

this opinion during a visit to Kenya, the Kenyan Opposition leader Mr. Ngala retorted that she had no business to express such an undemocratic view on the Kenyan soil. The fact has been recorded by one of her favourite biographers. No wonder her name has become a by-word for autocracy.

However, one may sympathise with Mrs. Gandhi at her failure to bend the opposition to her will in spite of Russian-style midnight knocks, detention of nearly two lakh opposition activists and medieval style torture of over 10,000 political prisoners besides economic ruin of lakhs of families. They have cheerfully chosen the path of martyrdom to protect the flame of liberty from being snuffed out in the land of Mahatma Gandhi.

She is really convinced that the opposition has proved a hard nut to crack. She has converted the whole of India into a vast prison house where the worst crime is to hold one's head high. However, the tragedy for her is that she stands discredited more than ever before. For, the silently suffering people of India have realised to their cost that Emergency is the era of worst governmental indiscipline and the poor are the hardest hit because the ruling coteries and the bureaucracy have no themselves up above all law.

P.C. Sen on Mrs. Gandhi's Statement

The West Bengal Congress(C) leader and former Chief Minister has issued the following statement:

"A fascist believes in violence, in forcible suppression of the opposition and in the extermination of the opposition. A democrat believes in persuasion, in rationalism and in the right of the opposition to dissent. A satyagrahi believes in non-violence.

"In recent interview Smt. Indira Gandhi boastfully announced that the opposition has been 'subdued but not yet vanquished'. This is just like a fascist. A democrat would not have bragged in that fashion. A satyagrahi in all humility does not measure things in terms of defeat or victory because he or she never succumbs to intimidation or oppression and gladly suffers for the cause.

"After the emergency a number of people belonged to the opposition were taken to jail and detained without trial. From the 14th of November 1975 till 26th January 1976 in course of 2 1/2 months more than 1 lakh 50 thousand persons offered satyagraha and courted suffering. This may be compared to the fact that during the 1942 Quit India movement some 80 thousand people courted imprisonment. This shows clearly that the satyagrahas and the true spirit of the opposition have neither been subdued nor vanquished. Smt. Indira Gandhi, it is a pity, is suffering from megalomania and her utterances and outbursts are proving more clearly that she is never a democrat at heart.

- Prafulla Chandra Sen "

Indians in U.K. Protest Against Emergency

A massive protest demonstration was held in London on June 26, 1976 against Mrs. Gandhi's dictatorship. Hundreds of Indians held a rally in Trafalgar Square in the afternoon and marched to the Indian High Commission after the rally. The protest was organised by the Friends of India Society International.

Again on June 27, about 2000 Indians marched from Trafalgar Square to the Indian High Commission protesting against Mrs. Gandhi's Emergency. They called for release of political prisoners in India.

and an end to Emergency. The demonstration was organised by the Joint Committee for Civil Liberties in India which is preparing a petition to the UN Commission for Human Rights.

Among those who spoke at the rally on June 26 were:

Dr. Subramaniam Swamy, M.P. (India), Mr. Markand Desai, Former Minister, Gujarat, Mr. Gautam, President, I.W.A. London, Mr. Sharpor Hoda, Free JP Campaign, Mr. F.L. Lakhani, Eminent Author, India, Mr. Giani Amlok Singh, Former General Secretary, Sikh Temple, Southall, Mr. S. Amar Singh Dhillon, President, Shiromani Akali Dal, Mr. Paul Connet, Free J.P. Campaign, Mr. S. Purn Singh, President, Shiromani Akali Dal, Huddersfield, and Mr. S. Gian Singh Bakshi, President Guru Sabha, Birmingham.

Friends of India Society International's
Letter to Mrs. Gandhi

Dear Prime Minister of India,

155 Junction Road,
London N. 19
26th June 1976

On June 26, 1975 in your broadcast to the Nation proclaiming the Emergency, you made a solemn promise to the people of India. To quote: you said, "I am sure that internal conditions will gradually improve to enable us to dispense with this proclamation as soon as possible". On June 27, 1975 you repeated this promise with the words, "I trust it will be possible to lift emergency soon". Along with this, you said, "I should like to assure you that the new emergency proclamation will in no way affect the rights of law-abiding citizens".

On this day, June 26, 1976, one year after, your actions have shown that you have no intention to live by your words. All the actions of the Government of India, of which you are now a virtual dictator, are in the exact opposite direction of your solemn promises.

