

OCTOBER 1956

Jayaprakash Clears The Air

Freedom First is privileged to carry below the answers given by Mr. Jayaprakash Narayan for exclusive publication in this journal in response to questions put to him:

- I. Q. Is it true, as alleged in certain press reports:
- (a) that you have "obtained an assurance that the Indian Communist Party would have no truck with Moscow or Communist Parties of other countries";
 - (b) that your "interpretation of the post-Twentieth Communist Congress trends is said to tally with Mr. Ajoy Ghosh's analysis of current Soviet politics";
 - (c) that you believe that "world communism today is fundamentally different from what it used to be under Marshal Stalin?"

A. (a) No. I think it would be extraordinary naivete to ask for, and accept, any such assurances from the Communist Party of India;

(b) No, again;

(c) No, I do not. It is too early yet to say what is going to happen. There are some hopeful signs, and every one who wants the good of the human family, should welcome and encourage them. I believe that in some, not inconsiderable, measure the reaction of the non-communist world to the changes in the communist part of it is going to determine the future of world communism.

- II. Q. Are any of these assumptions among the factors that have led you to advise the PSP to enter into an electoral adjustment with the CPI?

A. No. I have made it repeatedly clear that I had no ideological considerations in mind while suggesting an electoral arrangement with the CPI. I was thinking only of the interests of the PSP and of the urgent need of creating a strong opposition. The near-to one-party rule that we have today, would, if lengthened indefinitely, undermine Indian parliamentary democracy. Also, I am anxious that the elections do reflect public opinion faithfully. Otherwise, elections and

therefore democracy would lose all meaning for the people.

- III. Q. Would you object to a similar electoral arrangement with all other opposition parties?

A. No.

- IV. Q. What is your attitude to a "Left" United Front advocated by the Communists?

A. I have no kind of united front in mind.

- V. Q. Is there not a great danger of the electoral arrangement you propose developing or degenerating into the kind of United Front desired by the Communists? How will you prevent such a development?

A. I admit the danger. The only guarantee against it is the sense of loyalty and discipline of the members of the PSP and their political maturity. Whether they have these virtues would be decisive for the future of the PSP.

- VI. Q. Would you not agree that the real basis for a strong, democratic Opposition, which you feel the country needs, can be provided by the establishment of a broadbased party opposing the drift to state capitalism and drawing support from the peasantry, the lower-middle class, free trade unions and enlightened sections of free enterprise animated by a social purpose?

A. I agree with you. But I should like to emphasise the last five words of your question: "animated by a social purpose." Much as I detest state capitalism, private capitalism is not the alternative that I would accept. The trouble is that even the best representatives of private enterprise insist that private gain and not social good or service can be the incentive for private effort. I believe the most important problem of social engineering, or let us say of democratic politics, today is to find a way of reconciling private enterprise and individual freedom with social purpose or good. I think Gandhiji's theory of trusteeship encompasses such a reconciliation. The task is to discover the concrete dynamics of such a transformation. What has attracted me to Vinoba's movement is that he seems to have discovered a concrete social dynamics applicable to the concrete situation in our country.

Fresh Light On Communist Machinations

SOME important documents of the Communist Party of India relating to their Fourth Congress held a few months back in Palghat were released to the press on 13th September by the Democratic Research Service. The press conference at which the documents were published was addressed by Mr. H. R. Pardivala, a member of the Executive Board of the Service.

This is the second occasion on which the D.R.S. has been able to break through the iron curtain of secrecy and secure for public information some of the secret documents of the communists. The first occasion was after the Third Congress of the C.P.I. held in Madurai towards the end of 1953. The documents were then published as a book under the title *Communist Conspiracy at Madurai*. The publication of the documents, which were later accepted by all as genuine, had created a sensation all over the country.

The documents that were published on 13th September were three: (1) Report of the Central Committee to the Palghat Congress; (2) Polit Bureau's report on "Organisational Methods and Practices of Party Centre which have intensified the inner party crisis"; and (3) Speech of Mr. Ajoy Ghosh, the General Secretary of the Party, on the 20th Congress of the CPSU, at a closed session in Palghat. Besides these, the D.R.S. has also secured the on-the-spot notes of parts of the proceedings of the Congress taken down by one of the delegates. The notes could not be published for obvious reasons, but they were shown to the representatives of the press who attended the press conference.

The Polit Bureau's report on organisational methods and practices is a revealing document. It throws a flood of light on the confusion and frustration that reign in the Party from top to bottom. The report states at one place: "This crisis has reached such a stage that there is no Party Centre worth the name today. The Central Party organisation, the publication and sale of pamphlets and other literature, the activities of the comrades working in the all-India mass organisations and even the organisation of the work of the comrades working in the Centre—all this remains unattended to. This breeds a sense of frustration and cynicism." At another place it is stated: "Sense of frustration and inactivity are growing, sense of discipline is loosening, decisions of Party Committees remaining un-implemented. Irresponsible talk is going on a big scale and the prestige of the Party is going down."

The report gives information about the work done by each member of the Polit Bureau and points out how "they did not function as a collective team." This failure of Polit Bureau members, who should subordinate their individual activity to the need of the common activity, is characterised by the report as "individualism, a trait that is characteristic of the petty bourgeoisie." The report concludes mournfully

that "the net result of all these procedures is that the entire party is divided from top to bottom around the main trends which express themselves at the level of the top leadership of the Party."

Parts of this report were included in the report of the Central Committee to the fourth congress. They have, however, been deleted from the report as it is published in "New Age", the monthly journal of the Communist Party of India. The leaders must have thought that it was not desirable to let the people, or even their own rank and file, know of the real state of affairs inside the Party.

The third document, which is the speech of Mr. Ajoy Ghosh, proves conclusively how the Communist Party of India continues to remain tied to the apron strings of Moscow. Explaining to the Congress the denigration of Stalin, Mr. Ghosh said that the mistakes committed by Stalin were small mistakes committed in the course of the execution of gigantic tasks. He appealed to his comrades: "All this, let me repeat again, should not be allowed to blur in any way the gigantic achievements of the USSR in other spheres, the immense advance registered by the world communist movement and the outstanding role played by Comrade Stalin in all this."

