

Rape of Czechoslovakia

M. D. Kini

SOVIET Union has done it again. She has bared her fangs and claws and pounced on the tiny and defenceless Czechoslovakia with her accomplices. She has marched her troops into Czechoslovakia without the permission of the legal and the constitutional government of the country, has surrounded radio and television stations, ringed the Communist Party central office and that of the President of the Republic, arrested the leaders of the Communist Party and the Government. She has given an ultimatum to the Czechs to change their leaders or else has threatened to choose their leaders for them. She is trying to find a quisling in Czech ranks—a Czech Kadar to replace the Czech Imre Nagy. She has again committed the crime of aggression against a small State. She has once again dipped her hands in the blood of innocent people. In short, she has done another Hungary on Czechoslovakia. Not all the waters of Volga can wash away the stain and the stink of this crime from her hands, and the sins committed against humanity.

What is the crime that the Czech people have committed against the Soviet Union and her satellites? The only crime that Dubcek and his friends have committed is to allow a modicum of freedom to their people. They have removed censorship on newspapers and have allowed freedom of expression to their people. They have deposed some of the Stalinist party members who have opposed the liberalisation and the democratization. They have published a draft statute which seeks to introduce secret ballot in party elections, allows minority to express their views and opinions in the press, disallows top party and government jobs to the same person. The Czech Communist Party has not introduced any changes in the economic structure. They have not allowed private ownership of property and the means of production. *Rude Pravo*, the Czech party newspaper, has stated the position of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia clearly: "It (the Communist Party) will not return the means of production to private monopolies. It does not declare that it will do this in any document or speech by its leaders, nor is it stated in any speeches of the 'anti-socialist extremists' which Yuri Zhurkov (*Pravda's*

commentator) cites. Indeed it is not even physically possible."

It is not the fear of the restoration of capitalism, but the introduction of democracy into Czechoslovakia that seems to be the reason for the Soviet action. This conclusion is confirmed by the Soviet inaction in Yugoslavia in 1948, Communist China in 1962 and in Rumania more recently. Yugoslavia broke off from the hegemony of Soviet Russia but kept the dictatorship intact. So did Communist China and Rumania. And so, the conclusion is irresistible that the Communist Party of Soviet Union is afraid of freedom and democracy. May be, they fear the spread of democracy to other Communist States in East Europe and even into Soviet Russia, and to other spheres of life. She must be having her own theory of dominoes.

It all started with a resolution to divide the posts of the Party First Secretary and that of the President of the Republic. This resolution was tabled before the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia on December 19, 1967, since the issue could not be decided in the party Presidium which was split evenly into two—five against five. The debate that followed the introduction of the resolution in the Central Committee was marked by bitterness and passion. Members gave vent to their grievances accumulated over the years of Novotny's rule. Novotny lost the important post of First Secretary to Dubcek, the Slovak party chief. A silent revolution was on in Czechoslovakia with this small but important reform. People inside and outside Czechoslovakia became aware of the revolution when the press, radio and television started discussing problems which were not even mentioned before. The press did not ask for the freedom of expression, but it started exercising it. The new regime did not lift censorship officially. It did not use its powers. This was followed by a purge of old and diehard Stalinists. The Minister of Interior and the Attorney-General were dismissed. President Antonin Novotny was replaced by General Ludwig Svoboda. Soviet Russia and her satellites like East Germany, Bulgaria, Poland and Hungary felt concerned. Moscow felt that the Warsaw Treaty countries should hold troop manoeuvres in and around Czechoslovakia. Alexander Dubcek did not lose his nerves. He affirmed that Czechoslovakia was still a part of the socialist community and continued to be the member of the Warsaw Pact and the COMECON and all that they are doing was to rectify some of the errors of the Stalinist past.

When the now famous "Two thousand words" letter

written by the Czech intellectuals appeared in the press, the crisis came to a head. The letter gave expression to the plight and frustration of the Czech people under the Novotny regime and hoped for better times under Dubcek. It said: "... No one criticized the activities of the State and of the economic bodies. Parliament forgot how to hold proper debates, the government forgot how to govern properly and managers how to manage properly. Elections lost their significance, the law carried no weight. We could not trust our representatives on any committee or if we could, there was no point in asking them for anything because they were powerless. Worse still, we could scarcely trust one another. . . . At this moment of hope, albeit hope still threatened, we turn to you. It took several months before many of us believed it was safe to speak up; many of us do not think it safe even yet. But speak up we did, and we exposed ourselves so far that we have no choice but to complete *our plan to humanize the regime*. . . ."

This letter proved to be a red rag to the mad bulls in Moscow, Sofia, Budapest, Warsaw and Pankow. *Literaturnaya Gazeta*, the Soviet writers' publication, called it "a document of impudence". What impudence! *Pravda*, the Party's newspaper in Moscow, characterised it as the conclusive proof of the counter-revolutionary activity under the new regime and that the people who wrote this letter were in collusion with the imperialist reaction, and promised "full support" to the Czech communists in opposing them. On this excuse and pretext, the Soviet Union had sent its tanks to crush the Hungarian revolution under Imre Nagy in 1956.