Although there is no internal disorder to be seen, even by your own admission, you have used this fake emergency to consolidate your dictatorial grip and project your son, Sanjay in a disgusting manner. Further more:

- * 1,75,000 innocent people have been put in jails without charges or trial. These include not only opposition party workers, but members of your own party, students, professors, lawyers, doctors, eighty year olds and even a seven year old cripple girl.
- * All new laws passed by your captive parliament are either to put you above the law for any criminal or civil violations, or to deny habeas corpus rights to the citizens of India.
- * The people in prison have been brutally tortured by such barbaric methods as grinding with nail boots, electric shocks, and burning bodies with cigarette butts, and by such sadistic methods as force-feeding urine and solitary confinement. The civilized world weeps at the depravity and disrepute you have brought the country.
- * Elections have been postponed indefinitely, press has been muzzled, peaceful public assembly banned, patriotic organizations like the RAS outlawed, and the Constitution of India has been butchered.
- * Wages of workers have been cut, the landless labour suppressed, small farmers forced to sell their crops below cost of production, small industry squeezed, and the

poor living in slums rendered destitute. Unemployment has soared, while recession is looming on the economic horizon.

* Corruption and terror of your sycophants in your party, Government and police has reached unbearable levels.

All this misery has been heaped on the People of India... for what? From Kashmir to Kanya Kumari, from Kutch to Kohima every Indian is unanimous: It is to save your political skin. Nothing has lowered the prestige of India abroad than this obvious truth.

We, Indians abroad, are protesting here in London to strive to end this tyranny of the people of India. Toward this end we demand:

1. Release all political prisoners
2. Remove press censorship
3. Lift the ban on the RSS and other patriotic organizations
4. Withdraw the emergency and all constitutional amendments passed since June 26, 1975.

Yours sincerely,
Sd/- Friends of India Society
International
Akali Dal & others

'Samachar' Twists Asoka Mehta's statement

The other day 'Samachar' circulated a three line news from Ahmedabad that Shri Asoka Mehta, the Congress(O) Chief had said that he wanted a 'national reconciliation'.

Actually, Shri Mehta had said that talks for reconciliation could start if political prisoners were released. He asserted that such talks between the opposition and the Government could only be on equal footing and not between 'the jailer and the jailed'.

However, the 'Samachar' played the ruling party's game by creating the impression that the Opposition was too eager for talks.

24 more schools closed in Delhi

The Delhi Administration scaled the premises of 24 Shishu Mandirs (Junior Public Schools) in the last week of June just two days before they were to open after summer vacation. This act of official high-handedness and vendetta has thrown more than 500 teachers out of jobs and affected more than 10,000 students whose parents are now knocking from pillar to post to get admission for their wards in the Capital's over-congested schools.

It may be recalled that the Administration had closed down three of the Capital's best higher secondary schools in December last, affecting 200 teachers and 2500 students.

Democratic Opposition Boycotts Rajasthan Civic Elections

On 8th July a meeting of the spokesmen of the four opposition parties was held in New Delhi. Those present were:

Sarvashree Chaudhary Charan Singh, Bhanu Pratap Singh and Brahma Dutt (BLD), Asoka Mehta, Manubhai Patel (Congress-o), N.G. Goray, (Socialist Party) and O.P. Tyagi and Sat Irakash (Jan Sangh).

The following resolution on the forthcoming elections to the various municipalities in Rajasthan was unanimously agreed to:

"The spokesmen of the Congress(C), BLD, Jana Sangh and the Socialist Party view with grave concern the manner in which elections to 37 municipalities in Rajasthan are sought to be organised.

"The Government of Rajasthan announced these elections on 1st July and nominations are to be filed on and from 9th July. A number of prominent persons from these towns are under detention. The Government has refused to release them to facilitate their participation in the elections. In spite of the requests made to the Chief Minister and to the Prime Minister the facilities for campaigning available to the ruling party have been denied to the Opposition. Further there have been a number of cases of intimidation by police of prospective candidates. In brief, conditions of fair and free elections do not exist in the State.

"The opposition considers elections held under such circumstances to be a farce and a fraud on democracy, and resolves to boycott them and appeals to all the voters to register their disapproval by abstaining from participating in the elections in any form.

The spokesmen favoured abstention by the Opposition M.P.s from the next session of Parliament".

June 26 Jitters to the Dictator

The people of the national capital showed their abhorrence of the lawless emergency regime of Mrs. Gandhi by cold-shouldering all the official activity and propaganda on the occasion of the black anniversary of June 26, 1975.

