

SAAL - Per
1599-c

KERALA GOVT. MUST CARRY ON

National Councils Call

1959
Cont. Copy

NEW AGE
COMMUNIST PARTY WEEKLY

● From RAMDASS

TRIVANDRUM, July 15.

An important session of the National Council of the Communist Party of India opened in Trivandrum on July 13, with 84 members of the Council and members of the Kerala State Committee attending. Talking to the National Council members as they arrived from their respective States one was struck by awareness of the importance of problems facing this session of the Council. It was this seriousness of the situation which, despite short notice, brought from all parts of India such a large number of Council members to this southern-most end of the country.

ALL the eight members of the Secretariat are here as are all leaders from all States. The gravity of the situation was underlined by Comrade Ajoy Ghosh, with whose report the Council session began. Since its formation, said Comrade Ghosh, the Communist-led government in Kerala which signified a breach in Congress monopoly of power, has given a powerful impetus to democratic movement all over the country and big prospects have opened out before the people.

of paralysing the administration so that Central intervention becomes possible, with the struggle taking the form of school picketing, stopping of transport vehicles, picketing of government offices, violent actions etc.;

● That the present movement has the open backing and the active support of the Congress High Command.

But the one month that has elapsed now has shown that the Communist Party and its government have until now met the challenge effectively and defeated the moves of the Opposition.

It is also to be noted that powerful factors which are growing have operated in favour of the Kerala government. The Congress leadership hoped that Kerala would become an issue of Communists versus non-Communists on the national scale, that the Communist Party would be isolated.

But public opinion saw it as an issue of defence of democracy, upholding of Constitution, opposition to communalism, defence of education, right of equal treatment to non-Congress ministry and defence of a government which was carrying out democratic reforms against threat of overthrow by reaction.

Biggest-Ever All-India Support

The campaign in defence of Kerala and against the threat of Central intervention developed into the biggest campaign in the recent pe-

riod. This was a deep dilemma which faced the enemies of the Kerala government. The slogan of the overthrow of the ministry as the only slogan prevented gathering of mass support outside the State.

All these years Congress leaders themselves had preached that children should not be made pawns in the political game, that communalism and communal alliances were abhorrent, that the verdict of the ballot box must be respected.

But in Kerala they themselves were doing all this, and that led to their political and moral isolation. There was the biggest mobilisation against Congress policies in Kerala and the High Command's role; never since independence had the Congress High Command and Pandit Nehru been subjected to such sharp criticism. Against their expectations of a country-wide united front against the Communist Party what happened was just the opposite.

The Kerala government won positive support from the working class, the peasantry and big sections of the middle class from all over the country. Democratic-minded elements, many of whom were no supporters of the Communist Party nevertheless sharply criticised Congress alliance with communalism, the school closure move and the unconstitutional actions to throw out the Ministry. Important circles of the bourgeoisie even, who have always been hostile to Kerala government and the Communist Party criticised Congress action in creating a "dangerous precedent" which would imperil parliamentary democracy.

Not merely the tactics and slogans of the Opposition but also the positive measures taken by the Kerala government contributed enormously to discredit the Opposition and enhance the government's prestige, isolate the Congress politically and morally and to defeat till now the threat of Central intervention.

Non-resort to Preventive Detention Act and large-scale imposition of Section 144, etc., readiness to go to the utmost

VOL. VII, NO. 29 SUNDAY, JULY 19, 1959 25 NP.

possible limits to settle controversial issues amicably like acceptance of reasonable proposals made by the Prime Minister after his visit to Kerala, etc., won respect of whole country. Plans of short and swift struggle did not materialise. On the contrary the struggle suffered serious reverses. Out of seven thousand schools over 6,000 are functioning normally with increasing attendance, attacks on schools in the struggle and abuses have created revulsion among the people, active mass participation in the struggle is on the down grade.

Against Mid-Term Elections

Defeated in the attempt to paralyse the administration and effect swift Central intervention, faced with growing volume of criticism all over the country, now the slogan of fresh elections has been given. But this slogan has deceived no one, it has been seen through as a democratic garb to an undemocratic demand for resignation.