Immediately Russia along with her accomplices in East Europe invited Czechoslovakia for a summit meeting at Warsaw to discuss the situation in Czechoslovakia. This was politely turned down by the Presidium of the Communist Party headed by Mr. Dubcek. However, he agreed to have bilateral talks about the mutual affairs with all the countries. In a joint letter addressed to Czechoslovakia, on July 15, the Warsaw Pact countries sent a veritable ultimatum. The letter demanded among other things, that

- a) "the safeguarding of the socialist system in Czechoslovakia are not only your but *also our task*" (that means, they would interfere in the affairs of Czechoslovakia if and when they think the socialist system in that country is threatened).
- b) "mobilisation of all means of defence created by the socialist State," "against the right-wing and anti-socialist forces" (in simple words, crushing of all opposition to the Communist Party, if necessary, by arms).
- c) "the firm hold by the party over the means of mass communication — press, radio, television — and their utilisation in the interests of the working class

and socialism" (Party monopoly of mediums of expression).

- d) "undeviating observance of the principle of democratic centralism, and struggle against those who help the inimical forces by their activity" (crushing the minority).

In effect, Soviet Union and her four Warsaw Pact allies warned against the democratisation or "humanization," as the Czech writers put it, that was going on in Czechoslovakia and threatened to take action if it was not stopped. In reply, the Presidium of the Czech Communist Party submitted: "The abolition of censorship, freedom of expression are supported by the absolute majority of the people of all classes and strata of our society. . . . The Communist Party depends on the voluntary support of the people. It is not implementing its leading role by ruling over the society, but by faithfully serving its free, progressive socialist development. It cannot force its line by orders, but by the work of its members and the veracity of its ideals. . . . *It cannot impel its authority, but must constantly acquire it by its actions.*"

The Communist Party of the Soviet Union invited the Presidium of the Czech Communist Party for bilateral talks at Moscow, Lvov or Kiev so that they could use the dissidents in the Czech Presidium and browbeat the supporters of Dubcek. But Dubcek suggested Kosice in Central Czechoslovakia. Finally it was agreed that the meeting should be held at Ciorna Nad Tisou on the Czech-Soviet border.

Simultaneously *Pravda* alleged that there was a secret NATO plan to subvert Czechoslovakia and that a consignment of hidden American-made arms were found in North Czechoslovakia. *Red Star*, the Soviet defence Ministry newspaper, suggested that there were elements inside Czechoslovakia "capable of defending the socialist regime".

While in Russia the newspapers were building up tension on the eve of the crucial meeting, the newspapers in Czechoslovakia were mobilising support for Dubcek. Nearly a million people signed a document drafted by one of the staff members of *Literarni Noviny*, a literary journal, supporting Dubcek. An opinion poll held in Czechoslovakia showed more than 78 per cent of the people on the side of Dubcek. The Czechoslovak Writers' Union sent a message to the Czech leaders in a special edition of their journal *Literarni Listy*. The message said: "The history of our country over the past century is a history of bondage. Except for two small intervals we have been condemned to create our national existence illegally. The moment has come when we can give the world proof that socialism is not an emergency solution for underdeveloped countries but the only true alternative for civilization. . . . All we are striving for can be expressed in four words: Socialism, alliance, sover-

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Schism In Communist Movement

"Atreya"

EVER since its founding in the early 1920's the Communist Party of India which has claimed itself to be the true repository of Marxist wisdom, has always suffered from schism that is an inevitability for all bigoted groups. The difference has only been in the nature of manifestation of the Schism. The Indian Communist Party has sought to derive its power by a series of middle class antics to be the parasite on the power generated by the national movement and nationalists. After the nationalists took over power in India after Independence and came under the closer influence of the Soviet Union thanks to Mr. Nehru, the Indian Communists have again derived their power not "from the barrels of the guns" of revolutionary youth among the working class, peasantry and middle class students, but from the State, diplomatic and Rouble Power of the Soviet State and its various arms including the rupee accounts operated in India.

There were serious limitations in the scope for riding on Soviet power for the Indian Communists and these limitations were beginning to tell very soon. One important limitation was the competition for Soviet patronage by the "bourgeois" Government of India itself and the willingness of the Soviet power to bolster up the Indian Government in return for a pro-Soviet non-alignment policy. In other words, Pandit Nehru's Government and now her daughter's Government have stolen all the thunder of the "official" Communist Party. The point is that the Communists as the sole representatives of "Marxism" in India have had always the problems of remaining integrated and effective with their own achieved power base. This has been very difficult.

The earlier schisms within the Communist Party of India took the pattern of the party structure remaining intact, but the leadership being replaced under orders of Moscow via Great Britain in the early period and later directly from orders of Moscow. This was so long as Moscow represented the sole power centre of international Communism, the fountainhead so to say. This "monocentric" character of Moscow helped to keep the various Communist party instruments integrated. With de-Stalinisation campaign of Krushchev, the infallibility of the "monocentre" became highly questionable for the disciples all over the world as the high priests at the monocentre themselves confessed to the perversions and aberrations that occurred in their temple. This resulted in a structural schism as international Communism was no longer monocentric but became polycentric. With Tito in 1948 it had become so, but Tito and Yugoslavia were not

impressive power centres to make this polycentrism significant. With China, however, it was an entirely different matter and China emerged as a rival centre of international Communist influence and Peking lost no time in denigrating Moscow.