Fearing popular protests, the police raided some 500 houses in Delhi and combed some important centres of the opposition in a bid to round up some 5000 activists. Five hundred arrests could be made. The midnight raids started four days earlier than June 26, in some cases as many as three or four members of the same family including boys were arrested. Ladies were detained in police stations for hours together in a bid to force them to disclose the whereabouts of their menfolk. Thus the police set new record in harassment in a bid to crush the people's sentiments.

The Sangarsh Samiti gave a smashing reply to the Dictator's terror tactics by putting up anti-Mrs. Gandhi posters which had great impact on the capital. The posters appeared even in front of police stations and were in great demand even from highest official quarters showing that the stock of the dictator is indeed very low even in her administrative circles.

A batch of eight volunteers offered satyagraha on the Boat Club grounds close to the President's official residence on June 26. The protesters were carrying black flags and shouted slogans against the emergency.

Youth Congress Gangsters run riot

In a bid to cover up popular resentment over the continuance of a cooked up emergency, the workers of Sanjay Gandhi's Youth Congress stormed the streets and markets of Delhi to coerce the people into flaunting the ruling party flags. However, they condemned themselves more than ever before in the eyes of the people. Here are some examples of their hoodliganism.

a) Traders and shopkeepers were compelled to buy party flags at fabulous prices. A piece costing no more than one rupee was sold at Rs. 7 to 10. Those not flaunting the flag, were fined, depending upon the whims of the individual gang leader. In general, the fines ranged between 10 and 50.

b) Donations were also collected from shops, and trading and industrial establishments. In some cases those who said they were unable to contribute in cash were forced to contribute in kind. A vegetable oil dealer complained that they took away a tin of vegetable ghee from his shop. The amount of cash extracted was as high as Rs. 500 per head. No receipts were issued. Those who wanted to pay in cheques were asked to issue bearer cheques.

c) In most of the cases the Youth Congress gangs spent the money in drinking and dining in the evening. It is well known that in most of the localities, the Youth Congress bosses are known boozers. This has alienated them further from the people.

d) The forced collections have not stopped even after their so-called 'progress week'. Representations by some harassed shopkeepers including ruling party supporters have only resulted in a new system of collective levies on traders' associations instead of individual collections.

e) A comic side of the shameful episode was that many youth congress-wallahs had no idea of the symbol on their party flag. They were either distributing National flag or Congress(?) flag with charka on it or a tricolour without any symbol. But the ruling Congress flag with cow and calf was hardly seen anywhere.

Reports from the States received so far, indicate 15 to 20 thousand arrests of opposition workers all over India.

Posters were put up and anti-emergency literature distributed in all the States. However, the police could apprehend not many while posters were being pasted. Most of the arrests were made during raids on houses. Walls in all important cities like Calcutta, Bombay, Madras, Patna, Lucknow, Varanasi, Jaipur, Bangalore carried such posters for a number of days.

In Ahmedabad 54 MLAs and 5 MPs and the office-bearers of the parties constituting Janata Front violated the ban on processions under the leadership of Shri Babubhai Patel, former Chief Minister. They were promptly arrested. Thousands of people watched the scene in spite of massive police bandobast. People were physically prevented from joining the Satyagrahis. Because of the great excitement prevailing in the city, the police had to release all the Satyagrahis the same evening.

Earlier 2000 workers of the parties constituting the Janata Morcha met in Ahmedabad pledged to work unitely. A similar meeting was held at Baroda. Shri Asoka Mehta, the Congress-C President, was present at both the meetings.

In Amritsar, the Akalis held a massive demonstration and offered arrests. In fact, they are continuing their daily Satyagraha against Emergency since last year. All attempts by the Government to divide their rank and file have boomeranged, so that they are united more than ever before. As a result, the Centre considers the CM, Giani Zail Singh a failure. He has alienated the Sikh peasantry particularly.

FREEDOM OF THE PRESS -- INDIRA GANDHI STYLE

The Maharashtra Government has banned the publication of the Socialist Party weekly 'Janata' and the Marathi weekly 'Sadhana'. Janata had resumed publication recently after closure due to pre-censorship orders in the wake of Emergency proclamation. 'Sadhana' had been valiantly challenging the censorship orders. The two papers were among the few dissenters in the dead sea of uniformity created by Mrs. Gandhi.

NAVJIVAN PRESS SEALED

Similarly, the Gujarat Government has sealed the press of weekly 'Bhumiputra', in Baroda after it won a case against the censorship. Worse still, the Governor's regime has seized Navajivan Press founded by Gandhiji in early twenties. Shri Morarji Desai is the Chairman of the Navajivan Trust which is bringing out Gandhiji's works and doing job work. All the printed stock, account books and record in the premises of the press is being scrutinised. The ostensible provocation for this official vandalism is that the press published the High Court judgement against the Government in 'Bhumiputra' case.

