

Skating on Thin Ice

G. S. Rao

HIJACKERS of planes have posed a problem which even the mighty nations of the world find it extremely difficult to solve. Use of physical force is out of question as it endangers the safety of hundreds of innocent men, women and children. A few dare-devils, many a time only one or two, can thus hold the world at ransom and get their will done.

That is the awful and poignant drama that is being enacted at present in a desert air-strip in Jordan. At the moment of writing, the number of hostages held under control has gone down to fifty-four, the rest numbering about three hundred having been released after detention of a few days ranging from a day to eight or nine days. Fifty-four is not a small number; but small or big, civilization and human fellow-feeling demand nobody should be allowed to play with the life of even a single innocent individual.

It is this human feeling which has compelled five big nations of the world to hold parleys with the representatives of the outlaws in order to secure the release of the hostages. The outlaws have put forward conditions which in all conscience are unreasonable and atrocious. But they have to be seriously considered and may be even conceded as a price for saving the lives of hostages. The talks are still in progress and at the moment nobody is sure of the outcome.

The civil war that has erupted in Jordan is the direct result of the hijacking. No nation which intends to continue its membership of the international brotherhood of nations can allow such an act of piracy to take place on its soil. The blood of innocent hostages would be on the head of King Hussein and his Government if they are allowed to be massacred by the hijackers. It would also expose the ineffectiveness and unreality of the King's rule in his country. The King had therefore to act in order to compel the Palestinian guerillas to have a little more concern for international norms of civilized behaviour. The action has provoked the civil war which has put his throne into jeopardy.

The civil war threatens to develop into a war between Jordan and Syria. Some Syrian tanks and battalions were reported to have entered northern

Jordan in support of Palestinian guerillas. If a war is joined between Jordan and Syria, it will not be confined to the two countries. It may become a general war in the Arab countries and in West Asia. The two super powers may then get involved in it and the outcome may be a nuclear holocaust.

Nobody in his senses will say that the two super powers are interested in a general or even a limited war in West Asia. Both are anxious to avoid it, as they know that it will lead to a world war and the destruction of not only their power but of the world as it is built up through centuries. Nobody in the two countries, however power-hungry he may be, can contemplate with equanimity that dreadful prospect.

But the mad acts of a few lawless elements may drive the world towards that sad end. The lawless elements have deliberately placed themselves beyond the pale of law. They are not ordinarily actuated by considerations of self-interest. Many a time they are selfless idealists motivated by devotion to a cause. The Palestinian hijackers or guerillas are not selfish individuals or evil-minded criminals. They believe that a grave wrong has been done to their people, the Palestinian Arabs. They are out to secure the undoing of that wrong. The aim that they have in view, the destruction of the State of Israel, is unjust and unfair. The methods that they adopt are ten times more unjust and unfair, really speaking barbarous and devilish. But they cannot be regarded as ordinary criminals. As a matter of fact, the more high-minded such lawless elements the more dangerous they are from the point of view of preservation of law and order in a society and in the world.

Palestinian guerillas are not the only lawless elements in the world. In every society there are many who belong to that category. They have many real or imaginary grievances against the established order in a society. The Naxalites are a manifestation of that trend in Indian society. Technology is placing many weapons in their hands which they can use to hold society to ransom or to endanger world peace. It is not possible to stop the flights of aeroplanes because a dare-devil with a cause to espouse may hijack it one day. Nor is it possible to hold up the advance of technology because of its possible misuse. Whatever the precautions, the possibility of such mad acts threatening the safety of large numbers of people or the integrity of a society can never be excluded. Pre-

(Continued on page 4)

Kerala Elections And West Bengal

Analyst

THE people of West Bengal were still reeling under the impact of floods and Naxalite attacks on the police when the results of the Kerala mid-term elections came in. These results are portentous and are going to have serious effects on the attitude of parties in the State. At the time of writing these have not yet fully crystallised. But one thing is certain and that is that the CPI is now very much encouraged and emboldened to develop an open alliance with the Congress(R). The Bangla Congress had even earlier no inhibitions about it. Another effect would be that at the district level at least a good number of Congress(O) workers would join the Congress(R). But what about the other leftists of the 8-party group led by CPI? They have been strongly anti-Congress, Congress of any hue. Encouraged by the Kerala results, the central leadership of the CPI may ask for an open alliance between Congress(R) and the CPI in West Bengal. But, aware of the critical attitude of its left allies, a faction of the CPI leadership in West Bengal may argue for a more cautious approach. Thus, we can anticipate a phase of tension within the CPI, particularly as the CPM would be waiting on the side-lines to net any of those leftist groups that might show a tendency of breaking away. It is already well-known that the two ends within the CPI are represented by Somnath Lahiri and Biswanath Mukherjee.

The CPM will also have to take stock of its position now. In fact, the process has already started. In the course of the last six months politically it has lost heavily. The main reason is that it over-estimated the revolutionary potentialities of the situation. The attempt at smashing its united front partners, the building up of its armed volunteer force in villages, the undermining of the government machinery and building up of cells within it, the paralysing of the police apparatus, the setting up of a parallel trade union force in the industrial and trading areas, the control over electricity, banks, and transport unions, the domination in such areas as Durgapur made its leadership develop the illusion that the revolutionary situation was fast ripening. It also took for granted that the Centre will be weak and hesitant in acting to assert its authority.

The situation was however not that ripe. Thus it was a mistake to have the UF government eliminated at the time it resigned. It was within CPM's power to have prolonged its life quite for some time. It was thus a major miscalculation.

