia to Russia but resolutely thinking in terms of initiating economic policies which were not in conformity with the economic theories of communism. Under the expert direction of Ota Sik, Czechoslovakia was embarking upon West-oriented economic policies, which envisaged a measure of profit and private enterprise. The intellectuals were eager to

give unfettered expressions to their ideas; the writers, scientists, philosophers, educationists and artists, wanted to be free to write, to think, to experiment, to draw and to do what they considered good for themselves and for the community. Also it seems that certain democratic moves were already afoot in Czechoslovakia. For instance, the Czechoslovak Ambassador in New Delhi, Mr. Richard Dvorak, on the eve of Dubcek's reforms, claimed that "it was not true to say that Czechoslovakia had only one political party. The Communist Party had 200 seats in Parliament while 81 seats had been won by other political parties. The new Speaker of the Parliament was elected by 180 votes against 68." The Czechoslovak students were restive too. They demanded academic freedom; they wanted to learn not in accordance with the Communist dictat, but with what they as well as the liberal educational philosophers thought to be conducive to the development of their intellectual potentialities.

The cumulative effect of the climate of freedom which the people of Czechoslovakia themselves sought to generate on their own initiative, was that Dubcek and other Communist leaders had to move with the times, and any attempt on their part to swim against the current would have resulted in their alienation from the people. Dubcek's statement that "if the party cannot change the people it must change itself" was not without significance. It reflected Dubcek's response and that of his colleagues to the compulsions of a situation which had emerged as a result of peoples' own drive towards democracy and freedom.

The sudden surrender of Dubcek and other Communist leaders in the face of the Russian military thrust in Czechoslovakia makes it clear that Dubcek could not extricate himself from the moorings of the past. With the backing and active support of the Czechoslovak people, he could have defied Russia like Imre Nagy of Hungary and faced the consequences as Nagy did. He could have gone underground and led the resistance movement—a role which the leaders of any other country in that position would have played.

Now what is the result of Dubcek's initial surrender?

All that Dubcek and his colleagues did has been undone and what they intended to do has been effectively prevented. The modicum of freedom which they had introduced within the framework of Czech communism is in shambles. They have themselves become instrumental in dismantling the edifice of democracy, which they had nearly succeeded in building.

The National Assembly which met a few days after the Russian occupation, calmly and under the pretence

of unanimity, re-imposed censorship on Czechoslovakia's Press and literary writings and restrictions on peoples' rights of assembly and association and banned all political oppositions which had taken root during the liberalisation period. It re-established the single-party dictatorship of the Communist Party.

Again the three daring politicians who showed the courage of conviction and spirit of defiance even under the nose of the invading army, the Deputy Premier Ota Sik, Foreign Minister Jiri Hajek and Interior Minister Joseph Pavel, were dismissed. So were lesser people who were suspected of hostility towards the invading Russians.

In spite of all this, will the Russians tolerate Dubcek for long? The Russians are already reported to be keen on finding a popular substitute for him. The Soviet First Deputy Foreign Minister, Vasily Kuznetsov, who visited Czechoslovakia after the invasion with a view to pacify the Czechoslovak people, spent some time in Slovak capital of Bratislava to meet Dubcek's critic and rival, Gustav Husak. There was strong speculation that Russians may back Husak to replace Dubcek without rousing much public resentment. He has now been made Deputy Premier on the orders of Moscow.

As it is, the Russians are ignoring Dubcek in their negotiations with the Czechoslovak leaders regarding the troop withdrawals and other matters. It seems that the Russians feel that by-passing him would bring home to the Czechoslovak people the need to replace Dubcek if the Czechs want the Russians to mean business.

It may be argued that had Dubcek and other Czechoslovak leaders resisted the invasion, it would have provided the Russians an excuse to indulge in ruthless mass killing and reduce Czechoslovakia to the position of Hungary as it happened after 1956.

