

George Fernandes Underground Bulletin

I

"The arrest of Shri Jayaprakash is unfortunate. He is no ordinary worker. He has forsaken all for the sake of the deliverance of his country. His industry is tireless. His capacity for suffering is not to be excelled"

Mahatma Gandhi in "HARIJAN" in March, 1940.

"I would have no hesitation in admitting that non-violence of the brave, if practised on a sufficiently large scale, would make violence unnecessary, but where such non-violence is absent, I should not allow cowardice clothed in Shastric subtleties to block the development of this revolution and lead to its failure."

Jayaprakash Narayan in his letter from the underground addressed "To All fighters of freedom" in early 1943.

"I shall risk violence a thousand times rather than risk the emasculation of a whole race." —Mahatma Gandhi.

"The real guarantee of democracy is the faith of the people in democracy, the strength of the people, the capacity of the people to run democracy, the capacity of the people to manage their affairs themselves. This is not happening in our country. And, as we are going today, I do not think this a great going to happen in the future either; and this is a great danger. Out of this anything may emerge, even a dictatorship of the left or the right, one does not know. Just because the people participate once in five years or a given number of years in the election of their representatives, you cannot say there is democracy."

Jayaprakash Narayan addressing Members of Parliament on September 23, 1958.

"When Herr Hitler came to power in Germany, it was easy enough to notice how those brave and valiant and thinking Europeans belonging to the Socialists and Communist parties had lost all their manhood and, although I regret to have to say this word,

they behaved more or less like rats, scurrying to and fro for shelter from Hitler.”
—Rammanohar Lohia.

A fascist dictatorship has been clamped on our land. That the daughter of Jawaharlal Nehru should present herself as the dictator need not cause any consternation or surprise. Many of us had seen this coming over the years, and only the politically naive would have failed to see the inexorable drift towards dictatorship during the past seven years since Mrs. Nehru Gandhi set up her own party of defectors, opportunists, time servers and sycophants with a large sprinkling of the riffraff and other scum of our society. The few good people who lingered on in her party and occasionally gave vent to their convictions, only helped to bring out in sharper focus the real character of Mrs. Gandhi's party which shamelessly usurped the name of the once great party of India's freedom fighters.

Jayaprakash Narayan, the tallest Indian alive, is in prison detained under the draconian Maintenance of Internal Security Act (MISA) under which recently some smugglers have also been detained. Several thousand leaders and workers of the Congress (O), Jan Sangh, Bharatiya Lok Dal and Socialist Party have been detained either under MISA or the equally draconian Defence of India Rules. A few members of Mrs. Nehru Gandhi's own party, particularly members of Parliament, have also been jailed as are many newspaper editors, lawyers and others not aligned with any political party.

The blanket censorship on all news has been imposed for the first time in living memory. Even the British Rulers had not imposed such censorship when the country was fighting for its freedom. Jayaprakash Narayan and Morarji Desai are on *fast* inside the prison since June 26, but the outside world has not been informed of this fact or of the state of their health. The jailed leaders have been removed to unknown places and are held incommunicado from everyone. Neither their wives and children are aware of their whereabouts nor have lawyers been permitted to meet them to file habeas corpus petitions in law courts. In fact, *there is no rule of law any more*. The fundamental rights have been crushed under the high heels of Mrs. Gandhi's dictatorial boots.

The State-owned All India Radio, TV networks and other media have become peddlers of crass lies and tendentious propaganda. *Madam Indira Hitler* is her own Goebbels, and her every utterance is a damned perverted lie which is broadcast to the nation a hundred times over in true Goebbellian style. Though lying and deceit and black-mail have been Mrs. Nehru Gandhi's principal political weapons, she has excelled even herself in the manner in which she has reacted first to the Allahabad High Court

judgement unseating her for indulging in election corrupt practices, later to the Supreme Court's refusal to give her the unconditional stay on the High Court judgement and now by imposing her fascist dictatorship. Even Idi Amin of Uganda looks an amateur when weighed against the actions and utterances of Mrs. Nehru Gandhi.

It is obvious that the country is still to recover from the trauma of the developments since the early hours of June 25, 1975, the blackest day yet in our nation's long and tortuous history, though some may still consider January 30, 1948 as the blackest day. But when Gandhiji was felled by assassin's bullet, it was the final admission by his opponents of the triumph of his ideas and philosophy. When Mrs. Nehru Gandhi administered the *coup de grace* to what was left of Indian democracy, for the moment at least evil had triumphed over good and all that is indecent our society. Mrs. Nehru Gandhi is the personification of that evil while Jayaprakash Narayan symbolises the good.

It is equally obvious that the political leadership had either not anticipated, and in any event not prepared itself for such a quick transition of the country to fascist dictatorship. All politics, including the politics of the radical phrase mongers, had come to mean a few seats, and for some their own personal seats, in Parliament and legislatures and other elective councils. No party is on record having given any serious thought to the onward creep of fascism in the country under Mrs. Nehru Gandhi's leadership. India is Indira and Indira is India was not coined after the Allahabad High Court judgment. The whole country was plastered with millions of posters with that legend during the 1971 Lok Sabha elections. The elections to the State legislatures after the war with Pakistan over Bangla Desh were to seek another poster with a picture of Mrs. Nehru Gandhi with the legend: "I seek another mandate from the states." When the National Committee of the Socialist Party met to analyse the election results, I was to tell the Committee that the picture bore resemblance to Hitler's picture sans the moustache and the hair brushed at an angle to cover a part of the forehead. One can still verify this by using a brush on the picture.

In West Bengal, the rigging of the poll; the use of strong arm methods to beat opposition party workers, particularly the workers of the CPI (M); the physical liquidation of hundreds of opposition party workers, with the CPI (M) suffering the largest number of casualties; the take-over of hundreds of trade union offices from the CPI (M) and Socialists by Mrs. Nehru Gandhi's party's ruffians; preventing opposition parties from carrying on their legitimate political activity were all acts indicative of the steady growth of fascism. It is not Mrs. Nehru Gandhi's fault if we failed to recognise the

steady steps of the fascist demon and got lost in our own small squabbles and foibles.

The brutal tactics employed to crush the railway men's struggle during May, 1974 shook the Europeans and Japanese, perhaps, more than it brought any fresh awakening among our own politically oriented people. Here was fascism at work in its most crude style. The use and misuse of the Radio, TV, Newspapers, bureaucracy, professional thugs, prostitute journalists and Indira Congress strike breakers, the MISA, the DIR, withholding of earned wages, throwing the workers and their families out of their houses, mass arrests—if all this was not a dress rehearsal for total fascist take over, what was it? But most people, including genuinely militant trade unionists dismissed it all as just some excess show of strength on the part of the Government. Again, we failed to see the coiled cobra of fascism even while it kept hissing and biting.

The killings of the youth and protesters in Gujarat and in Bihar, the shooting of workers, peasants, harijans all over the country, the promulgation of DIR and MISA, the total control and the use for partisan ends of All India Radio and TV and DAVP were not just straws in the wind. It was fascism asserting itself and numbing the people, section by section, group by group. Mrs. Nehru Gandhi had mastered her *Mein Kampf*, while the opposition parties did not even know what their democracy meant.

All this is not said here to apportion blame, but only to highlight the fact that what happened on June 26, 1975 is not a temporary aberration on the part of Mrs. Nehru Gandhi which will be corrected in the near future. We are now living under a cold, calculating and ruthless fascist dictatorship, and there is only one way to fight it.

At this point, it is necessary to say a word to the CPI (M), DMK, PWP, RSP, Forward Bloc and other big and small parties. The juggernaut has apparently moved past them without hurting them, But that is an illusion. The same kind of illusion was created by Hitler. First, he attacked the Jews, then the Communists, the Socialists were next, and thereafter it was the turn of the Christian Democrats. And before anyone knew what was happening, he had wrapped up the remaining intellectuals, trade unionists and other dissenters. Of course, Mrs. Nehru Gandhi would not mind letting a few purely "local" parties and groups keep functioning for the present. That will enable her to play Hitler well since these parties would firstly not join the movement against fascism and secondly serve as a window dressing to her "democracy," But it is only a matter of time before they will be overwhelmed and ~~finished off~~, because there can be only one

leader, one philosophy and one party in the fascist order. Mrs. Nehru Gandhi's mantor, Herr Hitler has said it in the most unequivocal terms.

The question, therefore, is what do these parties, particularly the CPI (M), DMK and the Akali Dal want to do? make a compact with Mrs. Nehru Gandhi like Stalin did with Hitler? This is not said to blame Stalin but only to remind that Hitler attacked Russia even before the ink had dried on that infamous agreement.

Mrs. Nehru Gandhi has, of course, announced that she has finally worn her dictator's petticoat because that is the only way to save democracy. The words have a familiar ring about them. In January this year, a neighbouring country called Bangla Desh gave birth to another Oriental despot named Mujibur Rehman. His birth cry was no different from that of the latest addition to the fairly large family consisting of Idi Amin, General Franco, General Ne Win and a host of others from the banana republics of Latin America or the newly emerging countries of the African continent. Hitler and Mussolini also took absolute power in their hands to protect democracy and, like Mrs. Nehru Gandhi, to herald "socialism."

Despite her claim to illiteracy in the matter of democratic rights and values, Mrs. Nehru Gandhi cannot be completely oblivious of the fact that an evil road cannot lead to a good end. After all, she could not have stuffed her ears with cotton while Mahatma Gandhi went on preaching his philosophy on ends and means, even if she spent most of the years of the freedom struggle gallivanting in Europe. Her claim to participating in the freedom fight is just so much hogwash and a lie meant to impress the gullible. Either the British had extraordinary soft corner for her or she carefully stayed away from all struggles that, for one who claims to have organised the dolls on her baby cot to face the onslaught of the British bullets, she should have been in prison only for six hours in her entire life. Anyway, the point is that a wrong road cannot reach the right end nor can a hundred lies lead to the discovery of one truth,

The reasons for Mrs. Nehru Gandhi's imposing a dictatorship are not very hard to find. Firstly, she is power mad. She cannot survive without power. Secondly, she has now realised that opposition unity in some form or the other is inevitable and this would mean her defeat at the polls. Gujarat has demonstrated this. Jayaprakash Narayan's leadership has given a credibility to the opposition that it lacked since the demise of Dr. Rammanohar Lohia.

An alternative at the centre was clearly emerging and against the background of the total erosion of her own credibility, there could be no

doubt about her party getting a real drubbing at the polls. A defeated Indira Congress would disintegrate before one could count ten, for her party is no organisation, it is only a combination of opportunists buttressed by the governmental machinery.

Thirdly, Mrs. Nehru Gandhi is genuinely worried that once out of power she and her kind would be subjected to a searching judicial investigation for corruption, nepotism and for a hundred other crimes that fall within the purview of the Indian Penal Code, and other laws of the land. Her own name is linked with the Nagarwalla scandal, Maruti scandal, smugglers' operations, Dharma Teja's deals, Mink Coat, diamond necklace and what have you. Investigations by a new government into the Lalit-narain Mishra murder mystery and the dud bombs thrown into the car of the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court will bring about startling disclosures that could shock the world. The Time Capsule with a doctored version of the lives and times of the Nehru dynasty will be unearthed to show in all their naked ugliness the vanity and obsessions of a small woman.

The Russians who were the first to welcome the fascist order in India have also many stakes in keeping India a destitute nation, an objective Mrs. Nehru Gandhi is accomplishing with ruthless efficiency. Their foreign policy objectives of containing China and building a network of military bases around her are also interlinked with continuance of Mrs. Nehru Gandhi in power. To the Russians, all revolution ends in Moscow's Red Square. Currently, they are shipping arms to Uganda's village tyrant Idi Amin even while they are welcoming the emergency of Gdi Amin's counterpart in India. Only recently, a Soviet leader was on a secret visit to Taiwan to forge links with the regime of Chiang Kai Shek's son as a part of Russia's anti-China policy. In any case, the Russians have always preferred to deal with dictators, be they of the fascist brand or stamped in their own trade mark.

Be that as it may, the most important thing now is that every Indian be made aware of the fact that the country has finally come under the heels of a fascist dictator. For unless this awareness is created the struggle against fascism will not be effective. This is not to say that the struggle must wait. The fight must be launched immediately, every where, and in every possible way. But at the same time, the education of the people must go on in full vigour.

It is equally important to realise that all conventional political activity in India is now a thing of the past. With one stroke, all political parties, save the dictator's own have been made redundant and if they have not yet been disbanded, it is not because there is no desire or will to do so, but only

because Mrs. Nehru Gandhi wants to her own time schedule. Even assuming that the parties are allowed to continue, of what use is a political party which is told in clear-cut terms that it should never aspire to political power? In Mrs. Nehru Gandhi's scheme of things, some parties may even be allowed to lead muted and castrated existence. This way, while enabling her to flaunt her "democratic" colours to the cynical world outside, also, satisfy the little egos of some little men in the country whose politics has never been much more than some variation of shadow boxing.

The point is that resistance to dictatorship has never been possible through overt political activity. Much of the organisation and activity will have to be underground, while at a latter point of time some form of open resistance may also be attempted. This is not to say that we should right away disband our parties because their existence has now become obsolete. On the contrary, the cadres of the parties should be mobilised at once to involve them and the masses under their influence in whatever form of struggle that may be possible at the local level.

With the leading cadres of most parties, except the CPI(M), in prison, there are bound to be problems in organising such resistance. The censorship of news and the total blackout on the radio will come in the way of any coordination being achieved. But that is how it is in all dictatorships. The British were colonialists, but they were not fascist dictators, and, therefore, the struggle against the British could be conducted in more congenial conditions. Individually too, the British generally had a conscience, a thing that Mrs. Nehru Gandhi either was not born with or learnt to live without a long time ago. The British colonial rulers were at least answerable to their own people back home, but the new Indian despot is a law unto herself and has only toadies around her. When we fought against British imperialism, we had sympathy and support from most people of the world, today, the nations have developed new values in which individuals liberty does get bartered in returns for better trade agreements.

The struggle against the Indian fascists will, therefore, be a hard and difficult one. While we should strike for a quick victory, we should at the same time be prepared for what may in fact turn out to be a long drawn struggle.

How does one go about it all?

Firstly, we have to forget our own political and personal angularities, and get together all those who are willing to fight against fascism. For this purpose, anti-fascist peoples committees must be set up. These committees

must be set-up at the local level, at the village, Panchayat, block and district levels. In a big city like Delhi or Bombay or Calcutta, there could be such committees in every mohalla or a street.

These groups must become the Action Units. Each one of them responsible to itself and to no one else. They will devise their own action plans, if necessary every day or according to the exigencies of the situation.

Action will include:

1) Production and distribution of underground literature. This will be both educative and informative. While educating the people about the evil of fascism, it must also keep reporting on the underground activities elsewhere so that motivation is generated among the people to join the resistance movement. The government's one sided propaganda on the radio and through newspapers must also be countered regularly through these news-bulletins.

(2) Production and a pasting of posters. These will have to be mostly hand-written on old newspapers and wherever possible printed.

