

THE SEVENTEENTH AMENDMENT

We walked out of Parliament on September 19. Why? Because this gesture was, in the opinion of our members of Parliament, a necessary though dramatic indication of our uncompromising opposition to the Constitution (17th Amendment) Bill. We are a party wedded to a parliamentary form of government and we try to avoid all actions of an extra parliamentary nature. But here was an attempt to whittle down basic fundamental rights. A further abridgement of our people's liberty was contemplated. Therefore to protect our rights from megalomaniac adventures, our members of Parliament walked out when their plea to circulate the Amendment Bill for eliciting public opinion was lost. They also declined the invitation to join the Select Committee to whom the Bill would be referred. How could we discuss details of a measure when we were opposed to it in principle?

Two of our members in the Lok Sabha and one in the Rajya Sabha who participated in the seven-hour debate of the Law Minister's motion to refer the Bill to a Joint Committee of Parliament, made impassioned pleas for at least circulating the Bill to elicit public opinion instead of rushing headlong with its enactment into law. Unfortunately cliches and dogmas rather than commonsense and a concern for people's rights dominated Parliament. It was a sorry spectacle to see even intelligent members who had grave misgivings about the Bill lend it support nevertheless.

Prof. Ranga described the introduction of the measure in the Lok Sabha as the beginning of a "long, dreary, black day for the Indian peasants." Rao Krishna Pal Singh averred that through such measures "ninety per cent of the people are being converted into serfs and are deprived of their freedom... The very backbone of the country, the peasantry would for ever have been destroyed..."

In the Rajya Sabha our member Mr. Loknath Misra while protesting against the very little time allotted to discuss the measure felt that "If Mahatma Gandhi would have been there, when Sardar Vallabhai Patel was there, they would not dare tamper with the Constitution even once unnecessarily." For extracts from these speeches see page 3.

That the ruling Party was in a desperate hurry to push through the Bill was evident from a decision of the Joint Committee at its first sitting on September 24 that the last date for receiving memoranda would be October 5. We protested strongly against this unseemly hurry. In a statement issued by our Parliamentary Office in New Delhi it was pointed

out that "such a short time which has been given (for receipt of memoranda) will simply frustrate the purpose for which the Committee has agreed to invite the comments of the persons likely to be affected directly or indirectly consequent upon the passage of the Bill." Mr. Dahyabhai Patel addressed a letter to the Speaker and the Chairman of the Joint Committee urging the need for extending the last date to end of December. As a result of our efforts the Joint Select Committee adjourned till November 15 and agreed to receive memoranda till that date.

Writing in the *Swarajya* of October 5 Rajaji stated the reason for our non-participation in the Joint Select Committee. He said: "The reason why the Swatantra Party has refused to participate in the Committee is that it is a hopeless and dangerous task to seek to amend the Bill. When by a mere 'definition' all lands held on ryotwari title are transferred into the intermediary rent-collected status known as 'estates', any amendment seeking to reserve this or that right will only serve to create difficulties. It is hoped that individuals and bodies submitting memoranda will content themselves with a straight-forward protest against the Bill as a whole... The Bill in the present form cannot be amended and is a most dangerous, illegitimate invasion on law and justice."

Meanwhile reports coming in to the Central Office indicate that all Party units are devoting all their efforts to educate people on the sinister nature of the Bill and mobilising public opinion against it. The following report would indicate what our units are doing in the States to organise protest against the proposed amendment.

ANDHRA

Mr. G. Latchanna, President of the State Unit is now on tour of the various districts of the State.

On October 1 he was at Tekkali where he addressed a large gathering of cultivators and agricultural labour. He warned the peasants that the proposed 17th Amendment was aimed at relieving them of their ownership rights and freedom to pursue their profession. Two of our Party's Legislators in the State Messrs. R. Satyanarayana and S. Jagannadham also spoke on the occasion.

Similarly Mr. Latchanna addressed meetings and talked to peasants in the numerous villages of Sompeta and Srikakulam. It was very evident, according to reports received from our Andhra unit, that once villagers were told of the implications of the 17th

Amendment, they expressed in no uncertain terms their resentment against the proposed measure. Numerous memoranda were handed over to the State President seeking the withdrawal of the Bill.

BOMBAY

Our unit in the metropolis organised a series of meetings in the various wards and suburbs of the City.

Addressing a meeting at a predominantly labour area, the Kamgar Maidan, Mr. N. Dandekar President of the Bombay and Maharashtra units said that Congress rule had reduced the rights and liberties of the citizens and made the poor poorer. The amendment would snatch away the freedom of the farmer and make him a slave.

Mr. K. M. Munshi, Vice-President of the Party could not owing to illness preside, as originally scheduled over a meeting held on October 7. However his speech was read out on the occasion. Mr. Munshi said that neither the Supreme Court nor any party questioned the validity of land protection Acts which sought to help the tenants against unjust claims of the ryotwari landholders. "Why then has arisen the necessity of giving a blanket immunity to an odd jumble of 124 legislations in the Schedule of the proposed amendment?" he asked.

"If the amendment is accepted, the whole of rural India—the backbone of a democracy—will be placed at the mercy of the Congress Party which, whipped into action by its leadership can easily travel to the bitter end of collectivism," Mr. Munshi added.

Another speaker, Mr. Jaideepsingh of Baria cited instances of Gujarat farmers whose lands had been acquired in the name of land reforms and had yet to receive compensation for the same.

Mr. Lalchand Hirachand, industrialist, said the 17th Amendment was a corollary to the Fourth Amendment and called for an agitation against the new measure.

Among others who addressed the meeting was Mr. Phiroze Shroff. Mrs. Shantabhai Gulabchand presided.

Nearly, 2,500 signatures have been collected on post-cards and forwarded to the Speaker, Lok Sabha, New Delhi, protesting against the Seventeenth Amendment Bill. The Bombay Party intends to carry on this campaign more vigorously in the month of October.

DELHI

The Delhi unit hired a jeep and visited the villages surrounding the Capital displaying various posters depicting the evils that would arise if the 17th Amendment Bill became law. Thousands of handbills were distributed and village meetings held to explain the implications of the proposed measure.

MADRAS

Tamilnad is lodging its protest against the 17th Amendment by holding a series of Conferences

throughout the State. Last month Palani in Madurai District was the venue of a conference presided over by Shri K. B. Jinaraja Hegde the Party's chief in Mysore. Earlier this month Kulithalai in Trichy was the scene of the next conference. State unit President Mr. Saw Ganesan presided. Rajaji, S. S. Mariswamy the State General Secretary, Mookiah Thevar M.L.A. and other district unit officials participated.

At the Palani Conference Rajaji warned that allowing this amendment to be carried would be just like permitting a wolf in the midst of a herd of sheep. He requested the people to support the Swatantra Party on this basic issue and to sound their protest to the Lok Sabha Speaker.

Rajaji declared: "I have come to rout the Congress as Parasurama, the puranic hero who routed the Kshatriya clan. I feel that I still have the strength to achieve this object."

At Kulithalai, Mr. Saw Ganesan asked whether the Constitution was a thing to be trifled with through frequent amendments.

Mr. Mookiah Thevar explained how small landholders, owning even less than five acres of land would be greatly affected.

Simultaneously the State General Secretary is almost continuously on tour organising the Party's campaign against the 17th Amendment, in the State.