SARKARI ACHARYAS DISAPPOINTED WITH VINOBA

A delegation of 20 Sarkari Intellectuals visited Acharya Vinoba's Faunar Ashram last month to apprise him of the deliberations of the Govt.-sponsored 'Academics' Conference held in Delhi earlier. The 'Academics' conference was obviously a counterblast to the Acharya Kul Sammelan held at Faunar in January. It had asked for the lifting of Emergency.

The Sarkari delegation to Vinoba was led by Dr. V.I. Dutt of the Delhi University and included a few vice chancellors. However, Vinobaji countered them by describing the Sarkari Acharyas' Conference as 'Matsar Kul' - that is one born out of jealousy of the Faunar Conference.

When the Sarkari Delegation tried to dissuade Vinoba from his resolve to go on fast for ban on cow slaughter from September 11, he said it was a national issue and a question of conscience with him.

During the interview, Vinobaji satirically referred to Mrs. Gandhi as Sarvasaktiman Bhagwan (Omnipotent God) and Goddess Durga.

So disappointed were the members of the delegation with the outcome of their mission that after their return to Delhi they dated not report to Mrs. Gandhi which was their original intention.

A Vice Chancellor who was a member of the delegation told some newsmen privately that some of them had to join against their will. It is learnt that Rs. 20,000 were spent on this fruitless yatra.

Vinoba's Rebuff to Ruling Party Workers

Vinobaji expressed similar sentiments to a delegation of 100 prominent ruling Congress workers of Wardha district who called on him on June 25 to request him to reconsider the idea of fast unto death.

Vinobaji replied that he had thought over the matter 'not once but four times'. He told them bluntly, "Your conscience is dead; your brains are empty. You are sycophants of the Government. Baba (Vinoba) is not a sycophant. Baba will say fearlessly, whatever is in the interest of the country. I told the Government about my resolve to go on fast three months earlier".

Vinobaji further told them that he would wait for government's response till 10th September 12 p.m. He further said, "Simply the promise to ban the cow slaughter will not do. The promise must be put into action by December 21".

NEWS FLASHES

MISA Arrests in Ahmedabad

Two Jana Sangh M.L.As and Shri Prabhudas Patwari and Shri Viren J. Shah M.F. were among those arrested in Ahmedabad under MISA.

Raj Narain's Son Arrested

The UP police arrested and beat up the son of Shri Raj Narain M.F., the BLD leader now detained under MISA. Ch. Charan Singh has written a letter to the authorities protesting against the harsh treatment meted out to him.

Journalist's House raided

The Bombay Police raided the house of Shri K.R. Sundar Rajan, an Assistant Editor of the 'Times of India'. He was detained, interrogated and tortured by the police. He had recently presided over a 'journalists' meet addressed by J.P.

Seminar on Constitutional Reforms Banned

The West Bengal Government has banned the holding of the all-party convention on constitutional reforms which was to be held at Malda on July 3 at Malda. The convention was to be addressed among others by Shri Shanti Bhushan eminent lawyer and Congress-C Treasurer.

The Chief Convener of the convention Shri B.K. Sanyal was informed about the ban less than 24 hours before it was to start.

Similarly, a public meeting on constitutional reforms to be held by CPI(M)-led left parties Front at Calcutta on July 13 has also been banned.

Raids on Party offices

June

On 25th/night at about 10 p.m. police searched the office of the AICC(C), 7 Jantar Mantar Road, New Delhi. The residence of the permanent Secretary Shri Balkrishnan was also searched. The offices of the BLD and other opposition parties opposed to the emergency were also searched. Raids on opposition party offices were again made on June 26.

Vital Decision Postponed

Defence services wanted a deep penetration Aircraft, Jaguar of U.K., Mirage of France and Fiat of Italy were the main contenders. Opinion was veering round Jaguar but because of the pressure from B.'s Secretariat the decision has been deferred.

Bansilal's New Regiments

It is reliably learnt that the new Defence Minister Shri Bansilal has mooted a proposal that the existing Army regiments should be broken up. The adverse effect of this proposal on the morale and the cohesiveness of the Armed forces have been brought to the notice of the President in his capacity as the supreme commander.

Shukla's Design Against Indian Express

It is reliably learnt that Vidya Charan Shukla has pressurised Shri K.K. Birla to resign the Chairmanship of the 'Indian Express' group of papers on the plea that because of the sorry state of affairs of the paper, he will have to devote a lot of time setting things right which he has not got because of his other commitments. This will provide an excuse to the Government to take over the management of the Indian Express and to squeeze out Ramnath Goenka, recently a target of attack by Mr. A.R. Antulay, an AICC General Secretary, because of Goenka's association with J.P.