(3) Whispering Campaigns. Few things hurt a dictatorship more than whispering campaigns. A whispering campaign does not mean telling lies, like the All India Radio and the Government's press briefings. A rumour is just what it means: an unproved statement. We make the statement that in our opinion is true, and we let the Government come out with an explanation. To illustrate, we know that some of the arrested leaders are fasting in prison, some of them may be on the verge of death, some may even be dead and cremated without their near relations being given intimation. All this happens under dictatorships all over the world. We start a whispering and see that it goes right across the country. We rouse the emotions of the people on the basis of the statement that we believe to be true. We provoke the people to action on the basis of these statements. To give another illustration: We have heard from some sources that railway lines have been tampered with and there has been a derailment killing several passengers. We have reasons to believe this to be true. We make a statement. We tell the people not to travel in trains in the prevailing situation.

When newspapers give false and doctored news, there is no other way to bring out the truth except through a massive whispering campaign.

4) Organising strikes, hartals and bandhs. These will have now to become the order of the day. The fascist government must be told through action that it can receive no cooperation from the working classes. Strikes

and hartals will have to be organised under one pretext or the other. They can be on demands, or against some steps of the management or government. They can be purely political strikes. But everything will have to be done to make the fascist rulers realise that there is no possibility of industrial peace and tranquility under their tyranny.

5) Paralyse the functioning of the government. This will be one of the most important activity of any anti-fascist resistance group. Transport and communications must be choked through every legitimate means. The functioning of the Radio, post and telegraphs and railways must be made impossible. A return to the 1942 spirit is what is called for. Here again, the important thing is to make the fascist rulers realise that they cannot run the country for fascism and their foreign masters, the Soviet Union.

7) Be friend the members of the police and Armed forces. Mrs. Nehru Gandhi and her drummer boys in the country as her masters in Russia have been accusing the opposition parties with trying to play with the loyalty of the Armed forces. Nobody, not even Jayaprakash Narayan, has asked the army to revolt. What has been said is that the Armed forces must not allow themselves to be used to subvert the constitution, to destroy democracy, to impose a dictatorship. This we should continue to say. The Army is to defend the country. Of course, to the Indira Congress, Indira is India, and, therefore, the Army has to defend the throne of Mrs. Gandhi. We refute this heresy against our constitution and against the democratic values. We need not go as far as Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose went when he asked the very same Indian Army to revolt against the British authority which was then the lawfully constituted authority.

Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose is the country's hero, and however much she may hate it even Mrs. Nehru Gandhi has to pay homage to Netaji. Netaji told the soldiers of the Indian Army not to accept orders from their superiors, to desert the Army and join the Indian National Army. And even a Mrs. Nehru Gandhi dare not say that what Netaji did was wrong. Netaji was prompted by the highest considerations of patriotism when he asked the Army to revolt against the then lawfully constituted authority. Netaji did not want the Indian Army to shoot and kill the Indian people. He wanted the Indian Army to be loyal to the Indian people. Jayaprakash Narayan also does not want the Indian Army to shoot and kill the unarmed Indian people, the youth, the students, the women, the workers and the poor. He does not want the Indian Army to be a party to the defilement of our Constitution, to the imposition of a fascist dictatorship, to ending the rule of law in the country. We should talk to the Army and police personnel about these matters. The men of the Army and the police are the flesh of our flesh, the

blood of our blood. They are the sons and fathers, brothers and cousins, uncles and nephews of our own people, the working people, the peasants, the teachers, the students. They are not a foreign army or police. They are a part of us. We must talk to them, befriend them and explain to them the issues involved in the peoples' struggle against fascism.

Secondly, we should take steps to coordinate the anti-fascist peoples' struggle at the state and national levels. This will take time, but without such coordination, it will not be possible to create an adequate leadership to cope up with the demands of the resistance movement. Invariably, this coordination will be at the underground level. But early steps must be taken to bring about such coordinations. For a start, we should establish links with other local units operating in nearby areas. We should be particularly careful to see that leadership contests do not develop while bringing about this coordination. This is no time for ideological quibbling or personality clashes. We have only aim to defeat fascism and to restore democracy with its fundamental freedoms and pluralist political institutions.

Thirdly, we should try to set up as many underground radio transmitter stations as possible. These should be particularly beamed at the rural masses.

Fourthly, all foreign embassies and consulates should be mailed information on the brutalities committed by the fascist dictatorship. The smallest detail should be mailed to all of them, including Mrs. Nehru Gandhi's benefactors, the Russians and their satellites. This should be done to make all governments in the world know the truth of the fascist dictatorship in India, but even more to let them know the extent of resistance activity so that the credibility of the fascist Nehru Gandhi administration in the eyes of world is shattered. Our efforts should be to make this fascist government an outcast in the eyes of the civilised world, just as the South African or Rhodesian governments are. The world should also be saved from the empty moralistic sermons of the woman, the hollowness of whose head is matched by the wickedness of her mind.

Fifthly, we should formulate the slogans of our resistance movement. Our struggle is 1) for democracy, 2) for fundamental rights, 3) for rule of law, 4) against fascist dictatorship, 5) against Russian intervention in India's internal affairs, 6) against corruption, 7) against rising prices, 8) against unemployment.

Mahatma Gandhi's methods will guide us in our struggle. Mahatma Gandhi will be the unseen leader of our movement to liberate the country from fascist tyranny. It will be Mrs. Nehru Gandhi versus Mahatma Gandhi.

July 1, 1975

George Fernandes.

GEORGE FERNADES TO INDIRA GANDHI

II

Mrs. Indira Nehru Gandhi,
New Delhi

I note that I have been particularly singled out for a lot of publicity ever since you assumed the role of a Dictator.

First, the railway strike of May, 1974 is still haunting you. You see in it the grand design of reactionaries to overthrow you.

You know that the railway strike was for the legitimate demands of railwaymen. You know that your own CPI and AITUC who are sworn to defend you and your dictatorship to the last drop of the people's blood were active participants in the strike. When you still keep raking up the railway strike issue and indulge in your perverted and false propaganda after shutting us out from replying your wild accusations, you are also doing great disservice to CPI Chairman S.A. Dange who hailed the May 1974 strike as a great struggle of the working people and compared you to the medieval period rulers of Europe, to CPI M.P. Parvati Krishnan who spent a week in prison and to the thousands of your big and small puppets in the C.P.I.

And, when the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) to which your own Congress scab-unions are affiliated decided to send a fact-finding mission to India, your government, in true fascist style, refused permission to the ITF Mission to enter the country. So, please stop lying on the railway strike.

Second, you have charged that I received large foreign funds during the railway strike in May-June, 1974.

That is the damnedest lie you must have uttered in your whole life of lies. If this were the case, why the hell did you wait for one whole year to make this charge? Produce the evidence, put me on trial, and get me shot if what you say is true. All dictators are congenital liars, but you, Madam, excel them all.

Third, your publicists including the Russian patriots in India have written that I have received dollars from Japanese institutions and American institutions. You have cited two drafts, one for 68,000 dollars and the other for 17,000 dollars cleared by the Bank of Tokyo in June, 1975. You jolly well know that these two drafts were presented to the All India Railwaymen's Federation by two Unions of Japanese railwaymen at the fiftieth annual conference of the Federation in Jodhpur on May 27, 1975. The Japanese Railwaymen's Union (KOKURO) presented the cheque for 68,000 dollars and The Japanese Locomotive Engineers' Union (DORO) presented the cheque for 17,000 dollars. This money was the contribution of individual Japanese railwaymen to their Indian colleagues and though was earlier meant to provide relief to the railwaymen thrown out of employment by you in May, 1974, was actually presented by them for trade union education activities of Indian railwaymen. Six leaders of these two Japanese railwaymen's unions, all militant trade unionists and socialists attended the AIRF Conference as fraternal delegates along with a three-men delegation from the railwaymen's Union of Turkey. How dare you accuse the Japanese railwaymen of being American-stooges? And what perversity of mind you and your propagandists display when you charge me with receiving foreign money? Every paisa of the gift received by the AIRF has been deposited in the bank and is lying there. Madam dictator, can you not show even a semblance of respect for truth and decency, even assuming that in your desperate quest for power, you have to indulge in the most calumnious campaign against me.

Fourth, I am supposed to have written to Chairman Mao of the Republic of China complaining about the suppression of the railway workers strike by you in May last year.

Before dealing with Mao, let us have the facts straight. Are you suggesting that you did not suppress the railwaymen's struggle by using repressive measures unheard of the recent history of our country which

George Fernandes to Mrs. Gandhi

made even President V.V. Giri get disgusted with you and which were condemned by the working people all over the world including the WFTU of which your patrons, the Russians, are the god fathers.

And, Madam Dictator, will you please publish the text of my letter to Mao and provide further evidence of your perverted mind in dealing with your political opponents.

In December, 1974, there was a news report in the Indian press dated Hongkong that the Chinese railwaymen were on strike to press their demands and that the army had refused to break the strike. The All India Railwaymen's Federation staged a demonstration before the Chinese Embassy to condemn the reported efforts of the Chinese government to break the strike by using the army and to extend moral support to the Chinese railway workers. I led this demonstration. A memorandum addressed to Chairman Mao was sought to be handed over to the Chinese Embassy officials, but the Embassy had closed its gates on us. On the advice of your police which was guarding the Embassy gates, the memorandum enclosed in an envelope was thrown into the Embassy compound. The memorandum extended support to the Chinese railway workers, called upon Chairman Mao not to suppress the workers, and urged that the railway workers' demands should be met. And in that context, the memorandum referred to your suppression of the strike of Indian railwaymen.

(Incidentally, in January, 1975, I was to learn that the story of the Chinese railway workers' strike was a Russian canard planted through your courtesy in the Indian press with a view to damn the Chinese government.)

And Madam Dictator, if your effort is to suggest that I am a Chinese agent too, besides being an American agent, may I remind you that I am the same George Fernandes about whom your father publicly apologised to China's Prime Minister Chou En Lai. The white paper on the India-China dispute contains your father's letter to the Chinese Premier.

Fifth, you have, in a letter to some leader of the Muslim League in Kerala refuted my charge that you are the most communal-minded person. My charge against you has been publicly made during the last three years, both in my speeches and writings and has been carried by the national press on many occasions. But you waited till you became a dictator and imposed press censorship to refute my charge. I repeat my charge that during the last war with Pakistan, you as the Home Minister issued a secret circular

which required all public sector undertakings and government departments to see that Muslims were not employed in the key installations and positions.

Accordingly, Muslims working as Controllers in the BEST Undertaking in Bombay were removed from their positions and put to work as Inspectors. Muslims employed at Vaitasna Water Works of the Bombay Municipal Corporation were removed from their positions and transferred to the city, away from their families. Muslims in the Bhaba Atomic Centre were terminated from service with one month's pay in their hands. I intervened on behalf of these Muslim workers with the managements to no avail.

I also repeat my charge that Muslims in India are denied equality of opportunity and in the matter of jobs in Army, police and other public services, they are discriminated against. I can prove this by facts and figures. The point is how to do it in a dictatorship.

Lastly; may I demand that you show the courage to publish this note and be damned.

July 27, 1975

—GEORGE FERNANDES

III

WORKERS AGAINST FASCISM

Dear Comrades,

It may seem to you that all our hopes for a better life have been dashed to the ground, what with two emergencies, the DIR and MISA and the fascist dictatorship of Mrs. Nehru Gandhi to boot. But to me it only means more bitter struggles from now on—and not only to protect and advance the workers' interests, but to restore democracy all that it implies to our people.

It is a measure of the weakness of our trade union movement that when the biggest ever blow was struck against democracy and, therefore, against the working people by the fascist Indira Congress we should have failed to fight back in defence of our democratic rights. This demonstration of our failure to rise against the fascist dictatorship will only embolden the enemies of the working people further, and make them take steps that will strike a

mortal blow at the militant trade union movement in the country. Unless we regroup our forces at once, and through mass action and through underground activity serve notice on the fascist that the workers will not only fight back, but will spear-head the revolutionary struggle to re-establish the rule of law and democratic values in our country.

It is but natural that the Congress's INTUC, the Moscow Communist's AITUC and the Congressmen in the HMS should have met the dictator in Delhi and after making a public declaration of absolute obedience to the dictator's wishes surrendered at her feet all the rights and privileges that the workers had won through years of hard and bloody struggle. To the Congressmen who have only a record of treachery to the working people behind them, it means nothing to surrender rights won by the workers through a life-long struggle. But the role of the Moscow Communists in the present situation, though not unexpected, is, nevertheless, most despicable. Of course, it is in character for them to support a fascist take-over in India and in the process find themselves in the ennobling company of fascist caricatures like Shiv Sena Thackeray who, I note has been among the first to fall at the feet of the dictator and hail her. After all, Stalin had made a compact with Hitler and the Indian Communists had then discovered hidden virtues in Hitler and his fascist dictatorship. Later, when Hitler attacked their Fatherland Russia, these ragamuffins declared that the war had now become a patriotic war (for the Moscow patriots) and proceeded to betray Mahatma Gandhi and the struggle for India's independence by playing the role of British stooges.

The history of fascism the world over provides ample evidence that the working and the toiling people are the first and the worst victims of the fascist order. The employers and the bureaucrats are given a free hand to exploit and browbeat the working people, and we have already been witnessing it in our country. It is no consolation to us that a few employers and some bureaucrats who may invite the displeasure of the dictator will also meet a tragic fate. As a class they will thrive and proliferate as the poor and the working people are subjected to greater and more cruel exploitation and humiliation.

Already, we are seeing evidence of the repression against the working people. Strikes have been banned. Workers cannot hold their meetings and demonstrations. The Central and State Government employees have been denied their Dearness Allowances, even while the prices of essential commodities keep galloping. Congress and CPI stooges have been lined up to ask the workers to work for more hours at lesser wages. In the name of enforcing discipline, officers have been given the widest and blanket powers

to remove workers. Premature retirement and massive victimisation is now the official-policy of the Government. And what the Government does today, all employers do tomorrow.

One reason why a dictatorship is most ruthless towards the working people is that it fears the organised strength of the working class more than that of any other section of the people, save the youth. Which, of course, casts a heavy responsibility on the working people in so far as the struggle for restoration of democratic values is concerned. And this I want you to bear in mind constantly.

I do not know how long or how hard the fight against fascism in India, will be, though I know that it will not be an easy victory. Some of us will have to pay with our lives before others taste the fruit of victory, and many who are in prison may not come out alive from behind the bars. Much will depend on the working people themselves, on the extent of our determination to resist fascism and on the sacrifices we are willing to make to restore the fundamental freedoms.

There is one other warning that I would like to give. It is only a matter of time before the Indian dictator strikes at our unions and liquidates them. All unions will be converted into the puppets of dictator by merging them into the scab unions run by the dictator's hirelings and their stooges of the right Communist Party. Trade unions, in their own little way, are levers of power, even if they are currently lying prostrate because of their own faults. But the dictator's men are aware of the power of the unions; they are aware that sooner or later the unions will realise their strength and join the struggle against fascist dictatorship. So why not liquidate them before they are able to consolidate? With all their selfishness and petty-mindedness, I do not know if many of our otherwise militant trade unionists will be able to resist the dictator's efforts to destroy the free trade unions and to make them a part of her grand circus. Some of them may even go along with the new dispensation and begin singing the virtues of the dictator. The workers must beware of these dangers. We should at once meet and consider our course of action in the face of these inevitable developments. We should immediately educate our members on those matters and prepare them to counter the dictator's moves.