ORISSA

The Party's legislature group in Orissa has submitted a memorandum to the Joint Select Committee. The memorandum stresses the pragmatic aspects while pleading for withdrawal of the Bill. It said among other things: "...By including any land held under ryotwari settlement and any land held or let for purposes of agriculture or for purposes ancillary thereto and sites for buildings and other structures occupied by cultivators of land, agricultural labourers and village artisans within the definition of 'estate' the power of the State to interfere with the right to property of the individual will be made practically absolute and without any check. The sense of security that a ryot so long enjoyed will now disappear and his attachment for land will gradually diminish. Loss of this attachment will result in lack of care and interest in the land and production will go down."

PUNJAB

An emergent meeting of the State Executive, district Convenors, members of the district Committees and others interested in the protection of peasant-proprietary rights, was held at Patiala on September 8 under the presidentship of Jathedar Udham Singh Nagoke. The meeting resolved that a minimum of a lakh of postcard petitions should be sent to the Lok Sabha from Punjab. District-wise quotas were allotted and it was decided to put out posters in Urdu and Punjabi. According to a report from the Party's Patiala office over thirty thousand postcards have already been sent to Delhi.

In spite of indifferent health, State President, Jathedar Nagoke has been touring the districts to activate the campaign against the 17th Amendment Bill. A number of telegrams were sent to the Joint Select Committee not only pleading for extension of the last date for submission of memoranda but also requesting the Select Committee to visit a few places in the State and ascertain the feelings of the Punjab peasantry.

Several Conferences were held in Amritsar District.

A public meeting held under the auspices of the *joint non-communist opposition parties front* was convened in Amritsar on September 30 under the presidentship of Dr. Baldev Parkash, M.L.A. of the Jan Sangh.

A legal Committee formed for drafting a memorandum on the legal aspect of the amendment has almost completed its assignment and it is expected to submit the memorandum shortly. Mr. C. L. Aggarwal a senior advocate of Chandigarh is Chairman of the legal committee.

RAJASTHAN

Over a thousand farmers assembled in Jaipur on August 19 and 20 on the occasion of a Kisan Sammelan to protest against the Amendment. The Sammelan converted itself into a procession led by Shri Jai Singh, M.L.A. and wended its way through the main thoroughfares of the city ending up before the Rajasthan Assembly House.

UTTAR PRADESH

A U.P. Kisan Conference held in Lucknow under the joint auspices of the U.P. unit of the Party and the Anjuman Avadh decided to organise a cam-

paign against the Amendment and, if need be, to resort to satyagraha. The Conference inaugurated by Prof. N. G. Ranga and presided over by Mr. Dahyabhai Patel adopted a resolution urging the Government to withdraw the Bill seeking to amend the Constitution.

The Conference later formed a committee of action at a meeting of conference workers in the evening. The committee would set up an organisation to agitate against the amendment.

A resolution unanimously adopted by the Conference noted with regret that when according to the Government spokesmen themselves, Chinese troops are massing on our frontiers and when the country is faced with a serious threat to its integrity the Congress Government has thought it fit to introduce such a controversial measure, which affects a large majority of the inhabitants of this country, namely, the Kisans. The Resolution called for the immediate withdrawal of the measure.

WEST BENGAL

Post Card petitions opposing the Bill were sent from the districts of 24 Parganas, Howrah, Malda, West Dinajpur and Burdwan.

A meeting of our Party members in and around Calcutta met on three occasions and resolved to campaign against the Bill in the rural areas.

The North Bengal Krishijibi Sangha, a farmers' organisation whose General Secretary Mr. Ram Narayan Bhadra belongs to our Party organised a special Convention at Snehilata Hall at Raiganj in West Dinajpur district.

NOTE: Our regular feature "News from States" has had to be held over this month due to lack of space. It shall however appear in the next issue.

Swatantra in Parliament

The session of Parliament which concluded last month was significant in more ways than one. For the first time a motion of no-confidence was moved and debated. Then followed the lively debate on per capita income. The enquiry into the NEFA debacle was the occasion for severe indictment of Government's criminal neglect of the country's defences. The Constitution (17th Amendment) Bill was introduced and referred to a Joint Select Committee. In both Houses of Parliament our members took a leading part without paying lip service to shibboleths and dogmas. Since press coverage of their speeches has been scanty we have reported extracts from their speeches in both Houses.

The 17th Amendment Bill

PROF. N. G. RANGA — Sept. 18, 1963.
(Lok Sabha)

Sir, I consider this day to be the beginning of the long, dreary, black day for the Indian peasants in this country. I am sorry, the Government has thought it fit to draft this Bill, get it introduced and now proceed to rush it to the Joint Committee. It is typical of the non-chalant attitude of the Government that the hon. Law Minister should not have helped his col-

league, the hon. Minister of Parliamentary Affairs, to agree even to the very moderate motion moved by one of our hon. friends from the Opposition in regard to the hours for discussion of this. It is also typical of this Government's anxiety to liquidate the peasantry in this country.

The hon. Law Minister did not think it necessary to refer even in this very short Bill, as it is, with only three clauses, to the very important item here, that is, item (ii) of sub-clause (a) of clause 2, which says:

"any land held under ryotwari settlement"
nor he refer to item (iii) which reads:

"any land held or let for purposes of agriculture or for purposes ancillary thereto, including waste land, forest land, land for pasture and sites of buildings and other structures occupied by cultivators of land, agricultural labourers and village artisans."

This Bill comprehends within its mischief all classes of people, all cadres of people who live in our rural areas not to speak of a section of the urban masses also who happen to own some land in villages all-round the cities.

It is wrong for the Government to consider their land policy which they have conceived with the aid of the Planning Commission to be of greater sacredness, of greater inflexibility and of greater fixity than the Constitution itself. They will have to answer before the bar of public opinion in this country in regard to this particular matter.

Secondly, this Constitution in regard to this particular group of clauses 30, 31, 31A, has had a very chequered career. Every time the Supreme Court found any of these laws to be defective, to be violative of the Constitution and its spirit, the Government did not hesitate to come forward to this House with an amendment Bill in order to change the Constitution and in that way answered the Supreme Court, as it were.

Now, coming to the question about the reason why they want these amendments—I question the very necessity of this Bill—they have themselves published about the working of the Third Five Year Plan only this year, March 1963, but placed in our hands much later. And they have a chapter, Chapter XVIII, on Land Reforms. They have given copious information for State after State, for all the States except in the case of Kerala. In all other cases they have themselves stated that the Ceiling Acts are being enforced, are being implemented. Statistics are being collected in certain areas as to how much is available, to whom it is to be granted and so on. In certain other areas even distribution is taking place. If they are very keen only about ceiling and have no other ulterior motives in regard to this particular Bill, surely, Sir, there is not that urgency, there is not that need to come forward with this Bill.

Then there is this question. I think — I speak subject to correction — the Supreme Court has not raised any objection to the principle of ceiling. On how that particular ceiling is to be implemented they seem to have raised an objection. On the question how much of compensation is to be paid, on the quantum of compensation they have raised an objection. And why did they raise it? Because, the principle which they had adopted earlier in clause 31A in regard to estates is not fair, cannot be applied, cannot be extended to the ceiling legislation also. For a very good reason. There it was intended for all intermediaries, functionless people who were

created by the earlier Governments and whose function has lapsed or whose function has been terminated by this Government. They were rent collectors. Therefore they had to be sent out of their function and they did not have, it was felt by the Government, the same kind of right, the same magnitude of right for compensation as the ordinary people who own properties, landed as well as other types of properties. Therefore, they took for themselves the power to fix a tapering scale of compensation for them. The Supreme Court raised objection even in regard to that when the Bihar and other legislation came before them. Then Parliament took the opportunity of amending the Constitution and brought in clause 31A, and in that way they saved that particular policy of the Government. But when it comes to ceiling, these people are not *estatedars*, these are not *zamindars* or *talukdars* or *jagirdars* or any of these people: they are mere tenants, also peasant proprietors.