Now, after the Kerala results, the CPM will not be keen for an election in West Bengal. Therefore the CPM is likely to take a more revolutionary

posture politically. But it will be cautious enough not to get its apparatus dislocated or its effective cadre put in prison. The reason for the withdrawal of the Durgapur strike, and of the general strike call of August 28, and the comparatively sober observation of the Martyr's Day on August 31 was that the CPM was convinced that the State administration was prepared for the confrontation. But the CPM thought it would be premature to have its "army" put behind prison bars. The CPM machinery is therefore going underground—that is its main activity today.

Thus, politically, the CPM and the Naxalite positions are closer from the practical angle. They would maintain sporadic "revolutionary" activity and bide their time. But the CPM thinks that the Naxalites are more juvenile in their activities and unnecessarily waste their energies and get caught.

The trouble with the Congress(R) is that its organisation is too weak to take advantage of the situation that is favourable to it. The Bangla Congress does not want to get mixed up with the crowd of cliquish and over ambitious leaders in the State Congress(R), although they are prepared to ally with Smt. Indira Gandhi.

Meanwhile, the extensive floods in the districts have given a wonderful occasion to the State administration to do vigorous relief work and thus create a better image of itself among the people. The much maligned police, CRP and the Army have done fine work. The Congress(R), and the CPI are also taking full advantage of the situation. The CPM is reported to be rather passive and even obstructive.

The attacks on the police and its officers have increased and this has created a major stir. The Inspector General of Police has issued instructions to his men to go out in groups and small arms have been issued to them. Some of them have also been moved out from where they used to live. The police is finding it extremely difficult to get evidence for the crimes committed even from eye witnesses. Thus, unless they have powers of detention without trial, it will be extremely difficult to control such attacks on the police and the public, which seem to be premeditated. But the Congress(R) leadership in Delhi cannot allow the PD powers to be given unless the CPI leaders agree. Sri K. C. Pant, who visited Calcutta very recently said that the State's representation in the matter will be considered again, but it all depends on the "Opposition", which really means Bhupesh Gupta!

September 21, 1970

Lusaka Conference

Adam Adil

THAT more than 60 non-aligned nations of the world met at Lusaka during the second week of September is an event of world importance. The conference made it clear that non-alignment is not dead; and although some of the non-aligned nations are committed to either or both of the two super-powers in one way or the other, non-alignment has substance and meaning of its own. The conference has undoubtedly generated enthusiasm among the non-aligned nations and, if properly directed, non-alignment can be a force towards peace.

The first conference of the non-aligned nations was held in 1961, at Belgrade, when Jawaharlal Nehru, President Tito and President Nasser played a notable part in giving meaning and content to the philosophy of non-alignment. When the second conference was held in 1964 at Cairo, Nehru had passed away, and it was Lal Bahadur Shastri who as India's Prime Minister participated and affirmed India's commonness with world's non-aligned nations.

The conference at Lusaka is equally significant. It is meeting after six years and within these six years not only the nature of non-alignment but even of alignment is changed. For instance nations which once used to be very much aligned are not so much aligned now. Pakistan is an example. This does not mean that Pakistan should be allowed the membership of the non-aligned club. Although there is a change in the nature of its alignment, it has not yet qualified to be a member by an unequivocal acceptance of the policy of non-alignment. Further, its anxiety to become a member of the club is not due to any genuine desire to be truly non-aligned but purely to assume a position of rivalry to India. In that case it would be more a nuisance in the club rather than a cooperative member.

The nations at Lusaka have decided that non-alignment should not be only a passive doctrine of doing nothing, but a more active force in all directions. They have also decided that there should be more frequent summit meetings and consultations between nations at all levels and more constructive cooperation. Most important is the decision to forge "full solidarity" against forces which violate independence and integration of non-aligned nations.

How far these decisions will be implemented time alone will show. Past experience has been very disappointing. For instance, when India was attacked by China in October 1962, India sought to move or at least convince the non-aligned nations of the dire fact of Chinese aggression. India wrote to nearly 75 nations. Hardly 26 cared to reply. Many other nations adopted a lukewarm policy and refrained from expressing a word of sympathy for India, let alone condemning the

Chinese aggression. Probably, the only Asian country which came out strongly on the side of India was Malaysia, which, in fact, did not claim to be a strong and great country, as some non-aligned nations normally claim.

Similarly when in August 1968, the Soviet Union committed unprovoked aggression against a small and peaceful country like Czechoslovakia, the non-aligned nations once again failed in their duty. None of them, not even India, had the courage to condemn the aggression unreservedly. In the case of Czechoslovakia, the non-aligned nations should have had no hesitation in calling upon the Soviet Union to withdraw its forces, because, Czechoslovakia was only experimenting in the processes of democracy, generally known as "spring time of freedom" and also giving a human face to socialism. It had given no cause to the Soviet Union to be annoyed, for Czechoslovakia had not even decided to go outside the orbit of Soviet influence. Yet Soviet Union invaded it with massive strength and crushed the spirit of freedom of the Czechoslovakian people. The abject silence and near connivance of the non-aligned nations in this respect were shocking and painful.

It would be worthwhile and in the interest of world peace if the non-aligned nations' club is continued, inspite of the degrees of non-alignment or alignment of each nation. For instance, the non-alignment of U.A.R. is heavily loaded with a commitment to U.S.S.R. India also often enough exhibits a soft corner for the Soviet Union. Indonesia, on the contrary, is more in favour of U.S.A. Yet inspite of these aberrations, the non-aligned club would be in a position to play a useful role in world politics.