How do we do this?

First, we should become more active trade unionists. Spend more time with the workers devote greater attention to their problems, keep the offices functioning better than before.

Second, we should continuously educate the workers on the evils of fascism and create in them the awareness required to fight the fascist menace.

Third, we should intensify our agitation on the economic demands of the workers. Call the meetings of the workers, formulate new demands, forward them to the managements, and prepare the workers for struggle. We should not be worried if the Government attacks us when we do this. That will only help in educating the workers that a fascist state is a greater enemy of their interests than the employer. If we do not prepare the demands and begin agitating on them, the workers will not be able to realise the anti-working People character of fascism so clearly.

Fourth, we should create cells among the workers to take part in regular anti-fascist activity. In my note of July 2, 1975, I have elaborated on our anti-fascist struggle. The Action Groups proposed in that note should be set up among the workers. We should be particularly careful to see that these Action Groups are not infiltrated by fascist agents. There is hardly any managing committee of our unions which does not have police informers. Therefore, much screening will have to be done before we set up the Action Groups.

Fifth, while we keep on initiating action against fascist rule, we should also be quick to jump into any movement that is a part of the anti-fascist struggle. For instance, if in any town or district or State, there is a wide-spread-peoples' movement, we should at once join the fray by organising strikes, erecting barricades and making common cause with others. Failure to this will result in irreparable damage to the anti-fascist peoples' cause.

Sixth, we should raise resources to help the anti-fascist struggle. Special collections must be made every month to help the Action Groups to produce underground literature, to print and stick posters of Gandhiji's pictures, to organise satyagraha, to provide financial help to the dependants of people who may become victims of the brutalities of the fascists or who may be incarcerated for long periods.

In the event of the trade unions being taken over by the dictator, it should be possible for us to carry on with most of the above-stated activities, even while we use the forums of the dictator's puppet unions.

There is no time to lose in preparing to combat the dictatorship and to protect the right and privileges of the workers. I note that some of our friends and comrades in the trade unions are working as if they look to the

recent developments as a bad dream, and nothing significant has happened that should make them change their pace and style of work. Such an attitude will be criminal in the present circumstances, and can only help the dictatorship consolidate its strangle-hold on the people.

The working class is a part of the people of the Country. Therefore, while we play our role as the vanguard in the fight against dictatorship, we should at the same time join the masses in the anti-fascist activities. Satyagraha with the immediate response of the masses will remove the fear and sense of helplessness that a dictatorship always tries to create in the people. Every day, every where, as satyagrahis come out to defy the ban and shout defiant slogans against the dictatorship, the fear of the dictator will be replaced by an attitude of defiance and then self-confidence. And that is the point where one will see the beginning of the end of the dictatorship. I have said that we should prepare to send one satyagrahi from every family. And that includes the workers' families too. Through our unions, we should organise batches of satyagrahis from among the members of our families. Aged parents, workers' wives, their brothers and sisters, even their children should be enrolled as satyagrahis. ~~Pack the jails till the jail walls break at their seams.~~ Keep marching to satyagraha till the police decide not to arrest any more. And when that point is reached, the collapse of the dictatorship will become imminent.

I have no doubt that the brave working people of our country, the leaders and members of our unions, the veterans of so many struggles for better living for the working people will rise to the occasion, and play their rightful role in overthrowing the fascist, anti-working-people dictatorship of Mrs. Nehru Gandhi.

Long live the unity of the working people!
Down with the fascist dictatorship of Mrs. Nehru Gandhi!

Yours fraternally,
George Fernandes

August, 1975

READ — COPY — TRANSLATE — CIRCULATE

IV

GEORGE FERNANDES

Dear Friends,

In a few days, it will be two months since Mrs. Nehru Gandhi used power and installed herself as the Dictator. With all the arrogance and foolishness that is the prerogative of dictators everywhere, she declared in the Lok Sabha on July 22 "you have been calling me a dictator when I was not. Now, Yes, I am". It must be said to the credit of the woman that she is clear in her mind about her newly acquired status, while still there are few innocents at large who are looking for signs of an early return to democracy in the country. Let us finally be clear on this one point. Indian democracy was butchered on June 26, 1975 by a woman called Indira Nehru Gandhi, and none alive can now raise it from the dead. Our struggle is to overthrow the dictatorship. Only when we have accomplished that can we lay the foundations of the Second Republic.

As I have reported in my many communications, the battle against the dictatorship has been joined all over the country. I am, of course, aware that co-ordination between various underground groups has not been achieved to our satisfaction. And this because most people are still functioning as party workers. I want everyone that this attitude will have disastrous consequences for our movement. If people have their ideological axes to grind by all means keep grinding them. But within the four walls of your houses please. Where the struggle against the dictatorship is concerned whoever thinks of his party or his group is a traitor to our cause. He is even worse. He is an agent of the dictator. So, Friends, let us forget the parties, and begin to function with a single-mindedness in our struggle against fascism.

Secondly, every one must have by now realised that you cannot have committee meetings and mutual consultations in the prevailing situation. This has created considerable problems. Wherever I have gone, I have been told by political activists that they are awaiting instructions from their respective parties. The Presidents and General Secretaries of all the parties are in prison, so also most members of the national executives, State Executives, even district Committees of these parties. Those who have evaded arrest are not easily available. In these circumstances, who is supposed to give the instruction? Hence the need to have a new hierarchy to assume leadership of the movement. Either, there should be quick mutual consultations, at every possible level or we should have people assuming leadership at various levels. After a time, it may be possible to work out a better arrange-

ment. Just now, the wisest thing to do is for some one to assume leadership at the national level. Similarly at the State, District and local levels. Whosoever is acceptable at each of these levels must be called the Director of the movement. He should function on behalf of the Sangarsh Samiti at the appropriate level. In the event of his arrest, a person earlier nominated by him as the Director should take charge of the movement. The directions of the Director should be implicitly obeyed. This is no time for hair splitting on every suggestions or proposals for action.

Third, the action itself. As is usual in such situations, I find a lot of unnecessary debate on the nature of the movement that is called for in the struggle against the Fascist dictatorship. In some cases, it has been a useful cover for inaction, while in some others it has meant rationalisation of cowerdise. No one has proposed that the votaries of violence should not fight against the dictatorship, nor has it been hinted that those steeped in the techniques of non-violence should nor resort to violence. Every one can choose the method best suited to his genius and, of course, age. There are the 1942 veterans whose bones have turned stiff and muscles gone loose. They need not waste time in conjuring up visions of barnstorming the country. Then there are the youthful enthusiasts who want to set the Ganga and the Cauvery on fire. None need advise them that cold waters catch no fire. The hot blood coursing through their veins may still set the Ganga and Cauvery on fire. The important thing is to act now.

It is my deep conviction that satyagraha is still the best weapon in our hands in our struggle against Dictatorship. Whatever may be ones beliefs and ideological convictions, there can be no difficulty in any one offering satyagraha. Across the country we should at once launch a massive jail going movement. "One satyagrahi from every family" should be the rallying cry. Political parties, trade unions, youth, women's and students' organisations should co-ordinate to enroll satyagrahis. The satyagrahis should be prepared to spend any length of time in prison. People must be educated into realising that if some of us are not prepared to spend time now in prison then all of us will have to spend all our time in the vast prison that the country itself becomes under fascist dictatorship. I have reports that Mrs. Nehru Gandhi is building concentration camp in many parts of the country. The detantion camps in which Pakistani prisoners of war were kept are now being readied for the fighters for democratic freedoms in India.

Every day, batch of three or five people should offer satyagraha. The number of daily satyagrahis should depend upon the reserve list we have. The effort should be to have a list that will enable us to have satyagraha every day for the next six months to one year.

Satyagraha should be offered by distributing anti-fascist literature, shouting slogans and addressing people in the busiest parts of the town or in the main chowk of the village. In cities, if a crowd of five hundred persons witness the satyagraha, within 24 hours, the entire population will come to know of it by word of mouth propaganda. In a city like Bombay, for instance five hundred witnesses means 500 families living in atleast 400 buildings working perhaps in 300 offices, shops and factories, their children studying in several hundred primary and secondary schools and in a few colleges.

The 'formula three raised to the power of eighteen' will work here. If three persons tell a story each in turn to only three others, in a eighteen operations taking, say, eighteen hours, 38,74,20,489 people will have heard the story. Yes, thirty eight crores, seventy four lakhs twenty thousands four hundred and eighty nine. In other words, the entire adult population of the country.

We should constantly remember that fascism's biggest weapon is terror and fear in the minds of the people. Our biggest enemy, therefore, is the fear and terror in people's minds. Whatever it is that the people are afraid of, when thousands upon thousands of them are trying to court imprisonment, this fear of the unknown will cease to bother them. And when that happens, the end of the dictatorship will be at hand.

The Trade unions must come out of their stupor and return to their legitimate activities agitating on the demands of the grievances of their members. Just because Mrs. Nehru Gandhi had become a dictator, the workers' problems have not been magically resolved. In addition to their normal issues, they should now gird their loins to fight for democratic rights and for the release of their arrested leaders.

Mrs. Nehru Gandhi has been monotonously repeating that there are groups—planning sabotage and violence as a part of the struggle to rid the country of her fascist menace. She may be lying as usual when she indulges in such talk. But there is no reason for the non-violent satyagrahis to be upset if there are groups of people who have other plans. Any one who strikes one more nail in the coffin of the dictator is welcome. How he strikes the nail need not become a point of debate. After all, violence does beget violence. Mrs. Nehru Gandhi's rule is based on violence and falsehood. True, it will be finally defeated by truth and non-violence. But as long as it lasts, it will continue to provoke people in a violent upheaval, even if there should be many among us who would consider violence as not so legitimate a way of struggle. We need not be prudish at the sight of Mrs. Nehru Gandhi's illegitimate offspring.

A few do's and donot's before I conclude.

1. Do everything to destroy what is left of the credibility of Mrs. Nehru Gandhi.
2. Constantly ask the people not to listen to All Indira Radio for the news. BBC, VOA, even the Pakistani and Peking Radios may be heard for the news but not AIR.
3. Every bulletin or circular one receives should be duplicated, copied, translated and circulated. Any one who does not keep circulating the bulletins is, to say the least, an ally of the dictator.
4. Make extra efforts to educate the Muslims, other minorities, harijans and adivasis on the real character of Mrs. Nehru Gandhi's dictatorship, and to enroll satyagrahis from among them. Produce bulletins in Urdu for circulation among the Muslims.
5. Raise resources to meet the cost of producing underground literature.
6. Prepare nation wide mailing lists for sending literature and other information.

And remember 'three raised to the power of eighteen.' If three persons tell a story each in turn to only three others, in eighteen operations the whole country will have heard the story. Learn the power of the spoken word.

15th August 1975.

Yours sincerely
GEORGE FERNANDES

V

GEORGE FERNANDES

Dear Comrades,,

The dictator's claws are becoming sharper as her appetite becomes larger. The achievements of years of struggle by the workers are being wiped away with the ordinances of her thumb impressing President.

The hours of work are getting raised. The cost of living index is getting manipulated. The wage freeze is still on. No meetings, no demands,

no struggles—and if you dare, we have the MISA and DIR. Hundreds of our active workers and leaders are in detention. And now comes the ordinance reducing Bonus.

Madam Dictator's Government has come with some facile stupid arguments while justifying reduction of the the quantum of minimum bonus to all workers and fixing the ceiling of 10% to employees in public establishments like LIC, Banks, State Transport, Municipal Transport, General Insurance, Ports and Docks.

And-Madam Indira Nehru Gandhi has ordained that from next year, 'no bonus would be payable by any unit not making a surplus'. You can now trust Rajni Patel, Siddartha Shankara Roy, Devkant Barooh, C. Subramaniam, and other courtiers of Madam Dictator—to interpret this to mean that any employer who makes a big size contribution to the Congi coffers will be allowed to show that he is actually making no surplus and will not have to pay any bonus.

Perhaps to drive home the point that she cares a damned two hoots for the courts of the country and more particularly the Supreme Court, she has now decreed that the decision of the Supreme Court that 'bonus is a deferred wage' is no more valid. Just like the judgement of the Allahabad High Court holding her guilty of corrupt practices and perjury is no more valid.

Any pray, why this new attack on the workers stomachs, on the workers 'hard-won' rights? Listen to what Mrs. Nehru Gandhi has to say—according to her 'payment of bonus in the public sector increases government deficit. In the private sector, the prices are pushed up when bonus is paid. Or, the units become sick and have to be taken over by the Government. And this again increases government's deficit. Both sayings and investment decline and this increases unemployment.' Even Hitler would have been ashamed of this weired logic.

I do not have words strong enough to condemn the dictator's foolish and audacious arguments. I know that lying comes naturally to her. But there is a limit to every thing. If we are to believe this woman, rising prices, unemployment, government deficit, sick industrial units are all because the workers are paid bonus from out of the wealth created by them for their employers

Here we are, damanding bonus to Railway workers, P & T Employees, State and Central Government employees, Municipal and Local bodies

employees. Because bonus is a deferred wage. That is what the Supreme Court said, and that is what it rally is. And now, the Dictator bases her claws and strikes at the stomachs of the workers and of their wives and children.

I wonder what that professional stooge S.A. Dange and his Right Communist stooges in the AITUC will now say to the workers. They have recently formally joined the ranks of the official strike-breakers, the goons of the INTUC. And you can trust them to once again stab the working people in their backs.

Comrades, there is no alternative for us but to fight back this attack on the workers. We must close our ranks and make common cause with all those who are fighting against this Dictatorship. There is nothing to fear but fear itself. The dictator continues to attack us because we are not fighting back. Workers of another generation fought and died and secured for us rights, benefits, and privileges, that we have taken for granted. Are we now going to allow a Dictator to take away from us what other workers won for us? Think and act fast. There is no time to loose.

Down with Mrs. Nehru Gandhi's Dictatorship.

To hell with the stooges of the Dictator!

Workers and Partiot unite & fight against Mrs. Nehru Gandhi's Dictatorship.

Sept 26, 75.

Yours fraternally, GEORGE FERNANDES.

READ—DUPLICATE—TRANSLATE—CIRCULATE

VI

All mail to and from detenees is now being 'critically' studied' by RAW agents to find out the 'morale' of the detenees and their family members.

Kuldip Nayyar was released from detention a few days before the Delhi High Court was due to declare his detention invalid. The High Court has passed strong strictures against Government over the detention of Kuldip Nayyar.

The death toll in the Bihar floods is said to run into several thousands, but the Dictator and her stooges are refusing to speak the truth about the casualties. The Bombay rag CURRENT in its issue of Sept 13. reports film actor Dilip Kumar saying in a moving speech that all 21 (twenty one) members of his gardners family had died in the Bihar floods.

The Times of India of September 13 quotes the wretched Chief Minister of Bihar Jagannath Mishra saying that the 'Bihar floods claimed 117 (one hundred and seventeen) lives.'

Dilip Kumar has no reason to tell lies or to exaggerate. Jagannath Mishra is a disciple of the biggest liar in the country.

If one family lost 21 members, how many thousands would have perished in the floods can be well imagined.

