

June 26, 1976

TO THE NATION

26TH JUNE 1976 marks the completion of a year of dictatorship thrust on the people of India by the in-famous Congress (I) regime. During this period, thousands of our valiant comrades have suffered imprisonment and other kinds of torture. Even today most of them are clamped behind the bars in various prisons of the country. Their only crime is that they have refused to bow before a corrupt dictatorship. The stranglehold of this new slavery is being tightened round the neck of the Indian people day by day. This is the hour of trial for the jailed comrades.

I have full faith that as true satyagrahis they will stand steadfast in their determination and will not accept defeat till their last breath. Our struggle is continuing and it will continue.

On this occasion I send my revolutionary greetings to all co-pilgrims on the path of sacrifice.

LONG LIVE THE PEOPLE! LONG LIVE DEMOCRACY!!
LONG LIVE REVOLUTION!!!

Bombay
June 21, 1976

JAYAPRAKASH NARAYAN

ROLL CALL OF MARTYRS

Here is the second list of martyrs who laid down their lives in challenging Smti. Gandhi's dictatorship:

1. Shri M.R. Gulavani, Vita, Dist.Sangli, Maharashtra, RSS worker, Dentist by profession, age: 53, released after an unsuccessful operation in Sassoon Hospital, Poona, expired within a week at Satara on May 31, 1976;
2. Shri Prabhakar Rajah of Katangi, Madhya Pradesh, a social worker;
3. Shri Somnath Hadan, Seoni, Madhya Pradesh, student and social worker aged 19;
4. Shri Kullappa, Anakal taluq, Bangalore Dist.. a Harijan worker aged 25;
5. Shri Hariyadanbhai Bhatt, Jana Sangh worker of Surat (Gujarat) aged 60, arrested on March 13 and expired on April 14, 1976.

YESTERDAY TODAY AND TOMORROW

THE year began on June 26; according to the calendar it has just been over. But the anguish, the pain, the humiliation it had brought are not over; nor are

they going to be over soon. Thousands are still in Jail, some languishing in solitary confinement, refused permission to meet even their relatives. Some have died in prison for lack of medical attention; some are lying gravely ill in hospitals, but not released; of those who have been released some have been completely broken physically. Severe torture, inhuman and brutal, has crippled hundreds. Today with a false charge against him, George Fernandes is facing the ordeal - our prayers are with him to give him strength. The MISA has been extended for another year and fresh arrests have begun.

Looking around the capital, one finds the poor have been suffering as never before; their only crime is that they are poor. So they are forcibly sterilised, thrown out of their huts and banished in thousands to the water-logged, snake infested, mosquito-ridden areas from their fields of employment. Apartheid is near completion, for Delhi has to be. Over 5000 beggars - no matter they are crippled or lepers or mentally deranged or just unemployed - have been locked up. The price-index has gone up and the prices of foodgrains are rising. Yet, in a nation's life all these are minor sorrows - when compared to that larger one - the loss of freedom. Personal dictatorship is ruling the land. Democracy has passed out, dynastic regime is going to succeed it.

In spite of this deep gloom, there is one small ray of light; Mrs Gandhi has lost all credibility. No one, not even the humblest beggar trusts her; and, for her son, there is undisguised contempt. The image she has been building up over the years with such unceasing care lies shattered.

This is the situation today when JP has given his call for a National Party. The only duty which faces the opposition leaders at the moment is to strengthen his hands. They must dissolve their parties, settle their quarrels and come together. They must understand the reality of the situation, understand that fascism is already here, that people are suffering who can be saved, that generations more will suffer or live half-lives, if they fail to act. And if they fail them even at this hour, the people will never forgive them.

PILGRIMAGE TO MOSCOW?

WHEN on Moscorw's advice Sheikh Mujibur Rehman subverted his country's constitution and established a one-party state, Indira Gandhi defended him: "When they were doing basic things, so many countries have given up democracy because at that stage you have to lay the foundations. If you don't have that foundation, nothing can happen afterwards". Mujib had increasingly concentrated power into his own hands and then finding the foundations inadequate decided that a one party one leader state was the best for laying a fresh 'foundation'. For this he had ample advice from Moscow. Indira Gandhi needed no such advice. Ever since her visit to Soviet Russia in the early 'fifties she had believed that in order to make a country strong, remove poverty and eradicate illiteracy, it would be better not to have any opposition party. In achieving this, her own minions

provided the advice and told her how to control the people after the coup d'etat. The fountain-head of absolutism gave her the lessons and she has proved an apt pupil; the ground became thick with the KGB men who taught her how to shackle a democracy. If Mrs. Gandhi's first object is to shackle the country her second object is to found a dynasty and to give it legitimacy. The country, even her own Congress Party, would jib at recognizing a dynastic succession; she therefore needs some foreign acknowledgement. This was the primary purpose of her recent visit to Moscow.