At another place, he exhorts: "We must not permit a spirit of cynicism to develop in relation to the USSR and CPSU. They will be fatal to our movement. The CPSU remains the leading party of the international communist movement." At yet another place he has paid a similar tribute to the CPSU and Stalin. He says: "The CPSU has been the party which has acted as a model of the international communist movement, and Comrade Stalin was the international leader of the communist movement."

It is clear from Mr. Ghosh's speech that there has been no real heartsearching in the CPI. In communist parties of other countries there was a certain

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Notes

Riots And Counter-Riots

THE tragic episode of the riots and counter-riots over the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan publication, *Living Biographies of Religious Leaders* should again remind us of the shaky foundation of our secular democratic life. A minor book in circulation for over fifteen years could be easily utilised by Muslim communalists to excite the Muslims in a number of places and to provoke them into indulging in riots and ugly demonstrations. Exaggerated and false reports of these riots were enough for others to excite the Hindus in the same or other places to indulge in counter-riots. The riots and counter-riots have taken a toll of a number of innocent lives and have resulted in considerable destruction of property.

It is clear that communalist elements were responsible for the agitation and the counter-agitation. It is tragic, however, that they found the soil so fertile and the atmosphere so congenial for their activities. It will not be enough therefore to arrest and punish the instigators. It is much more important to change the atmosphere by inculcating the spirit of religious tolerance and by developing amongst the people a secular, rational outlook.

The Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan cannot be accused of deliberately publishing an offensive book. They had republished a well-known book in all good faith and were prompt in withdrawing it from circulation as soon as they came to know that it was offensive to Muslims. The Government of India also acted with commendable promptitude.

In view of this, the agitation in India was uncalled for and mischievous. Pakistan and more particularly the dethroned Muslim League are now utilising the agitation for their usual propaganda against India. It is to be highly regretted that the misguided zealots went to the extent of insulting the Indian flag and burning the effigy of the Prime Minister, who had absolutely nothing to do with the publication of the book. It is hoped that tempers will cool and it will be realised that one independent nation cannot indulge in such conduct against another independent nation.

The episode of the book also impinges against the fundamental freedoms of opinion and expression. It may be conceded that great care should be taken before publishing anything which may wound the religious feelings of any section of the people. But should religious feelings be so sensitive as to debar historical research or the publication of truthful accounts of the lives of religious leaders? The question should be calmly considered by the leaders of public opinion. The controversy over the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan publication has led the Pakistan Government to proscribe such classics of world literature as Hendric Van Loon's *The Story of Mankind*, Dante's

Inferno, and H.G. Wells' *A Short History of the World*. Would any sensible person like our government do what the Government of Pakistan has done?

A Wrong Decision

IT is surprising to learn that the Board of Film Censors has refused to renew the license for the showing of the film "With These Hands." The film portrays the story of the birth and growth of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union, one of the most outstanding of American unions. The film was in circulation in India for the last five years and was universally acclaimed as a very interesting and instructive documentary. It was also shown in many other countries of the free world.

The film has been refused license, it is learnt, on the ground that one of the scenes depicts the unsuccessful attempt of communists to disrupt the union. The attempt is a fact of history which cannot be omitted from the film without affecting its character as a true story. It is difficult to see why the Board of Film Censors should have found the scene objectionable.

The refusal of the license has unnecessarily given the country a bad name with the American labour and democratic movement. Mr. George Meany, the President of the American Federation of Labour, lodged a dignified protest with the Prime Minister. In his reply the Prime Minister pointed out that the Board of Censors is an autonomous body and that the Government could not interfere with its decisions. He has, however, promised to look into the matter.

The decision of the Board of Film Censors is manifestly wrong. It must be reversed as early as possible, both in the interest of a good film and the good name of the country.

The Punjab Special Powers Press Act

THE enactment of a measure for imposing pre-censorship and other curbs on the Press in the Punjab Vidhan Sabha (Legislative Assembly) unanimously is something of a portent. For while the gravity of the situation in the Punjab in regard to inter-communal conflict over the proposals for States Reorganisation is unquestioned, it is surprising that such a drastic curtailment of the powers of the Press (which is a part of the fundamental right of speech and expression guaranteed by the Constitution by Article 19-1a) should have been accepted without challenge by the legislators of the Punjab Assembly as the right and proper remedy for communal tension. It is sound doctrine that every right implies inevitably a corresponding duty and in this case that the right of free expression in the public Press carries the duty of restraint and statesmanlike sense of responsibility for moderation and constructive suggestion.

But the present measure commits the fallacy of preventing the exercise of a fundamental right instead of punishing wrong use of it through due process of

law. It registers a further encroachment of the executive on the rightful sphere of the legislature and the fundamental right of the citizen. It empowers the executive to impose pre-censorship on any paper and to demand the publication of Government versions or handouts. Any contravention of the prohibitory order empowers the Government to seize the press and prosecute the offenders who will be liable to imprisonment for one year and a fine of Rs 1000 or both. The Government is setting up a Press Advisory Council but it will have no legal powers, its advice having only the status of a recommendation. But appeal will lie to the Government which is not enough.

The absence of any serious protest against this grave inroad into the privileges of the Press and the fundamental right of expression of the citizen, (barring a few newspaper editorials) is disturbing, as an indication of public apathy towards fundamental rights. It is to be hoped that the Newspaper Editors' Association will take up this matter for representation to the Governments of the country and for wide publicity regarding the dangerous implications of this Punjab Press Special Powers Act, lest it should prove infectious in other States.

The right remedy for excesses of communal incitement to unlawful acts is punishment through the ordinary courts by due process, after due warning and consultation with the representative organisations of the Press.

Distinctly Unsporting!