The Socialist International appointed a four man delegation to visit India. The delegation consisted of the former West German Chancellor Willy Brandt, the Irish Leader Dr. O'Brien, Socialist International General Secretary Hans Janischek and International Transport Workers' Federation Secretary M.S. Hoda. The entry of the delegation to India was banned by Mrs. Nehru Gandhi by declaring that this was 'gross interference in the internal affairs of India.'

Incidentally, the military Dictatorship of Chile allowed two Delegations of the Socialist International to visit Chile and to speak up for those detained by the dictatorship.

Obviously Mrs. Nehru Gandhi has more skeletons to hide than even her Chilean counterparts.

The London Times of August 15 has a near full page advertisement signed by 572 leading personalities of the democratic world including 70 members of the British Parliament calling on Mrs. Nehru Gandhi 'to free Jayaprakash Narayan and all political prisoners held without trial.' The advertisement which cost £ 3,000 (Rs. 60,000) was paid for by the contributions from workers, writers, artists, politicians, trade union leaders and other ordinary people.

The Free JP Campaign committee set up in England has Nobel Laureate Philip Noel-Baker as its Chairman. Madam dictator who is mad at this Committee is doing her damndest to persuade Philip Noel-Baker to withdraw from the Committee.

A large number of Right Communists have been put on the pay-roll of RAW and the Russian Embassy to do spying on workers in factories and on workers of Opposition parties. In Bombay, the Shiva Sena and the Right Communists working hand-in-hand as police informers. S.A. Dange and Senapathi Thakre are said to have become members of a Mutual Admiration Society. There is, however, no confirmation of the rumour that Dange has been made an honorary Shakha Pramukh of the Shiva Sena

and that Thakre has been made an honorary member of the Right Communist Party, though it is a fact that both are active members of the madam Dictator's Club.

Thousands of people have gone to prison by offering satyagraha. More will be courting imprisonment in October and November all over the country.

On August 14, 1975 Rajni Patel called a meeting of Bombay and Ahmedabad textile mill owners in Bombay. The mill owners were asked to pay Rs : 3 Crores before September 14 and to keep another Rs : 2 crores available in the 'pipe line' for collection at any time during the coming six months.

The mill owners have paid 3 crores. Money from big industrialists all over the country has been collected during the last month. My information is that Rs. 30 crores have been raised and Rs : 20 crores are in the 'Pipe line.'

Whether these collections are for her 'elections' or for any other purpose, only Madam Dictator can tell.

Rajni Patel promised a 10% rise in the price of the standard cloth to the Mill owners. But Delhi has let him down. It is said that this is only to tell Rajni boy to stop acting too big.

The Right Communist party is poised for major split. J.M. Biswas, former MP from West Bengal and a Dange confidante has fired the first salvo taking with him 2700 party workers in West Bengal, Orissa, Assam, and Tripura. Many Right Communists have started joining the Congress, after the son of the Dictator (Sanjay Gandhi) said in a press interview, 'if you take all the people in the Communist Party, the big wigs—even the not-so-big-wigs—I don't think you would find a richer or more corrupt people anywhere.' The Right Communists are now satisfied that they meet the primary condition of the Indira Congress membership.

WARNING : Trade Unions, Industrialists, and others who may be contributing to the Bihar, Orissa, U.P, flood relief work should set up their own Committees to proceed to the flood affected areas and distribute the relief to the affected people. Contributions to some relief committee based in Bombay's Congress (Indira) House and headed by Rajni Patel are liable to be misused.

The Karnataka High Court has begun their hearing into the habeas corpus petitions of Madhu Dandavate (Socialist), L.K. Advani (Jan sangh),

S.N. Mishra (Congress) and Atal Behari Vajpayee (Jan sangh) members of Parliament on Sept 29. The first three of them are lodged in Bangalore Central Jail since Sept. 22 when they were flown to Bangalore from Delhi by a special chartered plane.

Mr. M.C. Chagla is arguing for the detainees. The newspapers are naturally prevented from publishing the news on orders from the Dictator.

In West Bengal, some of the leaders arrested on June 26: 75 were released on 5th Sept 65. They were all re-arrested on Sept 13 and 14. No reasons were given when they were released and no grounds mentioned when they were re-arrested. That is the way of the Dictator and her unions.

An All Kerala convention on Civil Liberties was convened at Trivandrum on 16th Sept 75 by an all party committee consisting of EMS Namboodiripad, A.K. Gopalan, and 15 other leaders of the Socialists, Congress (O) Jan sangh and other opposition parties.

The District Magistrate banned conference on the 15th and on the 16th, all 17 members of the convening committee were arrested. They were detained till 7 pm and then released,

You can trust the Dictator not to publish the truth behind explosion and fire in the Bombay Docks ware house. She is worried that may set in motion a series of explosions and fires in other parts of the country.

WATCH OUT : Vidya Charan Shukla is on the way out. The son of the Dictator does not like his looks. The SOD is also sore with him because V.C. Shukla has not taken action to prevent Blitz, Current, New wave, and New Age and other Russofils in India from attacking the Dictator and his SOD in a hundred subtle ways.

Madam Dictator is hell bent on hanging to death Kiste Gaud and Bhoomiah, brave leaders of landless labourers charged with the murder of two rapacious landlords in Andhra Pradesh. They will be the first political workers to be hanged in free India.

Brezhnev and his ilk, who put up such a grand performance of indignation over the execution of five Spanish guerillas only the other day can be trusted to demonstrate their damned cynicism and double standards when Kiste Gaud and Boomaiah are marched off the gallows.

Dictator Franco's Spain allowed a delegation of Amnesty International and of the Socialist International to visit the country to study the conditions there. Madam Dictator's hair stands up in a flourish even when the name of these two organisations get mentioned. Of course Madam Dictator has more to hide than Franco.

VI

GEORGE FERNANDES

October 2, 1975, Gandhi Jayanti, Rajghat, New Delhi.

One thousand policemen, mostly armed with rifles and automatic weapons guarding the 'samadhi' of the Apostle of non-violence. Why? Because Madam Dictator was coming to mock at Mahatma Gandhi's memory. Two enclosures in front of the 'samadhi'. The inner enclosure has some 30 or 40 people and in the front row sits the Dictator, hypocrisy incarnate. The second enclosure has about 300 people, many of them Secret Service policemen. To reach the enclosure, every one has passed through a metal detector installed by the Security Police. Ladies have their little hand bags searched, men are not allowed to carry any bags.

The prayers are on. Suddenly, a man, middle aged jumps over the fence from the second enclosure to the first enclosure and in a fraction of a second he is right in front of the Dictator, shouting "deviji, deviji". But even as he reaches there, about twenty policemen, including plain clothesmen have jumped on him, dragged him away, fisting him. The few old Gandhians keep chanting away, their thoughts are with Gandhiji. The Dictator is shaken beyond recognition. There is no mask now. There is naked fear showing on the face.

—Some from the second enclosure shout against the policemen beating up the man who had approached "deviji". The prayer meeting ends abruptly. The dictator is escorted away by the much harassed policemen. The second enclosure crowd shouts "Down with the Dictator". "Indira Gandhi Muradabad". "Mahatma Gandhi ki Jai". The Dictator walks away, limbs trembling, face white with fear. One man shouts "Indira Gandhi Zindabad", hoping that some (may be at least the Secret Service policemen) would take up the refrain. The coldness of the people to the slogan makes the Dictator's lone supporter look a goofy. He falls silent. The crowd continues to shout. Police pick up many of them and they are taken away to the police station. Some were released, others sent to jail, with a smile and a "Mahatma Gandhi ki Jai" on their lips. The mockery of Gandhiji's memory by the Dictator is complete. No, only half-complete.

In the evening, there is a prayer meeting at the Samadhi. It is led by 88-year old Acharya Kripalani, the oldest friend and associate of Mahatma Gandhi alive. About four hundred people have joined the meeting, while many were coming and going, paying their silent respects to Gandhiji's memory.

Acharya Kripalani is seated on the ground with the congregation. The chanting of Ram Dhun over, he is requested to say a few words about Gandhiji. It is 5-20 P.M. From the place where he was seated, in a voice choked with emotion and barely audible, the Acharya began. "Today, I can speak only about the Mahatma". Even as he spoke a few sentences, burly policemen come marching through the congregation to Acharya Kripalani and ask him to stop speaking. The Acharya says that permission for the meeting had been obtained. The policemen do not care. They threaten to arrest every one if he does not stop speaking. Some in the congregation say Acharya Kripalani was speaking on Gandhiji and the policemen too should sit down and listen. Now, more policemen with lathis come on the scene, and start dragging away the people to police vans that had been lined up nearby. The more stubborn ones are beaten up. Soon there are only a dozen people left with Acharya Kripalani who had not been able to speak since the police arrived. The Acharya tells the police "Allow us to sit here". The police do not listen. Rajmohan Gandhi and Ramchandra Gandhi, two grandsons of Mahatma Gandhi are dragged away into a police van along with a few others. Acharya Kripalani is told that he is under arrest. The arrested include veteran Gandhian Vishnu Dutt who had recently been released from prison after six weeks of detention and Socialist leader H.V. Kamath, the man who helped draft the Indian Constitution.

Rajmohan and Ramchandra are released at 8-00 P.M. Acharya Kripalani is allowed to go home at about the same time. The mockery of Mahatma Gandhi by Madam Dictator, is complete.

* * *

The Dictator's trumpets in Bombay were all ga-ga with its success. Said the senior trumpet BLITZ: "Bombay has never seen anything like it, and never will. Our movie stars flooded the streets and created a historic rain-storm of money." The junior trumpet CURRENT wrote: "It was a super-extravaganza with live (!) performances by the largest starcast ever assembled." Crowed the veteran sycophant K.A. Abbas in his "last page": "It was the Greatest Show on Earth by the greatest show-men."

"Current" wrote: "Packed in sixty trucks the film stars travelled 14 miles from Dadar to Mahalakshmi in sun and rain and exhorted the crowds to give all they could. The crowds went wild on seeing their favourites and often demanded flying kisses and hand-shakes in return for their donations." The show lasted, according to BLITZ, for nearly eleven hours, and "Bombay rose as one-man to give the stars the thunderous million-throated ovation. The scene is beyond words, beyond description."

That was the trumpeteers. The money collected by sixty truck loads of film stars and their ring-master Rajni Patel from this greatest show on

earth was Rs. 3,15,000 only. That is about Rs. 5,000 per truck of film stars. Bombay has 7,000,000 people and one half of India's money. So, Rajniboy could raise five paise per head from Bombay after all the bla-bla-bla. This is not said to denigrate either the film stars or Bombaymen. This is to tell the Dictator and her toadies that people may love their movie stars, but they hate the Dictator and her toadies. (Incidentally, the daily cost of maintaining the Dictator is now about Rs. 3 lakhs.)

* * *

SIGNS OF THE TIMES : The son of the Dictator (SOD) had a tiff with Rajni Patel and Siddartha Shankar Ray and shooed them off from Delhi. Both are now crawling before the SOD seeking forgiveness for their trespasses. But the SOD has so far not condescended to give an ear to their supplication. Madam Dictator has told them that she cannot over-ride the SOD.

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More than twenty people were killed by police bullets in Madras so that Madam Dictator could lay a wreath on Kamaraj's dead body at the Rajaji Hall. The army took over the arrangement at 1-00 P.M. and cleared the entire Rajaji Hall area to a radius of half a mile. The Hall was completely taken over by the Army and Central Intelligence Secret Police. A few relatives of Kamaraj and the top leaders of the Congress (O) were the only ones allowed inside Rajaji Hall. This was about two hours before the Dictator arrived by a back door under total cover provided by the Secret Service police. The Dictator left by the same back door to the Raj Bhavan grounds at Guindy where one acre of deer forest had been cleared for the cremation. The large mass of mourners were stopped at a distance of half a mile from the cremation ground, near Saidapet bridge. There were about 300 persons in the cremation ground including the Services personnel, the Dictator's bodyguard and Secret Service police. The SOD was hovering around among the Secret policemen. The newspaper stories were twisted to create the impression that the Dictator was freely moving and walking among the crowds.

The Dictator and her court jester and a few other courtiers have been lying to the people that Kamaraj's last wish to merge the two Congresses. Kamaraj died a broken-hearted man, shaken to the bones by the spectacle of the woman he installed as Prime Minister transform herself into a Dictator. All Dictators are adept in the tactic of killing some one and then proclaiming him a martyr.

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Two recent pictures of the Dictator make an interesting study. One at Delhi's Ferozeshah Kotla with the Ramlila drama troupe. The masks of

others are for their roles. The Dictator's mask is the only one that looks sinister.

The other picture is of the Dictator receiving the Yugoslav Prime Minister at Palam Airport. Actually, the Dictator is hiding behind the wall of the V.I.P. lounge at Palam while the Yugoslav Prime Minister is ushered in. The official photographer has taken the picture from inside the lounge, while secret servicemen are covering from outside. Was it not B.K. Nehru who said that since she became a Dictator, "she is more popular than she ever was"! Some popularity!

— * — * *

On Saturday, October 4, 1975, the workers of IDPL (Indian Drugs and Pharmaceuticals Ltd.)—a Government of India concern—staged a 'Dharna' inside the factory at Hyderabad demanding 20% bonus. The Company had earned a profit of Rs. 4.6 crores during the last financial year. The management under Madam Dictator's new dispensation on the Bonus was willing to pay only 4% bonus, i.e. Rs. seven lakhs.

The 'Dharna' started at the end of the day's shift. All employees—men and women—stayed inside the factory throughout the night. At three in the morning, the general manager of IDPL came to the factory and told the workers that there was nothing he could do in view of Madam Dictator's firman. He however said he would once again talk to the managing director of IDPL who was in town on that day.

October 5 was Sunday—a holiday. The workers continued to stay inside the factory. The management closed the canteen in the morning and at the same time closed all exit gates from the factory. The workers starved throughout the day drinking only pipe water.

By noon the armed police had surrounded the factory. At 5-00 P.M. the managing director came into the factory with a large posse of armed police. Without any warning the police began teargassing the workers who took cover at one end of the factory building. Having thus cornered the workmen the police opened fire. One workman, Bhikshapathi, was killed on the spot and 32 workmen were seriously injured in the firing. 37 workmen were arrested. The workers were locked inside the factory throughout the night without food and water. On Monday, October 6, each one of the workers was asked to sign on a form, the contents of which were not shown to them, and asked to leave the factory. The police took control of the factory. Work started on 13th October.

This is Madam Dictator's new labour policy. But there is nothing new

in this. Hitler did the same. Franco is doing the same. Madam Dictator has been spilling workers' blood before, but at least other workers knew about it, and could protest against such barbarism. The IDPL incident is a victim of censorship. So no one will know about it. Workers must fight against this dictatorship. Bhikshapathi's death must be avenged. Down with Mrs. Nehru Gandhi's fascist dictatorship.

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Kunhanandan Nair, world correspondent of Bombay's BLITZ says (BLITZ Oct. 11 '75) "The failure of the Indian Government to recall its ambassador from Madrid and publicly denounce Franco's terror and executions has puzzled the progressive world which thinks Indira Gandhi is an anti-fascist and a socialist."