She had a magnificent reception, she signed a joint communique and her sons were shown round the country. The Russians recognized her as the ruler of India, her party as the party which should be in power, condemned the Opposition parties as reactionary, recommended mutual cooperation between the Congress Party and other progressives; but they uttered not a word about the "Youth Congress Leader" who in the preceding ten months had been criticising the CPI and warning people against both the 'right' and the 'left'. Mrs. Gandhi can now flaunt before the Third World and, of course, before her own people, her version of the Briand-Kellogg Pact, the unprecedentedly magnificent reception given to her by a Super-power; but she has had to come back disappointed, bringing back her family in the tow.

Letter from Rt. Hon. Philip Noel-Baker
to Mr. George Fernandes

16 South Eaton Place,
London S.W 1
June 11, 1976

Mr. George Fernandes,

Dear George Fernandes,

This is to send you the warm greetings of your many friends, socialists, and people of all shades of liberal opinion in Britain, Social Democrats, Christian Democrats and many others in Europe, and to tell you how deeply we sympathise with you in the grave trials through which you are passing, and in the difficult life which you are passing, and in the difficult life which you and so many of your colleagues are obliged to lead.

We rejoice that JP was released from detention, but we find it sad that that only happened when the Indian Government were afraid that he might die while he was in captivity and we much regret that they gave the world so many assurances before he was released that he was "in good health". But we shall remain anxious for the safety and happiness of all of you while the so-called 'State of Emergency' is continued.

Experience in many countries has shown how relatively easy it is to establish a "state of emergency" where the Government is sustained by the armed forces of the police; and how exceedingly difficult it is for the government which has set it up, to bring it to an end.

We know that Mrs. Gandhi pledged herself to end her 'state of emergency' at the earliest possible moment. But after many months there seems to be no signs that she is preparing to carry out this pledge, and there seems to be no development that make it easier for her to do so.

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We remain convinced, however, that the strong support of the Indian people for democratic institutions and for the social and economic progress of India will, in some way we do not now foresee, bring about the restoration of representative parliamentary government. We pray that this may happen without any violent action, and that it may be accomplished by the principles which Mahatma Gandhi taught the world.

This is all the more necessary in a world where militarism and rule by force, instead of by law and justice, has become so widely prevalent. If mankind is to be spared from a Third world War which would obliterate our common civilisation, and perhaps the human race, it is vital that the Mahatma's teaching should triumph in the conduct of international affairs and we hope that India may soon be giving mankind an example in her internal affairs and leadership for the nations of the world.

Believe me, with warmest personal regards,

Yours sincerely,

sd/- Philip Noel-Baker

June 24, 1976

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL APPEALS TO INDIA TO MARK
ANNIVERSARY OF EMERGENCY BY DECLARING GENERAL
AMNESTY FOR POLITICAL PRISONERS

Amnesty International today (Thursday 24 June 1976) appealed to the Indian Government to mark the first anniversary of the declaration of a state of emergency on 26 June 1975 by declaring a general amnesty for all prisoners now held in detention without charge or trial. AI also urged the Government to restore constitutional safeguards and implement fully the provisions of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

AI said that the suspension of constitutionally guaranteed rights under the emergency apparently contravened those international legal norms contained in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Amendments to the constitution and emergency laws such as the Maintenance of Internal Security Act had introduced indefinite detention without trial and denied the fundamental rights of habeas corpus to Indian citizens, AI said.

".....Even according to official Indian statistics, 40,000 prisoners were being held without trial, the Amnesty International said. It expressed its concern at reports that large scale arrests continued.

In a letter to Shrimati Indira Gandhi, it is said that the curtailment of civil liberties in India had caused international concern. It said that the Indian Government had not replied to a letter suggesting that an Amnesty International delegation be allowed to visit India.

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WHAT THE NATION HAS LOST - C.K. Daphtary's View

"The Supreme Court recently in perhaps the most important decision it has rendered in the course of its whole life, has finally given the quietus to any hope that a person wrongfully detained can pray and approach the court for any relief even though the ground be that there has been a case of mistaken identity or that the detention has been made not bonafide. This was pronounced by a majority of four judges out of the five. ...One learned Judge however differed in a forceful opinion which may rank with the great dissents in *Olmsstead Vs. United States*, *Betts Vs. Brady*, *Minersville School District V. Gobitis*, which dissenting opinions were justified, vindicated and approved in other subsequent judgements of the United States Supreme Court.

"The right of personal liberty is therefore consigned to the deep-freeze for the period of the emergency which may be indefinite in its duration.....It is suggested with the utmost respect that the majority judges when endorsing the absolute nature of the powers vested in the executive could have issued at any rate a notice of warning against the possible or probable misuse of those powers, particularly when the exercise of these powers is not in a Minister or in a Secretary but in lower officials, who may not be wholly immune to influence or pressure and who may not appreciate fully the nature of their powers and the consequences of their exercise."