WHEN Mrs. Nina Ponomareva, the red head Soviet champion, was arrested by the British police on the charge of shop-lifting while on a shopping trip in the West End of London, the Soviet Embassy bailed her out, then protested: "It is upto the police to prove that a person is guilty before going to the court."

As a further act of protest she was made to disappear from London and the charge became an international issue of "Guilt."

Innocent Nina evidently did not know the maxim of "Capitalist" business that it was necessary for her to pay for the purchase she had made! This was an opportunity for the wicked British to malign her and "prevent her from taking part in the match."

Perhaps the Soviets were afraid of British Justice, so Mrs. Ponomareva *ducked*. After all, the police had not proved her guilty, and if she appeared before the court she would be admitting her guilt!

"Justice" is a political vice! An instrument of capitalist society by which labour is chained to the grinding wheel of factories! Not so in Russia, where justice is a political tool to be administered by the police. "Guilt" like truth must be extracted and proved even by force! To Russia justice is an abortive luxury; guilt is all that matters. If G.K.C. were alive he would have enjoyed writing the paradox: "Long live guilt, down with justice."

Our British Namesake

Freedom First is a quarterly magazine published by the Society for Individual Freedom founded seven years ago by the late Sir Ernest Benn and the late Lord Lyle. We have before us the spring and summer numbers (1956) of the journal which includes also a digest of information about the movement. Dr. John Murray, a British academic philosopher who has been writing on political liberty for over two decades now, is the chairman of the executive committee and has contributed trenchant reviews and notes to these issues. The main objective of the society is the political education of the people and pressure by every constitutional means towards the restoration of British traditional liberties now threatened by reigning collectivist policies, reassertion of the Rule of Law, the fostering of individual initiative and free enterprise, curtailment of bureaucratic controls and resistance to a State-planned economy.

These objectives include *ipso facto* an uncompromising opposition to all forms of totalitarianism, communist or fascist.

This namesake of ours from Britain has thus ideals similar to ours and we look forward to association in the common enterprise of the defence of freedom with another group of convinced democrats overseas, who are its sponsors.

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The Danger To Democracy

by V. B. Karnik

MR. JAYAPRAKASH NARAYAN'S answers (published on page 1 of this issue) to the questions put to him by *Freedom First* and his letter to the National Executive of the Praja Socialist Party have clarified the situation to a large extent. The communists and their friends had deliberately issued tendentious statements and spread false rumours regarding his position and his advice to the Praja Socialist Party. Democrats and socialists will be grateful to him for hastening to state in clear terms the very limited purpose and scope of the electoral adjustments suggested by him and his views on the issue of an alliance or united front with the communists.

Mr. Jayaprakash Narayan is definitely opposed to an alliance or united front with the communists. In his letter to the National Executive of the P.S.P. he has stated: "I am totally opposed to what is known as a united front. . . . I am not opposed to a coalition with any opposition party, but I am opposed to a coalition with the communists." Explaining the reasons for his opposition, he has stated: "I am opposed because I am not sure if their attitude to democracy and their subservience to Russia have changed in any vital manner." He has emphasised the same point in his answers to *Freedom First*.

In this connection, what Mr. Jayaprakash has stated about the methods used in communist countries like Russia and China is extremely important. He has stated in the letter: "We hear so much about how Mao Tse-tung has rooted out corruption in China. I am inclined to believe that. But that has been done under conditions of dictatorship in which any one can be arrested, jailed, or shot without due processes of law. Whereas in a democracy even the bribe-taker, the thief, the murderer have to be given a fair chance to prove themselves innocent. Likewise, forced labour, forced wages and savings, compulsory co-operatives, can solve many problems, including that of unemployment, but in a democracy these devices are not available to the rulers." Many a time, when comparisons are made between the results achieved in India and those in communist countries, this essential point is missed.

In view of all this, it is difficult to appreciate Mr. Jayaprakash Narayan's suggestion that the communists may be allowed, if they can, to form a government in any State. He appears to think that with a democratic Centre, a democratic opposition and a free press, communist rule in a State may not be harmful. He is of the opinion that "if the communists tried to play any tricks, they could be stopped and exposed." This is a rather naive supposition. In the first place, the communists do not play their tricks so openly. Moreover, they know how to wait for their opportunity. They will not begin to play their tricks unless and until they have infiltrated and undermined

the State. In the next place it is the experience all over the world that, once communists get into power, it is next to impossible to dislodge them, for thereafter there are no free elections. The election that places the communists in power becomes the last free election. In a State of the Indian Union the situation is no doubt different. But all the same, it is difficult to see why one should knowingly invite the risk.

It is now clear that the electoral adjustment that Mr. Jayaprakash Narayan has in view is of a very limited character. It is only an "agreement to avoid contests between opposition candidates." He has expressly disapproved of any joint campaigning or of any post-election agreement. Each party is to contest in its own name and on its own platform. The adjustment is moreover to be sought with all opposition parties and the distinction originally sought to be made between the communists and the communists has been dropped. Mr. Jayaprakash has made clear: "I never suggested that the P.S.P. should single out the C.P.I. for an electoral adjustment." With this clarification and with its narrow and limited scope, the adjustment that is suggested may not lead to very disastrous results.

All the same, the suggestion involves some risks and Mr. Jayaprakash is not unaware of them. He writes in his letter; "I am aware of the danger in this. Weak and opportunist candidates may not keep themselves within these limits, and the communists with their usual disloyalty to the pledged word, may tempt them too far." He is also aware of "the still greater danger, namely, the post-election temptation to try to form a coalition with any and every one."

It is the awareness of these dangers and the conviction that a democratic opposition can be built up in the country only on the basis of each party placing before the people its own programme and contesting the elections in its own name and on its own platform that persuaded the National Executive of the P.S.P. to reject after a good deal of deliberation the policy of seeking electoral adjustments. The party will set up candidates only in those constituencies where it is strong or has put in some effective work. If other opposition parties will follow the same rule, the danger apprehended by Mr. Jayaprakash Narayan of a division of opposition votes may be avoided to a large extent. The principle which determined the decision of the National Executive is that adjustments can take place with only like-minded parties. It is to be hoped that the P.S.P. will adhere to the principle and will not allow State organisations to take undue advantage of the loop-hole left in the resolution. It should be made clear to the party that it is better to lose on the basis of its own programme than to win with the support of treacherous or doubtful allies.