It is not Mrs. Nehru Gandhi's fault if the so-called progressive world acts goofy. Mrs. Nehru Gandhi has killed more workers than old man Franco. Kiste Gawd and Bhoomaih are waiting to be hanged in their condemned cell in Hyderabad for championing the cause of the landless labourers. When Franco kills, the world at least knows about it. When Indira Nehru Gandhi kills, she censors the news from our people. Kunhan should tell his progressive world that Mrs. Nehru Gandhi is not an anti-fascist and a socialist but an anti-socialist and fascist.

Will you Kunhan? Will you Rusi Karanjia ?

In the Chakolas (Allwaye) Spinning Mills Kerala, there was a 3 day strike in early September demanding the withdrawal of the illegal suspension of 2 workers. Even the stooge unions of INTUC and AITUC had to join the strike. The suspensions withdrawn the strike ended.

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The passport of Neelam Sanjiva Reddy, former speaker of the Lok Sabha and Mrs. Gandhi's candidate for the presidency in 1969 has been impounded on orders of the Dictator. This is a sequel to Sanjiva Reddy getting a letter from his son in America asking him to visit the U.S.A. and spend a few days with him.

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Educating the Dictator : "Though India may prosper a little under a benevolent and efficient despotism, she will remain stunted and the day of emancipation of her people will be delayed." Jawaharlal Nehru writing anonymously an article on "No Caesarism". What would he say to the most inefficient, corrupt and ruthless despotism of Madam Dictator, his only daughter ? Tut, tut, what a question! Don't you know she had differences even with Mahatma Gandhi ? (Cf. Illustrated Weekly). Besides Nehru never

faced any serious risk of losing power. He was sure of the dynasty. Some hope, Madam Dictator !

* * *

Watch Out : D.K. Barooah, the official court jester is on the way out. The SOD does not like his looks and size. He will, in all probability, go to Moscow as the Dictator's Ambassador. The Russians have been sounded. Though they would like Barooah to do the CIA baiting at home, they are not likely to veto the appointment. They, of course, feel that the Dictator is making a concession to the Americans by shunting out the CIA baiter. In the meanwhile the Dictator is scouting for a worthy successor to the court jester. The SOD will have to approve the name.

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An All India Conference on Democratic Rights was held in Ahmedabad on October 12th. The conference, attended by over 500 lawyers, writers and intellectuals, demanded immediate revocation of emergency, release of J.P. and other political detainees, end of press censorship. The proceedings of the Conference were naturally censored by the Dictator.

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The Supreme Court refused to accept an application by the Dictator for stay of proceedings in respect of the habeas corpus petitions of L.K. Advani, Atal Bihari Vajpayee, Madhu Dandavate and S.N. Misra now being heard by a Division Bench of the Karnataka High Court in Bangalore.

* * *

Surendra Mohan, General Secretary of the Socialist party was arrested under MISA by the Police in New Delhi on October 6. He was underground since the declaration of emergency. In Bombay Prof. Sadanand Varde, a veteran Socialist leader was arrested under MISA in the first week of October.

The police arrested some persons in Bangalore, who were distributing Mahatma Gandhi's pictures on October 2. When they protested against their arrest and asked what was the crime involved in distributing pictures of Mahatma Gandhi, the police said, "We don't know any Mahatma Gandhi. We only know Indira Gandhi."

Madam Dictator's mad outburst on foreign funds and the railways strike has again been replied—this time with lots of documentation of also thrown in the hope that the Dictator in spite of being a congenital liar, will finally be persuaded to keep her trap shut. The document is available for

sale/distribution all over the country for a small price to cover the cost of production. It can be translated and/or reproduced without permission.

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The J.P. campaign committee in London is producing a fortnightly journal called "SWARAJ" for circulation in India and abroad.

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The Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry whose president Harish Mahindra constantly keeps bending backwards to please Madam Dictator is raising 5 lakhs to be handed a bogus organisation called Convention of Teenagers. This so-called Convention of Teenagers is supposed to have produced 3 short films titled "Nehru the Maker of India", "Indira the soul of India" and "Wah Beti" (Wow Daughter). The money was demanded by the Finance Minister Subramanyam on behalf of the Dictator to underwrite the exhibition of these fraud films. Other organisations of Employers as also individual Industrialists have been directed to pay large amounts of money on the same account. None, however, has been told as to when this new racket called the Convention of Teenagers was organised by the Dictator and who its office bearers are.

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Phoren Minister Y.B. Chavan thought he was addressing his constituents in Karad in Maharashtra when he told the Americans that in India there was only number one and no number two. The Americans were so impressed by his transparent sincerity that they are now signing a petition to Y.B. Chavan's number one to retain him as a back number for all time.

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Madhu Limaye has been transferred to Narsingharh prison from Raipur prison, both in Madhya Pradesh. His wife Champa was allowed to see him for 15 minutes in 3 months. He is in excellent spirits.

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The Viswa Yuvak Kendra (World Youth Organisation—WAY) hostel overlooking New Delhi's Diplomatic Enclave was taken over by the Dictator's police on Sept. 1st in a lightning operation that lasted over 30 minutes. Every one in the hostel was asked to vacate within hours. The place now houses the Dictator's Super Secret Police.

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The Dictator and her family (sons, daughters-in-law and grandchildren) visited Konarak in Orissa and had a great picnic. Earlier they flew over the

flood affected areas of Orissa. Even the misery and death of the poor people in Orissa can provide fun and pleasure to the Dictator and her family. (Konarak houses India's most erotic sculpture and is a tourist spot.)

George Fernandes

VII

There are three separate items mailed to you this time. The usual news-views sheet which follows, a note for discussion (on the elections) and the text of a document which I received from Japan (on the foreign money question). May I repeat the request which I have been constantly making? Please share the information you get with as many people as possible. Make copies, translate, circulate. Above all, keep talking. If three people start, each speaking to three others, by the time the eighteenth round is reached, 38,65,00,000 of people the entire adult population of the country—will have known what the first three had said. That is the power of the spoken word—or the whispered word, if you please,

Jayaprakash Narayan has been released on parole for a month, and there is a general feeling that his release is a prelude to relaxation of the present situation and is the first move taken by the dictator to retrace her steps. Nothing is farther from the truth. JP was released because the dictator was afraid that he might die in prison. JP's health had begun to rapidly deteriorate during the second half of October. In the first week of November, his brother saw him in the Chandigarh hospital and came back full of despair. He addressed a letter to the dictator on November, 8, in which he emphatically declared that from all indications, JP was not expected to live for more than two months. While he did not request the dictator to release JP, he nevertheless asked her whether it would be in the interests of her government to allow JP to die in prison. The dictator knows where her interests are. Two days after receipt of this letter, she ordered JP's release on parole. He is to report back to prison at the end of thirty days.

There is, of course, a possibility that the dictator will use JP's parole to create confusion in the ranks of the resistance movement. There are enough

busy bodies in the country who will now get to work-talking of normalisation, negotiations, elections and what have you. The dictator will use these busy-bodies in her own diabolical way. But what kind of a deal can one make with her? How is anyone to trust her? She believes that Indira is India. Where does anyone believing in democracy fit into that? Her credibility is zero. Her strength lies in falsehood, repression and terror. To use her own words, it is only the Big Lie that sustains her. There is only one way to deal with her. She has to go. And for that purpose, our movement has to be intensified.

Incidentally, the Chief Censor has issued the following "TOP SECRET" message to all State Censors on Nov. 15,

"In regard to further stories regarding Jayaprakash Narayan's health some Socialist leaders have been giving out statement to the effect that he is cheerful but some of his internal ailments remain. Similarly some prominent leaders have been calling on him. There is no objection to such stories being allowed provided there is no statement to the effect that his health is failing. Further reports about his movement from one hospital to another or from one place to another should not repeat not be published nor the place of the hospital where he is being treated. You should ensure that all reports about Jayaprakash Narayan by news agencies or news correspondent *must be submitted for pre-censorship*. Please note that these instructions are for your guidance only and not to be conveyed to newspapers or correspondents."

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Madam dictator and her courtiers have been celebrating her "Great Victory" in the Supreme Court. The dancing girls and the riff raff from Delhi and surrounding areas are herded daily outside the dictator's residence to hail the Hitler. The news of the Supreme Court decision were doctored to create the impression that the judgment of the Allahabad High Court convicting Mrs. Nehru Gandhi of corrupt practices had been set aside by the Supreme Court. Even an otherwise intelligent man like Sardar Khushwant Singh, editor of the Illustrated Weekly has been fooled into believing that "the Supreme Court has cleared Mrs. Gandhi of all charge of corrupt practices during her election to the Lok Sabha." (Illustrated Weekly, Nov. 23. page 31).

Let us get this straight. The Supreme Court has not cleared Mrs. Gandhi of any charges of corrupt practices held proved against her by the Allahabad High Court. Justice Sinha's judgment stands and the lady remains condemned as ever.

This is what has happened :

After the Allahabad High Court judgment, Mrs. Nehru Gandhi had her Parliament amend the electoral laws to the effect that all corrupt practices she had committed were no more corrupt practices with retrospective effect from the day she committed them. The Supreme Court held that Parliament had the power to enact such patently perverse legislation. Ergo, the Supreme Court held that the judgment of the Allahabad High Court stood annulled.

One could illustrate this with the following example :

A man commits rape against a minor girl. The trial court convicts him to six years in prison. The man appeals to the High Court against the conviction. Incidentally, the man happens to be the Prime Minister who has a captive parliament under his thumb. He makes the parliament enact a law which says that rape of a minor girl is not a crime under the law of the land with effect from the date on which the Prime Minister committed the rape. The High Court holds that Parliament has the power to legislate that rape is not a crime from the date on which the Prime Minister raped a helpless minor girl. The High Court then proceeds to hold that the trial court's judgment convicting the man to six years of imprisonment is no longer valid. The man who is the Prime Minister then organises rallies to celebrate his "great victory" and the "vindication of his honour".

Do you get me Khushwant? I thought you might understand it with such an illustration.

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The nation-wide Satyagraha has started with a bang. In the first four days of the Satyagraha, over 10,000 people have been arrested all over the country. In Delhi, people have started writing anti-dictatorship slogans on the walls and on the streets. Posters, both printed and hand-written have also appeared in most parts of city. (A detailed report on the satyagraha will be mailed in a few days).

The World Council of Churches which speaks for the entire Christian people of the world has, in a letter dated Oct. 9, 1975 addressed to the Indian dictator expressed its grave concern at the denial of human rights to the Indian people. The letter criticises the imposition of emergency, press censorship and the denial of legal remedies to those detained under the draconian MISA. It has also appealed for the immediate release of Jayaprakash Narayan and other detained leaders. The letter has also urged the restoration of democratic rights of the people for political expression, discussion, and dissent.

The International Transport Workers Federation (to which the All India Railwaymen's Federation is affiliated) has, in a resolution condemned the imposition of dictatorship in India and said that "these developments as being totally undemocratic, unconstitutional and placing India under the equivalent of totalitarian rule." The resolution has called upon the President of India "to put an end to the state of emergency and its consequent repression of the Indian People, to release all trade union leaders and to restore full democratic and trade union rights which are guaranteed to Indian citizens by their constitution."

NOVEMBER 22, 1975

George Fernandés

STOP PRESS : JP has been admitted to the Jaslok Hospital in Bombay. The Bombay Sarvodaya leader, Govindrao Deshpande called on him on November 22. He was arrested as he was leaving the hospital. So much for relaxation. Will all the remaining Gandhians now find their way into the prisons ?

VIII

Only the dictator knows how many more days JP has. The doctored medical bulletins convey hardly anything. Dr. Shantilal Mehta is a fine man and a first class surgeon who will certainly try his best to keep JP alive. But from all indications, the dictator has done a fool proof job. That is what happend in the case of Dr. Rammanohar Lohia too. I had then flown Dr. Shantilal Mehta to Delhi in a desperate bid to save Dr. Lohia's life. After examining Lohia, Dr Mehta told me that it was too late. The butcher who operated on Lohia and who was later given a special reward by the dictator had done enough damage. So it will be with JP.

The dictator has now released JP from detention. If there was not so much tragedy underlying it all, one could have laughed at this cruel joke. Yet the "release" of JP is significant. The dictator seems to be now convinced that her demonic plan to finally release JP from the world of the mortals is now nearing its last phase. We can only tell this devil of a dictator that ~~she will never, never get away with JP's murder. Never.~~

I am reproducing here below a letter I have mailed to M.R. Masani, N A Palkhiwala, J C Shah (former Chief Justice of the Supreme Court), MC Chagla, Sheikh Abdullah, Babubhai Patel, M. Karunanidhi, SM Joshi and Achyut Patwardhan. The letter is self-explanatory.

"Dear Friend :

"It is with a heavy heart that I am addressing this letter to you and to a few other friends".

"When in early November I was told by a source from the Central Intelligence Bureau that JP has been drugged to a point where he will soon be dead or, even if he should survive for some time, he would be totally useless for the movement, I had addressed letters to several friends in the country requesting them to spare no efforts to organise the people and to raise their voice in a bid to save JP's life. A day or two after mailing these letters, I saw the text of the letter addressed by JP's brother to the lady in which he (JP's brother) gave JP less than two months to live. It now appears that the lady has done everything to ensure that JP is removed from our midst in the quickest possible time. I have been told by unimpeachable sources that the army, police and para-military forces have been put on an alert and all news of JP's

health and people's reaction thereto are monitored in a specially set up control room in New Delhi. This is just one part of the lady's diabolical moves.

"I have also learnt from very reliable sources that before his release on parole from the Chandigarh (Hospital) prison, JP's signatures have been taken on a number of papers, JP himself has admitted to signing on some papers without knowing their contents. I have reasons to believe that some signatures have been taken on blank papers, which could later be used in furtherance of the ulterior motives of the lady.

"You have seen the cynicism with which Kamaraj's death has been used by the lady and by her minions to trumpet the so-called last wishes of Kamaraj, when everyone knows that Kamaraj died a broken-hearted man, totally disillusioned at the sad spectacle of the lady he installed as Prime Minister turn herself into a self-confessed dictator. All those close to Kamaraj have told me that Kamaraj could never have dreamt of having anything to do with the dictatorship of the lady. In fact, in all his private and public utterances since June 20, 1975, he exhorted the people to fight against her dictatorship.

"Against the backdrop of the condition of JP, the lady will stop at nothing and stoop to anything to forge documents containing JP's alleged last wishes. Already, her Establishment has set afloat rumours that JP has realised the mistake of his aligning with the Jan Sangh, RSS and other so-called reactionary groups etc,

"While what happens to JP will be a tragedy beyond words for all of us, and while it will be to the eternal shame of our country that her greatest son alive, should meet with such a terrible fate at the hands of the wickedest woman alive, I feel that we should do everything in our power to ensure that the lady does not get a chance to smear JP's name when he is no more with us. I would, therefore, urge that either by an affidavit signed by JP before a Notary Public or through any other means you think proper you take steps to ensure that the papers signed by JP are not later put to use by the lady to forge some Last Testament of JP.

From the underground somewhere in India.

November 30, 1975.

Yours sincerely

George Fernandes

May I suggest that we observe Sunday, December, 14, 1975 as a Day of Prayer for Jayaprakash Narayan. I have been trying to contact the members of the Sangharsh Samiti to have this call go from the Sumiti, but without success. I would urge the Sangharsh Samiti, all parties, trade unions and other organisations to endorse this suggestion.