The final declaration of the Lusaka Conference rightly stressed the fact that the *detente* between the Soviet Union and the United States has lessened world tensions and reduced the possibility of an immediate world conflict. But it is not also oblivious of the fact that the world has not been made safer to live in. The conference was conscious that the super-powers still act in their self-interest, and the West Asian scene and the conflict in Viet Nam and Cambodia still constituted trouble-spots which carry potential seeds of world conflict.

The final declaration also referred to the danger of subversion within the non-aligned nations engineered by outside powers. Specific attention was drawn to this fact by Indonesia's General Suharto in his address to the Conference. General Suharto said "there is scarcely a nation in the developing world where the grievances of an ethnic or cultural minority cannot be exploited to create a civil war situation." He said it was a legacy left by the colonial powers.

Since the danger of internal subversion concerns practically all developing nations, General Suharto's reference went home to every member of the club. Although the threat of internal subversion is not anywhere based on ideological consideration, the final declaration stated: "any great power can inflame sub-national antagonisms if it suits its interest to do so. So all countries, whether radical and moderate, have a common interest in opposing interference in their internal affairs."

In one of the earlier drafts in relation to the internal subversion, Czechoslovakia's case was mentioned, but was dropped subsequently. One fails to understand why this was done. But it was clear that the events in Prague in 1968 weighed heavily on everybody's mind.

There were, of course, other problems to which Lusaka conference applied its mind without coming to any definite conclusions: for instance, the situation in South-East Asia and Middle East.

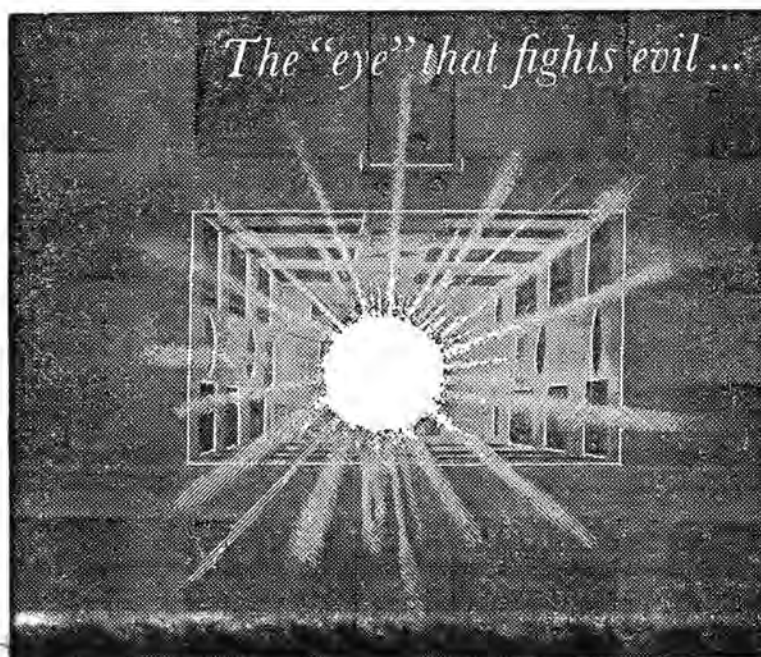
The one achievement of Lusaka conference which has to be taken into account is the desire of all non-aligned nations to be genuinely non-aligned without any internal interference of outside super powers. This means that each nation is anxious to make non-alignment a living force even though the cold war between super powers has largely ceased. To that extent the holding of the Lusaka conference must be welcomed. It has, indeed, given a direction to non-aligned nations — the direction being "depend more on one's internal strength rather than help from outside". This is not a small achievement.

SKATING ON THIN ICE — *Cont'd from page 1*

cautions, the most punctilious and efficient, should be certainly taken and whenever the offenders can be apprehended they should receive the severest of penalties. But that will hardly check the evil.

As long as persons with a cause to fight for believe that they can resort to any means to attain their end, the more hardhearted and bold amongst them will not hesitate to use the means which may appear atrocious and despicable to others. They must be therefore made to realise that the use of such means will, instead of advancing, damage their cause. They must be made to realise that even a noble cause cannot be advanced by ignoble and reprehensible means. Any and every time that such a means is resorted to there must be immediate and universal condemnation of the act of its perpetrators and of their sponsors. When it is realised that the revulsion of public feeling at the act damages the cause in pursuit of which the act is committed, there will be less desire to resort to it. It is a matter for regret that the hijacking of planes committed by Palestinian guerillas has not yet met with that deep and universal revulsion.

The hijacking and its sequel, the civil war in Jordan and the threat of a general war, show how thin is the ice on which the world is skating. The danger of war lurks around every bush and, if and when it breaks out, it may not be in pursuance of a deliberate design of one or the other super power but the unavoidable consequence of the mad act of an irresponsible individual or two. World peace is, indeed, skating on thin ice.



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Cotton Trade-Government Monopoly

M. R. Masani, M.P.

(Excerpts from a speech in the Lok Sabha on August 27, 1970, in the course of a discussion on the establishment of the Cotton Corporation of India)

WHEN this proposal was first made there was a certain ambiguity about its range and extent. It was earlier stated that the intention was to confine this project to the import trade but later on in the Rajya Sabha the Minister admitted that the domestic trade was also in danger and that the reprieve was only momentary. This is what he said on 3rd August:

"My ultimate objective is to take over domestic trade also. Otherwise, how can this public sector Corporation function effectively?"

This is very true. Unless the Government established a monopoly, there is no chance for it to survive at all because of its inherent inefficiency. We therefore face an attempt here to establish a monopoly of the Government over the entire import trade and domestic trade in cotton at the earliest possible moment and, if the Minister cannot follow up this policy of "grab" all at once, he will do so as soon as his hands can reach far enough.