The controversy over the policy of electoral adjust-

ments should not be allowed, however, to divert our attention from the basic evils of the present day political situation pointed out by Mr. Jayaprakash Narayan. He has written: "There is practically no parliamentary opposition today, and we have a near to one party rule. This is a dangerous situation, particularly in the context of the growing power of an already too-powerful bureaucracy, totally removed (at the higher levels) from the lives of the people; and also in the context of the apparent drive towards State Capitalism (which is the economic side of the shield of bureaucratism) and of the pernicious cult of personality which is sedulously being created." He has warned: "Fear, adulation, power-manoeuvres, arbitrariness—all the components of the cult are present and they should be a warning to all lovers of freedom." He is further afraid that the Congress "might become even more success-and-power-mad" after the next general elections.

This analysis of the existing political situation is far more important than the particular remedy suggested by Mr. Jayaprakash Narayan as a temporary measure to arrest the evil. Not many are yet fully conscious

of the authoritarian trends in the policies and action of the Congress Governments. Those trends do not necessarily express the conscious intentions of the Congress leaders but are the inevitable consequences of many of their economic and political policies. The essential task is to make the country aware of those trends. Mr. Jayaprakash Narayan rendered a signal service by pinpointing this danger to democracy.

In his answer to the last question posed by *Freedom First*, Mr. Jayaprakash Narayan has given an idea of what he desires should be done in order to build up a broadbased democratic opposition. One need not necessarily agree with his prescription. One can conceive of an effective opposition to totalitarian trends through the building up of a variety of independent political, economical, social and cultural organisations. One can think of various other ways in which enlightened public opinion can express itself and influence the development of events. It is not necessary that everybody should accept the same plan and method. What is necessary is consciousness of the danger and the will to take effective measures to counteract it.

Behind U Nu's Resignation

by M. A. Venkata Rao

THE announcement that U Nu, the universally popular national leader of Burma, will not head the new Government constituted after the April-May elections this year has been something of a surprise in this country. The Indian Press had not prepared us with accounts of recent developments in Burma to be able to appraise this announcement at its true value.

Charges in the Burmese Press during the recent election campaigns of the AFPFL (Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League), countenanced without mention of names even by U Nu and U Ba Swe in their speeches and Press Conferences and the sensational revelation of the presence of Red Chinese troops within Burma's borders in Wa State above Myittha are understood to be connected with the decision of U Nu to stand out of the new Government, though his Party has been successful as expected in gaining the suffrages of the people. U Nu has been expressing his desire to retire from politics off and on for years now, but today his motive in standing out of the Government is not personal and temperamental. He has made it clear in a Press Conference (announcing the names of the new Council of Ministers to be headed by U Ba Swe) that his aim in rejecting office is to be able to devote himself entirely to the renovation or purification of his Anti-Fascist Freedom League, the ruling Party in Burma corresponding to the Congress in India. He will consider re-entry into the Government if his colleagues so desire at the end of the year.

U Nu and his colleagues in the Party and Government were disturbed by the extent of foreign influence

that became apparent during the elections. U Nu minced no words in regard to this matter in his election speeches. Once of his speeches delivered on 23rd April (and broadcast over the Rangoon Radio the same night and published in the English language newspaper *The Nation* on the 24th) refers to this menace in trenchant terms. U Nu said: "This is not a normal parliamentary election. It is a contest between 1. stooges on the one hand and genuine patriots on the other. 2. between those who are going to convert Burma into a battle-field and those who are holding both internal peace and world peace. 3. between those who want to install a totalitarian regime in Burma and those who are sowing the seeds of democracy in Burma. 4. between those who are shouting from the housestops that they will bring about internal peace and those who are exerting their utmost to perpetuate a genuine enduring peace."

The promise of the Panchshila Declaration to which certain powerful foreign nations had vowed their adherence has thus been clearly broken in U Nu's opinion since he does not hesitate to call the opposition party by the name of "stooges" of a foreign power or powers. It has been a sad blow to him signifying the ruin of all his hopes in building a policy of universal friendship and neutralism and non-involvement on the pattern of India's foreign policy.

That U Nu realises the full implications of the foreign communist tactics of infiltration preliminary to conquest is evident by the following words of his in the same speech:

"In the past if a country wanted to have another country, it invariably launched war and conquered it.

Ngwadays, however, military conquests are not as easy as in the past. Therefore new tactics are employed whereby the interested country breeds stooges and pawns in the country in which it is interested. When these stooges and pawns gain power, the outside hands pull the strings. While these stooges and pawns are denied political power, their distant masters just incite them to unrest and insurrection. I need not tell you *who* in our country are those stooges. Their own words and actions are unmistakable evidence of the character of their allegiance." (Italics ours)

A Letter to the Editor of *The Nation* published on 3rd June over the pseudonym of *Maung Bamar* states that the reason why U Nu was not leading the new Government as Prime Minister as before was that he wished to devote his full attention to the urgent task of purifying his AFPFL Party and to rid it of its unreliable elements who had lent themselves to be suborned during the elections.

"U Nu was extremely disappointed with the way in which the Soviet and Chinese Embassies operate in this country. To the constant embarrassment of U Nu and his colleagues, these missions were in the habit of inviting BWPP and other neo-communist leaders to Russia and China on this or that mission. The hand-picked selectees in most cases happened to be those hostile to the Government and they returned to Burma to engage in occasional clandestine parleys at the respective embassies."

"According to this source—the last straw which broke U Nu's back (so to say), was the reported financial help rendered lavishly by some foreign embassies in Rangoon to many opposition candidates in the recent general elections. Thus the great edifice of international understanding which U Nu has been persistently building was crumbling before his eyes. He is reported to have been disillusioned at the absence of reciprocal attitude on the part of some countries for whose friendship he had worked so assiduously."