Now, these people are not *talukdars*: they are not intermediaries. They own their lands. In regard to them, you wanted to fix the ceiling which I should consider to be discriminatory, one-sided. The Supreme Court did not raise any objection in regard to that. But you wanted to take away their surplus land over and above the ceiling. Therefore, they said that the quantum of compensation that you were fixing, was not reasonable. It should be just; it should be reasonable, it should be as good as a market price and, surely, they should not be treated in any way worse than those others whose lands will be taken compulsorily by the Government under the Land Acquisition Act where they have got to be paid an average of market price over a particular period of years, plus a solatium amount of 15 per cent. Surely, it should be within the power of the Government, with the capacity of the Government to so amend their own ceiling legislation as to accommodate this particular principles which has been reiterated by the Supreme Court. I am saying 'reiterated' because it has been there since 1890 ever since the other legislation was passed and it has been enshrined in our own national tradition that nobody's property should be taken away without paying proper compensation, just compensation.

Now, I come to the question of the ryotwari holdings. I wrote a letter to the Prime Minister drawing his attention to the injustice of bringing the ryotwari peasants within the mischief of his Bill. He was good enough to sent to me, after two weeks time that he gave to his advisers, a note prepared by his advisers with the authority of the Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission. And what do they say? They say that already in Gujarat and Maharashtra and also in Punjab, ryotwari holdings also had been brought within the definition of the estate, therefore, there is nothing wrong in bringing all the ryotwari peasants all over India within the mischief of that particular definition. Now, this is a very arbitrary

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bureaucratic way of looking at things, and an irresponsible way also. It is befitting only a dictator, not a democratic Government.

So far as the ryotwari are concerned, they are the owners of their lands and they have been recognised as such. And how many of them are very rich people? They have the information in regard to the ceiling legislation as to what percentage of these ryotwari land-holders are *pattadars* and have been found to be possessing more than the ceiling. It is not more than 3 per cent, anyway, in any State and those people are being dealt with. As compared to other people, they are smaller people. Their income is not to be more than Rs. 500 per month and even those people are to be dealt with by this legislation. How are they going to be dealt with? They are to be treated as *estatedars*. What is the consequence? Once a person comes to be treated as an *estatedar*, all penalties that have visited the zamindars, talukdars, jagirdars, will come to visit these unfortunate people also. Their land can be acquired compulsorily by the Government either for the use of the Government or for the use of cooperatives or for the use of any other class of people, even individuals, according to the wishes of not only this Government but also the State Government and all its agents right down to the zila parishads and the village panchayats also.

Now, how has this Bill arisen? It has arisen from the genius of our friends the Communists in Kerala. Of course, they wanted to do a good thing, and that was in regard to the zamindari tenants; there, they are called the *jenmam* tenants or something like that. For them, they wanted the land in the same way as we wanted the land for all the other zamindari tenants all over India. Therefore, they were passing that legislation. But whether they knew it or not — I am inclined to think that they knew it—they included in it those ryotwari peasants also who happened to go, unfortunately for them, into the Kerala State because of the merger of a small portion of Kasergode; only about 2500 persons or so were there. In order to help those *jenmam* tenants, they brought those ryotwari peasants also into that legislation, and they got that Bill passed there. It was held up here by the President. In the meanwhile they went out of power. Then, the Congress people came into power, and they passed the very same Bill, out of good humour or out of repentance. They fathered their (Communist) baby; that baby was later on struck down by the Supreme Court. The Supreme Court did not raise objection over so many other things, but they certainly raised objection over this, thanks to the genius and splendid pleading of Mr. Nambiar, a namesake of my hon. friend Shri Nambiar here in this House; I am referring to Mr. Nambiar who is an eminent jurist and who pleaded, and then, the Supreme Court was able to see reason there that these ryotwari people had been brought in wrongly, and, therefore, they said that the measure should be struck down.

Instead of amending that Bill suitably, what has

this Government done? They wanted to oblige our friends over there. And they further thought 'Let us put the whole lot of these 123 Acts passed by all these legislatures' into the safe custody of the Constitution and make it a part and parcel of the Constitution.

Now, what would be the consequences of this legislation? About 65 million peasant families are going to be affected. There will be insecurity in their minds, and for years and years they will suffer from this insecurity, because they will not know when their lands are likely to be taken away at the dictates of the village panchayats or parishads or State legislatures.

All over India, in some States, more and in some States, fewer, peasants have begun to awaken themselves, and nearly 68,000 of these peasants have sent their petitions to the Secretary to the Lok Sabha, protesting against this Bill and asking that this Bill should be dropped. It would not have any appeal, and it might not make any appeal to these friends opposite. Sir, 1967 is coming, and I wish to remind them that in 1967 they have got to go with this Bill and with this Act, and indeed, this unholy addition to the Constitution, I shall leave it at that.

On an important thing like this, should they not be able to see from their own election manifesto whether really the people have given them a mandate in regard to this matter when last time they had one to the polls? If we are to be a democracy, then, is it not our duty, and the duty of this Government to wait until the next elections, before they possibly can rush through this legislation? Give an opportunity to those people, explain things to them, and tell them and get their consent. By all means, if they agree, if they want to commit political suicide or social or economic suicide, then that is another matter.

In conclusion, I wish to refer to one or two points that may be raised by some of our friends. In fact, it has become fashionable for some of these friends to say that we of the Swatantra party are a reactionary party. I wish to say that whoever wish to support this measure and the threat that is implied in it, and the threat that is going to be hurled at the crores and crores of these peasants, the self-employed peasants of this country are not only reactionaries but fascists and communist-minded people.

I wish to say that our party dissociates itself entirely from this Bill. That is why we have refused to go into the Joint Committee. That is why we are asking for circulation of the Bill. It is not at all fair that the Bill should be proceeded with in the way it is sought to be. Even parliamentary convention demands that a Bill like this, to which 124 other Acts have been tagged on, should be circulated among lawyers, peasant organisations, of which I am the head, and some other organisations that the other friends also have developed, other organisations and forums that Dr. Deshmukh has developed all over the country. This Bill should have been given the widest publicity among these people. They have not done that.

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Under the circumstances, they have no moral right to go ahead with this Bill. If they were to do so, it is my duty, it is our duty, to resist it. It is the duty of our party and the Kisan Sammelan of which I happen to be the head, it will be our sacred duty, out of devotion to this Constitution itself, to resist this measure through parliamentary means in this House and through every other legitimate means which would be open to us in this country.

RAO KRISHNAPAL SINGH — September 19, 1963.
(Lok Sabha)

I am a newcomer to this House comparatively. I have been here only for a year and a half. But in this short period I have been able to make one or two discoveries. One of them is that so long as one can raise a few slogans, say that other people are exploiting and have vested interests and a few things like that, one can get away as a socialist or a communist, even though one may own any amount of property or may have any amount of balances in the bank. This is exactly what we have been seeing. These very people who want to teach socialism to us have been suspected to be, and some of them have actually been proved to be, accumulating large balances in banks.