The Communist Party opposed this slogan because:

1. though apparently democratic it is patently discriminatory and therefore undemocratic;

2. a ministry which has a majority in the legislature must be allowed time to implement its programme—two years are too short a period to do that and enable people to judge the ministry there;

3. if the party which told the people that it would ensure stable government, voluntarily quits, vast sections would feel that voting for the Communist Party was of no use because whenever the Opposition created enough trouble and the Centre backed them, the Communists would quit.

The crisis that has developed

in Kerala shows the length to which the ruling class will go when its monopoly of power is breached in even one State and when the consolidation of the position of the democratic ministry led by the Party of the working class created the danger of further weakening of that monopoly elsewhere. Kerala has shown that the ruling classes in India despite all talk of non-violence and constitutionalism are prepared to adopt any and every measure in order to throw out the Communist-led Ministry.

The Kerala crisis has at the same time shown the volume of democratic opinion inside the country which, if harnessed and given expression to on the basis of correct slogans and approach, on the basis of mass mobilisation and mass action, can weaken the offensive of reaction and even defeat it, if the Party and the democratic forces are sufficiently powerful, conscious and organised.

The defence of the government of Kerala, concluded Comrade Ghosh, means today the defence of the biggest achievement of the democratic movement since the attainment of independence; defence of working class, peasants and toiling people against vested interests; defence of democracy against onslaught of reaction; defence of provincial autonomy against attacks of the Centre; defence of the Constitution and of fundamental rights of citizens of every State of India to vote for and elect a government of their own choice.

After Comrade Ajoy Ghosh's report, Comrade E.M.S. Namboodiripad reported on the impressions of talks he had had with the Rashtrapati, the Prime Minister and the Central Cabinet ministers.

Comrade Achutha Menon then

* SEE PAGE 4



Braving heavy downpour people rally in Calcutta to hear Comrade Dange on Kerala (Report on Page 3)

—Photo Shambhu Banerjee

Bombay Malayalees Demonstrate Massive Support For Kerala Govt.

FROM GERALD PEREIRA

For the first time in the history of the city, over 5,000 Keralites many with their 'mundus' on, marched through the streets of Bombay on July 12, drenched fully in rains and dancing with joy, to express their full and unconditional support to the EMS Government in New Kerala.

THE class-conscious citizens of Bombay North watched and cheered the impressive and orderly procession walking in twos, carrying a huge Red banner in front, which had inscribed on it: "Rally behind Kerala Government". The procession after zig-zagging through Parel, Dadar and Matunga areas converged at Indian Gymkhana Grounds (Matunga) where a rally of over 40,000 Malayalees was held. Practically, every fourth Malayalee in the city, out of the one-and-a-half lakhs citizens from the fourteenth State, turned out at the rally.

The Bombay Malayalees who held a convention in the morning of the same day at Vanmali Hall, representing all the sections of Keralites from the different wards of the city, for Defence of Democracy, unanimously adopted a resolution condemning "the direct action and the incessant campaign of hartal and strife accompanying it which have gravely endangered the normal life of the various communities inhabiting Kerala and their peace-loving pursuits, threatened the smooth and systematic execution of the great plans of national reconstruction, undermined the fundamental principles of Constitutionalism...."

The resolution continues, "....This Convention protests against the opportunistic and partisan approach to the problem in Kerala taken by the premier political organisation in India, which has formed the Government at the Centre and in 13 other States. It strongly feels that the resolution of the Congress Parliamentary Board has encouraged the forces of anarchy and chaos at present in Kerala and will lead to the same state of affairs in other parts of India in future".

The Convention which was attended by 823 delegates was inaugurated by Comrade A. S. R. Chari who, congratulating the organisers for bringing up such a Convention within three days, said that it reflects the mass upsurge of the Keralites and gives a heavy blow to the reaction. He called upon the Keralites to extend their support to the Kerala Government in order to uphold the democracy in the country and to prevent Ayub Khans rising in our midst.