The Editorial Comment of *The Nation* the next day, (June 24) on this letter calls this "the most unkindest cut of all from U Nu's friends." Answering a question at a Press Conference, U Nu refrained from mentioning the names of the offending countries but added that it is the duty of all citizens, Government and public to investigate into this matter and obtain irrefragable evidence about it.

A questioner at this Press Conference alleged that "some embassies, notably the Russian and Chinese, had erected big walls around them and were in the habit of doing things in secrecy."

Another newspaper *The Burman*, reporting the Press Conference of the 24th, said that U Nu declared that he had learnt at first hand in the districts that the opposition leaders were openly in league with the rebels and subjected the people to all sorts of threats, pressures and intimidation to deter them from voting for the AFPFL. At Tharawaddy, for example, a group of rebels swooped on a village on the night of the day that U Nu had addressed the inhabitants and seized thirty guns from them and

threatened them with fire and sword if they voted AFPFL.

U Ba Swe who has now assumed the office of Prime Minister said at that Conference that the Opposition bought votes for sums ranging from K5 to K15 and that larger sums of money had gone to organisers. He added that there were threats to kill AFPFL members so that vacant seats could be re-contested.

Bo Khin Maung Gale, the Home Minister in the new Cabinet said that the rebel slogan in Mandalay was: *Kill Bo Khin Maung Gale!*

The speech of U Nu on the 23rd April already quoted is a fine example of democratic militancy.

For example: "In a democracy, the people are free to choose their own Government, to criticise the Government freely if there are grounds for such criticism, to change the Government through the vote at the next elections. But in a dictatorship, the people are guided by the following five principles of conduct:

1. Go when you are asked to, 2. Answer when you are asked to, 3. Do what you are asked to do 4. Comply with all the demands made from above, for instance, for extortion money, food packets and even your daughters. 5. Submit meekly if you are sent to the dreaded Peoples' Courts and go to the gallows without murmur."

U Nu went on to add "Dictatorship is like cancer. If not arrested in the initial stages, it will develop into an incurable disease!"

Obviously U Nu has little to learn from expert students of the Russian and Chinese regimes about their monstrous character so destructive of all human or democratic values.

This is a hard and salutary lesson learnt by U Nu after his experience of frustration with the working of the Panchshila principles by Russian and Chinese regimes.

This was the first public reaction from the Chinese side broadcast over the Peking Radio quoting the *Peking Daily*. (Reuter)

The Guardian known to represent the Burmese official point of view published a letter from a political correspondent that gives the Burmese view of this dispute and its far-reaching implications regarding the value to be placed on the declaration of Panchshila by China. The letter is introduced with the headlines—*Old Story of Brazen Breach of Faith. Now We Understand U Nu's Hints, The Serpent Behind the outward Smile of China.*"

Even after the League of Nation's Survey and Definition of the border "the Chinese maps continued to show large parts of Burma as Chinese territory more out of nationalist pride than of legal rights Protests from Burma (1949) drew the reply that they were old maps and that the demarcation could be done by joint commissions!"

"In a way it is good that the Red Chinese have shown their *claws* for now we know *who* it was to whom U Nu was referring when he condemned foreign powers who like to interfere in Burma's internal affairs in his Martyr's Day Speech." (Italics Ours Ed.)

FRESH LIGHT ON COMMUNIST MACHINATIONS — (Continued from page 2)

amount of dissent for some time. The Indian Communist Party has, however, swallowed the Moscow line lock-stock-and-barrel and still bends its knee subserviently to the masters of the Kremlin.

In an earlier part of his speech Mr. Ghosh talks of a peaceful transition to socialism. This peaceful transition is, however, to be brought about "through a mass revolutionary movement." A mass revolutionary movement is, in communist terms, nothing but "hundreds of streams of partisan struggles merging with the general strike and uprising of the workers in the cities" as defined in the "Tactical Line" document of the third congress held in Madurai which still holds the field.

Mr. Ghosh has, moreover, emphasised that, however peaceful the transition to socialism, the leadership must remain in the hands of the Communist Party. He has drawn the particular attention of his colleagues to Khrushchev's exhortation that, "Whatever the form of transition to Socialism, the decisive and indispensable factor is the political leadership of the working class aided by its vanguard. Without this there can be no transition to Socialism."

As is wellknown, the communists consider themselves as the only party of the working class. Their patronising attitude to the socialist leadership with whom they are at present negotiating is shown by the following triumphant reference that is made in the Central Committee Report to the Palghat congress: "Till recently the dominant leadership of the PSP (which included the SP also) pursued policies of violent denunciation of USSR and China, opposition to the movement for peace, of refusal to build democratic unity in the name of anti-communism, of the attempt to secure agreement with the Congress. The errors of these policies are becoming evident to the members of the PSP & SP and has led, during the last one year, to their modification to a considerable extent in several States. On a number of issues and in several campaigns and struggles, these parties have joined hands with the Communist Party and other democratic forces. Our Party will make every endeavour to consolidate and carry forward this process."

It should also be clear that the talk of peaceful transition to socialism is used by the communists as a tactic. Mr. Ghosh has stated in his speech that "it is a big weapon in our hands." He has made the purpose clear. He says: "It enables us to heal the split in the socialist movement. It enables us to forge links with socialists who sincerely desire socialism but abhor civil war." The talk about peaceful moves is therefore a manoeuvre to inveigle the socialist into a struggle which will put the communists into power.

That the communists have no intention of giving up their ideas of violent struggles is confirmed by on-the-spot notes of Mr. Ghosh's talk. The notes quote Mr. Ghosh as saying: "The conception of violent transition is not to be replaced by the concept

of the inevitability of non-violent transition." It appears that Mr. Ghosh stressed this point in the course of his speech but later on the point was dropped from the prepared record of the speech.