The Bureau of the Socialist International meeting in Brussels (Belgium) on November 29-30 1975, has adopted a resolution on India. Only a few months ago, the dictator's party chief, Barooah, had invoked the Socialist International to stake the claims of the Congi as a party believing in democratic socialism. Here are the views of the Socialist International :

"The Bureau of the Socialist International, meeting in Brussels November 29-30, 1975, and having received a report from George FERNANDES, Chairman of the Indian Socialist Party, and further clarifications from his emissary; Noting with concern that, contrary to the assertions of the Indian Government, the health of Jayaprakash Narayan, who has recently been released from detention on parole for thirty days, has deteriorated greatly during his detention, to the point where there are now serious fears for his life.

"Noting further that :

- (i) tens of thousands of political workers, trade unionists, members of parliament and of State legislatures, journalists, students and intellectuals have been arrested and are still in prison, and that many new arrests are still taking place daily;
- (ii) the great majority of the political prisoners are held in sub-human conditions and are denied the right of appeal to any court of law ;
- (iii) although opposition parties are not legally banned, they are effectively prevented from functioning;
- (iv) the news media are not only subjected to rigorous censorship but are also compelled by the government to publish certain reports and statements the contents of which are not always factual;
- (v) a rubber-stamp parliament, all of whose vocal opposition members have been imprisoned, has amended the constitution and the law in order to bring in numerous repressive measures which deprive people of their fundamental rights;

- (vi) the workers have been denied their freedom of association and right to organise and to strike, and attempts are being made to render the trade union movement subservient to the Government's will;

Deplores the above-mentioned violations of civil liberties and fundamental rights;

Calls upon the Government of India to end the State of Emergency, lift press censorship, release all political and trade union prisoners held without trial and restore all democratic rights to the people of India;

Expresses its solidarity with the Socialist Party and other organisations fighting for democracy and socialism in India; and

Calls upon all member parties to extend all support and assistance to the Socialist Party of India.

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So Bahuguna is gone. A wholesale transfer of officers at the State and district levels has taken place and a thorough shake up in the U.P. administration is on. The dictator's party is split in three factions in UP. The pink Sphinx Kamapati Tripathi leads the most powerful group; Bahuguna (the private citizen) has the second most powerful group; and MAD (madam dictator) has an assortment of old-time renegades, sycophants and time-servers forming her own group. The UP developments could also mean that MAD is toying with the idea of early elections.

Weird stories are afloat in New Delhi on the reasons why Bahuguna had to go. They say it all started with MAD's supporter K K Birla losing his Rajya Sabha seat because of Bahuguna's opposition during the 1974 biennial elections. Bahuguna's failure to influence Justice Sinha to exonerate her of her election crimes provoked her further.....and so on and so forth. The weirdest one is about Bahuguna resorting to black magic to get rid of MAD which she first countered with her own black magicians battling with the demon in the lawns of her (MAD's) well-protected mansion. Then came the coup de grace.

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What is behind the Cabinet reshuffle? Nothing much, really. MAD wanted to demonstrate her virility by shaking the pack a little. She also

wanted to take over Defence because she does not trust any one any more. Then there was SOD (son of the dictator) insisting on having his buddy Bansilal in New Delhi. Ganesh had to be eased out for more than one reason, which has been known for a longtime. Khadilkar's utility had expired, besides he was talking too much with too many. G S Dhillon had to be rewarded for services rendered. And Jagjivan Ram and Y B Chavan had to be served notice. A major Cabinet shake up is on the cards during the next fortnight.

Is MAD planning a mad adventure in Bangla Desh? There have been major troop movements from the central and western commands to the eastern sector. From Delhi alone, during the second half of November, over 15,000 troops have been air-lifted to the eastern sector, besides the several troop carrying trains that have been moving eastwards. I am told the Russians have been pressurising MAD to do a Czechoslovakia in Bangla Desh and to install a puppet regime. It all sounds very absurd, but one can never be sure of MAD. She is absurd.

In early October, 1975, when the Spanish dictator Franco executed five Basque rebels, there was spontaneous revulsion all over the world. Franco did not survive those executions. The blood of the martyrs cried for revenge, and with that went the "last European fascist". The Soviet Union, its satellites and their propagandists too joined the chorus of protest over the execution of the Basque revolutionaries.

Now we have been told that Kiste Gowd and Bhoomiah were hanged in Hyderabad on December 1, 1975. All our efforts to save the lives of these two brave comrades who struggled all through their lives to protect the poor tenants and agricultural labourers from brutal exploitation by rapacious landlords finally failed. With their execution, the dictator and her goons have started putting the hangman's noose round the necks of political workers. For this is the first time in free India that political workers have been hanged for political crimes. Of course thousands have been killed by police lathies and bullets and are still being killed. Reports from Bihar mention of daily killings of the leaders of the landless labourers, harijans and other exploited sections of the people.

The blood of Kiste Gowd and Bhoomiah cries for revenge. And rest assured, madam dictator, their deaths will be avenged.

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Poor dear Raghayan. Of BLITZ, I mean. He has been spending a life-time educating the Nehru family on fascism. And now he complains

to having shock waves surging through his vodka-soaked arteries. Cause? "India observed State mourning in memory of General Franco, one of the worst fascists the world has produced". These are Raghavan's words (BLITZ, Nov 29). I have been trying to educate Raghavan into realising that one fascist does mourn the passing away of another. But Raghavan refuses to learn. Incidentally, what about our fascist executing Kiste Gowd and Bhoomiah? Guzzle more vodka and forget it all, eh, Raghavan? When will Raghavan and his kind also learn that to the Russians all communist parties all over the world are expendable if that serves Moscow's foreign policy objectives. The Russians make deals even with an Idi Amin. And will Raghavan stop all that rubbish of comparing MAD with Chile's late lamented Salvadore Allende? Of course, your boss Karanjia once compared MAD to Ho Chi Minh. When I asked him if Ho Chi Minh had a son who produced a Maruti, Rusi gave me a sheepish grin in return. What a Karanjia! What a Raghavan !

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The SOD's stink-pot Maruti, has, for all practical purposes, folded up. Birlas do not have the Rs one hundred crores to sink in the SOD's bottomless pit. SOD, of course, is not concerned. He has made his pile long ago. And now he says, who needs Maruti when I can be the 'marut' of India that is Indira. Some hope, SOD!

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They told me in New Delhi that MAD is scared to death. Literally, that is. She has been telling her very trusted(?) friends that she is afraid that "they" would liquidate her entire family. When friends ask who the "they" are, MAD says, "I am not afraid of the opposition. It is my own colleagues that I am afraid off". Now we know why every time MAD has left the Capital even for a single night, she has taken with her the entire pack of Nehru Gandhis. During the two days in Orissa, four days in Sikkim and Darjeeling, and a week-end near Sohna in Haryana, the State Exchequer was called upon to foot the bill of the entire family—MAD, SOD and all.

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Also heard in Delhi: Devraj Urs, Prakash Sethi, and Harideo Joshi are in the "Q" to be kicked out. Siddhartha Shanker Ray and Rajni Patel are moving heaven and hell to win back the favour of SOD.

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Kamlapati Tripathi is suffering from what? He is seen at the All India Institute of Medical Sciences regularly.

Court jester D K Barooah is suffering from an ailment that is refusing to respond to treatment. The Harley Street specialists whom he consulted on his recent visit to England (one report is that he wangled the visit to London to be able to meet doctors there) have apparently told him that "it" is now in the tertiary stage.

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The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India has produced several hundred thousand copies of a booklet by Rajni Patel president of the Congi's BPCC. In a brief foreward to the booklet, Rajni Patel writes that it is "primarily meant for Congress workers". Discussing the so-called achievement under the Emergency, Rajni Patel asserts in the booklet that "the Congress (meaning Congi) alone can marshal the people's support for all the welfare measures undertaken under the Emergency".

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This is further evidence that the State and the Congi are now one entity, and the tax payer's money is merrily being siphoned off for producing literature for the Congi by the dictator.

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While comrades in the underground would gain immensely by reading Gandhiji, Lohia and Subhas Chandra Bose, they would also profit much if they read Lenin, Che Guevara, Fidel Castro and Mao. There is a great deal to be learnt on tactics from the writings of these Communist revolutionaries. To understand Mrs Nehru Gandhi's fascism better, one could usefully read the various writings of Jawaharlal Nehru on the subject of fascism. A much recommended novel for the underground workers is John Steinbeck's 'The Moon is Down'. It is a short novel available in Pan pocket edition.

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In the nationwide Satyagraha that commenced on November 14, 1975, more than 60,000 people have courted arrest in the first twenty days. Reports from all over the country speak of the tremendous enthusiasm with which people are collecting at the spots where Satyagraha is offered. In Karnataka, Veerendra Patil and Ramkrishna Hegde have so far offered Satyagraha thrice. Some Karnataka Congians have complained to MAD that Devraj Urs is deliberately releasing the Cong (O) leaders so that they

could organise the people to greater action. A detailed report on the Satyagraha will be sent with the next bulletin.

December 5, 1975

George Fernandes.

Read

Translate

Duplicate

Circulate

P.S. If three people start telling a story each to three others, by the time the eighteenth round is over, 38,65,00,000 people—the entire adult population of the country—will have known what the first three said. That is the power of the whispered word. Keep talking or whispering. That is the way to beat the dictator's censor.

George Fernandes to Nanaji Deshmukh :
26 May 1976

My dear Nanasaheb,

When with one fell stroke delivered on June 26, 1975, the dictator from Delhi made all political parties irrelevant, it does not really matter if, in their present state of irrelevance, they stay as they are or they come together. I do not know the exact situation regarding other parties that have now decided to merge into one under JP's leadership, but if my understanding is correct, an overwhelming majority of the members of the National Committee of the Socialist Party are in prison and any formal decision, envisaged by the Bombay meeting that voted for merger, may not be possible, what to speak of a decision by a wider group like the National Conference or General Council.

The dictator has ~~reacted in a~~ predictable way to the news of the proposed merger. She will now resort to all her fascist techniques to damn the united party and play up the communal angle. She will also try to brainwash individual socialists, Congress (O) workers and others to speak and act against the united party. All of which is in keeping with the character of her dictatorship.

What bothers me are not the moves and methods of the dictator. She makes no bones about anything; she knows her mind. Her paranoiac urge to stay in power and to institutionalise the Nehru dynasty is there for all to see. I have always held that the woman cannot afford ever to renounce power. Nor motivations are neither ideological nor political. It is the megalomaniac in her that derives her, and now that she has tasted absolute personal power (with the final capitulation by whatever it is that her own party was), it would be the height of foolishness on anyone's part to expect her to ever willingly go out of office.

I am making these points in the first instance because of a growing fear in my mind that most people in the opposition are still not willing to face the realities of a total fascist dictatorship having taken over the country. There is a strange reluctance even among those who may be intellectually convinced to publicly acknowledge the fact of the woman's dictatorship. The only beneficiary of such ambivalence is, naturally, the dictator herself.

If the idea of the new party is to provide a democratic national alternative as has been enunciated by JP at his press conference, I am afraid the new party is starting on the wrong leg. A democratic alternative presupposes the existence of democratic conditions in the country. Do they exist? I am not indulging in hyperbole when I say that God alone knows how many people are in prison today without trial. The dictator herself would not know. The press has surrendered without the semblance of even a token fight. The judiciary (with a few honourable exceptions) has only demonstrated that it will always be a part of the million; after all, elevation to the bench does not necessarily mean elevating oneself up and away from all that is a part of our national life and character. If Parliament has been reduced to a joke, the so-called opposition parties' members who still refuse to resign their seats from that illegitimate Lok Sabha are only playing the part of circus clowns. I believe it is a contradiction in terms to say that we shall provide a democratic alternative to a fascist dictatorship. Such a position only means that we are all mixed up with our priorities.

In my opinion, the new party can have relevance only as an instrument of people's struggle to overthrow the fascist clique from Delhi and to restore democracy and the rule of law in the country. And to acquire that kind of relevance and the credibility that goes with it, the party must take up unequivocal positions on a number of questions of immediate import. First and foremost, without mincing words, we must make it clear that we are in fascist state. I have seen the documents which announce the reconstitution of the Lok Sangarsh Samiti with S.N. Joshi as its convener. The document is a perfect example of a 'willing to strike but afraid to wound' mentality. The analysis of the situation made in the document and the form of action suggested make it clear that we are living in a totalitarian state. But the terms used are 'incipient totalitarianism', 'early days of the Nazi rule in Germany' and the like. I am not saying that we equate the Indian prisons with the Nazi concentration camps. The point is shall we wait till that stage is reached to call the woman a fascist dictator? I must say, in fairness to JP, that he has been quite blunt in his characterisation of the situation. In his letter addressed to those who met in Bombay on March 20-21, 1976, he repeatedly says that 'we have in the country today a complete dictatorship'.

The next step must be to serve notice that the Emergency be lifted and the status quo ante June 25 1975, be restored within thirty days. I am not suggesting this with the hope of even some remote chance of the demand being accepted. My sole intention behind this proposal is to provide the

George to Nanaji

members of the united party in the Lok Sabha an opportunity to resign their seats and stop giving any more, even a modicum of legitimacy to that illegitimate body. The notice may be jointly served by all opposition members of the Lok Sabha and state that if the demand is not met within thirty days, all the signatories, will resign enmasse at the end of the period. Thirdly, the party must draw up a plan of struggle. Since the struggle will be a non-violent form of action, there is no reason whatsoever why it cannot be spelt out to the minutest detail. It should include satyagraha through writing of anti-dictator slogans on the walls, holding of street corner meetings, gheraos, of ministers and other minions of the dictator, as also of government offices etc. There are 100 universities in India and we could have 100 senior persons responsible for creating cells among the university students to carry on a campaign of educating the people against the dictatorship. Teachers, students and youth groups could also be charged with netting up such educational cells in all the colleges in the country. Similar agitation propcells will have to be organised in factories and offices through trade unions and other groups.

Fourthly, the party must draw up a plan of people's movements against official hight-handedness, against demolition of houses and hutments, for securing land and bank loans etc. Fifthly, the party must lay down here and now the terms under which it will enter the election areas. These must include 1. Withdrawal of the emergency and the unconditional release of all detenués and others arrested during the emergency, six months before the poll. 2. Restoration of status quo ante June 25, 1975. 3. Repeal of all laws curtailing freedom of press and other fundamental freedoms. 4. Resignation of the central government and the appointment of an all party care-taker governments two months before the poll. 5. Equal time for the united party on radio, TV and other government-controlled media. Sixthly, the programme of the united party must promise the people that if the party is returned to power it will bring to trial all those in government including those occupying the highest positions, for their anti-social, anti-people and other criminal activities.

While making these points, I am very much aware that politics is the art of the possible. But we are not currently indulging in political activity. We are engaged in what is literally a life and death struggle against a bunch of criminals who have usurped power at the centre. I am also aware that strong words do not move any mountains. But calling a spade need not cause any embarrassment to any of us.