The nature of the cotton industry is of a very delicate kind. It is a product where the price fluctuates all the time and there is a world-wide demand. It requires expertise of the highest order. Experience and personal attention are required in making a selection of the qualities of cotton and also of choosing the time of purchase. Cotton of different varieties has to be blended. You cannot just sell bulk cotton to one mill because each mill will require a particular blend for its own milling for the type of machinery it employs, and so on.

The Indian industry and Indian trade have achieved a very high level of competence and efficiency in this matter over generations. The importers have established a system of financial assistance to the mills through a system of mutual accommodation spread over several years. If the mills are not given accommodation, as they will not be given from now, they will not be able to find money to invest. In other words, this is a very specialised field of work which the Government will be the least competent to handle.

There has been no monopoly in this field. Here, like the goldsmiths of India, is a very large number of people, small people, competing and competing very intensely. About 3 lakhs of small people are competing in this trade and the beneficiaries of the competition are both the farmer, the grower of cotton, on the one

side and the consumer — the mills and all of us who wear the cloth on the other.

The profit margin in the cotton trade is the lowest in the world. The Indian cotton trade has been giving the lowest dividend. A study was recently completed by the Research Cell of the Bombay University's Department of Economics. This study came to the conclusion that the gross returns to the merchants and traders was 3 per cent on aggregate sales. But if we deduct the cost, then the net return is between 0.5 and 1 per cent on their sales. On the other hand, the Indian cotton grower is a favoured person. The average return to cotton growers throughout the world on the ultimate price is 35 per cent to 80 per cent in all other cotton growing countries. As to what goes to the primary producer, for whom we have every sympathy in India, it has been arrived at by the University of Bombay that 90 per cent of the ultimate price goes to the primary producer, that is, the farmer. These are the conditions in which we have to deal with this matter.

There are three or four consequences that are bound to follow from this utterly irresponsible approach to take over a very highly refined trade of this nature. The first consequence will be that the farmer, the grower, will be victimised. Today, the traders go to him and offer him a price. We know what happens when Government monopoly procurement is enforced. The farmer is mulcted and sweated. The very first victim of this monopoly buying of the Government is going to be the farmer, the grower of cotton.

The second consequence will be to send up the prices of cotton to the consumers, that is, to the mills and to us who buy cloth. This will be done, because they will destroy a mechanism perfected over generations and replace it by inefficient, incompetent and corrupt bureaucratic machinery.

We know what happens when the State Trading Corporation takes over the import of any commodity. All the costs go up. And the Reports of the Public Undertakings Committee and other Financial Committees of Parliament bear eloquent testimony to the fact that the State Trading machinery is the most incompetent and the biggest profiteer in this country. Cotton is now being subjected to this corruption and profiteering of bureaucratic administration.

Bulk purchase has been advanced as an argument. If any one knows anything about cotton, he will know

this — that bulk purchase is not what is required. What is required is the purchase of varieties, of different qualities, different staples, and bulk purchase is one thing that does not work. In fact, bulk purchase will endanger the Indian industry. Because bulk sellers will be reluctant to sell to Government organisations. The exporting countries are likely to put up their prices when they are faced with one monopoly buyer. This will cost the country valuable foreign exchange. They will demand a higher price than you anticipate.

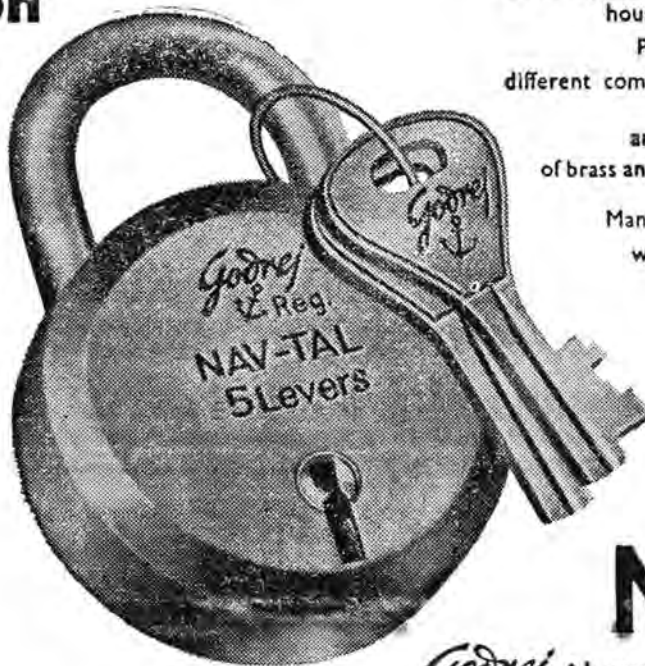
A third consequence is that this will increase unemployment. As if there is not enough unemployment already in this country, this Government, in a criminally irresponsible manner, is now going to add to it! There are 3,00,000 small people earning their livelihood as small businessmen in this trade and they are now to be replaced by bureaucratic drones who will not do half their work. The Government are fond of talking about unemployment day in and day out and this is the way in which they are trying to solve the problem of unemployment.