Similarly, it is noteworthy that the notes quote Mr. Ajoy Ghosh as making a reference to what he describes as the "Zhukov letter." Now, this Zhukov letter is none else than the notorious Shepilov letter to the CPI, the very existence of which the CPI has consistently denied. The substance of the letter was published by *Freedom First* in its January 1956 issue. Ever since Shepilov became Foreign Minister of the USSR, that letter is referred to in CPI circles as the "Zhukov letter." Yuri Zhukov was one of Shepilov's aides in *Pravda* who carried the letter to Delhi for transmission.

The D.R.S. also revealed on the occasion the results of the election to the Central Committee, giving the names of successful and defeated candidates and the votes secured by each. It was also revealed that an amendment advocating the P.C. Joshi line was defeated at the Congress receiving 126 votes as against 244 votes secured by the official resolution. This information was given on the basis of the on-the-spot notes taken down by one of the delegates.

The communists are naturally furious at the disclosures made by the D.R.S. They have however, dared to deny only the Shepilov letter. Their General Secretary, Mr. Ajoy Ghosh, has called it "a crude forgery" and characterised it as a "slandorous document." He has, however, wasted his fury. The D.R.S. has not published the letter for the simple reason that some newspapers had published its contents about a year back. The D.R.S. merely referred to it and pointed out that the "Zhukov letter" mentioned by Mr. Ghosh in his speech, as recorded in the notes, is the same as the Shepilov letter.

Another angry outburst is from *Blitz*, a crypto-communist weekly. The journal is angry, because, according to it, the disclosures made by the D.R.S. spoiled the chances of the C.P.-P.S.P. alliance or united front. The D.R.S. has never made a secret of its opposition to the communist move for such an alliance. Mr. Pardivala had declared at the press conference that the disclosures were being made on the eve of the meeting of the National Executive of the P.S.P. in order to place in the hands of the leaders of the party information regarding the real intentions of the communists. The D.R.S. is happy that it was able to make this information available to P.S.P. leaders. It is more happy to learn from *Blitz* that the information was of some use.

Apart from such a stray voice of protest and abuse from the expected quarters, the press and the general public have as a whole welcomed the new light shed by the D.R.S. on the working of the communist machine. It is gratifying to note that the D.R.S. will shortly publish these documents and a few others in the form of a book on the lines of its earlier publication *Communist Conspiracy at Madurai*.

Indian Socialist Leaders

by Yu. P. Nassenko

This is the translation of an article published in a recent issue of the Moscow publication Brief Reports of the Institute of Eastern Studies. The article portrays the real feelings of the Russian rulers about the Praja Socialist Party and its leaders. It is of great interest in view of the present efforts of the Communist Party of India to establish an alliance or united front with the P.S.P. The writer is one of the Soviet experts on Indian affairs.

THE Socialist Party of India was founded in 1934 by a group of representatives of the left-wing of the Indian National Congress. At the first conference in Patna it was decided to call the party Congress-Socialist, thus underlining its organizational links with and its ideological origin in the Indian National Congress.

In January 1948, six months having passed after the division of India along religious-communal lines, the Executive Committee of the Congress Socialist Party decided to leave the Government party, the National Congress Party. This decision was kept secret until it was endorsed by the party Congress. On the eve of the Congress, however, the right-wing socialist leader, Jai Prakash Narayan, in an open letter published in the weekly *Blitz* (13 March, 1948) declared: 'Our party should act as an opposition, but our opposition should be constructive' (i.e. it should be modelled on 'Her Majesty's opposition' in England, Yu. P.N.).

The real object of the decision on the organizational independence of the Socialist Party was to entice the disappointed members of the National Congress Party, to 'guard' them from communist influence and, in the long run, to create in India the two-party system on the American model.

The sixth congress of the Congress Socialist Party was held in Nasik from 19 to 21 March, 1948; it endorsed the Executive Committee's decision to leave the Indian National Congress, and adopted the name of Indian Socialist Party. In demagogic fashion, the congress criticised the Government for its 'totalitarian tendencies,' for its attitude on 'labour' questions and its policy towards the princes, but passed over in silence such a vital question as the complete liquidation of the positions held by foreign Capital in the country. At its very first congress, held in Bombay 21-22 October, 1934, the goal of the Indian Socialist Party was defined as the achievement of complete independence for India, separation from the British Empire, and the establishment of a 'workers' society'.

The right-wing leaders of the Socialist Party who spoke at the sixth congress emphasized more than once that they were opposed to the class struggle, slandered the Soviet Union and the Indian Communist Party, and called for a struggle against the Communists. Acharya Narendra Deo, reporting on the political situation in India, said: 'The Socialist Party and Congress should unite their efforts to liquidate the Communist Party.'

What do the Indian right-wing socialists represent? What is their theory and practice?

There are three pillars on which the official ideol-

ogy of the Indian Socialist Party rests—'democratic socialism,' hatred of the Soviet Union and the Chinese People's Republic, 'positive neutrality.' At one time the right-wing leaders of the Indian Socialist Party falsely declared that they too were Marxists, although not in the 'orthodox' sense, that they 'accepted the aims of the communists,' but not their 'totalitarian methods.' They proclaimed, and proclaim now, that they stand on the platform of 'democratic socialism.' Thus Jai Prakash Narayan, defining 'democratic socialism,' asserted that it includes recognition of democratic means, pacific methods, and a constructive approach to the attainment of our goals.²

In connection with the rise of a mass movement in India after the Second World War and the growth of the political consciousness of the masses, it became more and more difficult for the right-wing socialist leaders to apply their 'theoretical' principles to concrete problems, as the rank and file members of the Socialist Party began to see that they were being deceived. Consequently they began to seek 'adequate scientific foundations'—to use the words of the theoretician of Indian right-wing Socialism, Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia—for 'democratic socialism.'