With the emergence of China as a contender to Moscow's pre-eminence the schism in the Indian Communist Party, as in other parties in the world, could not be contained within the organizational structure itself. Thus it was in 1964 that the Indian Communist Party broke up when the Communist Party of India (Marxists) was formed. The logic of the split from the till-then-integrated Communist Party was given by the CPI (Marxists) as arising from two fundamental questions of great relevance. Internationally the prevailing leadership owed blind allegiance to Moscow which was becoming revisionist, according to the Marxist who were impressed by Chinese polemics against Moscow. Deriving further logic from this international factor, the CPI Marxists found the prevailing party line in relation to the ruling Congress Party equally revisionist and reprehensible. The CPI (Right) was committed under Moscow tutelage to "peaceful transition to socialism" and "peaceful co-existence". The CPI (Right) had already become very much on the defensive and suffering from what was considered "Me-tooism" in the eyes of the CPI (Marxists).

Before the onslaught of the CPI (Marxists) the Muscovites squirmed, but deriving organizational mileage from both Moscow and the Indian Government, they branched off on the road of obtaining power through palace intrigues and diplomacy rather than through revolution and sharpening of class struggle. In the words of revolutionaries, the revisionists were becoming "respectable" and in the words of an ultra-revolutionary, T. Nagi Reddy: "When Communist Party becomes respectable, they are finished." The Marxist Communists, inspired by Red China's emergence as an alternate centre of Communist international power, did not have to be contained within one organization when the ideological schism developed. This time in 1964 they decided to break away and form a "genuine communist party" and expose the revisionists!

The CPI (Marxist) emerged as the "true-blooded Marxist party" and contrasted itself with the "revisionist" Communist Party led by that "arch revisionist" Dange. Undoubtedly the CPI (M) commanded much greater support from Marxists in India as they kept the revolutionary nerve alive. It suited the Marxist Communists to go on fighting a lot of

fires against the "official" Communist party, exposing them day in and day out at the revisionist compromises in national as well as international policies. All this went on well until the General Elections after which the Left Communists came out in much greater triumph in the elections than the "revisionists". In West Bengal and in Kerala the Left Communists were the leading group in the United Front. The success of the left Communists in the ballot boxes soon resulted in a paradoxical situation for them. Much as they wished to kick the ladder through which they climbed — and disown the ballot box after gaining success with it — this could not be done, notwithstanding their tolerance of 'Naxalbari' and 'Gherao' in West Bengal, and a series of consolidation measures in Kerala in favour of their party, by use of the Governmental apparatus. The moment they got engaged in the tasks of running the Governments, they became subjected to the same political patronages and this meant discarding of revolutionary strategies and tactics.

Thus the Communist Party of India (Marxist) itself got into a position of becoming "neo-revisionist". Its holding on to bourgeois parliamentary institutions and ruling apparatus has been denounced by "extremists" within the Marxist Communist Party, especially again after Peking had given the guide when Naxalbari had to be crushed under the auspices of the United Front Government itself in West Bengal. A serious split was in the offing and came about in June this year. A few months earlier, the "Naxalbari group" in West Bengal broke away from the Marxist Communists and set up their own Naxalbari Communist Party. The ideological position taken by the "revolutionaries", whether the Naxalbaries or the Revolutionary Communists of Andhra is very interesting. They have now called the CPI (Marxists) as the neo-revisionists. They have the virtue of constituency when they state that "the birth and growth of a genuinely revolutionary party is possible only through the storm and stress of sharp revolutionary class struggle. Fighting bourgeois parliamentary elections becomes the main motivation, say the revolutionaries, when a revolutionary party tries to attract other Marxist parties into a united front. According to the revolutionaries, a revolutionary party cannot be built unless the youth of the working class, peasantry and middle class do not get imbued with the thoughts of Mao Tse Tung, and revolutionary practices. The primary conditions for this was to organize armed struggles in the country-side.

The Naxalbari group in West Bengal went about organizing its own group and tried to form an all-India Committee under the name of All-India Co-ordinating Committee of Communist Revolutionary Groups". The Co-ordinating Committee has given a call for an armed struggle of the peasantry to "encircle the cities and capture political power" on the

lines of Mao's and Lin Piao's thoughts. It publishes a journal called "Liberation". It has characterised the present era as "the era of Chairman Mao".

In June this year, there has been a major split in the Marxist Communist Party in Andhra Pradesh when under the leadership of Mr. T. Nagi Reddy a big splinter group broke away and formed itself into a new Communist Party called the Revolutionary Communist Party. So far this break-away is still an Andhra process and has not become an all-India process in integration with similar break-away group such as the Naxalbari groups. In Kerala also there has been a break-away by an extremist group from the CPI (Marxist) on the same patterns of characterising even the CPI (Marxists) as neo-revisionists.

The Naxalbari group has not yet decided to integrate with the Revolutionary Communist Group of Andhra under Mr. Nagi Reddy. Apparently there will be a race among the splinter groups themselves for being among the first to obtain Chinese patronage as the sole authorised representative of Mao's Thoughts in India. If Chinese insist on integration of all these splinter groups, then there might develop a Third Communist Party.

Meanwhile, predictably the "Ultras" have reacted to the Czechoslovakia occupation by Soviet Troops by denouncing the Soviet Union of being guilty of big power chauvinism.

The polycentric evolution of international Communism has resulted in a disintegration process and the Czechoslovakian invasion by Soviets can be termed as a panic at this disintegration. The disintegration of the party in India too is taking the same pattern arising out of polycentrism. The future for Communist organization seems to be indeed bleak.



"Comrades, do you realize what will happen if we do not honor our commitments in Czechoslovakia? Imagine a set of dominoes..."