And finally, I wish to say this. By putting Mr. Rasiklal Parikh, a discredited Gujarat politician of their party as the Chairman of this Corporation, they have shown very clearly that they are playing politics with this trade, that they want to extort money from this trade through the Chairman whom they are appointing. This shows political influence right from the word go. If they had appointed a good business manager, some-

body who knew about cotton, who was in this field, I would have said that at least they were trying to be honest. But the moment they form a Corporation, instead of finding an expert to head it from any field, anyone from there, they put in one of the politicians of their own party and thereby show what their intentions are. Their intentions are thoroughly dishonourable. They are going to ruin — by political lobbying and political intrigue — a very fine industry that this country enjoys. There is no positive economic justification in this measure. It is purely a political gimmick to extort money from this prosperous trade of cotton. We talk of Land grab, but can anything be more disgraceful than this grab of trade? This is grab of money by this Government, wherever money can be found.

There are some misguided people in this country — journalists and businessmen — who in the last few weeks have imagined that this Government is on the mend. There are certain comments in leading newspapers and I have met some otherwise intelligent businessmen and they tell me: "Mrs. Gandhi is improving, her Government is becoming more responsible, more moderate, and turning away from the extremist path." To such misguided gentlemen, I make a gift of this grab of a well-established, well-run, well-disciplined trade and ask them if this is a sign of the growing intelligence, growing sanity and moderation of this Government?

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Labour Camps In Russia

Ludmilla Thorne

SEVEN years ago Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn's *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich* was published in the Soviet Union. The work had an immediate and profound impact both in the Communist world and in the West, not only because of its sheer artistry but also because of the political function it performed.

Now we have a new book from the Soviet Union—one which makes it sadly clear that labour camps are still a part of the Soviet reality. Stalin has passed on, but the camps have not.

The book, titled simply *My Testimony**, was written by Anatoli Marchenko, a 31-year-old labourer with an eighth-grade education. Unlike *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*, Marchenko's book was not published in the USSR and probably never will be, because for several years now writings on the "camp theme" have been forbidden. But like many other Russian books, *My Testimony* circulates in the Soviet Union in manuscript form. In the summer of 1969 it was published in Paris in the original Russian, and now it has appeared in English translation in England, Canada and the United States. The English edition has an excellent introduction by Max Hayward, who underscores the importance of Marchenko's book as "the first detailed and completely unvarnished report on conditions in Soviet camps today by someone who knows at first hand."

The author of the book was born in 1938 of illiterate parents in the small western Siberian town of Barabinsk. Before completing his secondary education—the regular "ten-year school"—Marchenko started working on the Novosibirsk hydro-electric station and on other similar projects in Siberia. Like other young workers, he lived in a dormitory. One day, a fight broke out in the living quarters of the young men. By the time the police arrived, most of those involved had run away or gone into hiding. Those who remained were arrested, among them Marchenko. "They sentenced us all in a single day, with no attempt made at finding out who was guilty and who innocent," he writes. "Thus it was that I found my way to the terrible camps at Karaganda."

Unable to reconcile himself to the idea of being unjustly imprisoned, Marchenko planned an escape from the camp. In October of 1960 he and another prisoner tried to cross the border into Iran but were captured about 50 yards from the frontier. They were taken to Ashkhabad, the capital of the Turkmen Soviet Socialist Republic. Marchenko was then 23 years old.

After being detained in solitary confinement for five months, Marchenko faced a closed trial; not even

his mother was allowed to attend. He was tried for treason by the Supreme Court of the Turkmen SSR and was sentenced to six years at hard labour—a ruling not subject to appeal. His companion, who testified against Marchenko in order to gain leniency for himself, was given only two years for attempting to cross the border. However, even Marchenko's sentence was relatively light; as a "traitor to the homeland," he could have been shot.

Marchenko's experiences during his long six-year journey through a maze of Soviet jails and forced-labour camps comprise the main part of his account. He says that after he was sentenced, "I had only one sensation, and that was that an injustice had been committed, a legalized illegality, and that I was powerless; all I could do was to gather and store my outrage and despair inside me..." It is amazing that such sentiments are expressed in his account not in a spirit of hatred or vindictiveness but as a straight, stark narration of the facts. His story is written in simple but literate Russian, with an ample sprinkling of camp jargon, some of which is impossible to translate.

Artistically, Marchenko's book cannot be compared with Solzhenitsyn's classic narrative—but Marchenko does not claim to have produced a great work of



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* *My Testimony*, Anatoli Marchenko, New York, E. P. Dutton; London, Pall Mall Press; Toronto, Clarks, Irwin & Co., 1969.

literature. In his introduction he states: "I don't consider myself a writer, these notes are not a work of art." Literary quality aside, however there are strong parallels in the two works. Marchenko himself reminds one of Solzhenitsyn's hero. Like Ivan Denisovich Shukhov, he is a simple worker and not a member of the intelligentsia. Like Ivan Denisovich, Marchenko lives each day as well as he can. Unlike other prisoners (called "zeki" in Russian camp jargon), neither of the two men tries to ease his frightful existence at the expense of his fellow inmates. They do not kowtow to the administration; they do not go after "soft" camp jobs.

Marchenko's term began at the large camp compound near Potma, about 250 miles east of Moscow. There are no statistics available on the total number of political prisoners in the Soviet Union today, but Marchenko tells us that at Potma alone there are about 3,500 prisoners. He mentions other prison compounds located in the areas of Vorkuta and Kazakhstan, as well as certain "death camps"—notably Norilsk—from which no prisoners return.

Comparing the present with the past, Marchenko states that "today's Soviet camps for political prisoners are just as horrific as in Stalin's time; a few things are better, a few things worse." It appears that the only really significant difference is a quantitative one: whereas prisoners under Stalin numbered in the millions, today they number in the thousands.