But the question is: has Dubcek saved Czechoslovakia from the fate more or less similar to that which overtook Hungary in 1956? Actually, the trigger-happy Russian soldiers have already killed hundreds of Czechoslovaks who spontaneously reacted against the Russian invasion. The cream of Czechoslovak student community has already been liquidated. A large number of intellectuals have already fled the country. No amount of appeal is going to induce them to come back. Such of the intellectuals as were unable to leave the country have been gagged. And now, finally, a treaty has been signed providing for the continued stay of Russian troops in Czechoslovakia—thus making the illegal act of Russia legal. Although the soul of the Czechoslovak people can never be crushed, terrible frustration has set over the country. Although no country can be divided off from forever,

the future to Czechoslovakia appears bleak at least for a pretty long time in spite of the silent, yet resolute resistance the Czechoslovak people are forging against the Soviets in contravention to Dubcek's advice.

Trial in Moscow

A score or so Russians bravely dared KGB retaliation by standing vigil outside the courthouse during the entire trial. Unable to enter the courtroom, the protesters assembled across the street in an outdoor reading pavilion. There a petition against the trial was drawn up by former Major General Pyotr Grigorenko, 61, an outspoken bear of a man, who was drummed out of the Red Army in 1964 and confined for 14 months in a mental hospital for openly protesting against restraints on personal freedom.

The scene outside the courtroom was a stirring, though by no means isolated, example of the courage of Russia's dissenting intellectuals. In addition to speaking out boldly for freedom and justice, some of the protesters even stepped in front of the KGB photographer to try and stop him from taking pictures of others demonstrators. After the trial, they presented bouquets to the defense lawyers. Inside the courtroom, the scene was even more dramatic. "Freedom is important to all of us", Litvinov told the court. "In a large socialist country like this, the freer each one of us is, the better it will be for all of us." Said Vadim Delone, the poet who received a labour-camp sentence: "For three minutes on Red Square, I felt free. I am glad to take your three years for that."

—*Time*, October 18,

Russia Tries to Rally French Communists

The Soviet Union is intervening directly inside the ranks of the French Communist Party to 'punish' the party leadership for its rebellion over Czechoslovakia.

Communist sources report a mounting Russian propaganda campaign at grassroots level—financed by the Soviet Embassy—designed to wean the rank and file away from the party secretary, M. Waldeck Rochet, and his politburo, judged 'too progressive' by the Kremlin.

But the Russians know that it would be pointless, as well as difficult, to topple Rochet, as all senior French Communists, except a handful of semi-retired veterans, share his indignation at the military occupation.

The vast French Communist Party 300,000 card carriers and a voting strength of over four million has always been an advance base for Russian influence in Western Europe.

—*The Observer*, October 6

Central Government Employees' Strike

An Observer

IT is clear from all accounts that the Central Government employees were misled into a stupid and adventurous action when they were asked to stage a one-day protest strike on 19th September. It was nothing short of suicidal to ask them to stage the strike when it was banned. Fortunately, few employees responded to the call and it is only a few who will have to bear the penalties that may be imposed for participation in an illegal strike. But about a dozen precious lives were lost; they will never come back, and a number of persons were injured as a result of firings and lathi charges.

A large number of employees are at present under orders of discharge. Disciplinary action is threatened against a good number and the recognition of unions which participated in the strike is withdrawn. The employees and their organisations will have to spend the next few months trying to repair the damage that these steps have caused and to secure the restoration of conditions before the strike. In the meanwhile, they will have no time and avenues to press for economic demands. That task will have to be shouldered by others who had the wisdom of keeping away from the strike and, if any relief or concessions are secured, the credit must go to them.

How did the employees, many of whom are literate and educated, allow themselves to be dragged into such a useless and disastrous strike? It should have been clear to the meanest intelligence that the strike could not have secured the need-based minimum wage for which it was launched. Possibly, many of them thought that the Government, weak-kneed as it is, would not be very severe with a one-day protest strike. But the Ordinances that were promulgated should have removed that misconception.