The Story Behind Orissa Governor's Resignation

In a speech on the occasion of annual Visuva Milan of Shri K.K. Mahatab's Oriya Daily, 'Brajatantra', at Bhubaneswar on April 13, Shri Akbar Ali Khan, the then Governor of Orissa, praised Shri Jayaprakash Narayan's patriotic spirit and dedication to the country.

Shri Khan quit his post a few days later because of an earlier clash with the Chief Minister Shrimati Nandini Satpathy over his letter to the Prime Minister levelling serious charges of corruption and maladministration against Smt. Satpathy, her family members and some collaborating high officials including the Chief Secretary, the I.C. Police and Smt. Satpathy's Personal Secretary.

One of the serious charges against Shrimati Satpathy is that she has built a house valued at over Rs. 7 lakhs in Bhubaneswar. It was built under the supervision of IED engineers and a lot of material from Government stores was used in it, the Governor said.

However, Smt. Satpathy claimed that the house had cost her only Rs. 1,68,000 and produced a certificate of construction cost from the Executive Engineer IED. The Governor refuted her claim by sending a plan of the house to the Centre. He pointed out that the cost of the ten bathrooms alone in the new house came to Rs. one lakh.

The Governor also said that Smt. Satpathy had got sanctioned a scholarship of Rs. two lakh to her father Shri K.C. Panigrahi for research on Oriya literature. Rs. one lakh had already been paid to him.

Shri Akbar Ali Khan highlighted the activities of the G's son Babuli by giving several examples. For example, Babuli is nursing Danki constituency in Cuttack district with official help and is treated as a Minister wherever he goes, the Governor pointed out.

The story of motivated raids

The pro-establishment Bombay weekly Blitz has in its front page news story in the June 26 issue described how a noted postess and authoress Mrs. Kamala Das was victim of a motivated police raid. The raid was conducted at the behest of Mr. Ayub Syed, Editor of another Bombay weekly 'Current' who is close to Sanjay Gandhi and inimical to Mrs. Kamala Das as she stopped the publication of her serialised autobiography in his weekly.

However, not all such victims of selective and maleficide raids are as fortunate as Mrs. Kamala Das who has hit front page headlines. She could get her humiliation publicised because a number of authors including Dr. Bala Raj Anand, influential in the Delhi Barbar, sent a telegram to the P.M. And 'Blitz' published it because of its rivalry with the other paper 'Current'.

As Chairman of the Committee defending Mrs. Kamala Das, Dr. Anand put the whole issue in a wider perspective at a press conference by stating that: "Under cover of the Emergency some miscreants had been using the name of the Prime Minister and other leaders to settle old scores. Such people needed to be exposed if only to save the intelligentsia from their vendetta. If a world famous intellectual like Kamala Das, whose family claimed a three-generation record of service for the Congress Party could be thus victimised, what would be the fate of the unknown people of the country?"

While countless people are thus suffering under the Emergency regime, we may take the case of motivated raids on some monopoly houses. Out of 17 big business monopoly houses in India, raids have been conducted only against the following three for reasons mentioned hereunder:

1. The Bafatals had their premises raided mainly because they have refused to sell their 12 per cent shares in the prestigious daily "The Statesman" to the Birlas. Earlier the Binnys had refused to do so. "The Statesman", published simultaneously from Delhi and Calcutta, is the only paper which the Emergency regime has not been able to control directly. The Bafatals are also an eyecore for the establishment because they offered to foot the entire bill of Rs. 8 lakhs for the dialysis apparatus for Shri Jayaprakash Narayan. JI declined the offer politely, since the money had been raised by small collections. Bafatals have also given shelter to Shri B.G. Verghese, former Editor of the 'Hindustan Times' who was dismissed by the Birlas.

2. A number of offices of the House of Bajajs, founded by Seth Jamunlal Bajaj, a close associate of Mahatma Gandhi were raided. It is significant that the Bajajs are considered close to Acharya Vinoba Bhave, the greatest living Gandhian. People think that pressure is being built up on the Bajajs since Vinobaji has decided to go on indefinite fast from September 11. A detailed note on the raids and the treatment meted out to the Bajajs was sent to Vinobaji by Shriman Narayan, a former Governor of Gujarat and son-in-law of the late Seth Jamunlal. Vinobaji has forwarded the letter to Mrs. Gandhi, of course with no reply, so far.