The other point which strikes one when one hears the speeches of champions of labour and champions of peasants is that probably these champions have not done a day's work anywhere, and worse still, they are incapable of doing any physical work or any hard work anywhere. So, Sir, these political or theoretical communists or socialists come preach us the benefits of socialism and communism and may say that we should be very happy when India becomes a country with a socialist pattern. I will not say very much on that; so many of the hon. Members have proved beyond doubt that the socialist pattern which has been introduced by the present Government is nothing but a method of destroying the traditional rural economy in this country; this is what it aims at. This socialist pattern of society which comes in the name of land reform is nothing but a method by which they could convert ninety per cent of the population — it is not 60 or 70 per cent as people say — into serfs. More than half the population of every city comes from the village. He may be drawing rickshaw or working in factories but they come from the villages and settle permanently in cities or migrate temporarily and when they have no work they go back and work in their fields. So, this socialist pattern and the land reform are intended to convert ninety per cent of the population into serfs and into hewers of wood and drawers of water for the remaining ten per cent who want to live in luxury and comfort at the expense of others. Unfortunately we have no statistics from other parts or provinces than Maharashtra. A gentleman from Maharashtra has gone into this subject in great detail and has produced this pamphlet.

Dr. M. S. Aney: What is his name?

Shri Krishnapal Singh: Bhamburkar. This is what he says on page 14:

"The present Ceiling Act is neither an attempt to nationalise the land resource in the State nor to rationalise it. It is a hotchpotch arrangement and we think it has been arrived at without giving proper thought to the rural problems. Thus this has made one section of community and particularly the section which is coming up by dint of its own merits and labour and which has contributed substantially to the national development, better too. It is feared in some sections that this Act is a Governmental device to destroy a community which is coming up as the likely rival for power."

The people who want to introduce land reforms have never been near the land! They do not know what land is; they do not know what is grown on it; they do not know how it is grown; they do not know what is the method to be adopted. By some theories, and by means of propaganda they want to introduce reform which is not reform, in fact, but which are only intended to ruin the largest and the best section of the community in this country.

MR. LOKANATH MISRA — September 21, 1963.
(Rajya Sabha)

This 17th amendment to the Constitution has been aimed at the liquidation of the peasantry. Particularly during the Emergency, this Bill should not have been brought forward. It is a controversial issue. Government knows it pretty well that it is controversial. It is not that only the Swatantra Party says that it is controversial but a lot of people who do not belong to the Swatantra Party also oppose this measure. So, during this Emergency this Bill should not have been brought forward at all. And now after it has been brought forward, it should not only be sent to a Select Committee but it should be sent for circulation for eliciting the opinion of the people as a whole.

Now, Sir, this is a matter of policy whether we should tamper with the Constitution or not. If Mahatma Gandhi would have been there, when Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, the iron man, was there, they would not dare to tamper with the Constitution even once unnecessarily.

After that this tampering business with the Constitution has started and endlessly continues. Within the last thirteen years they have amended the Constitution sixteen times. People feel if this party remains in power for another thirteen years, probably there would be little of the original Constitution left in it.

Shri Sheel Bhadra Yajee (Bihar): It is being done for the good of the society.

Shri Lokanath Misra: Do not say that. You are doing everything in the name of the society. Every-

thing you do in the name of the people. When you shield a Chief Minister, it is in the name of the people. When a Chief Minister, who did not have anything ten years back, now owns Rs. 10 crores, it is also in the name of the people. It is all for the good of the people that you are doing.

Now, Sir, the Congress Party was the first party to give all sorts of assurances, alluring promises to the agriculturists. But I have found that the latter have been always kept under illusion. Sir, for unproductive labour a man gets a concession from tax up to Rs. 3,000; he does not have to pay even a pie. Even if he is a broker who does not produce anything, he is free from income-tax to the tune of Rs. 3,000. But in the case of an agriculturist his first rupee is being taxed. He pays rent for the first rupee he gets out of his land. So, how has social justice been meted out to the agriculturist after thirteen years of this independence? Has the ruling party done anything for the agriculturist? Coming here to Parliament and making brilliant speeches does not ameliorate the condition of the agriculturist. They must do something genuine about it.

The peasant must know that he owns his land, that he can do something for his land, that he can invest some money in his land, or else he is not going to put in the labour that is required for the land. It is a question of relationship between the farmer and the soil. It is not a relationship between Mr. Yajee and his Government. Naturally, the farmer must be given all the assurance that is needed to develop his land. And in this context, Sir, I would give some references.

Let us take acreage into consideration. My friends, who interrupt me so often, are mistaken because in Japan and Formosa, probably the acreage per head is the minimum. The normal acreage that any family holds there is about 2, and the entire world knows that the production in Japan and Formosa is the highest.

So, Sir, it is not the acreage that yields. It is the sense of assurance that yields results. With the enormous acreage of land brought together in Russia and China, there is starvation, there is famine. With all the co-operative farming brought about in these two countries, till today there is starvation and famine. And we would not like famine to come in here because of this land legislation and the socialistic pattern of society that is envisaged.

Dr. A. Subba Rao: Does this legislation bring about socialisation of land or does it bring about collectivisation of land or anything of that sort?

Shri Lokanath Misra: It aims at collectivisation. It is the Communists who are working behind the scene and it is all to their advantage.

What is even worse is, this Bill is given retrospective effect from 1950. That complicates matters. There may have been so many transfers in the meantime. What would happen in those cases? It would only develop litigation to a very large extent.

Shri Akbar Ali Khan: This is a matter which the Select Committee would look into.

Shri Lokanath Misra: I hope they would not be as rash as my friend Shri Yajee.

Lastly I would like to state and on behalf of my Party I make this statement that I would like to disassociate myself and my Party from this Bill. That is why we have not gone into the Joint Select Committee.

Per Capita Income and Prices

PROF. N. G. RANGA — September 6, 1963.

(Lok Sabha)

I am glad that my hon. friend Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia has given the occasion for this House as well as for Government to have a heart-searching in regard to the stark poverty that is prevalent in the country. If he had not made bold to pitch upon this particular figure of three annas, perhaps, we might not have done that heart-searching. The dispute is not between three annas and seven annas, but the dispute is, and ought to be, over the question whether as a result of these fifteen years of this Congress administration and these two and a half spans of their planning, the actual living conditions of the general masses of this country have improved or not.

In actual fact, the *per capita* income has been going down even according to the Government's own records. From 250 which it used to be in 1951-52, it has come down to 193 in 1961-62. Then, if you take again their own hopes of increasing the *per capita* income in this country, they were hoping that they would be able to raise it by 4 per cent per annum in the First Five Year Plan, by another 5 per cent, I suppose, in the Second Five Year Plan, and by another 5 per cent in the Third Plan. All these hopes have come to be frustrated, and they have reached only 8.2 in the First Five Year Plan, and 9.7 in the Second Plan. Therefore, it does not show progress. On the other hand, it is only a regression. Then, on top of it, what do we find in regard to the consumption levels of our people.

It was said by experts that the calorific quantity of food that an ordinary worker would need would be 1½ lbs, i.e. 24 ounces for manual workers. I am sure that most of these 27 crores of people whom my hon. friend Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia had in his mind when he was speaking, belonged to the class of manual workers and those other people who were just liberating themselves from eight to ten hours of manual work every day. These people would certainly need a minimum of 24 ounces of cereal food. But what are they getting? As a result of this planning and the 16 years of this administration and all these ever-rising burdens of taxation and public loans, whereas, in 1951, they were getting 11.5 ounces of cereals and 2.02 ounces of pulses, by the time we reached 1962, they were getting only 13.6 ounces of

cereals; that is, instead of getting 24 ounces which they need, they are getting only 13.6 ounces. If this is not half-starvation, if this is not starvation, I would like to know what sort of starvation anyone can possibly imagine.