Very likely they found themselves caught in a net of their own making. They had been persuaded to adopt strike resolutions and found it difficult later not to implement them. Workers generally have a deep sense of loyalty to their unions. Sometimes a small clique takes control of a union and issues in its name orders which members find it difficult not to obey. On this occasion, some union leaders made a clever use of this strategem to drag employees into the strike. This can be clearly seen from the fact that, where unions withdrew the strike notice, the employees concerned cheerfully accepted the union decision and did not join the strike. It is a pity that only a few unions had the courage of their conviction to take that step. The rest just towed the line laid down by the leaders and exposed their members to the numerous hardships of an illegal strike.

It is evident now that the decision to organise the strike was taken by the Communists in the employees' organisations. It was taken under instructions from both Communist Parties. The one-day protest strike was to be followed in December by an indefinite strike and other actions. The one-day strike and the indefinite strike were to be organised in order to deal a heavy blow against the Government which, according to Communists, was moving in the direction of right reaction. The time had come, they thought, to begin an open fight against the Government and to discredit it and weaken its authority. The Communists were in control of the National Federation of Posts and Telegraphs Employees and of the Confederation of Central Government Employees and of most of the unions affiliated to the two organisations. They were also in control of some railway unions and of some unions of defence employees. Operating from those strategic positions they secured the support of persons like Mr. S. M. Joshi and Mr. Peter Alvares. It was not difficult then to persuade the S.S.P. and P.S.P. to support the action, eager as they always are to fight the Congress Government. Some sections of the Jan Sangh were also dragged in. The stage was thus set for a countrywide fight against the Government in the name of its employees.

The strike was essentially a political manoeuvre though it was camouflaged as an industrial dispute. If it were an industrial dispute, no sensible workers' organisation would have rejected out of hand the honourable and generous compromise that became available when the Government agreed to settle or refer to arbitration all issues in dispute except the demand for need-based minimum wage. The compromise was rejected because the leaders of the strike were anxious to teach the Government a lesson. Under the circumstance, who can blame the Government for accepting the challenge and making use of its ample powers for defeating the strike? The Government would have exposed itself as incompetent to govern if it had meekly submitted to this coercion and blackmail of a few communist activists posing as leaders of its employees.

In real fact the Communists do not enjoy much support amongst employees. They take advantage of the apathy and carelessness of others and get themselves elected to important positions in unions. Those unions represent in many cases only a small minority of employees. By a cunning procedure that the Government has adopted some of them have secured exclusive representation rights. That enables Communists to give an exaggerated idea of their strength and in-

fluence. Moreover, they are adepts at exploiting and fomenting discontent. Anybody can see that there is a very large measure of discontent in the ranks of employees. It is due to the ever-growing rise in prices and to the inordinate delay that takes place in securing the solution of even minor problems. A revision of pay scales is long over-due but the Government has not yet appointed the Pay Commission which alone can handle it.

Another blunder that the Government has committed is to lump all its employees together. This was done in the interest of uniformity and standardisation. This may have helped bureaucrats, but it has harmed the interests of various sections of employees. What is common between a railway employee, a driver, a guard, a cabinman, a machineman in a workshop or a gangman, and a clerk or a peon in the Secretariat? Similarly, employees of the Posts and Telegraphs have their own problems which require to be considered and tackled separately. The lumping together of all these diverse kinds of employees has proved most injurious to the interests of most. In any case, separation of industrial workers from non-industrial workers is urgently needed. Without such a separation no steps can be taken to increase the efficiency and productivity of industrial workers. The Government should seize this opportunity to give a fresh thought to all these problems so that a satisfactory system is evolved for looking into the grievances of various classes and categories of employees. The system as it exists has obviously proved ineffective and unsatisfactory.

In the short run the Government must revise the steps that it took to meet the threat of the strike. Now that the emergency has passed, the Ordinances should be withdrawn. In view of the fact that the large mass of employees was misled into the strike, mere absence

on the day of the strike need not be regarded as an offence deserving of a penalty involving termination of or a break in service. Fortunately, the Government has already taken that step. It cannot be, of course, suggested that no steps should be taken against those who actively worked for the strike or became involved in illegal activities. But the punishment accorded to them should be tempered with justice and mercy. The unions and federations which instigated an illegal strike have, no doubt, committed a grave offence. But it must be remembered at the same time that the Government cannot do without some channels of communication with their employees. In view of this need it will be necessary in the not too distant future to restore their recognition.