The search led to the 'discovery' that there is no essential difference between socialism and Gandhism, and that the ideal of 'decentralized economy' is excellently suited to Indian conditions: the right-wing socialist leaders began to deceive the people, maintaining that the industrial development of India could in present-day conditions proceed not by the creation of large mechanized undertakings, but by establishing small industrial concerns. Their reasoning was that 'the communists' predilection for a large-scale economy,' their emphasis on the progressive character of technical development, is allegedly an 'imitation of capitalism' and an attempt 'to turn history backwards.' Capitalism and communism, the right-wing socialist leaders asserted, are but two parts of the single complex of present-day civilization, which is 'breaking apart.'³

The right-wing Indian socialist leaders have established close connexions with all enemies of the democratic countries and are trying to drag India into the American aggressive bloc. This is obvious from the policy they advocate in foreign affairs, the policy of so-called 'positive neutrality.' The term 'neutrality' is used in order to delude the rank and file members of the Socialist Party, who are filled with a genuine hatred of imperialism, and the adjective 'positive' to make sure that the imperialist bosses should not misinterpret the line.⁴

An example of the right-wing socialists' betrayal

of the workers was the breaking of the railwaymen's strike in 1951. Early in July 1951 the general council of the All-India Railwaymen's Federation took a decision, later endorsed by the All-India Trade Union Congress, to begin a national railwaymen's strike on 27 August for a 40 per cent. wage increase. The right-wing socialist leaders prevented the declaration of the strike on the pretext of the 'strained relations with Pakistan.'

These examples of the activities of the Indian right-wing socialists demonstrate that their fundamental task is to break the militant unity of the Indian proletariat.

In a peasant country like India the attitude of the Socialists to the agrarian problem and their relations with the peasantry are of particular interest. In their programme the Indian right-wing socialists demand the liquidation of landlordism 'as quickly as possible' (but do not state that it shall be without compensation), and the redistribution of the land among those who cultivate it. At the same time the chief emphasis is laid on meetings of the representative of the village *panchayat* (councils) at district, regional, and later national levels 'to help and advise the government on questions relating to agrarian policy.'⁵

The disruptive role of the right-wing Indian socialist leaders came into particular prominence at the time of the Indian general elections at the end of 1951 and early in 1952...

A united democratic front in the elections could not be established without an energetic ideological struggle against the right-wing socialist leaders and the exposure of their role as splitters. This struggle was made easier because the Indian Socialist Party was going through a severe crisis. Already at the eighth Socialist Party Congress in 1950 the right-wing leaders' denial of Marxism was so obvious that many delegates criticized Narayan's report—he was at that time general secretary of the party—as an 'ethical and political utopia,' as an attempt 'to reshape Gandhi's ideas and clothe them in Marxist garb.'⁶

Subsequently the gulf between the right-wing Socialist leaders' treacherous policy and the increasing pull of the rank and file towards joint action with left-wing parties and progressive social organizations grew wider. In these circumstances the communist party's criticism of the right-wing socialist leaders was bound to accelerate the process of the formation within the Socialist Party of a left-wing advocating a united democratic front...

Shortly before the elections *Crossroads* and a number of other Indian newspapers published a statement by a former socialist, Kanjibhai Kapadia, on the details of the secret agreement between the leaders of the Socialist Party and the Maharajah of Baroda. In 1948 the right-wing socialist leader, Mehta, received from Pathak, the Maharajah's adviser, a cheque for 2,000 rupees (*Crossroads* reproduced a photograph of the cheque). Moreover, Pathak bought 12,000 rupees of shares in the Victoria Press, of which Mehta is the head and which publishes Socialist Party literature. According to

Kapadia, Mehta and Narayan promised the Maharajah in return to organize a protest campaign against the inclusion of the Baroda principality in Bombay province.⁷

The Communist Party's exposure of the right-wing socialists helped to isolate the right-wing leaders from the rank and file and the active members at the lower level. A big part was played by the resignation from the Socialist Party in April 1951 of a left-wing group led by one of the most influential members of the party, Aruna Asaf Ali, the adherence of this group to the united left-wing led by the communists, and the publication of Aruna Asaf Ali's pamphlet *The Socialist Party: Its rejection of Marxism*.⁸

The Socialist Party had large financial resources for its election campaign. The right-wing leaders could not hide the fact that they had received money from the Americans—45,000 dollars through Lohia, and 30,000 through Narayan, who received the money from Timberlake, an agent of the United States Embassy in India.⁹

Armed with American dollars and a demagogic platform, the right-wing Socialist Party leaders refused to co-operate with the progressive forces in the country and declared that they would compete with them for the votes of the electors. 'Let the communists offer themselves to the electors and accept their verdict' crowed the Socialist weekly in anticipation.¹⁰

Recent events have convincingly shown the deepening crisis in the National Socialist Party and the absence of any leadership in it. In August 1954 Lohia resigned as general secretary and became a member of its Executive Committee;¹¹ in October 1954 the Chairman of the party, Kripalani, resigned. Narayan has almost ceased to work in the party¹² and has become active in the Bhoodan movement.¹³ More and more of the rank and file members of the Socialist Party and its supporters—among them many honest people sincerely devoted to the progress of their country—are supporting the struggle of the democratic forces in India.

¹ Said to be the only leader of an Indian political party who received his education (as a jurist) in America. For a time he was a member of the Indian Communist Party, then joined the Indian Socialist Party at its foundation in 1934, and soon become its leader.

² R. Gupta, *The Real Face of Democratic Socialism*, Bombay, 1950, p.20.

³ A. Ghosh, The new ideology of democratic socialism, *Crossroads*, 13 July, 1952.

⁴ *Ibid*, p.18.

⁵ *Free Press Journal*, 6 April, 1951.

⁶ *Crossroads*, 13 July, 1952.

⁷ *Crossroads*, 21 December 1951.

⁸ Aruna Asaf Ali, *The Socialist Party: Its rejection of Marxism*. Delhi. Later these left-wing socialists joined the Indian Communist Party.

⁹ *Pravda*, 6 February, 1953.

¹⁰ *Free Press Journal*, 3 July, 1951.

¹¹ *New Age*, 1954, No. 9.

¹² *Times of India*, 23 October, 1954.