One aspect of prison policy which does not seem to have changed is the use of hunger as a disciplinary measure and as a means of inflicting punishment. In a chapter titled "Hunger," the author gives us a penetrating description of what it means to be tortured by starvation "day after day, month after month, year after year." The regular fare in camps is scientifically designed to provide the minimum nourishment that will keep a human being alive and "able" to do hard physical labour.

Prisoners are exposed to other privations—cold, filth and disease. They are also exploited by members of the camp administration, who frequently bully or bribe prisoners into doing "personal favors" (such as loading logs for firewood or helping build their private homes). Above all, the prisoners are constantly subjected to personal humiliation, reminding them that in the camps they are no longer considered human beings.

Toward the end of Marchenko's term, the writer Yuri Daniel was sent to Potma and was assigned to Marchenko's work-gang. The two men became friends. Daniel and Andrei Siniavsky had of course become a *cause célèbre* when they were sentenced in February 1966 to five and seven years respectively for publishing their works abroad and "slandering the Soviet Union." Marchenko gives us the most accurate report yet available on Daniel's imprisonment. He also

provides some insights into the other prisoners' attitudes toward the two writers.

Daniel emerges as a man of great will and simplicity, traits which endear him to his fellow inmates. There is a moving description of how Marchenko and several other prisoners tried to shield Daniel from the vindictive persecution of the camp authorities, though without much luck. Marchenko reports that in June 1966 Daniel was sent to the *shizo* for 15 days despite the fact that he was suffering from an infection that had developed in an old wound. No sooner was he released than he was put right back in for another 10 days.

Other camp inmates, men from all walks of life, are portrayed by the author with equal sensitivity. We meet Anatoli Burov, the son of a dispossessed "kulak" family; the Lithuanian Richardas, who was shot while trying to escape and was left lying unattended for five days; Andrei Novoshitsky, a young soldier who had defected to the West but returned because he felt homesick; and many others. All have ended up at the bottom of the pit. As the author makes distressingly clear, the law of the jungle rules life in labour camps. The strong devour the weak, and only the strongest survive. Animal instincts prevail over human instincts among prisoners whose only purpose is to keep alive.

My Testimony is not an easy book to read, with its fearful details of suffering and horror. Most readers will be shocked, depressed and disturbed by it. But for Western observers interested in all facets of Soviet life, it is necessary reading. Max Hayward notes that in addition to providing information on Soviet labour camps, Marchenko

... also succeeds ... in giving very revealing glimpses of Soviet life in general. Not only is there a wealth of information about social habits (including sexual mores), but the reader is given the "feel" of real life at the humbler levels of existence in the Soviet Union. Marchenko introduces us to the vast submerged reality which few foreigners or educated Russians ever see.

Anatoli Marchenko's six-year term ended in November 1966. But today he is once again in prison, because his courage did not stop with the writing of *My Testimony*. After his release, he authored a number of open letters of protest against conditions in Soviet labour camps as well as against Soviet actions in Czechoslovakia, vexing the Soviet authorities to the extent where they were determined to put him behind bars again.

On July 29, 1968, he was arrested on a trumped-up charge of violating passport regulations and was jailed for a year. His release was scheduled for July 1969, but instead he was sentenced on August 20 to two more years in prison camps for "defamation of the Soviet political system." Marchenko's friends now fear for his life; they are not certain whether his health can survive another jail term.

—Condensed from an article in *Problems of Communism*

Reviews

Dimensions of Industrial Relations in India

Edited by Dr. B. S. Bhira, United Asia, Rs. 20.

LAST year the International Labour Organisation completed fifty years of its eminently useful life. The occasion was celebrated in India and all over the world. The book is part of the tribute that India paid on the occasion to that international organisation.

The first part of the book consists of articles on the I.L.O. They describe the role that it has played in establishing healthy industrial relations and its impact on labour legislation in India. The contributors include Dr. V. V. Giri, Shri N. M. Tidke, Shri J. L. Hathi, Shri N. H. Tata, Shri V. B. Karnik and Dr. B. S. Bhira, the Editor of the publication.

The other part is devoted to a discussion of dimensions of industrial relations in the country. The topics dealt with cover such topics as wage boards, recruitment of labour, workers' participation in management and industrial relations. The articles are written by competent writers, each well-versed in his particular field.

The book carries a foreword by Dr. P. B. Gajendra-gadkar, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Bombay and Chairman of the National Commission of Labour. The recommendations made by the Commission have initiated a general discussion in the country on industrial relations in the Seventies. The book is a valuable contribution to that discussion.

United Asia deserves to be congratulated on thinking of celebrating the fiftieth anniversary of the I.L.O. by the publication of such a well-edited and well-printed book.

N.D.

Absenteeism in Industries in Bombay — A Survey

Employers' Federation of India, Bombay. Rs. 3.

THE monograph contains the results of a survey into absenteeism conducted by the Employers' Federation of India. The survey covered thirty industrial units in Bombay employing about 15 per cent of workers in manufacturing industries. It extended over a period of three years 1962 to 1964.

According to the survey, the rate of absenteeism ranged "between 13 and 15 per cent". But surprisingly enough 70 per cent of it was "authorised absenteeism" while only 30 per cent was "unauthorised absenteeism". The latter, against which alone employers can complain, ranged "from 0.06 per cent (in Electric Supply) to 4.0 per cent (in Transport Equipment)". The problem is not, therefore, as big as it is made out to be.

On the effect of absenteeism on production the

survey found: "Of the 30 units, the management of 13 units were silent on the question. Among the remaining replies, the management of 9 units stated that absenteeism adversely affected production; the replies of 8 units do not support this view".