C.K. Daphtary Ex-Attorney General
President,
Bar Association of India
in 'Indian Advocate' Vol.XV

Solemn Pledge Broken

"We have accepted it as a Principle that, so far as High Court judges are concerned, they should not be transferred excepting by consent " - Mr. Asoke Sen, Law Minister in Lok Sabha on April 30, 1963.

Sixteen judges have been transferred from one High Court to another in recent months. The transfers have been made without the judges' consent. More transfers are under way. There is little doubt that these are punitive transfers; for most of these judges had in the past few months decided a number of cases rejecting the Government's contention.

RESOLUTION OF THE WORKING COMMITTEE OF THE INDIAN
NATIONAL CONGRESS (U) ADOPTED UNANIMOUSLY AT ITS
MEETING HELD AT BOMBAY ON 16TH JUNE, 1976.

The Working Committee congratulates the thousands of political workers who have been suffering hardships of all types including unlimited imprisonment without trial and sympathisers with the hardships suffered by their families.

The Working Committee reiterates its resolve to work for the consolidation of democratic opposition in the country in order to provide a viable national alternative to the ruling Party. As however, during the emergency, civil liberties of the people are suppressed and even the normal working of the parties is being denied, the Working Committee sees no alternative but to concentrate on non-violent resistance to work for the restoration of civil liberties. It therefore resolves to direct all its activities exclusively to peaceful resistance. It congratulates Shri. Jayaprakash Narayan for his lead in raising the morale of the people against authoritarian acts of the Government. It calls upon all the people of the country to rally round Shri. Jayaprakash Narayan to work for the restoration of democracy in the country.

While releasing the above resolution to the press, Shri. Asoka Mehta, President of the Congress, (U) said:

"The Working Committee hopes that by 25th June, the Emergency will be lifted, political prisoners released, and normal conditions restored. In the event of prolongation of the present abnormal situation it will be the sacred duty of all democrats to devote their energies to combating the situation, to the exclusion of all other activities. The Working Committee directs its units and members to devote themselves solely and exclusively to resist peacefully through popular education and action, individual and collective satyagraha, against the lawless laws that throttle the liberties of the people. We shall not rest till the inalienable rights and liberties of the people are restored to them.

PLEDGE TO JAYAPRAKASH

We, the undersigned political prisoners now detained in the District Jail, Rohtak, welcome heartily the creation of a new party under the leadership of Shri. Jayaprakash Narayan, and pledge ourselves to work devotedly for strengthening this democratic national alternative and for achievement of its objectives.

ROHTAK 26.5.1976.

1. Jayannath Rao Joshi, Organising Secretary, Jana Sangh,
2. Samar Guha (M.P.) Leader of Socialist Party in Parliament
3. Piloo Mody, M.P. General Secretary, ELD (4) Sikander Bakht,

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General Secretary, Congress Organisation (5) Surendra Mohan, General Secretary, Socialist Party (6) Bhairon Singh Shekhawat M.P. Jan Sangh (7) Maniram Bagri, Ex-M.P. B.L.D. 8 Satyadeo Bishahri, President, Sangarsh Samiti, Himachal Pradesh 9. Mool Chand Jain, Ex- M.P. Haryana (10) Hardwarilal M.L.A., B.L.D. (11) (11) K.R. Malkani, Editor, Motherland (12) Jagroop Singh Student leader (13) Bhagwan Das (14) Ravindranath Kaushik (15) Manohar Lal Saini (16) Ranjit Rai Sharma, Ex- Member, D.M.C.

R E A D E R S' V I E W S

BEGINNING AFRESH.

Sir,

To become a successful National Alternative a new party must have the following essential features:-

(a) It should be unitary and established at the national level. There should be no political units or parties either federating into or merging into it. It should be entirely New which individuals may join, after severing their connection, if any, with any existing party.

(b) This process should be independently accompanied, if feasible, by the voluntary dissolution of the other parties, giving their members opportunity to join any party they like. The party leaders should not give the members any directive or issue any appeal to join the new party. That should happen without any such directive or appeal. Strategically, it is always better that a few of the members of the dissolved parties find their way into the ruling party also, so that the new party may not be the sole inheritor of the odium that, rightly or wrongly, attaches to any of the dissolving parties. This is the only way of enabling the new party to acquire a political image which is not open to attack by the ruling party.

(c) The new party should, ab initio, project an image attractive in the eyes of broad masses. No amount of negative criticism of the ruling party will be of any avail. The ruling party has, over the decades, perfected the art of keeping the poor masses in perpetual hope and expectancy, while enabling the rich to grow richer all the time. If this is to be countered, the new party will have to place before the masses of few items of their programme intelligible and acceptable to them, items which the people have been promised time and again by the ruling party but which they have now lost all hope of getting. These items should be treated as "committed and time bound, by the new party and there should be no mental reservations about them. In fact, the party should be totally and irrevocably identified with them.