Comrade Vasudevan Nair, MP, who greeted the Convention on behalf of the people of Kerala, explained in detail the latest developments in Kerala and showed how the toiling masses are fully behind the Namboodiripad Government.

"Even the foreign press correspondents who had come to see the fall of Government", he said, "went away fully convinced

that the Communist Ministry will not fall because of the huge mass upsurge there in support of the Kerala Government".

The Bombay Keraleeya Samiti for Defence of Democracy has elected a 101-member Committee to carry on the work in the city. Srimati Sarah Latifi has been elected as the President and Comrade A. P. Narayanan as the Secretary.

Rival Show Flops

The 5,000 stormy procession which started from the Kamgar Miadan at 4 p.m. had to face a challenge (it could scarcely be called that) from a rival procession starting from the same place and at the same time, jointly organised by Sri M. Madhavan's (PSP) Kerala Aid Committee, the Bombay Branch of PSP, the Kerala Socialist League and other Congress groups, etc. The unfortunate 400 had to walk fast (not march!) in twos keeping a gap of 2 yards, in between to make the procession appear longer. They went to Napoo Gardens, and Sarvashrees Madhu Dandavate, Peter Alvares and M. Madhavan has to be satisfied in addressing "a heavily advertised meeting", of 700 people.

In sharp and significant contrast a huge mass of humanity packed the Indian Gymkhana Grounds, flooded the gulleys and climbed up the terraces. A novel feature was that for the first half hour there was slogan-shouting, and the maiden echoed with a 'strange language' which few (other than Malayalees) understood.

Srimati Sarah Latifi who presided over the rally put forward for approval the resolution passed in the morning at the Convention. With cheers the resolution was adopted to be despatched to the President, the Prime Minister of India, the Governor and Chief Minister of Kerala and to all the political parties in Kerala.

Reverend Father J. S. Williams, the Arch-Priest of the Indian National Church in an impressive bi-lingual speech (Hindi and English) declared that Christ had called for "peace on Earth and goodwill among men", and questioned emphatically, "how is that the churches directed from Rome, London and Washington have launched direct action and are fighting against the progressive measures of the Kerala Government?"

He opposed the idea of leaving the education of our young children "in the hands of foreign missionaries or their local agents" for in such conditions "our children suffer

from an inferiority complex". He called upon the Government of Kerala not to resign "as it is elected by the people to serve them".

Sri P. R. Lele, the famous columnist of Blitz dubbed the whole agitation in Kerala as a comic opera, except for the fact, he said, that some people are getting hurt and going to jails. Ridiculing the idea of central intervention, he stated that "our President is not there just to throw out the Kerala Ministry". Amidst thunderous applause, he declared, "Let our Prime Minister come out boldly against the obscurantist and reactionary forces in Congress, and tell Sri Namboodiripad that whatever powers are at my disposal are at your disposal, in putting down the agitation".

Comrade A. P. Narayanan, the Secretary of the newly formed Bombay Keraleeya Samiti for Defence of Democracy exposed the bogus character of the Kerala Aid Committee of Sri M. Madhavan (PSP) and the Kerala Council of Sri G. P. Nair (Congress). The latter has close links with the Phillips tea interests in Kerala he said. On behalf of the city Keralites, he promised full support to the Kerala Government.

Comrade A. S. R. Chari addressing the mammoth rally wished "that there was television from here to Simla so that Sri Nehru sees the mass upsurge of Keralites in Bombay".

He said that the EMS Ministry had not been established just by an accident. The Communist-led Ministry came there, he emphasised "because of the various struggles and sacrifices of the people.

The people of Kerala had given a full trial to Sri Panampilly Govinda Menon and Sri Pattom Thanu Pillal but they failed in solving the problems of the people and, therefore, the people voted the Communists to power".

Amidst stormy applause, Comrade Chari stated that "the security of Kerala is safe in the hands of Sri EMS Namboodiripad, the democratic masses of Kerala and the thousands of people who will fight for Kerala".

Talking about central intervention, he said that "so far as the Constitution was concerned there could be no central intervention against the Kerala Government and if at all there is one, it will be on the side of the Kerala Government".