In this way, the standard of living of our people is coming down, and it has come down also even according to the admissions made by the Mahalanobis Committee and also by the professor himself, as well as by so many Congress leaders including the Prime Minister himself, that the poor people are becoming poorer and the rich people are becoming richer. That was why they appointed that Mahalanobis Committee. And what have they done? Till now, they have not published their report at all. I do not know why. They are keeping it a great secret. But we know one thing that Professor Mahalanobis himself has said that the *per capita* income per day is not more than five annas. He has accepted only five annas as the *per capita* income. Even supposing we take five annas as the starting point, what do we find? If you would look into the commemoration volume which was published in honour of Shri Gadgil, you will find that there is a very interesting calculation made there in regard to the incidence of excise duties on ordinary people, on agricultural workers, and also industrial workers, and you will find from that that one anna every day is the *per capita* incidence of excise duties on those people. If you take into account the incidence of all other taxes and other burdens that are indirectly being placed on them by Government as well as by various exploiting agencies in this country, you will only get about 4 annas or 3½ annas. Even according to Professor Mahalanobis himself, if you take the figure as five annas, then the incidence of excise duties and other burdens would come to one anna or one anna and six pies. Therefore, the figure cannot be more than four annas. So, how on earth could it be seven annas at all?

I have no objection if they give their figures only in regard to consumption. Even in regard to consumption, what is it that the ordinary people are getting? I would like to invite my hon. friend the Minister in charge of Planning and other Ministers also to come to the weekly markets and see how the ordinary working class women and the peasant women are making their purchases. They come there with only four annas sometimes, or sometimes eight annas or only in very few cases, with one rupee, and with that one rupee or eight annas or four annas, they make their purchases. And how many things can they purchase with this sum? So, they go on heckling and haggling and bargaining, and they also quarrel with each other, and in the end, they get small quantities of oil, salt, ginger, and then condiments and various other small things, and mind you, no *dal* at all. As for tobacco, they cannot even hope to get a stump of tobacco, and so, they purchase only the *churnam*. This is the position of the masses of this country, even after fifteen years of planning. In the face of this, I

cannot understand how my hon. friend the Minister in charge of Labour, who was the Labour Minister till the other day, had the heart and also the temerity to come here to this House and make such a statement. And my hon. friend is a man of honour, and a man of sentiments also. I wonder how he could have stifled his own sentiments and come forward here to contradict Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia's statement in a grandiloquent and solemn manner and say that it is not three annas but seven annas.

MR. DHAYABHAI PATEL — September 13, 1963.
(Rajya Sabha)

Prices in a country are dependent largely upon the policies of the Government. When the Finance Minister introduced his Budget in this House, I think it was on the 28th February, and this House had the opportunity to discuss the Budget, I pointed out that inflationary trends are likely to be increased, accentuated, by the action that the Finance Minister wished to take. We heard a long defence and of course we were silenced in the wake of the emergency. I still maintain that it was not fair to this country that in the name of the emergency when the Government had not made up its mind whether it was really going to fight or not, that such a very high burden of taxation, particularly indirect taxation, has been put besides the other measures which were oppressive and which needed police action in many places to keep going.

Sir, in this city, next to the Parliament House, we see demonstrations everyday and satyagraha is being offered on account of a certain order that has come as a part of that Budget. I mean the Gold Control Order. People are coming from every state and offering satyagraha in large numbers. They are not restricted to any one party. They come from all parties, pointing out that this is harrasment. And then of course, the police has got to keep *bandobust* and all that adds up to the cost. Police cost is cost that is not scrutinised but it does fall on the people. Therefore, it is the Government that is encouraging this directly and indirectly.

The other way in which the Government is accentuating the increase in prices is by their operation of the controls. Sir, we have strayed away from the policies enunciated by the Father of the Nation long long ago. He warned us and asked the question: When the authority that is responsible for maintaining law, order and justice, also becomes the authority that is to control production, then who is going to protect the people? Well, we have come to that stage.

Of course, the people are concerned primarily with the cost of food. We are forgetting that the major part of the food in this country is produced by the agriculturists. What are we doing to ameliorate the condition of the agriculturists? In the name of giving

land to the tiller—a very good principle, but very unsound in the way it is applied by the Government—the Government has a policy which is taking us nowhere and which is actually reducing production every day. The Prime Minister says he wants co-operation on a voluntary basis. I would suggest to the hon. Members of this House and to the Prime Minister, to look at the land legislation that has been passed in the State of Gujarat. This talk of “voluntary” is only an eye-wash on the part of people who do not want to recognise facts. In that land legislation it is provided that where there are two pieces of land, if they are taken under the Land Limitation Law, then the piece of land that is in between those two pieces will also be taken over by the Government, if they want to introduce collective and cooperative farming. This law also provides that where 60 or 65 per cent—I forget the exact figure—of the people of a certain village agree to form a cooperative, then the balance of 40 per cent will also be compelled to join in. I repeat that this is a policy to make this country communist. That is it seems, is what the Government wants and that is what is causing all this food shortage. For so many years they have been having these collective farms in Russia and China, but what is the result? They have famine even today in China and production is going down.

I was saying that the high prices that we suffer from are because of the policies of the Government. Repeatedly attention has been drawn to this fact, but no effort is being made to correct it. Let me draw the attention of the hon. Members of this House—I think many of them are forgetting it—that we received a circular from the office of Rajya Sabha pointing out that we should open our accounts of our C.D.S. deposits and that the time expires on the 15th. I requested answer to a short-notice question as to whether the hon. Minister is going to scrap this scheme, because it involves too much cost, too much labour. Will the hon. Minister find out how many postal clerks have to be added to the present strength to get these accounts opened? Of course, the taxpayer is going to pay for those postal clerks who will have to open the accounts and give the pass book to everybody who deposits Rs. 10/-. This is extra cost.

For these things, you tax us more and you impose Excise Duties and then naturally prices go up. What can we do? The easiest thing for you is to abuse the merchants and call them as black-marketeers but big things. Where has it produced anything cheap, good and efficiently? You have ruined the economy of this country. I charge this Government with ruining the economy of this country completely, tinkering with it, playing with it. The person who has made a mess of planning now has become the Home Minister and I shudder to think what will happen to Delhi and if there is trouble, whom is he going to ask? We are having trouble all along. Is there not trouble in Punjab? Is there not trouble in Orissa? The favourites are all in trouble and if they are going to be in

charge of the Government here, I do not know what will happen to us. Sir, that is the real reason for all our troubles. Whether it is Mr. Kairon or whether it is Mr. Patnaik, it is the same story everywhere, and then, of course, the Prime Minister will say that “He is a great statesman”.

I say, Sir, that prices will come down only if there is less of regimentation. It is regimentation that is leading us to high cost everywhere, whether it is agriculture or whether it is distribution. We are told that the next thing that is coming after this is the taking charge of foodgrains supply by Government.

It is because the Food Minister resisted this type of nationalisation or taking control over the grain shops and Government trying to enter into it that under some pretext, that of the Yamaraj plan, he was sent out. I do not know what this Yamaraj plan is going to hold out for this country. I shudder to think of what will happen after this Yamaraj plan. We may get the Sadhu Samaj plan.