(d) As a Corollary to such commitment, the new party should not allow itself to be dominated by those

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elements whose interests are generally opposed to the commitment. If this exclusion is properly spelt out the party's image will be tarnished. There need be no opportunist if alliance with such elements, as one of the basic principles of the new party is to achieve political power into clean hands. This is the only way to face the ruling party which has made itself almost unbeatable by foul means.

The four main thrusts indicated in the tentative policy paper are:-

- (i) full employment
- (ii) maximum production.
- (iii) relevant education and
- (iv) efficient administration

A glaring omission in this list is equitable distribution. In fact, the emphasis on equitable distribution, even though touched upon elsewhere appears to be subdued throughout the document and its conspicuous absence from this particular para is likely to create a distorted impression. It is hoped that this is not the intention in which case this para has to be recast.

The document has gone into too many details - most of them of a general and platitudinous nature. In result, the main thrust which is so essential for a new party is lacking. The approach of 'everything to everybody' has made the document diffused.

The document has missed the main aspects in respect of which the ruling Congress has become vulnerable. Those aspects are:-

- (a) Opportunism and Power-craze.
- (b) Lack of correlation between policies and persons implementing them;
- (c) lack of ideological clarity and fidelity.
- (d) Trying to find political solutions to economic problems
- (e) hero-worship bordering on idolatry.
- (f) artificial efforts to build up dynastic political leadership; and
- (g) authoritarianism tending to destroy the democratic sap in the nation's polity.

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It is necessary to emphasise these aspects and to explain how the new party proposes to function in regard to each of them.

Only a clear-cut exposition of these aspects will carry real conviction to the people.

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THE STORY OF THE NINETY THOUSAND RUPEES:

Following the current journalistic ethics in India, our daily press recently published the official and the Congress Party's reaction to J P's letter declining to accept the grant from the Prime Minister's relief Fund for buying a dialyser for his treatment, without publishing the letter itself. As Satya Samachar believes in objectivity and fairness, we give below a copy of JP's letter:-

Contd:

J A Y A P R A K A S H N A R A Y A N

CAMP : BOMBAY -5.

JUNE 11, 1976.

Dear Indiraji:

I am writing about the ninety thousand rupees which which you have so kindly contributed from your relief Fund for the purchase of a Dialyser machine for my treatment. Some weeks back when Shri. Radhakrishna, on Professor P.N.Dhar's advice, had sent a friend here to enquire if I would accept a contribution from you, I had given my consent without knowing that the money would be from the Prime Minister's Relief Fund. I took it for granted that it would be from your personal account, though a little thought on my part should have shown that it was not possible for you to contribute personally such a large amount. Be that as it may, the position is that before the contribution from your Fund was received, more than three lakhs of rupees had already been collected from the Public in response to the appeal made by Shri. Ravishankar Maharaj, Swami Anand (Since deceased) Shri. Kedarnathji and Dada Dharmadhikari. Out of that money a dialysis machine and accessories and supplies for a year had already been purchased; and enough money is left to pay for monthly expenses for a year or two.

There are two other relevant points that I should mention here. One, the Committee had announced that only small contributions would be acceptable. Some friends had offered large donations, but they were not accepted and only small amounts were taken from them. Two before the contribution from your Fund was received by Shri. Radhakrishna, the Jayaprakash Health Fund Committee had closed the Fund through a public announcement on the ground that the Fund had already been oversubscribed.

In these circumstances it is not right that I should accept such a large donation from your Relief Fund. There is so much of relief to be rendered that every pice of a relief fund should be used where it is needed most. Therefore, I am advising Shri. Radhakrishna to return the draft received by him. I do frequently hope that you will not misunderstand me and think me ungrateful and discourteous. There is no discourtesy meant at all and I am grateful for the concern shown by you for my health.

With my best wishes,

Yours Sincerely,

Sd/-

(JAYAPRAKASH NARAYAN)

Smt. Indira Gandhi,
Prime Minister of India,
New Delhi.

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A R R E S T E D

New Delhi, April 29 - Shri. S.D. Paliwal of the Socialist Party and his colleague Shri. Kamlesh were arrested here on April 9, Shri Paliwal was detained in police custody for ten days; was interrogated non-stop without being allowed to sleep. It is understood that though arrested under the MISA, Shri. Paliwal is going to be tried as an accused in the Baroda dynamite case.

Bangalore; May 2: On April 24, Shrimati Saraswati Bai Hegde, the 80 year old mother of the former Minister, Shri. Ramakrishna Hegde who is at present a MISA detenu accompanied by Shri. Kshetrapal of the Sarvodaya Mandal went on a protest fast in the Mysore Bank Square. They were arrested and detained in Police custody but were released at night.