Far more important are the problems that the employees and their organisations will have to face. They must realise once and for all that to talk of and resort to a strike from time to time does not help them. As public servants there is a great obligation upon them to keep the services running. Any interruption of those services may cause some annoyance to the Government, but it causes grave inconvenience to the general public without whose support the employees can never hope to improve their condition. A resolution to stage a strike may be adopted as a bluff, as it was in the case of the 19th September strike, but it has a logic of its own which many a time drags those who passed it into a strike much against their will. The employees must also take note of the Communists in their ranks, how in spite of their small numbers they worm themselves into positions of power and how through various manouvres they impose adventurist policies upon the unions. The experience of the one-day strike should make them conscious of this grave peril to which they are exposed.

(Continued from page 1)

STRIKES IN INDIA

By V. B. KARNIK

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Home Minister must refuse to entertain Mr. Namboodiripad unless he expresses regret. But, in spite of the persuasive manner in which the Union Home Minister, Mr. Y. B. Chavan has chosen to deal with him, Mr. Namboodiripad persists in being recalcitrant for political reasons as he has been so far, nothing should deter the Centre from dismissing the Ministry. There is no doubt the advisability and the inevitability of such a move will not be lost on the intelligent and patriotic people of Kerala, and they are bound to appreciate the Centre's move. Undoubtedly, if the President's rule is imposed, they will cooperate with the Centre so that fresh elections are held as early as possible and a new democratic government emerges in the State. The electorate of Kerala is mature and it shall never let down the State.

India And Israel

V. B. Karnik

ON the issue of last year's Arab-Israeli war there was a big divergence between the policy of the Government of India and the predominant public opinion in the country. The large majority of the people never found itself in agreement with the pro-Arab and anti-Israel policy of the Government. As the war ended early, in less than a week, there was no necessity for the people to assert themselves and see that the Government changed its policy. The Government was left in no doubt, however, about the lack of public support to the attitude that it had adopted.

It is this awareness which seems to have persuaded the Government to put forward through a pamphlet¹ an explanation and defence of its policy. The pamphlet begins by giving information about "the original decision to establish a "national home" for the Jews in Palestine". The information given, however, omits a number of essential facts which do not support the Government's view. According to the pamphlet, Palestine did not belong to the Jews and the "national home" need not have led to the establishment of a Jewish State. It then adopts all the usual Arab arguments against Israel and holds her responsible for all the conflicts and tensions that have developed in the region during the last twenty years, as will be clear from the following sentence: "Partly as a result of the manner in which Israel was brought into being and partly as a result of the behaviour of the new Israeli State, a continuing state of tension and conflict between the Arab countries and Israel became the dominant feature of West Asian politics after 1948".

The rest of the pamphlet is an elaborate apologia for all the pro-Arab and anti-Israel stances adopted by the Government from time to time. The underlying assumption of all these stances was, it appears, that the Arab countries were a progressive force while the Jews and the State of Israel were a tool in the hands of Western Powers. The assumption has no basis in facts, but it seems to have determined the policy of the Government. One is happy to note, however, that the pamphlet states towards the end that the Government of India has "recognised as a fact that the State of Israel has come to exist." That gives one the hope that the Government will not allow the Arab Governments to destroy it.

India would have been ill-served if this government publication were allowed to stand unrefuted. Mr. Dabiyabhai Patel M.P. deserves to be congratulated

on the immediate steps that he has taken to publish a detailed refutation of the facts and views put forward by the Government. His reply,² based as it is on a marshalling of incontrovertible facts and cogent arguments, is a convincing reply. Delving into ancient history, Mr. Patel has shown how Palestine was the "home land" of the Jews and how through centuries they had maintained their sentimental attachment to it. Coming to more recent times, he has referred to the agreement between the Arab delegation led by the son of the Sharif of Mecca and Dr. Chaim Weizmann, the representative of the Jewish people, concluded at the Peace Conference in Paris in 1919 and shown how the Arabs had at that time committed themselves to help and collaborate with the establishment of a Jewish State in Palestine.