—Ollphant in The Denver Post

Vietnam's Politics And Law

A. G. Noorani

VIETNAM is one of those problems on which there is a wealth of material and abundance of confusion. The facts are hard to come by despite the enormous literature. "Few internal conflicts in modern times have received as much publicity and been as little understood as the fighting in Vietnam" Mr. Duncanson writes.*

The author was a member of the Malayan Civil Service during the Communist insurrection, a member of the Thompson Advisory Mission to Vietnam from 1961 to 1965, and Counsellor for Aid in the British Embassy in Saigon from 1965 to 1966. This work, published under the auspices of the Royal Institute of International Affairs is undoubtedly a major contribution to the growing literature on Vietnam.

The importance of the war cannot be gainsaid. "After the disappearance of the USA from our region and the victory of the Communist camp, I myself and the People's Socialist Community that I have created would inevitably disappear from the scene". This was none other than Prince Sihanouk of Cambodia speaking in May 1965. On the other side, Giap has affirmed in Communist jargon that "the failure of the special war unleashed by the U.S. imperialists in South Vietnam would mean that this war can be defeated anywhere in the world". The war is clearly a test case of Communist tactics and the author rightly remarks that "American determination to 'contain' these ambitions is no mere issue of chauvinistic prestige. Both sides agree how much is at stake."

The author narrates the history of the unfortunate people of Vietnam and analyses the impact on them of the legacies, first, of China and later of France. The rise of Ho Chi Minh and the role of Diem in the South are ably described. Mr. Duncanson is uniquely qualified to write on the latter since he has sat through "his notorious monologues lasting four, five or six hours."

An outstanding feature of the work is its detailed description of the administration of Vietnam under different rulers. This is one of those rare books where the lucidity of style is not impaired by the detailed treatment of the subject.

In the author's opinion, Diem "was the embodiment of his country's soul, for good no less than for bad". He mentions his achievements side by side with his

lapses. "His real difficulties lay in his character: he wanted to preserve his own discretion unfettered and, with that, the possibility of locking up other rivals for power besides those who were implicated in criminal act; keeping the door open for his own discretion, he left it open for his subordinates as well, especially in the provinces, and then had to take the blame as self-appointed patriarch and dictator."

The situation did not improve after Diem's exit. "If the story of South Vietnamese independence down to 1963 was a sad chronicle of villainies and follies, the stages by which national cohesion has been eroded since then makes no more cheerful reading. No fault of Diem's patriarchy was reformed: instead whatever was already bad became worse—patronage, corruption, detention without trial or review. The Buddhists did not become more law-abiding as concession after concession was made to them, but less so, and more immolations and demonstrations took place after November 1 than before. Where administrative, agrarian or other reform was called for, the task was shelved in the name—but hardly the substance—of more radical social revolution. Nor did aid or advice take any new direction: whatever had gone wrong up to now was blamed on Ngo Dinh Diem in American circles as loudly as in Vietnamese, and old efforts were simply redoubled. Vietcong strength also doubled—and so, tragically, did the bloodshed." This excellent summary occurs in a Chapter entitled "Failure of Nationhood" which well sums up the predicament in the South.

Difficult as the problem would have been, anyway, it is rendered more so by the intervention of the North. "During September 1960 the Lao Dong had held its Third Party Congress in Hanoi; in his concluding address President Ho Chi Minh had spoken of the connexion between the Second Party Congress and the final victory against the French, and said the Third would be the 'source of a new dawn in the struggle to achieve reunification', his welcoming address to delegates had already declared that 'so long as we have not driven the American imperialists out of the South and liberated it from the barbarous My-Diem clique, our people can know no peace of mind. Ho Chi Minh issued this obvious war cry only when the Cochinese insurrection was firmly established; in response to it, on 12 December, a clandestine broadcasting station announced that the Vietcong had 'formed a Races' Front for the Liberation of South Vietnam' (for which the Communists' own English translation has since become 'National Liberation Front'). The NFLSV was the tenth front behind which the Ind-

* *Government and Revolution in Vietnam*: by Dennis J. Duncanson, Oxford University Press: 63sh.

The Vietnam War and International Law: Edited by Richard A. Falk; Princeton University Press. Agents: Oxford University Press: \$3.95.

Law and Vietnam: By Roger H. Holl and John C. Novogrod; Oceana Publications Inc., New York.

China Communist Party had operated in Vietnam—the seventeenth if all the 'Liberation' and 'National Salvation Committees' are included—and like many of its predecessors consisted entirely of faceless men, not one of the thirty-one names broadcast being an eminent Vietnamese and barely a handful identifiable by the Government at all." So much for the origin of the NLF.

The course it has adopted, since, has been of a piece with the deceitful character of its origin. "The difference between the Front's two voices lies in the audience addressed; to the Western world the Front, and the armed insurrection it leads, seeks sympathy by appearing as a respectable form of civil strife, manned by the enthusiastic masses smarting under their grievances and wanting only what is best for their nation; but before the Communist world the Front emphasizes its Marxist-Leninist orthodoxy and reassures its friends that its struggle is fully in line with their common Cold War interests. As General Vo Nguyen Giap explains the Front's position to his Communist audience, if the Front in the South has truck with the middle classes and the bourgeoisie and espouses the slogan of 'neutrality', that is only out of expediency, to make use of 'the nationalism of the largest majority of the people' against the US notwithstanding their 'class' objections to the movement's real Marxist aims."

It was to check this attempt at forcible reunification that the U.S. intervened by its massive support to the South. The net result over the last few years has been a "virtual deadlock while each side has waited for the other's civilian morale at home to crack".