On the same, day, four women, all relatives of MISA detainees and one male worker of the Lok Sangharsha Samiti observed a fast near the bus stand and also displayed placards and distributed pamphlets demanding the withdrawal of Emergency and release of political prisoners. They were all arrested and detained in police custody till April 30 when the women were released and the male member was sent to jail custody.

BOMBAY: June 1. Dr. Datta Samant MLA (Congress R) an INTUC leader has been detained under the MISA since May 28 for serving strike notices on three factories. Shri. P.J. Mehta, President Engineering Mazdoor Sabha was arrested on May 28 on for demanding a public enquiry against Rajni Patel for accumulating black money.

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VINOBA TO FAST TO DEATH.

WARDHA & JUNW 1 - Acharya Vinobha Bhave has decided to go on an indefinite fast from September 11 if cow slaughter is not banned in the country. He had announced this decision to Shri. S.B. Chavan on May 17, and again on May 29 to the members of his Ashram. But noticing that the Press had not carried the news, Vinobha convened a meeting of the village headmen of the Wardha district yesterday and asked them to carry the news to villages. "If you are arrested in the process", he told them, "You must gladly go to jail. If I die during the fast, they will suppress the news. After six months the Government may say, I died of heart failure. But it is not a question of individuals. With me millions will fast".

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WORKER'S PARTICIPATION - POINT 15 OF THE 20 POINT PROGRAMME.

CALCUTTA: June 2; Shri. Ananda Bharti, Congress Party member of the West Bengal Legislative Assembly disclosed yesterday that last week another worker of the Bengal

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Potteries committed suicide. This, Mr. Bharati said, brought the number of such deaths to 32. He explained that the workers had little choice. The two factories of the company had been closed for the last ten months and about 5,000 of their workers are out of job. Mr. Bharati is the President of the INTUC union of the Bengal Potteries Union.

INDIRA GANDHI'S STATEMENT 'NOT TRUE'

New Delhi, June 3: On May 30, Mrs. Gandhi told the AICC (R) that the Catholic community had stated that it was not against the sterilisation programme, "from the point of religion". When contacted, the spokesman of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of India said that no such assurance had been or could have been given by any of the Bishops, Archbishops or Cardinals of the Church in India. On the contrary, the Bishops' Conference had issued a statement on April 29, disapproving of sterilisation as it does "violence to the conscience" and calling for a day of fasting on May 14 and for a crusade of prayer during the entire month of May. When asked if Mrs. Gandhi's statement was false, he said "It is not true".

POLITICAL PRISONERS ON INDEFINITE FAST:

CALCUTTA, JUNE 4 :- About 300 political prisoners in the Calcutta Presidency Jail went on a week-long hunger strike from May 18 in protest against the denial of certain rights, refusal of permission (i) to meet their relatives; (ii) to cook their own meals; (iii) to go out in the open yard for a breath of fresh air or for normal exercise. Six of them Prof. Sandip Das, Prof. Amal Basu, Shri. Sukumar Banerji, Shri. Himangsu Halder, Sri. Sant Basu-Mullick and Shri. Gour Hari Dutta detained under the MISA are on an indefinite fast since then. Others are on relay fast with them in batches of 250. On June 9 there was a sympathetic mass fast.

ABOLITION OF CHILD LABOUR OUTSIDE 20 AND 4 POINT PROGRAMME:

NEW DELHI, JUNE 4 :

The Working group set up last year by the Ministry of Education and Social Welfare reached the conclusion that it is neither feasible nor desirable totally to abolish child labour in the present state of the Country's economic development. The team has yet to recommend the consequential deletion of Art. 39(f) of the Constitution which directs the State "to protect children against exploitation" and of Art. 45 which expects the State "to provide within a period of ten years from the commencement of the Constitution for free and compulsory education of all children until they complete the age of fourteen years".

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are gradually wearing out and people are beginning to get restive. To remedy the situation their advice to Mrs. Gandhi was either to go all out and ruthlessly enforce punitive measures or gradually to relax the restraints. That Mrs. Gandhi has decided on on ruthlessness becomes clear from the fresh wave of arrests. In the past week the Tihar Central Jail is understood to have had an inflow of about 200 fresh arrivals, some of them under the MISA, Dr. Ramlal Varma, formerly Executive Councillor, Delhi Metropolitan Council, is one of these.

It is further learnt that due to maltreatment of political prisoners, the alarm bell in the jail was rung twice and the jail officials and the jail staff sprang upon the politicals 'to teach them a lesson'.

GEORGE FERNANDES:

New Delhi, June 12: The Socialist leader, George Fernandes was, it is learnt down from Calcutta to Delhi. Straight from the airport, he was taken to the Tihar Central Jail. After two hours, he was removed to the Red Fort where he is being subjected to third degree methods for interrogation by the Police.

GENTLE AND CIVILISED PRESSURE.