Mr. Patel has then dealt with the sedulously propagated myth that the Jews are the tools of British imperialism and the Arabs the victims of both and shown how it has no basis in historical facts. Britain was all along opposed, for one reason or another, to the creation of the Jewish State and, when the United Nations decided in the end in 1948 to sanction it, Britain did not support that resolution. On the other hand, the establishment of all Arab States after the end of the first world war took place with the active cooperation of Great Britain. A fact to be noted in this connection is that Russia and all East European countries supported the establishment of Israel. They gave their support because they knew that there was an "inherent clash of interests between British imperialism and Zionism".

Dealing with the Arab-Israeli war of June 1967, Mr. Patel has shown convincingly how it was forced upon Israel and how the stand adopted by the Government was throughout wrong and biased. It must be admitted, however, that the stand that was adopted was a continuation of an older policy. As stated by the Government of India pamphlet, "the roots of free India's attitude to the current problem of West Asia are to be found in the positions taken in the early years of this century, by the leaders of the nationalist movement in India, particularly of the Indian National Congress". During the intervening period public opinion in the country underwent a change as a result of many factors, such as, Hitlerite destruction of one third of the Jewish people, the collusion of Arab nationalist leaders with Fascism during the Thirties and the Forties, the constant attempts of Arab leaders

¹ *India and Palestine—The Evolution of a Policy*, External Publicity Division, Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, New Delhi.

² *India and Palestine—A Reply*, Dabiyabhai Patel Society for Parliamentary Study, New Delhi.

to destroy Israel through wars and terrorist attacks and a better appreciation of the demands of the Jewish people and the progressive role that they were playing. Mr. Patel has drawn attention to these factors and pointed out how, while the public opinion had changed, the policy of the Government of India had remained "frozen around the initial prejudices."

The initial prejudice against the Jews was that they were Whites and that they were agents of imperialism and exploiters of the poor Arabs. They were also regarded as carriers of Western civilization which was antagonistic to the so-called spiritual values of the East. As such, there was a feeling of hostility towards them. The Arabs, on the other hand, were regarded as an oppressed and exploited people fighting against imperialism for national independence and social progress. As such, they excited the sympathy and support of the Indian national movement. Many Indian leaders still hold to their heart that picture of the Jews and the Arabs. Many European Socialists and Leftists share that illusion with them.

One of the enthusiastic propagandists of this line was the wellknown socialist thinker and writer, late Mr. Isaac Deustcher. A long interview with him putting forward the line was published in the *New Left Review* of London a couple of weeks after the June war. According to Mr. Deustcher, the June war was a "reactionary war" and "it was only with disgust" that he watched on the television "the scenes from Israel in those days: displays of conqueror's pride and brutality, outbursts of chauvinism, . . . wild celebrations. . . . contrasting with pictures of Arab suffering and desolation". He is not, however, a blind supporter of the Arabs. He is critical of them as well as of Russia who, according to him, encouraged them in their quarrel with Israel. Mr. Deustcher's criticism of Israel is based on the theme that "Israel is a Western outpost in the Middle East", that it is "firmly committed to anti-Communism" and that it sees "highest wisdom in keeping the Arabs backward and divided". He views the Arab Israeli conflict as "a clash of two rival nationalisms" but, according to him, "the nationalism of the people in semi-colonialist or colonial countries must not be put on the same moral political level as the nationalism of conquerors and oppressors" and "Arab nationalism, unlike the Israeli, still belongs to the former category".