3. The bete noir of the ruling coterie is, of course, Shri R.N. Goenka founder of the House of Goenkas. A number of raids have been conducted against this monopoly house and tax evasion cases launched mainly because of R.N. Goenka's close association with JI. Goenka has been forced to resign from the Chairmanship of his Indian Express group of newspapers. The Express has the largest circulation in India and is published from eight cities. Goenka has been a Congress MP for long and is now an independent MP in the lower House.

A determined bid has been made to ruin him.

While we hold no brief for any of the monopoly houses, one wonders why the fourteen others enjoy a happy rapport with the Government. In fact, they never had it so good, what with myriad tax and excise reliefs.

The biggest monopoly house of the Birlas is the most favourite with the establishment. An enquiry against them has been shelved. One of the Birlas who controlled the 'Hindustan Times' even before the Emergency has been put as Chairman of the Indian Express. He is likely to head the 'Statesman' when the Government succeeds in easing out its present Managing Director and some others. This particular Birla - K.R. Birla - is one of the closest advisers of Shri Sanjay Gandhi.

Incidentally, the senior-most Birla - G.D. Birla - has given a good character certificate to the Indira Government for shelving some of its socialist policies.

Sanjay Favours Siemens

The entire Electronics industry in public as well as private sector is proposed to be brought under the control of one holding company which will be patterned on the lines of the Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL). Foreign participation is also being invited. A British firm and the Siemens, a West German multinational are the main contenders.

However, as a result of the liaison work done by Maruti Consultancy (P) Limited, and the active interest taken by Mr. Yashpal Kapur, and Mr. K.R. Puri Governor of the Reserve Bank, the Government has decided to accept the offer of M/S Siemens.

Menaka Becomes Editor

Shrimati Menaka, wife of Shri Sanjay Gandhi, has decided not to lag behind other members of Mrs. Gandhi's family in making easy money. Before the Emergency, the M's elder son Rajiv Gandhi's Italian wife has already figured in Parliament because of her life insurance assignments fetching her over Rs. 5000 per month. The Maruti Scandal is now too well known all over the world. It has brought Sanjay no less than Rs. 100 million in terms of property and hard cash.

Now Sanjay has helped wife Menaka to float a publishing house with the help of some over-obliging industrial tycoons. The new concern is bringing out two monthly journals, 'Surya' in English and 'Surya Bharat' in Hindi. Menaka has been named the Managing Editor at a salary of Rs. 5000 per month. Interestingly, Menaka's mother Shrimati Anand has been appointed the Managing Director of the new venture. The first issue of the papers will come out on August 15. Each of the capital's three dailies - 'Hindustan Times', 'Times of India', and 'Indian Express' - have been asked to arrange for sale of 15000 copies each of the paper through their circulation departments.

International League for the Rights of Man protests to P.M.

The Headquarter of the International League for the Rights of Man has sent a letter to Mrs. Indira Gandhi to protest against the suppression of human rights in India.

Among the six signatories is Mr. Gunnar Myrdal, the Noble Prize Winner Economist of Sweden and author of the famous book 'The Asian Drama'. Mr. Myrdal has been a hot favourite with Mrs. Gandhi's regime.

as well as that of her father. He has visited India a number of times and his wife was the Swedish Ambassador in New Delhi for a number of years. He has passed through India even during Emergency.

Obviously upset by the criticism of Mr. Myrdal and his colleagues, Mr. T.A. Pai referred to him indirectly at the recent ACC(1) session by saying that he did not understand the situation here.

Here is the text of the letter:-

The International League for the Rights of Man
777 United Nations Place, New York, N.Y. 10017.
February 23, 1978.

To:

E.R. Indira Gandhi,
Prime Minister of India,
New Delhi, India.

Dear Mrs. Gandhi,

As an international organization concerned with human rights everywhere and acting in accordance with the principles of the United Nations to which your country subscribed, we express again to you our concern over the course of events in India. We are convinced we share this concern with supporters of human rights throughout the world who have been puzzled and dismayed by the severe measures of repressing your political opponents.

We regret to say that we have never seen in the course of these months in all the press dispatches we have read and material presented in your name, any acceptable justification for these measures. Your Government speaks of an emergency, of anarchy, of chaos, of threats to the national security, but we have seen few details of facts to bear out those threats.

This is no routine protest on our part, strong as our feelings are whenever democracy is sacrificed to dictatorship rule. It is an appeal rather in the interest of India as well as of fundamental rights, for restoration of these practices which since independence have so signally distinguished your country.