An interesting and important fact that has come to light as a result of the survey is that "on an average, 73 per cent to 74 per cent of workers were employed on a permanent basis". The rest were temporary or casual or substitute workers. It is unfair and unconscionable to keep as big a work-force as 25 per cent on a non-permanent basis from year to year. This is a grave evil which requires to be set right as early as possible.

The monograph is a fine study and the Employers' Federation of India deserves to be congratulated on conducting the study and publishing its findings.

V.B.K.



*Pre-poll uncertainty has ended . . .
Let's worry about this post-poll uncertainty.*

Courtesy: Amrita Bazar Patrika

Britain 1970 — An Official Handbook

British High Commission, New Delhi, Rs. 29.25.

The handbook contains factual information on almost every aspect of British national affairs. Prepared and revised each year by the Central Office of Information with the co-operation of government departments and many national organisations, it is designed to answer questions about Britain that are most frequently asked in India and other countries. The publication is illustrated by photographs, diagrams and maps. Each chapter has a short bibliography giving sources and further titles of reference. One can think of no better book for information about Great Britain.

N.D.

BOOKS RECEIVED

1. *The Administrative History of India 1834-1947* (General Administration), B. B. Misra, Oxford University Press, Bombay. Rs. 100/-.
2. *Managing Manpower in the Industrial Environment*, Theodore A. Toedt, Lawrence C. Lovejoy, Richard M. Story, Jr., Dorian Shainin, Wm. C. Brown Company Inc., Iowa, U.S.A.
3. *Rethinking on Public Sector*, Forum of Free Enterprise, 235, D. N. Road, Bombay 1.

Letter to the Prime Minister

A letter signed by over 300 citizens has been sent to the Prime Minister criticising the Government's action in asking the B.B.C. to close its office in New Delhi. The letter states *inter alia*:

"We citizens have been pained and frightened at the course of events which have led so rapidly to your Government's decision to oust the B.B.C. from India. . . . Respect for other's opinions, even if these opinions are contrary to those of the majority, is a living tradition in any dynamic and mature society. Should we not emulate these even if the act requires some measure of political courage? . . . Perhaps we are heading towards an intolerant insular and chauvinistic society faster than we realise. We as responsible citizens feel strongly that our Government should have the confidence and faith in the country and its people to withstand criticism and perhaps even learn from it. . . . Censorship has never been an answer to any national problem: keeping the channels of communication alive and utilising them to project India's viewpoint would in fact be more effective."

Letter to the Editor

Dear Sir,

With reference to Mr. A. A. Deshpande's article "West Asia—Combat of illusions", in *Freedom First*, No. 220, may I make the following observations:

Ever since independence in 1948, Israel has granted full equality, citizenship and freedom to its Moslems, Christians, Druses, Bahais and Jews. Mr. Deshpande's comments on this point are therefore incorrect.

No country on earth would ever accept Mr. Deshpande's remark that to desire "secured and guaranteed frontiers" is an illusion to be given up. If all present frontiers became illusory, wars would break out everywhere. However, once the Arab neighbours agree to recognise Israel's right to exist as a sovereign State, it will be possible to negotiate permanent and secure frontiers. Surely Mr. Deshpande did not suggest the opposite?

DAVID ZOHAR
Vice-Consul
Consulate of Israel

Bombay, 7 Sept. 1970.

Dear Sir,

Adverting to V. B. Karnik's article "Land Hunger" in your September issue, I would like to mention the following points:

The Author has rightly pointed out the great loopholes in our political set up. 'Land Grab' movement is only a political gesture. It is impossible to distribute land to all people.

In order to patch up the deficiencies of their wrong political promises leftist parties have started this campaign. Even after passing so many laws, agricultural production could not be increased.

Politicians have forgotten the basic feature that land is limited in area and is immobile. The law of diminishing returns will become operative if land is distributed amongst landless peasants.

Our Government must take the initiative in evolving a comprehensive programme for implementing land reforms. Efforts must be made for increasing the output from land and not in decreasing the output and the like. Land for landless is only a myth.

R. SRINIVASAN

Madras, 17 Sept. 1970

Can anyone doubt that the real victor of the Kerala election is the Communist Party of India?

—*Opinion*, September 22.

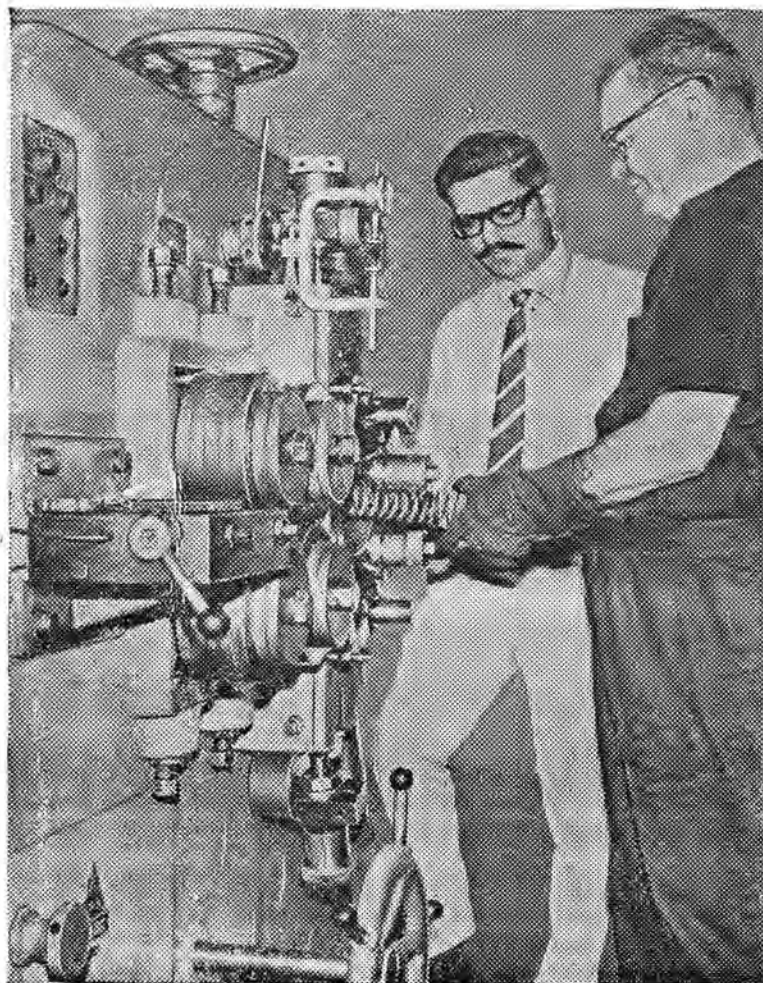
The vote in Kerala is heavily enough in favour of Congress policies and not of Communist policies.