NEFA Enquiry

MR. DAHYABHAI PATEL — September 20, 1963.
(Rajya Sabha)

An assurance was given to this House that there would be a thorough enquiry. Shri Chavan himself said that if the allegations against certain army officers were proved, Government would take action against them. Slowly, the Government shifted its ground. In the Lok Sabha, in answer to a question in March, the Defence Minister said that Government had not decided whether even the terms of reference could be disclosed. But he repeated that the enquiry was only a military appraisal. How this happened within the space of a few months is difficult to understand. Then about the enquiry itself, how did the enquiry proceed? Who were the people interviewed? I would like to know from the Defence Minister whether the persons who were actually fighting, the jawans who were at the front, how many of them were interviewed and examined, how many of the junior officers present at Tawang or at Sela were interrogated to know what the situation was actually. Serious allegations have been made about the failure of the Government, of the Defence Ministry, to supply equipment, about sending the flower of our army for slaughter without even the requisite equipment, without even snow boots. We should like to know from the Defence Minister whether any real enquiry into this has been made. The Prime Minister has taken shelter under a very useful word ‘witch-hunting’. Nobody wants witch-hunting. But this House and the people of this country do want to know who is responsible for this debacle. A person who has been connected with the Government of this country, who knows many people in the Government and who has been knowing for some time people who have served as Ministers, has given some of his views. It is not possible to escape the observations that he

has very rightly made in the background of how the former Defence Minister came into this country from London. About the jeep scandal case, our Public Accounts Committee has quite a lot to say. It is not possible to forget the way in which he had gone into this and the suspicions of the people that the defence of the country was not in the right hands even though the Prime Minister might go on defending him. The Report of the recent Public Accounts Committee is before this House; the matter has been referred to more than once. Last year, after a visit after the Emergency came, the members of the Public Accounts Committee have commented and pointed out that while we had well-equipped defence workshops, they were not producing what they should. Not only were they not producing what they should, but they were not even helping the industry. In most progressive countries, defence production and industrial production are co-ordinated. We should have trained people in charge of machines, we should have the machines in full use. We should have men that could be switched on to defence production, to the production of armaments and at the time of crisis. Some sort of prevention of unemployment was really begun there. But instead of producing useful things, the ordnance factories were producing coffee percolators, photo-enlargers and bath tubs.

When this enquiry was promised, as I said, it was stated clearly that if any of the allegations or certain things, or lack of foresight on behalf of Army officers was proved, action would be taken. Has any action been taken? Our questions are not answered. I have myself asked several questions particularly with reference to the Prime Minister's statement in the Lok Sabha that General Kaul has seen a lot of active service, that he has a useful record of service. I should like the Defence Minister to tell us whether General Kaul has seen active service anywhere. If he has not seen active service, is the Prime Minister misleading this House. I am afraid I have found the Prime Minister misleading this House.

Parliament has been pointing out repeatedly the necessity of defence preparedness. I find that on the 8th April in the Lok Sabha, Mr. U. C. Patnaik made the following observations:—

"I am just giving instance after instance of our requirements for Ladakh as well as for N.E.F.A. which our Ministry has not taken care to produce." This was 1960. Mr. Krishna Menon says in April 1961: "We are in the same position with regard to medium artillery and our production establishments are able to meet whatever demands the Armed Forces may make upon them.... Of course if there was an emergency of a serious character, it is calculated that defence production should go up by ten times."

How many times has the defence production gone up since the emergency came? And how far are we from it?

A word about our intelligence. What does the report say?

"The size of the Chinese force still remaining on Indian soil is believed to be less than 200. Official circles here hope the intruders will desist from further provocations and withdraw peacefully."

This is from New Delhi, dated the 17th September, 1962. What is the position? And what was the size of the intruders? Is the information of our intelligence correct? On the 20th October Mr. Krishna Menon said at a public meeting....

Shri Moni Govindan Nair: Is it a press report or a report by some correspondent?

Shri Dahyabhai V. Patel: Yes, it is a press report by a responsible paper. It is not denied or contradicted. "Addressing a well-attended meeting at the L.I.C. grounds, Mr. Menon said, 'some posts had been lost to the enemy in Ladakh. But they were of little military significance.' He reiterated, 'To the best of our ability we will defend our land'".

In Lucknow, in December, 1961, Mr. Krishna Menon said that so long as he was the Defence Minister he would not expose a single soldier to unknown danger.

"Mr. Krishna Menon who was addressing a largely-attended public meeting pointed out that the country was governed not by Mohammad Tughlak but 'by men who were sincere' and he took realities of the situation into account."

"...Those who asked India to fight China to regain lost territory did not know what they were talking about. If there was a war everything would have to be flown across, a match box to a tent."

It is time that the Government should realise that the enemy cannot be fought by the Gold (Control) Order or the Compulsory Deposit Scheme. The enemy can be fought by building up the morale of the people. And you did not build it. You cannot build it up by oppressive measures. You can build up the morale of the people by inspiring confidence in them. Gandhiji out of nothing built up a people that could resist a mighty Empire, not by coercive measures, but by voluntary co-operation, with their help.

I am sorry the Government is not doing that and for that in any free country the Prime Minister and the Defence Minister who retired would have been impeached. Unfortunately things are not done that way. We hope that some day the people of this country will realise what they are getting by blindly voting for the Party that has been in power, that has done nothing to improve the condition of the masses, talking of the socialist pattern but only building up the party position again and again. I hope the new Defence Minister will see reason and a practical man that he is he will be a little more practical and assert himself if he can. But I am doubtful if he can do that, because even while he was making his statement on the enquiry I saw how he was being interfered with and when the Prime Minister got up, he whitewashed the whole thing.

MR. P. K. DEO — September 20, 1963.

(Lok Sabha)

I beg to submit that the official summary of this eagerly awaited report has fallen short of our expectations. In spite of the Prime Minister's promise, an unexplainable plea has been taken for withholding the report on the ground that "information about the strength and development of our forces and their location would be of invaluable use to the enemy". Sir, no one wants any information regarding the strength and disposition of our troops. We want to know the reason for this national humiliation.

From whatever material has been available to us, there can be no two opinions that the report is an admission of the failure of the Government in its primary duty to defend this country and to preserve its territorial integrity. Sir, this document is a more terrible indictment than the severest critics of the Government have ever charged it with. If you read in between the lines, if you closely study the sequence of events, you will be convinced that all the findings, all the fingers point at one person, and at only one person who was at the helm of affairs, that is, the then Defence Minister.

The report has rightly said:

"Even the largest and the best equipped army need to be given proper policy guidance and major directives by the Government whose instrument it is."

The most shocking thing that has come to our notice is the state of military unpreparedness. The report says:

"Our training of troops did not have a slant for a war being launched by China."

What assessment of Chinese intention could there be when while our armed forces in that altitude were being subjected to the rains of Chinese fire and mortar attack our Defence Minister was toasting "Hindi-Chini-Bhai-Bhai" at Geneva with Marshal Chen Yi by clinking the wine glass?

Sir, on 12th September 1959, when the discussion on the first White Paper took place, in which I had the privilege to initiate the debate, I told this House to streamline our defence forces. I still remember the words of the Prime Minister then, they are still ringing in my ears. He called us "timid", he called us "weak", he called us "panicky" and he called us "alarmists". At that time Shri Dange said:

"I guarantee that there shall be no invasion—as far as the Prime Minister is concerned he has said so—with the same confidence I guarantee that there shall be no invasion as far as China is concerned. I cannot talk about others."

Sir, on 14th August, 1962, when on behalf of the Swatantra Party I tabled a substitute motion for consideration when this same subject was being discussed and urged that to streamline our defence efforts we should accept military aid from foreign countries without any strings and also demanded that we should

get rid of the then Defence Minister who is the root cause of all trouble, we were ridiculed by the Prime Minister. At that time he said:

"It is quite absurd to talk about China invading India or that China has committed aggression. That is bad enough. We should face it and try to get it vacated. But imagining that she is swooping down the whole of India and swallowing it has, I submit, nothing to do with reality or possibility, even remote possibility of any situation."