Be that as it may, the most important thing is for the new united party to project itself as an instrument of social and economic change and also as the restoration of moral and ethical values without which everything is a big cipher. Over the years, we saw the woman destroy the moral and ethical foundations of our polity as a part of her strategy to capture absolute power. Whether it was the political duplicity she practiced, the immorality of the floor-crossing and catering to the baser instincts of public men she encouraged, the brutal killings of the so-called Naxalites (later also of the Marxist communists) inside and outside the prisons she engineered (often with active and always with passive approbation of those heinous and barbaric crimes by most people in the so-called opposition parties—most of whom are now themselves in prison) the black mailing of her political associates leading to their total castration that she organised—these and many more acts of commission and omission of the woman have completely destroyed the moral fabric of our nation. If India survives, it is in spite of the dictator and her cohorts, in spite of the opposition and its lack of mind and will in spite of everyone and everything. For millenniums, this country has survived; and its people have put up with inequities unparalleled in human history. Unless we now create an awareness, first and foremost, among those aspiring to lead the people in the struggle for restoration of liberty and democracy, and then among the masses, of the size and gravity of the problems we are faced with, social, economic, political and moral problems,—we have nothing much to do or to offer.

Another point. Almost to the last man, opposition politicians in India are obsessed with 'opposition'. I remember the 1967-70 days when non-Congress coalitions were in power in various States. Members of the cabinets of these governments used to call themselves 'opposition governments'. Even when in power, they did not realise that they were ruling parties and the Congi was the opposition party. The resolution adopted at Bombay meeting of March 20-21, 1976 once again reminded me of this 'opposition obsession'. The resolution, in para 6, refers to the appointment of a Steering Committee 'to draw up a policy and programme for a single unified democratic opposition party'. What you mean is a political party. Why for a single unified democratic opposition party? Why call it an 'opposition party'? I am not indulging in semantics. But, these little things influence our thinking. I used to be filled with revulsion when our Party people used to talk about 'virodhi Sarkarem'. It went on for years, and we are still at it. We want to form a political party that wants to come to power through parliamentary means, but which will also subscribe to extra-parliamentary means like satyagraha and civil disobedience, strikes etc., if and when it becomes necessary to secure any immediate relief to the people suffering

from oppression by government and other sources. It is necessary to drive home these points constantly. Because, the ruling oligarchy also tries to perpetuate the myth that its destiny is to rule. With a small, docile and domesticated opposition adorning a few seats on the other side in the amphitheatre. Those getting old and tired could always cross the floor and help themselves to some crumbs or chew a few bones as some are now doing. I want the party to take a positive position on satyagraha and civil disobedience. There has to be an alternative to the bullet when the ballot being to oppress or becomes irrelevant. If we renounce satyagraha and civil disobedience, we admit that there is no alternative to violence.

It is supremely important that the new party tell the people that only by going through the crucible of suffering and sacrifice including the sacrifice of our lives, will our country see liberty and democracy again. We will only be repeating what others have said and done through the ages when we prepare the people for this struggle. Thomas Jefferson had said that the tree of liberty must be provided with the manure of the blood of patriots once in every thirty years if tyrants were not to take over. It is now thirty years since the blood and toil of another generation of our countrymen planted the tree which has now been felled. Our generation will have to go through the entire effort all over again.

One last point. Though I am aware that most of the younger generation of the political leadership are in prisons, it would, nevertheless, be worthwhile to have some young people to associate themselves with the efforts of those of you who still have some freedom of movement. The average age of those who met in Bombay on March 20-21, 1976 must be about 65-70. It should be brought down at 40-45. It does not matter if the young people do not have the experience. If they have the will and the spirit, that can take care of their lack of experience. Secondly, please see that women are associated, if possible, in the same proportion as men. Not as ornaments, someone's wife or mother or sister also attending or being around. There are committed women and girls. They may also be lacking in experience or resourcefulness, besides suffering from other wellknown, age old handicaps. But they must be there. For they have a big role as any man may have to play. And socially backward people and minorities. Again, it is no use saying that they are not around. They are very much around, but they need a little bit of extra push. If these matters are not taken care of in the beginning itself, it may later become difficult to carry the message across to where it must actually reach. And if you recognise any dead-wood, throw it out right now. There should be no room for cowards in our movement. Lay down some tests, and don't waste time with those that fail. The cause will be served better without some of these fair weather associates.

And finally please protect and defend all those who are engaged in the struggle against the dictatorship, even if you do not agree with the words and deeds of some of them. The worst among them are more patriotic and less harmful than the best of the dictator's myrmidons, to speak nothing of the dictator and her cabal. And by the same token, maintain close relations with all genuine opposition parties irrespective of their ideological hues. I have not written about the programme of the united party for two reasons. Firstly, this has been drafted long ago and anything in the finalisation of which JP has the last word, can be accepted without any reservation; and secondly, because I do not know whether a programme etc. have really any relevance at this stage.

I hope you will find it possible to circulate this letter among the various parties. With kind regards and greetings,

from the underground
somewhere in India

May 26, 1976

(Copy to ?) Shri N.G. Goray New Delhi

Yours
George Fernandes

II

My Dear Nanasaheb,

14.12.1976.

The newspaper report that you are attending a meeting of Opposition parties called by Mr. Karunanidhi to initiate talks with Mrs. Gandhi. According to my information, some talks are on at the moment between Mrs. Gandhi's nomenclature and some important leaders of some opposition parties. I also learn that some kind of proposals amounting to a sell-out have also been submitted by the opposition leaders. I am sure you will make it clear to those opposition leaders' meeting that so far as the Socialist Party is concerned, it is committed to continue the struggle against Mrs. Gandhi's dictatorship to its logical end can never compromise on certain fundamental issues like withdrawal of Emergency and scrapping MISA, release of all political prisoners and others held without trial, freedom of the press, independence of the judiciary, immediate dissolution of the illegitimate Lok Sabha and the holding of elections after fulfilling certain preconditions to ensure a fair poll, repeal of the Constitutional amendments adopted since June 25, 1975. The recent special convention of the Party held in Bombay has, if anything, endorsed the line of struggle always pursued by the party. I also hope you will be able to persuade the opposition leaders to get their parties to direct their members in the Lok Sabha to resign their seats forthwith and join forces to wage a relentless struggle to overthrow the dictatorship. A copy of my letter to JP is enclosed.

With greetings,

Yours sincerely,
Sd/- George Fernandes.

14.12.76

George Fernandes to J. P.

My dear Jayaprakashji,

There are certain aspects of the present situation that have disturbed and alarmed me. First, there is this orchestration of statements by many sundry leaders and some leader writers urging you to call off the movement. Second, one sees constant efforts by some busy bodies to somehow or the other secure an invitation to sit across the table with Mrs Gandhi. Third, there is a stubborn refusal to realise that Vinoba's first loyalty is to the court and that he will never lift a little finger to help the fighters for freedom and democracy in the country. Fourth, there is reluctance to make an honest evaluation of the changes that have taken place in our body politic since Mrs Gandhi turned dictator on June 26, 1975. Concomitant with all this is the delusion that Mrs Gandhi is still not a dictator. A recent refrain from those who seek to have a dialogue is that the first task before J. P. and others is to secure the release of those in prisons.

I had hoped that this growing cacophony of normalisers is but only a manifestation of the frustration of despondency of some of the leaders and not one of those diabolical moves of the dictator to drive a wedge in the ranks of those opposed to her dictatorship, sow confusion among the masses and demoralise those who are uncompromising in the fight. This move to negotiate has, I believe, been motivated by a desire to prevent or in any case postpone the creation of a one party through merger of various parties of the opposition by presenting a new set of priorities.

The frantic efforts that are being made, and a series of meetings that have been arranged by opposition party leaders have confirmed my fears of a "sell out". I could not believe that any responsible leader from any party could formally put down the kind of terms that are reported to have been suggested as the basis for talks that are scheduled for the next few days. Neither the demand to revoke emergency nor for the release of all political prisoners surprisingly is set for negotiations. Whatever the result of these talks, it would affect the already low morals and sagging determination of political workers and others who have been opposing the dictatorship.

I must say the opposition parties in India have neither learnt nor unlearnt anything since June 26, 1975. When will they realise that they are facing a woman who will never surrender power? Can they not see if Nehru

went about grooming his daughter in subtle and sophisticated way to succeed him, the mother lacks even a modicum of shame while indulging in a crude and vulgar exercise to appoint her son as the successor. This is not to say that Nehru's method was commendable or was less dishonourable, but only to point out that like then so now the opposition refuses to understand the designs of the ruling clique. Over the years, opposition politics in India has been reacting to the initiatives of the ruling party and of never taking the initiative on its own and make the ruling coterie run for [from] chairs. In the mid sixties, Dr Lohia took the initiative united the opposition by dragging them literally by the scruff of their necks and routed the Congress in 1967. But since then, except for the initiative which the youth took in Gujarat and later in Bihar, there has hardly been an effort to confront the Congress by the opposition parties. The development since June 26, 1975 indicate that the opposition leaders lack not only the perspective but also in nerve. Or else can anyone say that the primary task today is to secure the release of those in prisons? This is the stuff that breeds and nourishes dictators.

I am aware of your own frustrations with the opposition leaders and also of the kind of pressures they are building on you. But I want you to know that there are people who are committed to carry the fight against the dictatorship to the bitter end and for as long as is necessary. I believe that there are certain issues which are simply non-negotiable. These are: Revocation of emergency and scrapping of MISA; Independence of the Judiciary; immediate dissolution of the illegitimate Lok Sabha and the holding of elections after fulfilling certain pre-conditions to ensure a fair poll and repeal of the constitutional amendments adopted since June 26, 1975. Release of all political prisoners and other held without trials; freedom of the press.

I know that Mrs Gandhi will accept none of these terms. If she can accept these conditions now, she need not have, in the first place, usurped power and become a dictator. And it is not merely that it is impossible for her to reverse what she has done. With the opposition that does not show much will to fight, what is there for her to be worried about? So what precisely do the 'Negotiators' want to 'negotiate' about even if they realise at this last moment to add to their demands for discussion at the negotiating table?

Instead of spending their time drafting statements seeking negotiations whatever terms, I wish to see opposition parties apply their collective mind to build an effective movement among all sections of our people to resist the dictatorship. The time appears to be favourable for such efforts to be successful.

For all her bombast, Mrs. Gandhi is today more isolated from the people than she ever was. Her credibility is at its nadir. I am told that recently in Delhi, even doctors rushed to the schools and took their children away believing that Mrs Gandhi is sterilising them. She and her propagandists say that prices are falling while in Delhi in the four weeks beginning from the first week of November to the first week of December there has been an increase of ten two twenty per cent in the prices of consumer goods. Even in Delhi's Super Bazar, the dictator's much touted fair price shop of the Capital, mustard oil was selling at Rs. 12.15 per kg. On December 1, compared to Rs. 10.20 on November 1. In this one month Vanaspati has gone up from Rs. 8.15 to Rs. 8.50 packed vanaspati from Rs. 9.90 to Rs. 10.50, pure ghee from Rs. 25.50 to Rs. 26.25 a kg. Two hundred grams of coconut oil cost Rs. 4.65 on December 1 compared to Rs. 4.25 in the last week of November. The same with the prices of dals. In the above period of one month. a kg of moong (whole) is up from Rs. 2.15 to Rs. 2.30, urad (whole) from Rs. 2.65 to Rs. 2.80, masur (red) from Rs. 2.45 to Rs 2.80 rajam chitra from Rs. 2.60 to Rs. 2.95, The Economic Times Index of Wholesales prices of commodties (base 1069-70:100) which was 158.5 on December 9, 1975 stood at 179.2 on Dceember 9, 1976 an increase of 13.5 per cent.

Her radio has become a permanent joke. The censored press and the Samacharred news do not fool the people anymore. The all pervading fear that she succeeded in instilling among the people is still there; but in Bombay—Poona,—Mangalore, West Bengal and Tamil Nadu, there has been a series of strike action by industrial workers. The number of police firings in Uttar Pradesh alone during the last few months of the sterilisation drive are said to be more than one hundred with over a thousand fatal casualties. Last month in a speech in the Lok Sabha Shibbanlal Saxena said that in his constituency of Gorakhpur police had opened fire on people in several places to force into sterilisation camps. Of course, the speech was censored. In Maharashtra and Karnataka her party is a house divided. In Gujarat her party legislators came to blows on who should be the Chief Minister. Her ministers in Orissa and West Bengal are issuing press statements accusing each other of being "anti-social elements" who indulge in "anti-social" activities. This is the House Mrs Gandhi lives in. Granted that the bureaucracy and the repressive organs of state power are continuing to prop her petticoat dictatorship, are there not enough signs to indicate that like all dictatorship everywhere her dictatorship too finally will be consigned to the garbage heap.

I am sorry if I have rambled a bit. But I think it is necessary to record my total disenchantment with some of our friends. It is my conviction

that the future of our country will be shaped by those who are willing to state their everything to restore democracy and the rule of law. The compromisers and others who are seeking the soft options will succeed only in giving some legitimacy and hence credibility and respectability to Mrs Gandhi's dictatorship.

In this context, I am at a loss to understand the minds of those who continue to maintain their membership of the Lok Sabha even while they criticise for the record that it is a House which has lost its mandate. Why should anyone take cognisance of their criticism when they have no qualms in deriving whatever petty privileges they can as members of that illegitimate Lok Sabha. This split mind of the opposition is Mrs Gandhi's real strength.

I am glad that the Socialist Party's special convention—that met in Bombay at the end of November had resolved to give all support to your efforts to unite the four parties of the opposition. If such a unity is not forthcoming, the party has said that it will go along with you in the formation of a new party. In the present frame of mind, of the leaders of the parties which were to merge and their anxiety to reach a settlement at the cost of giving up our fundamental demands, I believe that it is not desirable to make further attempts to bring about a merger. Because one of the basic points of agreement for merger was the struggle for the restoration of status quo ante June 26, 1975, and it is clear that no party other than the socialist party is willing now to adhere to this basic objective and the socialist Party cannot agree to a merger unless there is agreement over this fundamental question. The political resolution adopted by the Bombay convention of the party has directed the party members to address themselves to the task of "training and organisation of cadres and the widest possible mass contact for a long and sustained struggle for the restoration of democracy."

Since June 1974, I have been urging you to launch a political party and I have committed myself, despite some reservations and a little hostility from many of my party comrades, to work for the success of that effort. At the meeting of opposition parties convened by you in November 1974 in Delhi I had circulated a long note (which was later issued in pamphlet form) in which I had publicly appealed to you to launch a new party. I am aware of the handicaps you face because of the state of your health, but I believe that you owe it to posterity to bring under one banner all those who are pledged to fight against the dictatorship and are committed to the creation of a democratic egalitarian society in India.

I am deliberately refraining from making any suggestions about the forms and future course of struggle. I have said enough on this during my days in the underground and done what I believed was needed and was

within my capacity I have no regrets and I can never have any reasons to revise my views. I am sure that our youth, workers and intellectuals will keep forging new and adequate instruments of struggle and succeed in overthrowing the dictatorship. There have been signs in the recent weeks of real restlessness and defiance in many circles, signs which should gladden your heart as they have put more hopes in mine.

In the context of the negotiations that are underway and the general anxiety for a settlement that is apparent from the attitude of the leadership of most opposition parties, it is necessary to make it clear that the socialist party cannot agree to participate in such negotiations, nor will it agree to join other parties in the move to withdraw the struggle against the dictatorship. The Socialist party has made its position clear in the past and has endorsed it at recent Bombay convention. As the Chairman of the Socialist party, I will not be a party to the repudiation of what has been an article of faith and which has received unqualified and unanimous support and endorsement from the rank and file. I think, it is my duty to make the position of the Socialist party and of my own clear to you as I understand that you are being pressurised to agree to the withdrawal of the struggle by the Lok Sangharsh Samiti.