LUCKNOW, JUNE 12:- The Government of U.P. has issued orders for withholding the pay for the month of June of those employees of the Family -Planning and Health departments who do not fulfil their first quarter quota of bringing 6 and 3 cases respectively for sterilisation by the end of this month.

Patna, June 12 : It is reliably understood that the Bihar Cabinet has decided that in future no ration card will be issued for more than three children in a family.

New Delhi , June 15 :- According to a Delhi Administration Press release:

- (i) No person with three or more children will be treated free in a hospital without producing a certificate of sterilisation of either spouse;
- (ii) Patients will have to show their ration cards to prove that they have less than three Children.
- (iii) Only Children up to five years of age and eligible persons and eligible couples will, hereafter, be treated free. Others will have to pay Rs. 5/- per visit to out-patient ward and Rs. 10/- per day for indoor treatment.
- (iv) Even emergency cases will be required to give before attended to as undertaking to be sterilised. It is presumed that a pauper involved

in a serious accident and brought to the emergency ward in an unconscious condition will be kept un-attended till he regains consciousness and signs such a declaration.

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BANSILAL'S CANDIDATE DEFEATED:

HISSAR, JUNE 16: Shri. Sardana, recently released from detention, was elected President, Hissar District Bar Association, defeating the Congress (R) candidate who lost in spite of the personal effort of Shri. Surinder Singh, son of the Defence Minister, Shri. Bansilal.

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P R I C E I N D E X M O V E S U P

New Delhi, June 19:- The general index of whole-sale moved by 3.9 points from 288.5 for April to 292.4 for May 1976. The rise was of the same order in May, 1975, before the declaration of emergency. During the month under review food articles and manufactured items advanced.

V I N O B A A G A I N

BOMBAY, June 20: Greater significance is being attached to Shri. S.M.Joshi's visit to Paunar in first week of July and Shri. J.P.'s decision to call on Vinoba on his way to Patna in the 3rd week of July. Satya Samachar understands from sources close to Vinoba that his indefinite fast for a ban on cow slaughter may also be extended to include the demand relating to certain aspects of the Emergency.

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INDIA: A PASSAGE FROM DEMOCRACY
(A Special Correspondent)

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A dozen of us were in Patna, capital of Bihar. The same evening Mrs. Gandhi addressed a public rally at the Mahatma Gandhi Grounds which the dutiful press described as "the biggest ever held in Bihar. The crowd was certainly large around 300,000. Mrs. Gandhi was at her oratorical best, attacking 'fascist reactionaries who wanted to plunge India in chaos', 'foreign powers who are jealous of our progress in the last ten years', and 'the cowards of the underground who want to destroy me'. I noticed, however, that all the applause emanated from only two sections of the throng. Later, I was told that 100,000 Congress Party volunteers and 3,000 plainclothesmen had been deployed around the platform.

For days government buses had been bringing villagers to Patna to line the streets to welcome Mrs. Gandhi and attend her meetings. But what was even more revealing about Mrs. Gandhi's nearly year-old 'disciplined democracy' was that almost 8,000 Biharis had been rounded up in the ten days before Mrs. Gandhi arrived in Patna to ensure 'law and order'. They included 80 teachers, 400 students, almost 1,000 followers of J.P., as Narayan is fondly known, and hundreds of other completely harmless men and women who posed no threat to Mrs. Gandhi except perhaps for the fact that they do not approve of her police methods. I was told by a Patna University professor that today in Bihar alone there are no fewer than 40,000 political prisoners. One year after the emergency the national total is estimated at 250,000 - including 30,000 arrested in Tamil Nadu State after the opposition Tamil nationalist government was summarily sacked in January, and 15,000 taken into custody in Gujarat State following the toppling of the opposition regime there in March.

Returning to Delhi, I went by train to Agra, home of the Taj Mahal. Journalistically, it was a piece of unexpected luck, for Sanjay Gandhi was there the same day. The whole town had been decorated with bunting and arches. One estimate is that the Uttar Pradesh state government spent £6,000 on reception and security arrangements for the Prime Minister's increasingly ambitious and authoritarian son. Reaching Agra railway station for the return trip to Delhi, I found some 200 handcuffed men squatting in the blazing noonday sun. They had been roped in several times over with about 50 armed policemen guarding them. 'They are anti-social elements', explained a railway ticket collector. 'Burglars, highway robbers, kidnappers and rascals like them'. Some of the

handcuffed prisoners were shouting for water. Two had fainted and were being roughly carried towards a goods wagon as if they were a piece of luggage. Soon a train arrived and all the prisoners were pushed into two carriages which had been already shuttered.