A socialist writer, Mr. Simcha Flapan has dealt with all these arguments of Mr. Deustcher and shown their hollowness and falsity in a just published booklet¹. It is not necessary to refer to all the issues in the controversy. The most important is whether and how far Israel is a tool in hands of imperialism. On that point the information supplied by Mr. Flapan will

be of great interest to Indian readers. Mr. Flapan writes: "Nothing is more mistaken than the thesis that turns Israel into the sole or principal pawn of the United States in the Middle East. The United States has in the Middle East a much more important Arab engagement, to whatever extent it may be interested in Israel. Out of the fourteen Arab States in the Middle East and North Africa, only three (the UAR, Syria and Algeria) follow a neutralist policy and have the support of the Soviet Union. The others are to varying degrees oriented towards the West and the United States in political, economic and military affairs. The two most important American bases are in Saudi Arabia (Dahran) and in Libya (Wheelus). The Arab States in the Middle East and in North Africa are for the United States one of the most important zones from the economic (oil) as well as from the strategic point of view. The American companies hold the lion's share in the production of crude oil and in refining in the Middle East; Arab oil account for 27% of world production and 60% of known reserves. Out of 100 million tons of refined products, the American companies account for 44% and they own 55% of the crude oil production. In the four main oil-producing countries—Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Iran and Iraq—American interests amount to 50%, 100%, 30% and 25% respectively. The oil revenues of those countries are from 70% to 90% of their total income. When they are compared with these giant interests, all American investments in Israel seem insignificant". His conclusion therefore is that the "oil lobby" is far more powerful than the "Zionist lobby." Regarding the supply of U.S. arms to Israel the position was as follows: "Only in 1954 did the United States agree to lift the embargo on arms destined for Israel that had been in force since 1948 — that is to say, since the outbreak of the war the Arab States had started in order to prevent the creation of Israel. Even then, the supply of arms to Israel was compensated for by the supply of arms to Jordan, Iraq and Saudi Arabia and by training facilities for their military cadres."

Mr. Flapan does not deny that out of the large amount of capital that was needed for building up Israel a good part came from the United States by way of gifts of American Jews and loans by the American Government. But in the case of Israel "the evolution was decided not by capital but by immigration". And he points out: "The great majority of immigrants consisted of impoverished Jews, workers, artisans, members of the middle class in process of being proletarianized. Nearly half of them came from Eastern Europe with a history of class struggle, socialist education, and political consciousness." The society that has built up is described as follows: "Thus there resulted a unique development: an economy with a capitalist structure, but which contained the maximum number of planning elements and of co-operative and

¹ *The Arab-Israeli War of 1967: Simcha Flapan, Jewish Workers Party (MAPAMI), Tel Aviv, Israel.*

socialist achievements that could be found in a capitalist country — 91% of the land, all sources of energy, most of the natural resources (water, electricity, mines, oil) are nationalized; workers' enterprises occupy key positions in the economy (24% of industry, 80% of agriculture, most of public transport, the main building and public works enterprises, etc.); a system of national insurance that covers all risks; progressive labour legislation; the highest proportion of trade unionists (70%) with a highly advanced system of mutual and medical insurance; and last but not least, more than 200 kibbutzim which, though representing only 4% of the population, nevertheless control 35% of agriculture, 8% of industry, and play a predominant role in political life in Israel. The labour parties hold the majority of seats in the Knesset and in all government coalitions." These facts should remove a number of misconceptions that are still current in the country.

The June 1967 war was fought by Israel only because it had no other alternative. The position as it obtained a few days before the war is described as follows by Mr. Flapan: "Within a few days, a wave of enthusiasm and war hysteria unfolded on the Arab continent, from the Atlantic to the Persian Gulf. All rushed to take part in the 'Holy Alliance'. King Hassan II placed a military unit at the disposal of the UAR, Bourguiba made haste to declare that his differences with Nasser 'never had applied to the actual basis of the Palestinian problem.' Algeria sent volunteers and aircraft, Lebanon and Kuwait promised active support and expressed their solidarity,

Saudi Arabia decided to send troops to Akaba, and King Hussein, the 'Zionist agent', the 'imperialist spy and plotter', rushed to Cairo to sign a military treaty that handed the command of the Jordanian Army over to the Egyptian Chief-of-Staff. Israel was completely surrounded. In the mosques, the imams called upon the people to join the Holy War." President Nasser of Egypt had by this time concentrated 80,000 troops and 1,200 tanks on the Israeli border. The Iraqi army had entered Jordan and Saudi Arabian forces were near Akaba. In this situation what could Israel do but strike the first blow in order that the mortal danger which was facing her may not overwhelm her?"