The emergency of June 26 is no longer an emergency with the extension of the decrees of continued imprisonment of the opposition and the censorship of the press. How long do emergencies last? What are the conditions under which they end? These are questions deserving an answer from all those disturbed as we are by the course your Government is following.

We who sign this are mainly U.S. representatives of the League, due to the location of our Headquarters in New York, but we are confident that our representatives in many other countries would join us.

S/- Roger N. Baldwin (Honorary President)
Gunnar Myrdal (Honorary President)
Jerome J. Shestak (Chairman)
Frances R. Grant (Vice-Chairman)
C Edmund Clubb (Advisory Committee)
Donald S. Harrington (Advisory Committee)

INHUMAN TREATMENT OF POLITICAL PRISONERS

COMMUNIST FRONT'S LETTER TO WEST BENGAL CHIEF MINISTER

25 June, 1976

The Chief Minister,
Government of West Bengal.

Dear Sir,

We wish to place before you the following memorandum for your consideration and immediate action. The atrocious and inhuman treatment being meted out to prisoners in jails is causing us deep concern. The prisoners, connected with political parties and mass organisations and democratic movements are being specially harassed and ill-treated. Repeated declarations made by the spokesmen of the Government that they do not recognise any category of prisoners as political cannot wipe out the reality of their existence. Through prolonged and self-sacrificing struggles from the days of British rule political prisoners had established some rights and secured certain facilities. During the Congress regime also after a spell of severe repression inside jails, an understanding was reached between the detainees and the late Dr. B.C. Roy, the terms and conditions of which were incorporated in the jail code. Since 1972 however most privileges were denied to the prisoners and their families. They were subjected to unnecessary hardships and humiliated in various ways. As a consequence, there were numerous hunger-strikes in different jails from time to time. In 1974, after a prolonged hunger-strike, the Minister-in-charge of jails met the prisoners and persuaded them to call off the strike and promised some concessions. Again since the last two months even the meagre concessions have been withdrawn. The situation has so deteriorated that prisoners in Presidency Jail belonging to various political persuasions have been protesting through hunger-strikes, refusal of cooked food, refusing interviews under degrading conditions etc. Forced feeding, solitary confinement, threats etc. are being resorted to by the authorities adversely affecting the health of a large number of prisoners. This dangerous situation must not be permitted to continue and a solution must be found by the Government without delay. We urge upon the Government: 1) to restore the position as it existed earlier, 2) to hand back the kitchen management to the prisoners - a privilege enjoyed by them since British days, (3) to allow them interviews once a week across the table instead of through the wire-nets 4) to permit them newspapers, books, literature, 5) to arrange for prompt medical treatment in outside hospitals whenever necessary, 6) to discontinue solitary confinement, 7) to provide facilities for exercise & sports and free movement at fixed hours, 8) to grant the detainees a monthly allowance for expenses inside jail and also family allowance, 9) to give higher classification to political prisoners irrespective of their social status, 10) to confine the detainees in such jails in the State, where it is not difficult for their relatives to meet them once a week. Transferring and scattering them as a punitive measure as is being done in a number of cases, should cease.

Whilst urgent steps are taken along the above lines, we are of the firm view that political prisoners should be released forthwith.

Yours sincerely,

Sd/- Samar Mukherji (CPI(M))
Mukham Paul (RSP)
Shridh Kullick Choudhury
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Indira Gandhi's Year of FailureSunday Observer London

By Zahir Masani, Author of a recent biography of India's Prime Minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi reports about the one year of Emergency

Those who had viewed Indira Gandhi's emergency rule either as a temporary aberration or as a potentially radical step have little cause to celebrate its first anniversary. For by now it is clear that this peculiar blend of Oriental despotism and Western style fascism is a logical, if bizarre, culmination of tendencies that have long been dominant. India continues to be governed, though far more ruthlessly, by the same corrupt breed of politicians and bureaucrats who manipulated three decades of parliamentary government - not even the ruling dynasty has changed. And Government policy continues to serve, only far more overtly, the exploitative interests of the agrarian and industrial elites who have traditionally dominated the Congress Party.

Political repression, a constant feature of Congress rule since independence, has reached new heights, with about 200,000 political prisoners held without trial, the widespread use of torture, murder and other police atrocities, and the abrogation of all civil rights. The enforcement of this law and order depends increasingly on paramilitary forces responsible to the Prime Minister's Secret service, and on the gangsters of the Youth Congress, led by Mrs. Gandhi's son and heir-designate.