¹³ A movement for the voluntary 'surrender' of land by the landlords in favour of the landless peasants, designed to slow down the process of awakening among the peasant masses and to divert them from organized mass struggle to settle the agrarian question.

A Misleading Report

by "V"

THE interim report submitted by Mr. Thapar, Secretary to the Ministry of Food and Agriculture on behalf of the delegation that had gone to China under the leadership of Mr. M. V. Krishnappa, Deputy Minister for Agriculture, is typical of the new trend in Indian administration to take Chinese achievements, at their face (or propaganda) value and to recommend the Chinese Plans for imitation by our country, ignoring the authentic evidence of the colossal human wastage and cruelty involved in their execution. The Report breathes the atmosphere of enthusiastic admiration for Red Chinese ways. It calls the Chinese effort in agriculture colossal in dimensions, which is true enough. It recommends a vastly greater programme of investment and more intensive methods of mobilising popular enthusiasm in India than contemplated in our Five Year Plans.

The Report shows awareness of "the steel fist that still dominates the psychology of the people" but brushes it aside with the remark that "it may be true" but that the enthusiasm displayed by millions of Chinese agriculturists cannot all be due to coercion. For "hundreds of millions of people would not allow themselves to be enrolled into cooperatives and work hard from morning to evening if they saw no good in the work they were doing."

This is an *a priori* impression that ignores the hard realities of the Chinese scene under the present Marxist leaders.

No one is against our learning from the Chinese or other achievements and incorporating useful ideas and practices into our efforts for improved agriculture. The superior methods listed by the report and the picture of governmental assistance given to farmers by way of cooperative credit, marketing facilities, fertilisers and other forms of aid in kind should undoubtedly stimulate increased investment and better organisation of Governmental aid to farmers here.

But the clear tendency to ignore the harsh realities of coercion and the very different aims of Communist Planning evidenced in the Report needs close scrutiny by public opinion and political parties in India, if the country is not to be hustled into dangerous ways and practices destructive of democracy and productive of immense suffering and injury to the ignorant and innocent population of the country beguiled by promises and hopes of higher levels of prosperity and welfare.

It is not possible to awaken those who are shamming sleep. It is to be hoped that *the will to believe the best* of communist achievements engendered by uncritical enthusiasm for socialism will not be allowed to dictate policy without a thorough scrutiny of all its implications for democracy and long-term well-being of the people.

The Report curiously enough mentions clearly the

processes by which the enthusiasm of the farmer for hard work and entry into co-operative farms has been secured in Red China. This part of the Report is in clear contradiction with the earlier declaration that the enthusiasm displayed by millions of Chinese farmers is genuine and based on solid grounds of self-interest.

"As a result of land distribution, most of the farmers in China had less than one acre of land and most of them did not possess any draught animal or good plough and since the State promised them generous assistance if they joined a co-operative farm, there was enthusiasm among the farmers for doing so." Here the cat is out of the bag. The farmers who showed enthusiasm were the landless tillers who got less than an acre of land free from the State. The middle and upper farmers have been eliminated from the greater part of the Chinese agricultural scene through terror and coercion. The Chinese Reds are faithfully applying the Marxist-Leninist-Stalinist doctrine of "proletarianising" the peasant with a view to control him in a total manner. This is the ultimate condition of all the farmers who are assisted in the early stages so lavishly in the manner listed by the Report through co-operative credit, marketing and State assistance in kind.

It is all important therefore that the country should make up its mind whether this is the goal towards which Indian agriculture and the farming population are to be led.

Objectives should be clarified without delay. Democracy would seem to postulate a society of peasant proprietors who plan their own lives and

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work, of course using the advice and assistance of the State and the local community voluntarily. The unit of holdings to be striven for should be determined by policy so that the right balance between increased output and individual prosperity may be induced over a period.

Agriculture is not only a means of production of grains and money crops but also a way of life with its own intrinsic values.

The Thapar Report is aware of the very different aims of Chinese Plans. It notes A. that it is necessary for the survival of socialism that peasant proprietorship should be replaced by co-operative farming, B. that with growing industrialisation large quantities of food grains will be required to feed the urban population and procurement is easier for the Government if the small individual farmers are organised into co-operative farms, C. that crop planning can be done better through co-operative farms than through millions of individual farmers.

The Chinese policies of forced progress of which the proletarianisation of the farmer, reducing him to the helpless condition of the industrial labourer with no property to fall back on is a part are thus (as seen by the Delegation) governed by the principle of treating the citizen as a *mere means to the ends* of the Communist State. Granting that they will achieve unprecedented industrial and agricultural production resulting in a tremendous acceleration of military power, there is no guarantee that it will produce individual happiness and widely distributed national prosperity. The charge that capitalism produces wealth only for the employing class few in numbers when compared with the bulk of the working classes, is true to a greater and more malignant extent of the Communist State. There is no use of wealth in the State if the vast majority have no access to it.

We have to shape our goals and evolve our own policies if we are not to be stampeded into adopting methods ultimately destructive of democratic values.

To the Editor,
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I. C. C. F. NEWS

The Patna Group arranged a reception in honour of Mr. Prithviraj Kapoor, M.P., the well-known artist, and his troupe of actors. The reception was held at the Bankipur Club and was presided over by Mr. Mahabir Prasad, Advocate General, the President of the Patna Group. Raja Radhika Raman Prasad Sinha of Surajpura welcomed the distinguished guest and his colleagues. Mr. Prithviraj made a suitable reply. Mr. R. K. Desai moved the vote of thanks.

* * *

Taking advantage of the presence in Delhi of Dr. Sampurnanand, Chief Minister of U.P. and Mr. M. R. Masani, an informal meeting of members and friends of the Committee was held in the Asian Office on Tuesday, September 18. There was a discussion at the meeting about the work of the Committee and its impact upon the intellectual life of the country.

* * *

A reception was accorded in the office of the Committee in Bombay to Prof. Mahamahopadhyaya D. V. Potdar on September 21, on the eve of his departure to Europe to attend the International Archives Conference as a delegate of the Government of India.

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