Currently the U.S. and North Vietnam are negotiating in Paris. The Communist view of negotiations was well expressed by Gen. Nguyen Van Vinh of the People's Army in May 1966. "Fighting while negotiating is aimed at opening another front, at making the puppet army more disintegrated, at stimulating and developing the enemy's contradictions and thereby depriving him of propaganda weapons (that is to say, so that he can no longer point to Communist intransigence as the obstacle to peace), isolating him further, and making those who misunderstood the Americans see clearly their nature."

The author comments "as if this cynical approach to the process of negotiating a peace were not disheartening enough, the guerrillas are told that the agreement, once negotiated, might not be allowed to last any longer than that of 1954 if under it the Communist demands were not satisfied in full: 'Whether or not war will resume after the conclusion of agreements depends on the balance of forces; if we are capable of dominating the adversary, war will not break out again, and the converse also holds true.' With one side unwilling to honour a settlement it has agreed to if, by it, it gains less than total cession

of the South to the North, immediately or by stages, peace will not necessarily follow even if agreement is reached, and true reconciliation seems far off indeed." The book well prepares the reader to follow the dialogue in Paris.

Mr. Falk's book, sponsored by the highly prestigious American Society of International Law, is a collection of erudite articles on "the legal issues raised by the U.S., involvement in Vietnam". The problem has been considered in the wider perspective of world order as well. There is a documentary section giving the texts of pertinent documents. The main objective of the collection is to set out the various major positions that have been taken by American international lawyers who have written on the subject. As Mr. Falk writes in his Introduction, three kinds of disagreements dominate legal analyses of the U.S.' role in Vietnam—disagreements as to questions of fact, on the legal consequences of accepted facts and as to the international consequences of the precedent set by the U.S. in Vietnam. It is an able collection.

Mr. Hull and Mr. Novogrod's book is of a different type altogether. The authors are two 1967 Yale Law Graduates who wrote the work as a law-school thesis. The authors seek "to develop fairly and objectively both sides of the factual and legal questions and to allow the reader to formulate his own views" while at the same time recording their own views on each of the issues raised. The aim is most ably accomplished.

The authors set out succinctly but with a wealth of documentation the cases of both sides and analyse them. Particularly useful is their appraisal of the character of the NLF, "the motivating force behind its creation was North Vietnam". It was right from the beginning "so sophisticated and so well endowed with cadres and funds that it had to be the creation of Hanoi". They conclude that in the face of Hanoi's threat to its independence Saigon was entitled in law to use force in self-defence. As for the U.S.' involvement, the "crucial factor" is the finding that South Vietnam has suffered an armed attack. "As a consequence, then, it seems clear that the U.S. may, either bilaterally or pursuant to the SEATO Treaty, respond to this coercion through an exercise of collective self-defence."

THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF INDIA A Short History

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Yuri Daniel In Camp 17

Bogaras Bruchman

[Bogaras Bruchman is the wife of Yuri Daniel, the Russian writer now imprisoned in the forced labour camp at Potima. His offence was publishing works abroad which 'slandered' the Soviet Union. Sentenced seven years in 1966, the sentence was recently reduced on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the Russian Revolution. Mrs. Daniel wrote extensively about the conditions in the camp in the German weekly *Die Zeit*. The following are excerpts from one of her articles appearing in the Australian quarterly journal *Quadrant*.]

WE have come on a personal visit. On the 26th, Colonel Bardin of the K.G.B. (State Security) telephoned to say that permission for a visit had been granted. My friends lent me money and, all day long, ran from one shop to another to buy provisions, the best and most nourishing. They collected all, arranged all and bought tickets for us. We had two rucksacks full of provisions, one bag filled with books and many containers with soup — which by now, after two days on the road, had already gone sour. Even if we had been accorded three full days — the maximum duration of a visit — the three of us could not consume all this....

Instead of three full days, instead of one day only, instead of even half a day, they allow us only one hour in the presence of a guard. The officer in charge of that section of the camp does not tell us of this decision at once. Up to the moment of the visit, we had still hoped to be allowed a full day. And just before the visit they tell us 'One hour exactly.' Despite all this we are taking with us — we cannot hold ourselves back—one carton of cigarettes, four oranges (one in each pocket) and a small piece of cheese.

The men's zone seems much more sinister than women's; the fences are more recent, the barbed wire more visible, the watch towers taller. The woman guard on duty pushes an iron bar to the side. A door opens, we go a step forward and we find ourselves facing a similar door with a similar bolt. I cannot recall how many such doors we have crossed but I know that there were several. In front of us there is the Zone: on the left, living quarters, on the right working area; between the two there are several rows of barbed wire, tall and close together. On the inside, on the other side of the hedge, there is a line of stakes, a no-man's land.

You cannot really say anything in one hour. At every moment, you have the impression that the guard will start barking: 'Go now, it's all over.' I had hoped to discuss a lot of things, but everything vanished and in any case would have been out of place. If you have but one hour, you must raise only the most important

questions. But which are they? One has no time to choose. The time runs.

We then exchange few remarks about our friends. Yuri wants to explain to me that the trifling worries are not important, that it is not only a question of his own fate. To ask for an extra visiting hour would be absurd; to speak of important matters is unthinkable. There are in the camp prisoners who have each submitted 500 different petitions. Enough to make you mad....

'The visit is over'.

I forgot to speak to him about the packet of Byelomar cigarettes which I was forced to leave in the first room. We hid the oranges on us—this time they forgot to search us before the visit. I ask the guard, 'May I give the cigarettes to my husband?' He says neither yes nor no: 'Go into the first room.'