After the prisoners' special steamed out, I had to wait 90 minutes for my train to the capital. The railway ticket collector was more relaxed now. 'Sanjay is the rising star of India', he said. 'He will be even greater than Jawaharlal Nehru, though he did not go to college'. Then, I switched the conversation to the prisoners we had seen earlier. Were they really criminals? I asked. To me at least some of them had looked bright and decent. 'I am under transfer and will be gone from this horrible place in a day or two', the railway official said. 'Once I was an active union worker. Now, everything is finished. Tomorrow you may be arrested for snoring loudly or not saluting the district magistrate. The handcuffed men are not criminals. They are political prisoners. The jail in Agra is just too full. They are going to construct a new jail to accommodate 5,000 prisoners, the biggest in the country'. The next morning's Hindustan Times of Delhi carried a front-page photograph showing Sanjay Gandhi and Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister N.D. Tewari inspecting a model of the proposed jail. The Times of India quotes the Home Minister of Madhya Pradesh State, notorious for its ill-treatment of detainees, as saying that the jails have been overcrowded for the 'last few months' and that a short-term solution would be to construct 'open air' prisons. Mrs. Gandhi's India is indeed bursting with prisoners.

From his sick-bed in Bombay J.P. has called for peaceful protests on 26th June, the first anniversary of the emergency. He wants people to come out and demand the restoration of civil liberties and an end to press censorship. One senior government official in Delhi expects at least 50,000 people to be arrested all over India on that day. But the problem, as he put it, is where to keep these new critics of the emergency. Some chief ministers are reported to have suggested that, since schools and colleges are closed for the summer vacation, they could be used as temporary jails. A knowledgeable opposition politician claims that a solution has almost been reached. This is to release as many convicted criminals as possible to make room for political dissenters. Defence Minister Bansi Lal jocularly told a journalist that 'if necessary we can reopen the old British jails in the Andaman Islands. The sea breeze there will soon help to cure J.P. of his kidney ailment'. Considering the rate at which India's prison population is growing, Mr. Bansi Lal's pragmatism may have to be taken seriously before long.

Mr. Jagannath Mishra, Chief Minister of Bihar, is reported to have told friends that he strongly opposes

J.P.'s plans to return to his home state. It is believed that the pacifist statesman, who has not many more months to live in the opinion of doctors who have seen him, would like to spend his last days in Bihar. But Mr. Mishra fears that the presence of J.P. in Bihar might in due course pose an unmanageable law and order problem. As Mr. Mishra told a senior journalist of Patna: 'I would like to ban Narayan from coming back to Bihar as was done for years in the case of Sheikh Abdullah, who was banished from Kashmir. Alternatively, he can be re-arrested'.

The rearrest of J.P. cannot be absolutely ruled out. He was released after nearly five months in solitary confinement only because Mrs Gandhi panicked that he might die following the massive damage his kidneys suffered while in prison. But his fate has still been better than that of 81-year old Morarji Desai, her former-deputy prime minister. He is still in solitary confinement after almost a year. On 15th April Mr. Desai was met by a government emissary who said that Mrs Gandhi would be willing to set him free if he gave a signed undertaking that he would retire from active politics. In characteristic fashion, the old man is said to have shown the visitor the door.

Meanwhile, with Mrs Gandhi's conquest of Gujarat and Tamil Nadu, the two states which provided a sanctuary for her critics a nationwide manhunt has been launched for underground politicians. Reports available in Delhi, Calcutta, Bombay, Madras, Kanpur and other centres suggest that upwards of 30,000 wanted men and women are on the run. Hundreds have been captured, often thanks to information supplied by pro-Establishment teachers, journalists businessmen and trade unionists. In Gujarat one former office-holder of a railway union is said to have betrayed as many as 40 wanted men who had taken shelter in a group of villages in the Rajkot area.

At the same time many brave people are giving shelter to the fugitives. The Madhya Pradesh State Administration has made it known that anyone harbouring an absconder will be imprisoned without trial for a minimum period of five years.. .. .

Mr. George Fernandez has reportedly made some foolish statements to American newspapermen who managed to meet him underground. One is that Mrs Gandhi can only be removed by violence, meaning assassination. But close friends of the veteran trade union leader say that perhaps only one foreign newspaperman (and he an Englishman) has really met him during all these months. A widely held belief is that the George Fernandez who talked to American newsmen 'somewhere in India' was a counter-agent of the Research and Analysis Wing (RAW), the CIA-type outfit mothered by Mrs. Gandhi and now the favourite plaything of Sanjay.

Courtesy - from New Statesman, London, 28.5.76

FROM THE MOTHER OF GEORGE FERNANDES

To the President of India

May 24, 1976.

Sir,

It is with a heavy heart that I am writing this letter with the hope of obtaining justice at your hands. I am 65 years and my 75 year old husband is a heart patient. My third son Michael Fernandes has been detained under the MISA since December, 1975.