—*The Indian Monitor*, September 26.

**When you feel
the faultless suspension
of a Rajdoot motorcycle,
remember—**



there's interdependence at work.



Not all components of the RAJDOOT suspension are made at Escorts. Its vitally important springs, for instance, are made, among others, by Southern Automatic Industries, Madras—in a remarkable form of cooperation with Escorts. At Escorts, we call that interdependence.

Southern Automatic, for example, began its association with Escorts by supplying 24,000 springs in 1964. Since then it has provided increasing volumes of quality springs (147,000 last year alone). In return, Escorts has helped it to develop them to high international standards.

Today, Southern Automatic is over 12 times its former size. In place of one small workshop, it now has two busy factories in Madras and Bombay, and another recently established at Faridabad to cater specially to Escorts' requirements. Its bond of interdependence with Escorts is stronger than ever, and if today it begins to export, Escorts will be there again to help.

Only a few critical components of Escorts products are made at Escorts. The rest—nearly 70%—are provided by over 1000 manufacturers, spread all over the country, employing about 100,000 men.

With them as with Southern Automatic, Escorts has established the same form of interdependence. They provide quality components; Escorts provides technical, even financial, aid. Helps them to specialise and grow.

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As always, Escorts is interested in hearing from manufacturers, however small, who believe they can become a part of this interdependence. Write, stating your engineering specification, to General Manager, Escorts Limited, 19/6 Mathura Road, Faridabad, (Haryana).

**Interdependence—for 25 years,
the Escorts concept for growth**



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 easy to be autocratic in India and that is the line which the Union Government under the guidance of the Prime Minister has decided to follow.

—C. Rajagopalachari, *Indian Express*, September 7.

Property has become a dirty word today; liberty may become a dirty word tomorrow.

—N. A. Palkhivala, *March of the Nation*, September 12.

Princes in India should be thankful that they are losing their purses and privileges and not their heads.

—S. G. Sardesai, Communist M.P., *Current*, September 12.

The BBC has quit India. And shall we all live happily ever after? Hardly likely.

—*Hindustan Times Weekly*, August 30.

A large tenet of Chinese Communist international policies is simply the desire to get whatever wars are actually in progress to continue and cause political havoc as far afield as possible.

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

Instant radicalism, whether it is bank nationalisation or the abolition of privy purses and princely privileges, will not meet the country's massive and urgent economic needs.

—Nandan Kagal, *Indian Express*, September 10.

Not the rulers but the supremacy of Parliament has been de-recognised

—A. B. Vajpayee, M.P., *Times of India*, September 13.

To the Editor,
FREEDOM FIRST,
C/o Democratic Research Service.
127, Mahatma Gandhi Road,
Bombay 1.

Please enrol me as a subscriber to FREEDOM FIRST.

I remit the annual subscription of Rs. 5.00

Name:

Address:

Signature

We cannot trust Indira because she is a double talker, like her friends, the Communists.

—Mrs. Tarakeshwari Sinha, *The Indian Monitor*, September 12.

All governments concerned should insist that the "guerillas" and their leaders must stand trial for aerial piracy — an international crime.

—David Lawrence, *U.S. News & World Report*, September 21.

Each second we live in a new and unique moment of the universe, a moment that never was before and will never be again.

—Pablo Casals, *Observer Review*, September 13.

Blackmail is a well-known criminal method, so is kidnapping; the one thing that is known about these things is that the best way to see them repeated is to give in.

—*Swiss Press Review and News Report*, September 14.

The step against the BBC is a demagogic gesture to win popularity by satisfying Indian chauvinism.

—Nirad C. Chaudhuri, *Opinion*, September 15.

Only the power *not* to make decisions is left to the private sector.

—J.R.D. Tata, *Swarajya*, September 19.

Abolition of privy purses makes little impact on the economy of India.

—N. G., *People's Action*, September 1970.

That 20 times more should be spent on military power than on constructive progress appears to me the mark of an ultimate — and I sometimes fear, incurable — folly.

—World Bank President, Robert McNamara, *Economic Times*, September 22.

The axis of the Indicate, the CPI and Muslim League is sure to backfire in North India.

—*March of the Nation*, September 26.

The Communist loss in an erstwhile Communist State is more significant than the zeros of the CONGO, the Swatantra and the Jana Sangh.

—*Current*, September 26.