In the first room I ask again: 'May I give the cigarettes?' And without waiting for an answer, Sania and I take the four oranges and put them beside the packet on the table.

'No, it is forbidden.' — 'But perhaps only the oranges?' 'Forbidden.' Yuri says: 'Stop, he will not allow it.' But I can't stop myself and who knows? — after all, he is a human being, and he is not risking anything if he gives his permission: 'Only a packet of cigarettes?' — 'All right, put it on the table and take the rest away with you.' But then he seizes the packet and pushes it into my hands: 'No, take it away. It is forbidden.'

In spite of everything that had happened, the next day I submit two requests: I want to see my husband in privacy and I want my gifts to be given to him. The camp commandant informs me that Daniel had forfeited the right to receive private visits. I demand a written explanation, but they are not obliged to give it to me. An oral declaration is enough: 'You were given permission for a visit of one hour and now you must leave.' No explanation, nothing. I would need a whole day to obtain an official written reply to my demands: I declare that I will not leave until I have one.

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ignty and freedom.... Act, explain, but unanimously defend the way we have embarked upon and which we do not intend to leave alive."

Armed with such massive support Dubcek took his country into confidence and told the television audience the ideas and ideals that were the basis of the revolution: "Socialism must regain its human face.... People were dissatisfied with the former leadership. We cannot change the people. So, we had to change the leaders." In these few words he set forth the aims of the revolution.

The Czech-Soviet talks were followed by a summit conference at Bratislava in Czechoslovakia of the leaders of the Communist Parties of Czechoslovakia, the Soviet Union, East Germany, Poland, Hungary and Bulgaria. The declaration of Bratislava is a climb-down both for Soviet Union and her allies as well as Czechoslovakia. Soviet Union acknowledged the right of individual communist parties to fashion their policies according to the local conditions in their countries. Czechoslovakia agreed to maintain the leading role of the Communist Party, to struggle against the bourgeoisie ideology and anti-socialist policies. The declaration recognised the "equality, the observance of the principle of sovereignty, national independence, of territorial integrity and of brotherly cooperation and solidarity" and the Czech party was allowed to go ahead "with liberalisation within the party".

In spite of signing the Bratislava Declaration the Soviet Union and her satellites have thought it fit to send their troops into Czechoslovakia at midnight on 20th August, and occupy the country. They have done it on the excuse that the leaders of the government and the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia have sought their support in defending the socialist system in Czechoslovakia. They have not yet named any leader who has invited them. The Communist Party leader, Dubcek, whose movements were restricted by the invading troops, has described the military action as "a violation of the international law" and against all canons of brotherly relations between socialist States. The Presidium of the Czechoslovak National Assembly has called on the Assemblies and Party leaders of the five countries whose troops have occupied Czechoslovakia to order the withdrawal of these troops immediately. Now the question arises, who has invited these invading troops? Neither the Party Chief nor the Government Chief nor the Assembly has done it. The action of the Soviet Union and her allies is a flagrant violation of the U.N. Charter, of the Bratislava Declaration and a threat to the peace of the world.

The Czech people deserve all praise for standing up to the Soviet giant. In an Extraordinary Congress held under the shadow of the occupying troops the Com-

munist Party of Czechoslovakia has elected once again Dubcek as their leader with a vote of 1094 to 1. The people have expressed their protest against the occupation by observing an hour's strike in all the establishments. They have removed all road signs and house numbers to prevent arrest of prominent people. Only signboards now seen in the Czech streets read: "Moscow: 2000 Kilometres."

Pravda has set forth the reasons for the Soviet military intervention after sending their troops into Czechoslovakia. Attempt to change foreign policy, questioning the use of Warsaw Treaty, rapprochement with West Germany and growing political opposition to the Communist Party led by People's Party and Socialist Party are some of the reasons cited by *Pravda*. These are the internal affairs of any country, and it is their sovereign right to change their policy if and when they want it. It passes one's imagination how Soviet Union can claim any right to interfere in this. But it exposes the Soviet profession of peaceful coexistence and non-intervention in internal affairs of other countries.

The Party's First Secretary, Dubcek and Prime Minister, Cernik, who were kidnapped by the Russians to Moscow, had talks under duress with the Russians and their Warsaw Pact allies in Moscow, along with President Svoboda. The communique issued after the talks indicates that the Russians have agreed to the continuation of the present leadership in Czechoslovakia provided they introduce control over the press especially in regard to the criticism of the Warsaw Pact countries. The Soviet Union has promised to withdraw the troops in stages when "constitutional government is consolidated", which means, only after the Soviet Union is satisfied that her will and wish has been imposed on the Czech people.

It is a matter of shame that a motion introduced by Mrs. Sucheta Kripalani in Parliament to condemn the Soviet "Violation of the UN Charter" was defeated by the treasury benches. It is a matter of shame that the Government of India has abstained from condemning the intervention by the Soviet Union at the U.N. Security Council. It is a matter of shame that India has failed to stand up and be counted for freedom and democracy and against the violation of the sovereignty of a small nation. Not all the quibblings of Mrs. Gandhi can exonerate our country of the shame of it all.

India and the world have a duty towards Czechoslovakia. India cannot be a mute spectator to the rape of a small and a repeatedly wronged nation. India and the world need not go to war with Soviet Union and her satellites to get justice to the Czech people. India should mobilise world opinion to put pressure on these guilty nations to restore Czechoslovakia its legitimate government. If necessary, the world should boycott these nations till they withdraw their invading troops from the soil of Czechoslovakia.