Please take care of your health. I do have to tell you how much all of us think of you and pray for your health. With kindest regards.

P.S. A few questions which are bothering me : why have the negotiations become so vocal when Mrs Gandhi is having serious problems in Orissa and West Bengal where the CPI-supported Chief Ministers and their coteries are under attack by their own partymen, and when from Delhi to Chincpokli congressmen are vying with each other in issuing statements telling their CPI tails to stop wagging the congress dog ? Is Mrs Gandhi trying to tell something to the Russians through proxy by encouraging the negotiators whom she branded till a few days ago as "fascists"? Or is she trying to tell the American and Western capitalists that India is theirs to plunder and when it comes to ideology the fascists of yesterday will be her friends tomorrow ?

George Fernandes
December 14, 1976.

George to J.P.

II

December 31, 1976

Dear Jayaprakashji,

In my letter of December 14, I had given expression to certain fears about recent developments and also stated my views on merger, negotiations and struggle. Since then, my worst fears have been confirmed, and I have a foreboding of something disastrous happening.

The note which the BLD leaders have given to Mrs Gandhi's spokesman after their secret exploratory meeting with them clearly spells out the terms of the surrender. And if this note is only a 'points for discussion—that is how it is titled—, the final settlement could be nothing but an ignoble surrender.' In a letter dated December 18, to the members of his working committee, Asoka Mehta says that the meeting of opposition leaders held in Delhi on December 15, 16 and 17, 'approved of the approach behind the note and welcomed a dialogue.' So whatever it is that Charan Singh and Biju Patnaik have negotiated with Mrs Gandhi's men is now being accepted as the common approach of the entire opposition. I am not elaborating on the BLD note, since you must be aware of its contents.

The newspapers had reported and now Asok says in his letter of Dec 18 that in a message to the Delhi meeting you had welcomed the initiative of the opposition. Obviously your message was sent before Dec 14 and like almost everyone else you could not have been aware of the secret meeting of BLD leaders with Mrs Gandhi's men, or of the terms of surrender negotiated between them. Yet, an impression is sought to be created that you approve of these terms and that you are keen on a settlement at any cost. I am not prepared to swallow this bait; but in the prevailing atmosphere, it is likely a very large number of our comrades, those inside and outside prisons, will fall for it and go along with these exercises in the emasculation of the opposition's will, thinking that you too have blessed this effort.

It is now obvious that the moves for merger are not motivated by a desire to create a united command to fight the dictatorship. The most charitable view that can be taken is that they have been induced by a sense of fatalism and by what may be called, a sink or swim together attitude, I have reasons to believe that it is something far worse than that. With her characteristic cunning Mrs Gandhi is using the opposition leaders, some of whom obviously defeated and demoralised men to help her out of a pre-

dicament. Everyone knows that in recent months opposition to Mrs Gandhi's dictatorship has been gaining ground even in unexpected quarters. On the eve of the debate on the final rape of the constitution in November, in that illegitimate Lok Sabha thousands of lawyers teachers, writers and other intellectuals, singly and collectively came out openly questioning the competence of the rump parliament, to amend the Constitution. Later, many more intellectuals joined in petitioning the President to withhold the assent to those amendments. In the universities, in the bar associations among writers and thinkers there is now total realisation that Mrs Gandhi is a total dictator whose commitment is only to her dynasty. So what does she do? Initiate talks with the opposition and create an illusion among such people that after all she is not a dictator and dictators do not hold talks with the opposition. Do They? and rather than unite all those who have recently come out opposing the dictatorship and extend the areas of struggle the opposition is only too willing to play Mrs Gandhi's game.

It is also evident that Mrs Gandhi wants the opposition to go in for collective castration as a pre-condition to accept in their surrender. She is therefore very anxious to see that the four parties merge quickly and then surrender jointly, such elements that will refuse to go along could then be easily marked out and crushed. Thereby dealing a mortal blow to the will and capacity of the people to keep fighting—at least for the time being.

I can see no avenue other than relentless struggle, open for those who want to restore democracy in India. And for this struggle we need unity of purpose and action. But when action is not contemplated, nay discarded and the purpose is to play the game according to the rules framed to manage a fascist dictatorship where does the unity of the opposition party fit into all this? Let me therefore reiterate what I had written to you in my letter of Dec 14 that the Socialist Party cannot be a party to this merger for surrender.

After three days of secret confabulations with BLD representatives and after getting the opposition leaders to make a 'declaration of faith' and further after manoeuvring them into a position of merger sans struggle, Mrs Gandhi has launched a new tirade against these parties. She has characterised Ch. Charan Singh as an opportunist committed to a one point programme of becoming the chief minister of Uttar Pradesh. She has called the Jan Sangh a party of violence bracketted with the Naxalites. As for the Socialist Party after requiting its history by proclaiming Acharya Narendra Deva as its sole founder, she has been pleased to certify that he was a good man, while all others who have been associated with the socialist

party have been branded as frustrated people, who were prompted with the sole desire to denigrate her father and his offspring, and the moral coward that she is, has stooped to attack Dr Lohia without mentioning him by name accusing him of having exposed for public gaze all the dirt of Mr Nehru's politics which he (Nehru) had so successfully concealed from the people. Since then, her mentally dehydrated minions have been issuing statements daily repeating the same charges.

One does not need a great deal of imagination to realise that this characteristically vulgar display of boorishness by the dictator and her minions in attacking the opposition without giving them a chance to defend themselves is designed to subject them to humiliation, to make them look ridiculous before the people, to confuse the ranks of the opposition parties and to demoralise those who support them, but why these attacks when the so-called talks are on? One could, of course, explain them away as the outburst of a schizophrenic but not when one sees a perfect method in this madness. The fact is that Mrs Gandhi is trying to tell the people that the opposition are not only devoid of all courage and convictions but they even lack in selfrespect, the cartoon in Blitz of Dec 21 1976 (page 2) sums the total picture and the statement by Om Mehta asking the opposition to admit that their conduct before June 25, 1975 was wrong, confirms it.

That the opposition have to constantly invoked your name no matter what they wish to do means that you are in a position to prevent their going in for an abject surrender, and not for their sake, I do not care what happens to any of us whether in jail or outside, all of us are expendable in this struggle to restore liberty and democracy but we owe to the people to the generations to come to keep the struggle going. I do not subscribe to the theory that Mrs Gandhi's dictatorship is there for keeps. Everyday the bell is tolling louder for her. If the opposition leaders show nerve and character and the will to fight, it will only be a matter of time before we shall have overcome.

I am therefore, appealing to you to ask the opposition leaders to give up this exercise in emasculation and instead to draw up a programme of struggle, to go to the people to the workers and peasants, to unemployed youth, to the exploited masses in the urban and rural areas to the landless, the Harijans and Muslims and Adivasis, to educate them and prepare them to fight against the dictatorship. I can say without any fear of contradiction, that an overwhelming majority of the people are opposed to the dictatorship, and if only the collective cadres of the opposition parties operate with a collective will, they can change the course of history sooner than they believe it to be possible, and you make them do it.

J. P. to George

I shall appreciate hearing from you if possible per bearer of this letter. I hope this finds you in good health. With the kindest regards,

(George Fernandes)

J. P. TO GEORGE FERNANDES

I read over your letter to J.P. His reactions were as follows :

"I very much appreciate your sentiments, contained in the letter. Most of the people who come to see me insist that the struggle (or movement) should not be withdrawn. There are of course a few people who do suggest that the movement should be withdrawn. But they do not have any impact on my mind. My main concern is how to convert our idea of the movement into reality. How to give practical shape to the psychological opposition to the present dictatorship. This is the question I am faced with ?"

(Original in Hindi)

Sd/- Sachidanand
Private Secretary to
Jayaprakash Narayan.

YOUTH FOR GEORGE FERNANDES COMMITTEE

Dear Friend :

You are aware that George Fernandes and twenty-two others are facing trial in a Delhi Court charged with a conspiracy to overthrow Mrs. Gandhi's government. The case against them has come to be known as the Baroda Dynamite Case.

An unscrupulous government, which Mr. Fernandes rightly calls a fascist-monarchist dictatorship, is sparing no efforts and is pouring all its resources to secure the conviction of Mr. Fernandes and his co-accused. Over 575 witnesses have been lined up and thousands of pages of documentation prepared to make this Conspiracy Case a court room extravaganza. All over the world, Indian embassies and other hired agents are drumming up a campaign in a desperate effort to confuse world opinion over the issues involved in this case. Our Embassies and High Commissions have been

issuing regular "backgrounders" to the world press and to others concerned, painting Mr. Fernandes as the Devil incarnate, who is trying to destroy the "heaven" the Nehru dynasty has made of our country.

Nearer at home, Mr. Fernandes is being subjected to constant humiliation and harrassment which, of course, is to be expected from a dictatorship. He is brought to court handcuffed and chained, and is kept under heavy police guard and is locked up in prison in Maximum Security Yard. Since June 12, (1976) he has not been allowed even one single meeting with his lawyers, while Mrs. Gandhi's dictatorship keeps trumpeting to the world that Mr. Fernandes is being given a "fair trial".

There is no denying that Mr. Fernandes has today come to symbolise the nation in chains. And in his person it is the entire nation that is on trial. Those of us who know Mr. Fernandes are aware of his total commitment to democracy and socialism. The struggles he has waged in defence of the rights and in furtherance of the aspirations of the working and toiling people of our country are a part of the history of our nation. The personal sufferings he has undergone and the sacrifices he has made in upholding his convictions have few parallels. He has led movements of the youth for jobs, of the homeless for houses, of the landless for land. In his single-minded devotion to the cause of civil liberties, he has led a world-wide campaign against the government's atrocities towards the Naxalites. He spoke up for Mujib before Mrs. Gandhi would make up her mind. He campaigned for Salvadore Allende of Chile, Angela Davis of the United States, and the patriots who defied the Russian jackboot in Hungary and Czechoslovakia.

Today, when Mr. Fernandes is on trial, it becomes the patriotic duty of every Indian to rush to his defence. What stand he will take on the charges brought against him is just now a matter of much speculation. But of one thing we can be certain : it will be a stand that will do us proud and will show George Fernandes in the full splendour of his indomitable will, utter fearlessness, and tremendous strength of character.

A National Defence Committee, with Acharya J.B. Kripalani as Chairman has been set up for the defence of Mr. Fernandes and his co-accused. Several illustrious people, including former judges of the High Court, legislators and parliamentarians, writers and workers, legal luminaries and students, professors and trade unionists have joined this Committee. Lawyers from all over the country have offered their services to stand up for the defence of Mr. Fernandes. The Committee is raising funds to meet the

expenses of legal defence and to keep the people informed of the progress of the trial through publication of bulletins etc. In Europe, America, Japan, and Australia, in parliaments all over the world, concern has been expressed over the treatment meted out to George Fernandes. Defence Committees have been set up in several European and American countries by Socialists and others concerned with human liberty and freedom. Eminent lawyers from England have offered to fly to India and stand up in defence of Mr. Fernandes.

We have set up a national Youth for George Fernandes Committee to help supplement the efforts of the National Defence Committee. We are organising branches of this Committee all over the country to raise funds, to disseminate the news of the trial, and to educate the people in general, and the youth in particular on the fundamental issues involved in this trial.

The enclosed document, which is the text of a declaration made by me in the Court, will give you some idea of the size of our problem. But I can only say that to make freedom a priceless gift, some of us have to pay a heavy price.

This is an appeal to you to take courage in your hands and join the Youth for George Fernandes Committee and to play your role in the struggle for the restoration of freedom and democracy in the country as a pre-requisite step towards the establishment of a socialist and egalitarian society.

With greetings,
(Dr. Girija Huilgol)
General Secretary.

Chairman : Mr. Ravi Nair.

Vice Chairman : Mr. Than Singh Josh.

Please address your letters to :

The Secretary/Chairman,
Youth for George Fernandes Committee,
16-17, Vithalbhai Patel House,
Rafi Marg,
New Delhi-110001.

AFFIDAVIT

AFFIDAVIT OF Dr. Miss Girija Huilgol D/o Capt. R.P. Huilgol, aged 25 years resident of A15/11, Vasant Vihar, New Delhi-110057.

I, the above named deponent do hereby solemnly affirm and state as under :—

That the deponent is a Medical Graduate from the MAULANA AZAD MEDICAL COLLEGE, New Delhi and is presently working as a House Surgeon in Irwin Hospital, New Delhi.

I note that the CBI has mentioned my name as a prosecution witness in their case against George Fernandes and his colleagues. I also note that they have circulated a large number of statements allegedly made by me to their so-called Investigating Officer.

— Ever since the arrest and subsequent detention of my father, Capt. R.P. Huilgol, former Director of Operations, Indian Airlines, on March 28, 1976 on the alleged offence of having sheltered George Fernandes in our house, my entire family has been subjected to the most vicious forms of harassment, torture, and blackmail by the CBI officials and other police agencies. My brother, Chandra Kumar, was arrested and tortured and asked to make statements which had no bearing on reality: The harassment and torture I have been subjected to is a long story which will be told some day.

I was taken into custody on March 30, 1976, in Dhulia, and from that moment onwards I have been, and still am, under constant investigation and interrogation. In the course of the never-ending interrogations, I was told that I would be detained under MISA and my mother and brother too would be picked up, and our family ruined; that I would have to spend the rest of my life in prison. On the other hand, I was also told that if I agreed to give evidence against George Fernandes and his friends and colleagues, my father would be released, the prosecution against my father would be withdrawn, and I would be substantially helped.

Even at this moment, I am being subjected to constant threats and terror. I am still being told that the freedom of my father depends on my "cooperating" with the CBI by giving evidence against George Fernandes and his friends and colleagues. I have been told that my own freedom and liberty, as also that of my mother and brother also depends on my saying and doing things that the CBI would want me to say or do.

I want to state most emphatically that there is no question of my giving evidence against George Fernandes and his colleagues, men whom I respect and admire for their courage for conviction. Today, I am more than ever convinced that we are living in a dictatorship that has to go. Only in a dictatorship could my family and I have been subjected to the terror and blackmail that has been and still is our lot during these six months and more.

With this statement, the CBI will finally know that there is no question of my succumbing to their blackmail. They and others will now have no qualms in subjecting me to further terror and blackmail. They may deny me my own freedom, and my father, mother, and brother may be subjected to grievous hurt. All this is the price some of us have to pay to restore to the country the democratic values and the freedom which have been trampled under the high heels of the dictatorship of Mrs. Gandhi. And I am prepared to pay that price.

I shall now devote my time and energy to help organise the defence of George Fernandes and his friends and comrades.

Sd/-
Deponent

Verification: —

I, the above named deponent do hereby verify at Delhi on this 16.12.76 that the contents stated in the above Affidavit are true to my knowledge and belief.

Sd/-
Deponent

Delhi/Dated : 16.12.76

Solemnly affirmed before me read
over & explained to the deponent.

SEAL

Sd/- dt. 16.12.76

Oath Commissioner, Delhi
Mohan Lal Sud