The police force has undergone a major purge in the last year, with 5125 of its members retired in the public interest, according to a recent Government statement. More ominous is the close liaison between the heavily-armed, 2,50,000 strong Border Security Force and the notorious Research and Analysis Wing of the Prime Minister's Secretariat. Though intended to patrol border areas, the BSF is now quartered in major cities and notably in the capital.

Can this massive resort to repression claim any mitigating social or economic benefits? Some Western observers seem to think it can. A recent World Bank report advocates increased aid to India on the supposition that 'conditions are once again ripe for an upturn in the growth rate of the economy'. The report praises 'vigorous Government action', to control inflation, and notes with approval the liberalisation of imports, budgetary incentives to indigenous and foreign private investors, increased administrative efficiency, and improved labour discipline since the ban on strikes.

Although no dictator since Mussolini has failed to claim credit for administrative discipline, the shallowness of such claims continues to elude naive outside observers. Indira Gandhi herself seemed to have fewer illusions when she confessed at a recent conference of government officials: 'I have a feeling, confirmed by many visitors, that the initial alertness has slackened, even in the railways. The trains no longer run on time; and in the long term, the absence of public accountability can only increase administrative corruption and slackness.'

Even more transparently designed for foreign consumption is the government's rhetoric on population control, especially as its current expenditure on family planning, as on other social services, is far below previous levels. The long record of India's family planning shows conclusively that the birth rate falls only in areas where mass living standards are first raised and not the reverse. According to present life-expectancy estimates, an average Indian needs to have seven children to ensure that he has one surviving son in his old age, and in the absence of any other social security, procreation remains the only social insurance available to India's poor.

The use of compulsion cannot overcome these basic determinants, unless it envisages forced sterilisation on a massive scale; and the Government itself admits, that it lacks the machinery for this. All that can be expected therefore, is the present random sterilisation of unsuspecting or defenceless victims, most of whom belong to underprivileged and minority groups.

Leading Indian economists like Ashok Mitra (former Chief Economic Adviser to the Government) point out that the regime's economic claims are equally deceptive. The temporary halt in inflation is based on a record food harvest due to the best monsoon since 1970, a windfall for which emergency rule can hardly take credit. Prices, nevertheless, remain high, while per capita availability and consumption of foodgrains have dropped lower than for any year since 1967. The main result of the Government's deflationary measures has been to cripple the purchasing power of the masses.

Drastic wage-cuts, the laying off of about 275,000 workers and the abolition of collective bargaining are social costs which may not worry profit-motivated investors. What is bound to concern them, however, is the fact that India is in the throes of its worst demand recession since independence. Production has been cut back in many industries; 23750 million worth of equipment lies idle; and savings and investment rates remain stagnant.

Economic stagnation and the vicious circle of inflation and recession are inherent in a system which protects the high profits of farming and business elites, while wasting the vast resources and manpower which a redistribution of income and wealth would mobilise. The regime's latest attempt to square the circle is a Brazil-type, export-oriented growth strategy, relying on foreign investment, imports and markets, and channelled increasingly through foreign multi-nationals. Such a strategy might produce superficial growth, but only at the cost of creating a semi-colonial dependence on foreign inputs and fluctuating foreign demand, while diverting production from the basic consumption needs of the Indian masses.

Based as it is upon a single bumper harvest, the fragile stability of the Indian economy could be shattered by a single monsoon failure. The present recession would then be compounded by renewed inflation, igniting the mass discontent that smoulders beneath the surface. The resulting explosion might well produce a political crisis more serious than that of June 1975, which even the formidable steel frame of emergency rule may be unable to contain.

Precise political alternatives are less easy to identify, now that effective opposition has been driven underground. The new federation of non-Communist opposition parties led by the 73 year old J.I. Narayanan may boost the morale of its members, whose separate organisations have been slashed by a combination of repression and deflection. But its chief asset, Ji's popular charisma, suffers from the fact that his five month imprisonment has left him a permanent invalid attached to a kidney machine.

With increasing polarization between Left and Right, and the consolidation of the latter/Ars. Gandhi there are signs of greater cohesion and fresh

(around) thinking within the left opposition, which is now the main target of government repression. There has been unprecedented cooperation between sections of two main Communist parties - The Communist Party of India (Marxist) and the Maoist CPI (Marxist Leninist) - now that their differences over parliamentary versus underground tactics is an academic point. Though the Moscow-controlled CPI remains under strict orders to support the Emergency, its leadership faces mounting rank and file discontent, especially since the arrest of some of its own trade unionists. Until these realignments produce a coherent alternative on the Left, however, the most likely successor to the Congress remains the Army.

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