Letters to the Editor

Legislators' Freedom of Action

Sir,

I HAD the honour of contributing an article on "Defection and their Control" to your last month's issue. In that I had made a point that in a democracy it is better to permit a party member to choose his line of behaviour rather than restrict his freedom of action and very likely his freedom of conscience. I was much gratified subsequently to read an article in the *Manchester Guardian Weekly* of the 18th July by Mr. Angus Maude, M.P. on "Why a split among the Tories was unavoidable". In this article he also makes out that it is better that an individual member should as far as possible be allowed to exercise his own discretion on questions which were not included in the creed of the Party.

I am hoping that you will find it possible to publish the three relevant paragraphs which I have enclosed from this article. Mr. Maude has been a member of the House of Commons for the last 25 years and holds an important position not only in the Councils of his Party but also in the House by reason both of his experience and sobriety of his views.

Bombay,

A. G. MULGAOKAR

14th August, 1968.

If a back-bench MP cannot express an individual opinion about a political issue without being written up as a "rebel," it is small wonder if he hesitates before saying what he thinks. The result is to inhibit the creative discussion and controversy which is the basis for constructive policy making. It is no good blaming the party Whips, whose duty after all is to hold their party together and uphold the position of their leader, if they occasionally become excessively nervous of anything that might be construed as "rebellion" by a newspaper commentator.

The simple fact is that a great political party is essentially a coalition. It is not—and cannot without disaster be made to be—a monolithic group of entirely like-minded men and women. Therefore no party leader, whatever policies he adopts or tactical decisions he makes, can possibly please all his followers all the time. Nor can he always compromise exactly at dead centre on every issue; if he did, he would generally be wrong and would normally succeed in satisfying nobody. It follows that party policies, and the emphasis of its leadership, will tend to swing from "left" to "right" of centre according to the issue involved and the prevailing mood of the party and the country.

The Conservative Party, no less than others, comprises a wide spectrum of political opinion, ranging from "reactionary" right-wingers to radical "progressives" who are virtually indistinguishable from left-wing intellectuals in the Labour and Liberal parties. There are certain issues on which it is almost impossible for the two extremes to agree, and the Tory leadership sensibly very seldom tries to force agreement on these. The leaders know that, over and beyond these areas of conflict and the other divergencies on points of detail, there are certain basic beliefs which all their followers hold in common and which will always hold the party together.

Manchester Guardian Weekly, July 18, 1968

A Devilish Creed

Sir,

We cannot adequately express in words how much we appreciate some of your articles and also other articles from your regular contributors. There is much truth and substance in what you convey. We hope that our men at the top who shape the policies of our nation take note of the free-minded opinion expressed in your journal.

Yes, fanaticism and superstition if allowed to enter into man's outlook, will certainly degenerate his mind, will poison the atmosphere and will destroy human relationship. Communism is such a fanatical and devilish creed. By promising an utopia that never comes, they keep people under virtual slavery. I was able to see many of its victims in U.S.A., Canada, Israel, West European and Scandinavian countries. Yet, perhaps God is using Communism as a brutal broom to sweep clean the dirt we all have been accumulating by our selfish way of living.

Personally speaking, I am following the age-old tradition of our Sages by living alone in a solitary little hermitage in this forest, by observing complete silence and by devoting most of my time to prayer and meditation.

In this world of troubles and turmoils, while so much of propaganda is going on for or against, a few like me may also be necessary to keep up the tradition of quiet contemplation.

You are certainly rendering a great service. We remember you in our prayers. May God bless your good and noble work.

SWAMI NIRMALANANDA

12th July 1968

Vishwashanti Niketan,
B. R. Hills, Chamarajanagar,
Mysore State

Review

The Red Rebel in India

A study of Communist Strategy and Tactics, V. B. Sinha, Associated Publishing House, New Delhi 5, Rs. 24.

THIS is a well-documented study of communist activities in India from the formation of the Party in the early Twenties till about the middle of 1967. The study is based on communist documents as well as comments on them by well-known writers.

The thesis of the book is that Communists act not as a national organisation but as agents of a foreign power. A large number of incidents and written and spoken words of wellknown Communists are collected together to carry conviction to disinterested readers.

In some places the author has carried his mistrust of and opposition to Communists too far. For example, the split between the Right and Left Communists in India appears to him to be a put-up show. He writes: "So they (communists) decided to bifurcate the Party into pro-Moscow and pro-Peking groups and create a mock rift in the CPI, taking advantage of Sino-Soviet feud. The underlying idea of the cleft was to put the charge of being traitor and anti-national squarely on one clique of the CPI, which had more openly supported the Chinese aggression, and thus to exonerate the other Communists from the charge of being foreign agents and pose them as *national*. Thus, by sacrificing one part of the Party and branding it as pro-China so as to divert the wrath of the people and the Government towards it from the whole CPI and to enable the rest of the Party to work freely, the CPI tried to regain the sympathy of the people and induce them to co-operate in its revolutionary programme. Besides, the division was also necessitated because to carry out the revolt successfully, the CPI had two jobs to perform, i.e., creating a suitable atmosphere and making preparations for the violent struggle, and for this two-fold work, two well-knit organizations were required. The two factions of the CPI, pro-Russia and pro-China, are working for the same ultimate purpose, though their jurisdiction is different." This is too simple an explanation of a very complex fact.