On Saturday May 1, at about 9 p.m. my 44 year old second son Lawrence Fernandes, was taken away from our residence by the police. They began questioning him about the whereabouts of my eldest son George Fernandes and then subjected him in a most inhuman, reckless and ruthless manner to third degree methods of physical torture. Besides beating him with slubs (until five of them were broken to pieces) they used a banyan tree root to clout him with and booted him and slapped him. They threatened that if he did not reveal the whereabouts of George Fernandes he would be thrown on the railway tracks and killed under a moving train leaving no evidence of their hand in his death. After thus reducing him to a condition of a physical and nervous wreck, he was kept in a solitary confinement in different police lockups in the most unhygienic condition until May 20 during which period he was subjected to further torture and interrogation. He was kept without food for three days, and was not given proper food on other days, nor allowed cigarettes. During all these 20 days he was allowed bath only on three days and made to remain in the same clothes in which he was when he was taken away on May 1. He had become unconscious as a result of this inhuman treatment. He was taken to different doctors and hospitals, each time under a different and false name impersonating him as a police officer, for treatment to keep him alive. On one night a doctor was brought to the police station itself for treating him.

On May 9, my son was taken by police car to Davangere and on May 10 produced before the Magistrate as though arrested in Davangere on the previous day.

He was continuously interrogated, refused lawyers' help and not allowed to contact home. He was threatened with dire consequences if he reported to the Magistrate about the torture. Finally on May 20 he was produced in the 2nd Metropolitan Magistrate's Chambers during lunch time and then removed to the Bangalore Central prison where he has been detained in a cell meant for condemned criminals.

The whereabouts of my son Lawrence had not been informed to us. On May 20 upon being informed by a lawyer, I went to the prison with the lawyer but was not allowed to meet my son. On the 21st, after waiting for over three hours I was taken to the cell to see him, but not the lawyer. I found him looking dead. He was unable to move except without two persons helping him about, and then too with great pain and limping. His left side is crippled and is unable to talk freely without flatering; he has lost at least 20 kg. during these 20 days.

Yet another page was added to this act by serving on him on May 22 an order of detention under MISA, which also he has been kept in the same cell.

.../...

Are my two sons being held hostages for George Fernandes whose whereabouts or condition my entire family is totally unaware of? Is it morally right that my family should be so harassed and tormented for the political views held by my son George Fernandes?

Whatever I have stated here is on the basis of what the family could gather from Lawrence during the visits to him in the cell. For obvious reasons it is not quite exhaustive. I urge you in the name of all that is good in civilised conduct of human beings and their Governments, and in the name of justice to order a thorough judicial enquiry into this barbaric torture etc. and take suitable action against the concerned authorities.

I also urge that he should be transferred to a good hospital and specialist medical and psychiatric treatment be given to him and daily visits to him by the family allowed so that he may regain his mental and physical health and become a human being.

Alice Fernandes

WHEN THE PRESS WAS FREE

"The Queen is a certified crook. Long live the Queen". So runs the coggerel in the mints of all those hundreds of Congress MPs and other courtiers who have been lounging around within the portals of power by courtesy of Indira Gandhi.

To most Congressmen it is quickly obvious that if she is made to step down from the seat of power, they might have to follow as they have no political base of their own. Most of them were handpicked by Indira Gandhi in 1971 or 1972. Now in this emergency situation, their dependence on her has become absolute. In the circumstances, legal 'quirks' like not using officials and official machinery for personal and party ends are nuisances which can be simply ignored - in the afternoon as in the morning. In the violation of legality, some of the Chief Ministers have a wealth of experience. Two of them, Shri Siddhartha Shankar Ray and Bansilal, who have revelled in the politics of terror in West Bengal and Haryana, are drumming up support for Indira Gandhi. Truckloads of 'active' workers and peasants were brought from Haryana for the show of strength organized by Bansilal.

The melodrama has reached the second act. The durbar has got entangled within its own postures of propriety. The final suicidal act has yet to unfold. There is as yet no directing party which is capable of precipitating the final act.

-Economic and Political Review, June 14, 1975

SATYA SAMACHAR MAKES INTERNATIONAL
HEADLINES

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The news about the publication of the June 12 inaugural issue of 'Satya Samachar' was relayed in the evening news bulletins of the BBC on June 11.

The Guardian, London, June 12, carried the following Reuter Report about it:

.../...

"Opposition Political party workers have distributed their own news sheet here to protest against press censorship and to mark India's first year under internal emergency rule.

"The first issue of the bulletin, Satya Samachar(True News), carries tomorrow's date to draw attention to events on June 12 last year, which it says led to declaration of the emergency two weeks later.

"The Allahabad High Court held Indira Gandhi guilty of corrupt electoral practices, the citizens of Gujarat rejected her (in State elections) and the rumblings within her own party became ~~so~~ ominously audible", the bulletin said.

"Jayaprakash Narayan, in a message for the first issue, said, "June 26, 1975 will be remembered as the blackest day in Indian history since independence...India was a working democracy and overnight it was converted into a personal dictatorship".