Comrade Vasudevan Nair in his long, one-and-a-half hour speech in Malayalam, full of humour and pathos carried the entire audience and actually made them participate rather than respond.

"The so-called liberation movement" he stated, "continues mainly because of the volunteers supplied by the Catholic church to the political parties. Sri Mannath Padmanabhan had guaranteed that no private managers' schools would be opened and that Government schools would be forced to be closed down, and had requested the people not to send their children to schools for a week, promising the immediate fall of the Government.

"But his arithmetic did not work out and to-day out of 7,700 schools in 9 educational districts, only 543 schools are not opened".

Referring to the firings,

Comrade Nair said that "they were unfortunate. We do not enjoy police firings and are full of sorrow and agony for those who are killed; but the Government could not help it under the given conditions".

But soon after the firings, he said, "Sri Namboodiripad addressed a huge rally at Trivandrum on June 16, while Sri Morarji's meeting at Ahmedabad, after the Gujarat firings was completely boycotted by the people. That shows that the people understand that the Opposition parties are responsible for the firings".

His last words—almost drowned by the massive cheers and slogan-shouting—were: "There can be no doubt that the Kerala Government will continue in office and in the service of the people".

Andhra Congress Leader Speaks Up

SWAMI RAMANAND TIRTH, prominent Congress MP from Andhra and former President of the Hyderabad State Congress, expressed his strong doubts about the justifiability of Central intervention in Kerala.

Speaking in Hyderabad on July 11, the Swami said: "The happenings in Kerala are distressing. The picketings of schools and Government offices and other types of demonstrations, verging on violence, have to be severely condemned".

PSP IN U.P. ROCKED WITH CRISIS

PRAJA-SOCIALIST member of the Uttar Pradesh Legislative Assembly, Sri Shambhu Dayal, has resigned from the Party as a protest against PSP's leading association with the "reactionary and anti-democratic agitation against the progressive legislative measures of the Kerala Government and for the overthrow of the democratically elected Communist Ministry".

Sri Dayal has also protested against his Party's alliance with the Congress and communalist organisations in Kerala. Another Praja-Socialist MLA, Sri Bansidhar Shukla, also announced at a public meeting in Sitapur his intention to resign from the Party as a protest against its anti-Communism and its attitude towards the Kerala Government.

Much more significant seems to be the letter addressed to the former PSP General Secretary, Sri Triloki Singh, by a leading member of the Meerut District unit of the Praja-Socialist Party, Sri Peetambar Shastri, on behalf of himself and three other

local party leaders, Principal Mool Chand, Sri Jhamman Singh Shastri and Sri Guru Dayal.

Meerut Leaders' Protest

Criticising his Party's "joining hands with the Congress in the direct action in Kerala", he says that this action is highly undemocratic and unconstitutional and will shake the faith of the people in democracy. While pointing out that the Indian Constitution under which Kerala's popular Ministry has been formed and is functioning does not contain any provision for recall or referendum, he says that if those defeated at the polls took recourse to direct action to oust the elected majority from power "simply to wipe off their own frustration", democracy will not be able to function. He feels that in joining hands with the Congress against the Communist Ministry, the Kerala PSP leaders were guided by their "personal grudge". Sri Shastri warns that on

the issue of Kerala, "there is possibility of disruption among the rank and file; the party seems to be divided into two camps. Many important members may quit the Party; many sympathisers may withdraw sympathy". He says that the Meerut PSP's reported decision to send 100 volunteers had no basis in reality; no such decision had been taken by the local party and only some "professional jail-goers" were anxious to go to Kerala. He has asked Sri Triloki Singh for his personal opinion in the matter and requested him to "intervene and ask the State (Kerala) Party to keep away from the movement, otherwise the Congress leaders would call off their movement and the Party finding no alternative will have to abide by their decision".

That there are reasons for the fears entertained by Sri Shastri about disruption in the PSP over Kerala is shown by reports of resignation from the Party reaching us from Muzaffarnagar and Naini Tal.