This courageous and heroic fight which Israel waged for her survival ought to have received the warm-hearted support of the Government of India as it did of the large majority of the people. But weighed down by preconceived notions and old prejudices, the Government of India refused to see the new situation that had emerged. It continued its old policy of blind support to the Arabs. The policy is reflected in the pamphlet that it has published. It is to be hoped, however, that as a democratic government it is open to persuasion and to the influence of facts and reasoning. Enough has been written on the issue to persuade the Government to give a fresh thought to the matter. It is to be hoped that the reconsideration will not be delayed too long.

Crime in Soviet Russia

The fact that crime, particularly misappropriation, is so widespread is partly due to the peculiarities of the Soviet system. The first of these is the absence of private ownership; the nation's wealth belongs to the state, and is under the control of state employees who often abuse their positions for illegal gain. These officials, especially those employed in the distribution and trade network, are frequent offenders and thereby set a bad example to other citizens, who may be tempted to resort to common theft at their factory, for example. The unsatisfactory standard of living in the Soviet Union encourages such activities, since illegally-obtained goods, particularly from outside sources, can be sold quickly and profitably. This sort of crime owes much to the deeprooted conviction of the Soviet citizen that stealing state property is not reprehensible, since it "belongs to everyone and to no-one."

It is clear that despite claims to have abolished the social roots of crime, the Soviet leaders are faced, like their counterparts in other contemporary societies, with a mounting crime wave, for which neither they nor any other society has yet found effective deterrents,

Y. M. Almoscow, South - in the Soviet Union

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With Many Voices

"The deep
Moans round with many voices. Come, my friends,
'Tis not too late to seek a newer world."
—Tennyson.

It is my hunch that had the desperate Czechs made it convincingly clear that, come what may, they would have fought with their fists if necessary to oppose any military intervention this summer, there would have been no intervention.

—C. L. Sulzberger, *The New York Times*, October 6.

It should not now be forgotten—and we can safely assume that the history books will not forget—that in interior politics, within America itself, President Johnson has been the most enlightened of all Presidents in the field of civil rights.

—*Swiss Press Review and News Report*, October 7.

India's contribution to the art of administration, it would seem, is Government by slogan.

—S. Srinivasan, *Indian Express*, October 8.

Their (Russians') aim is to break the Czechoslovak morale, for it was high spirits which gave birth to the brief democracy.

—*Guardian Weekly*, October 10.

Even today, I maintain that our main enemy is Pakistan.

—Krishna Menon, *Times of India*, October 12.

Calcutta is not one disaster, but many, each breeding its own kind of despair, its own special nightmare.

—Joseph Lelyveld, *The New York Times*, October 13.

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But there comes a point at which choices have to be made, choices about the nature of democracy and the limits of free speech and the place of violence.

—Alan Watkins, *New Statesman*, October 18.

For Russia, Zond-5 was a timely diversion from the shame and the horror of its action in Czechoslovakia.

—*Thought*, October 19.

The frightening thing about the Czechoslovak tragedy was less the arrival of Soviet tanks on the Bavarian border than the revelation that the Soviet leaders can set vast armies in motion on the basis of a totally false appreciation.

—*The Observer*, (London) October 20.

The trouble about democracies is that they have to have elections.

—*The Economist*, (London,) September 21.

Most of the people, in their anxiety to bring equality as quickly as possible tended to overlook the truth that unequal affluence was better than equal poverty.

—R. S. Pande, resident director, Tata Steel,
The Economic Times, October 24.

The leadership that democracy without literacy has thrown up in the country leaves much to be desired.

C. D. Deshmukh, *The Times of India*,
October 28.

What is needed is not more ideology but a greater respect for feasibility.

—David Lawrence, *U.S. News & World Report*,
October 28.

The rise by three-fold of our defence budget, far from being a safe sign of readiness, is the path that leads downwards.

—Maj. Gen. Habibullah, *Mainstream*, October 26.

If undue attachment to acquisition of property is bad, revolutionary zeal to dislocate the structure of property is worse.

—K. Subba Rao, *The Economic Times* October 29.