The book carries a foreword by Mr. Morarji Desai, the Deputy Prime Minister. In a forthright observation on the aims and objectives of Communists in India, Mr. Desai states: "The activities of the Communist parties in India which usually result in the deepening of the misery of the people should leave no one in doubt as to their aims and objectives. They wish somehow to capture power not through peaceful solutions of socio-economic problems or through sub-

version and disruption of the economic life of the people."

Mr. V. B. Sinha's book will be of use to all to get authentic information about communist activities. The information that he has given should put everybody on his guard against the communist danger to the country.

N. D. N.

CAMP 17 - Cont'd from page 7

"In that case do you want us to call the police?"— "Call the police. I shall not leave until I have an answer." They bring it to me at the end of the second day.

"Citizen Bogaras Bruchman, Your request has been examined. A personal meeting with your husband has been refused because of a violation of visiting rules. There is no provision for him receiving parcels. (Signed) Commandant of the camp, Annenkov. May 30, 1967."

No matter with whom I argued in the past, here is my first written reply. Usually all they say is 'Forbidden'.

When I arrived in Moscow after leaving Osernoye, I rang the Colonel of State Security, Mikhail I. Bardin, who, as I have already said, kindly informed me that the visit to Daniel had been authorized. 'Perhaps,' I said to myself, 'the authorities here are unaware of this whole system of re-education which employs hunger, mental and physical humiliation, a flagrant violation of the law and lack of medical care. After all, the law affirms that the denial of freedom must not be accompanied by physical privations nor by attacks at the personal dignity of the prisoner.' But Mikhail Ivanovich assures me that he is acquainted with the conditions of the Camp, that everything done there is in accordance with existing rules and that there is absolutely no violation.

It may be so. I naturally do not know the rules of the camps; they are secret. But nevertheless they are not good. The result may be that my husband falls ill again. If that happens. . . .

"That depends on him. Let him change his attitude. And I suggest to you that you speak to no one about this. If anything were published in a magazine about the Camp. . . ."

"And I myself believe that conditions are too mild. You are enjoying too much freedom. And that is why your husband does not change his attitude. The screws will have to be tightened."

This Colonel of State Security, Mikhail Ivanovich Bardin, will never understand that none of these usual educational measures — hunger, prison, solitary confinement — will make Daniel forget that he is a human being.



Democracy is a Government of the people, by the people, for the people. True. But it can find fulfilment only if citizens have a right to own property, to produce and consume goods and services desired by them within reasonable regulations by the State. Democracy can find fulfilment only

if the initiative and enterprise of the people, whether in agriculture, business, industry or the professions, are allowed to flourish. A democracy can work only if you, an intelligent citizen, understand the economic issues and help to formulate public opinion

Join the Forum of Free Enterprise, a non-political organisation, to educate public opinion on free enterprise and to stimulate public thinking on economic issues. You will find booklets and leaflets, issued by it every month, helpful in understanding current economic problems.

Write for particulars (state whether Membership or Student Associateship):

FORUM OF FREE ENTERPRISE

Sohrab House, Dr. D. N. Road, Post Box 48-A, Bombay-1, (BR).

With Many Voices

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

Leaders who go to Moscow are either sick when they go or become sick after they arrive.

—A Czech on television quoted in *The Economist* (London), July 27.

The march of mankind is still towards the summit and not the chasm.

—President Lyndon Johnson quoted in *The Economist* (London), July 27.

After three long days of hard slogging across the conference table at Cierna nad Tisou, it looked as if the greatest damage had been inflicted, not on the principles of either the Czechs or the Russians, but on the health of Mr. Brezhnev.

—*The Economist* (London), August 3.

The prospect that is haunting eastern Europe today is not really that of counter-revolution, but of counter-evolution.

—*The Economist* (London), August 10.

We have nothing to lose by the defections of our MLAs to the Congress.

—Bhailalbhair Patel, Vice-President of Swatantra Party, in a press interview at Ahmedabad on July 30, *New Age*, August 11.

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.
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Signature

Every one knows about American politics and even in the Soviet Union where I just came from, the Russians, who refused to express opinions about their own government, expressed strong opinions about ours.

—Art Buchwald, *The Hindu*, August 14.

I am not drawn to countries where the influence of Communism is strong; having once been given an overdose of it, to this day I feel nauseated at the very mention of it.

—Svetlana Alliluyeva, *Time*, August 16.

Che Cuevara has been a god-send to the flourishing protest industry. By dying when he did, in circumstances so mysterious, he made it certain that he would be canonised among Leftists and their associates.

—Malcolm Muggeridge, *The Observer Review*, August 18.

Mr. Dubeck and his colleagues in Prague have said that as far as they can they want to rule with the support of their own people. This is, indeed, their alternative to ruling with the support of the Kremlin. It must be one or the other.

—Ian Tickle, *Swiss Press Review and News Report*, August 19.

The Soviet leaders are wrong in thinking that socialism can be kept enthroned all over Eastern Europe by their armed power. They must woo the people, and for this roaring tanks are not the most appropriate instruments.

—*Amrita Bazar Patrika*, August 23.

When we see what the Soviet Union might do to an ally we shudder to think what it might do to another State.

—Lord Caradon, Britain's U.N. Representative, *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, August 23.

The socialist forces can and should intervene in the internal affairs of other socialist countries.

—E.M.S. Namboodiripad, *Indian Express* (Ahmedabad), August 22.