Subsequent events have unfolded who is right. In spite of the warning given to the Government from these benches no action has been taken, no lesson has been learnt. But the report now says that we are unprepared. I say with all the emphasis at my command that this amounts to culpable negligence or it amounts to deliberate sabotage.

Time and again we have been told by the Government that our defence efforts are being handicapped by meagre funds. Is it not true that an amount of Rs. 132 crores was surrendered in a period of six years out of the budgeted allotment for the Defence Ministry? If it is closely studied, it will be found that the percentage of surrender goes on increasing. It was 3.2 per cent in 1957-58 and it has risen now to 6.1 per cent.

Regarding communications I beg to submit that our entire communications have been handicapped by lack of roads. The vehicles were old and defectively maintained. Crores of rupees have been spent on the infamous Tusker Project which adorns the name of our Prime Minister and of our former Defence Minister as the President and the Vice-President. Even though our new Defence Minister has taken charge of the Ministry, his name has not been associated with the Tusker Project and he has got nothing to do now with the Tusker Project. The Tusker Project has been conspicuous by financial irregularities. Roads on the maps are no good unless they actually exist.

Regarding vehicles the less said the better. This morning Shri Kamath has reminded this House about the jeep scandal. We tom-tommed about Shaktiman. What happened to its *shakti*? To set up isolated posts without the proper supply line virtually amounts to delivering our troops as hostages to the enemy. That is what actually happened.

So far as the system of command is concerned, I will be failing in my duty if I do not point out to this House that so far as the NEFA operation is concerned the difficulty arose when there was a departure from the accepted chain of command. This has been admitted in the report. The hon. Defence Minister has not hesitated to mention this fact in his statement. It is gratifying to note that the general standard of our junior officers was fairly good but at the higher level the shortcomings became more apparent. It is the 4th Indian Division, the crack division of the Indian army, which had fought creditably against Rommel's men and had many victories to its

laurals, that was routed. If India is proud of anything, then India is proud of her fighting men.

To keep up the morale of the Armed Forces is the primary duty of every Government. We have seen how many experienced young Generals have been retired prematurely, and one of them had serious public differences with the then Defence Minister. A Brigadier was promoted overnight, superseding many fellow officers, and he was the person who played the disastrous role as the corps commander in the NEFA operations. Now, we learn that he has been profitably rehabilitated in some company.

The report has been conspicuous by the fact that there was constant interference from Delhi. The report has rightly said that details of operations should have been left to the officers on the spot, but this was never done.

Another thing which completely bewilders me is the announcement of the Prime Minister prior to his departure to Ceylon as to whether it was political decision or one backed by military advice. The hon. Member from Phulpur, our Prime Minister, made a statement that our chaps should proceed to the Thagla ridge and oust the Chinese-Military manoeuvres are not broadcasted from platforms. When the Indian Army was going to take up an offensive operation at that particular moment, off went the Defence Minister to the United Nations. This was the height of irresponsibility. The only parallel to that can be found in the Roman history; when Rome was burning, Nero was playing with the fiddle. As a result 24,000 of our seasoned fighting men had to retreat in great confusion and were ultimately beaten.

Regarding military intelligence, there have been no two opinions that there have been grave shortcomings in this regard. If the intelligence would have worked efficiently, then the report would not have said that the Chinese attack was sudden. Without intelligence, it means that you blindfold the Army and send them to fight. I do not know how it would be possible for them to fight.

In this connection, I would like to draw your attention to a statement made by the Prime Minister on the 10th December 1962, that is, after the debacle in which he says:

"I think, on the whole, our intelligence has been first class".

Before I conclude, I would make some suggestions. I suggest that the powers of the Supreme Commander, that is, our President, who is just a figure-head now, should be vitalised. He should take more interest in the affairs of the armed forces as in the United States of America where the President is authorised to look into the disposition and movement of troops even though Congress raises the army and sanctions expenditure for it.

Secondly, there should be a Defence Council established. It should weigh the various defence needs objectively and independently. It should be free from executive fiat and it should express its opinion freely.

Thirdly, the three services should be co-ordinated some sort of integration of the defence services as has been done in UK according to the British White Paper of July 1963. The Chiefs of Staff should be free from file work. They should think more about military problems, tactics, training of troops, their disposition, vulnerability etc. etc.

Fourthly, our defence machinery should be geared up to meet any sudden attack.

At the same time, our policy of non-alignment may be reviewed in this context. The country has paid adequate price for the mistake the voters of North Bombay committed.

Foreign Affairs

PROF. N. G. RANGA — September 16, 1963
(Lok Sabha)

Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Prime Minister said that India's position in the world, except for our conflict with Pakistan and China, has very much improved. This is a confession, according to me, of the failure of the Government. If excepting our conflicts with China and Pakistan, we are making a great progress, I would like to know what that progress means in terms of national interest. It is the duty of the Foreign Minister and the Government of India to so develop our foreign relations as to improve our position vis-a-vis Pakistan and China.

The Prime Minister has advised our representative there at the United Nations to help her (Communist China) to go into the United Nations, obtain a permanent place in the Security Council and have the power to vote just as unscrupulously and as freely as Russia has done during the last so many years. We dissociate ourselves from this policy.

Then, I come to the other point that has been raised by my hon. friend the Deputy Leader of the Communist Party. He put a question to me and to my leader Rajaji, in regard to Rajaji's views about Kashmir.

I wish to remind this House, because I have stated it once before, that in our party manifesto we have stated 21 principles, and on 20 principles, we have stated our party's attitude. On the 21st principle, we made it very clear that our members would be free to express their view and popularise all those views also in regard to all other matters. Kashmir is one of them. The Hindi question or the language question is also one of them. On these questions, Rajaji has held those views, and he is entitled to hold his views. To the extent that the country is wise or unwise in looking into them, in examining these views and in accepting them to the extent that it finds them acceptable, well, it is in the interests of the country to do so.

So far as we as a party in this country and in this House are concerned, in regard to Kashmir, I would like to know why it is that the Prime Minister allows that conspiracy case to go on for all these years. Why

has he been satisfied, in keeping, with all his love of civil liberties, all of us have stood for civil liberties—one of the great leaders of the Kashmir area and the Kashmir people, Sheikh Abdullah, once a bosom-friend of the Prime Minister, in jail and in detention during those years, and now under this pretence of a conspiracy case, in jail, for so many years? Does this redound to our credit? Does it in any way help us in our approach to the Kashmiri people *vis-a-vis* the Pakistanis, or enable us to grow to be in a position some day, if we may have to do so, to persuade the Kashmiri people to choose their comradeship with India by an overwhelming majority? I want answers to these things.

I also welcome the advent of Malaysia. I know that my friends the Communists have many mental reservations, and some of their friends are protesting against the advent of this new nation and new country. But it is a good thing that it has come into existence, and it is a well known fact that through that the democrats all over the world hope to be able to stem the tide of Chinese Communism.

Unfortunately for us, our country has not been developing as friendly relations with the South-East Asian countries as there is need for them. We have not done enough to develop either cultural contacts or trade relations as briskly and as successfully as necessary.

Our Government is trying to view everything from the view point of Soviet Russia and its friends. It is something like the tail wagging the body. The Communist Party gives the order here. It has begun to interfere even in the civil service, in regard to officers, in such matters as which particular officer has to be sent to which place, to which department and so on, and it also tries to interfere in the constitution of the Ministry and all the rest of it. No objection, because they have every right to make suggestions, but from Soviet Russia these suggestions come either directly or through our friends and the Prime Minister goes on reorienting foreign and international policies in the light of that. I can give any number of instances.

Is it not high time, especially in the light of what is happening between China and Pakistan, that we declare ourselves in favour of the independence of Tibet. The Communist friends here who are waxing eloquent on the freedom of all the other countries, and asking our Government to go to the rescue of the poor Portuguese colonies and so on, are so silent on Tibet because they have already swallowed Tibet and like crocodiles they are masticating and digesting it. In this direction, I would suggest that the Dalai Lama should be given every freedom to function as what he is, the real and temporal head of these people, until they make up their mind in a democratic manner to have their own democratic government.

Then, there was this Voice of America proposition. Who thought about it? We did not think about it.

Nobody suggested it. It was the Government which thought about it. They needed it. Why? Because they realised the power of the communists and their propaganda machine. Here is an American journal, the A.F.L. and C.I.O. News of Washington which quotes the USIS Chief, Edward Murrow, as saying that last year the communists went from 30 million to 40 million books in the number of books they published in the non-communist bloc countries. In addition, they caused to be published outside the Soviet Union about 100 million more. For that reason, they thought of this Voice of America deal. What happened? Soviet Russia sent in a hush hush manner her objection. The next day the Prime Minister turns round.

And who is this Prime Minister? He is a person who has been the Foreign Minister of this country ever since this country achieved political freedom. When I was speaking from that bench, as one of the front benchers of the Congress, I suggested it was high time for the Prime Minister to give up the Foreign Ministry. He would not agree. Shri Jaya Prakash Narain made the suggestion. He would not agree. That was not even the first occasion. As long ago as 1949 in the Congress Working Committee deliberations, I made that suggestion. Why did I do so? Not because I did not like the Prime Minister, but because in every other important democratic country in the world you find that the Prime Ministership and the Foreign Ministership are kept separate.

Shri D. C. Sharma: Macmillan was Prime Minister and Foreign Minister.

Shri Ranga: In England for instance, the last time that these two positions were combined was in 1922-23 by Ramsay Macdonald with very bad results; and so much so the British people want that these posts should be held by two different people. Therefore, I made that suggestion. That was in 1949. Since then 14 years have gone by. All the time he has been there. Now, what has happened? Circumstances have changed: the world has changed. India's needs have been changing. Yet the Foreign Minister has not changed and the foreign policy has not changed. It has become a dogma and a doctrine, a doctrine of non-alignment.

Therefore, I say it is high time that there is a change in this Ministry, in the incumbent of the Ministry. If the Prime Minister is not prepared to do it, I can only say that the Prime Minister fails in his national duty towards this country in regard to external affairs.

PROF. M. RUTHNASWAMY — September 9, 1963.
(Rajya Sabha)

Shri M. Ruthnaswamy: Madam Deputy Chairman, since the last debate on foreign policy many changes have taken place in the international situation and the Prime Minister referred to them in his speech this morning, the nuclear test ban treaty, the conflict between Russia and China and the developments in

South Vietnam. With regard to the latter we are all glad that the Government of India has sent a protest against the persecution of Buddhists by the Govt. of President Diem. But I wish this regard for other peoples' rights had been awakened in the Prime Minister's mind when in a neighbouring country a Government was guilty of similar acts of persecution. The Ceylon Government under its present leadership has organised regular persecution of Catholics in that country. Catholic schools have been overnight taken over by the Government and even when they wanted to run them, the right to levy fees was taken away from them, and even when they wanted to raise donations in order to run these schools, the Govt. came down upon them levying high income-taxes on these donations. No protest was made against this persecution of Buddhists, but our feeling for other people's rights must be widespread.

But in regard to non-alignment, has the Prime Minister considered this ironic comment upon the policy of non-alignment that almost all the non-aligned powers India, Egypt, Yemen, South Arabia, Indonesia—have been at one time or the other engaged in war. They have been the subject of war. Not a single—I want it to be noted—non-aligned power raised its little finger in favour of India when China organised its aggression against us.

I was rather astonished the other day when the Prime Minister in his speech on the No-Confidence Motion in the other House said that there was nothing wrong with appeasement. But did he forget then the historical and political connotation of that word? Appeasement is associated with the men of Munich. But in practice, I am glad to note, as I noted before, that the Prime Minister's practice is much better than his creed. He has asked for massive equipment from the Western Powers. He has welcomed the so-called 'Air Exercises'. Why should he not go a step forward and ask for help in Forces also? If he does not like the term 'military alliance' there are other forms of alliances which do not look so glaring. There are ententes, understandings, conversations between one power and another which may be tried by India in regard to future military collaboration. Such ententes, military conversations and understandings preceded the War of 1914-1918, which brought England to the side of France. Similarly, we may have such understandings, conversations between our representatives and the representatives of the Western Powers so that when there is the next aggression, immediately we shall get military help of all kinds, not only of equipment but also of Forces.

Then I come to that sensational incident about which the Prime Minister was rather silent today, and that was the V.O.A. Agreement. Here was an agreement which on the whole would have favoured our propaganda against the Chinese. This agreement received the initial approval of the Prime Minister and I think it was signed, according to the records,

by the representative of the two parties. But subsequently, soon after, the Prime Minister realised that it was against the foreign policy of the country, and so he is trying to get this Agreement modified. It is astonishing, Madam Deputy Chairman, that on an important question like this the Prime Minister, the Minister of External Affairs, should not have at the start realised the implications of the V.O.A. Agreement. Is it because he was preoccupied with other tasks or was he too busy as the Minister of External Affairs to attend to this small matter of Agreement.

This menace of the Chinese is not a passing phase. It has begun to put forward racial chains and says that Sikkim and Bhutan, because they are inhabited by people belonging to the Mongolian race, are considered to be part of China. We are glad that the Government of India has given assurances to these two States that they will come to their aid if they are attacked. But can we be militarily sure that we can defend by ourselves Sikkim and Bhutan? Can India do it alone and that is why with regard to the protection of these people, with regard to our protection, I would advise an all-out request for all kinds of help from the Western Powers.

Why should we give the initiative always to China? It is the Chinese that have taken the initiative at every stage. Why do not we take the initiative? Why do we not take the initiative in organising a line of defence of all the South East Asian Powers from India right up to Japan and including Formosa and even Australia? It is an old saying, I think it was a saying which dates from Kautilya: 'My enemy's enemies are my friends' and that is a wise principle in diplomacy as well as in foreign policy. Instead of non-alignment which is an ideology and therefore rigid, we want a more flexible policy. If the Prime Minister will not listen to me, I think he will listen to Lord Acton, who is not only a great student of history but also a great diplomat and politician. He says in one of his writings:

"If a principle is set up in regard to foreign policy, will you not sacrifice your country to it, will you not prefer your party which represents your principle to your country which represents none but itself."

Shri K. P. S. Menon, who was our Ambassador in Russia till the other day has published a book of his reminiscences—*The Flying Troika*—and there in his concluding words he says that he hopes that the aggression of China will infuse a tone of realism into the foreign policy of this country. That is to say a foreign policy of promoting our national interests, not through any philosophy, not through any ideology but by changing our policy from time to time according to the dictation of our national interests, in order to promote our national interests, the interests of our country, the interests of freedom and independence. This is a foreign policy which is worthy even of the Congress Party and of the Prime Minister.

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