

**THE ROLE OF NON-COMMUNIST LEFT MOVEMENT  
IN KERALA POLITICS FROM 1942 TO 1977.**

**Thesis submitted to the University of Calicut for  
the award of the  
Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in History.**

**SASI KUMAR. P.  
SELECTION GRADE LECTURER IN HISTORY  
GOVERNMENT COLLEGE, MADAPPALLY**

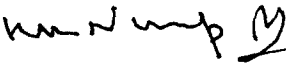
**DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY  
UNIVERSITY OF CALICUT - 673635  
AUGUST 2005.**

**Dr. K.K.N. Kurup,  
Former Professor and Head,  
Department of History and  
Former Vice Chancellor,  
University of Calicut.**

## CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that this thesis **The role of Non-Communist Left Movement in Kerala Politics from 1942 to 1977** submitted for the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in History, of the University of Calicut is a record of bonafide research carried out by **Sasi Kumar. P** under my supervision. No part of the thesis has been submitted for any degree before.

Madappally,  
24.08.2005

  
24.8.05  
Dr. K.K.N. Kurup,  
Supervising teacher.

## DECLARATION

I, Sasi Kumar. P, hereby declare that this thesis entitled **The Role of Non-Communist Left Movement in Kerala Politics from 1942 to 1977**, is based on original research work done by me under the supervision of **Dr. K.K.N. Kurup**, former Head of the Department of History, University of Calicut, for the award of the degree, Doctor of Philosophy in History. This thesis or any part thereof has not been submitted to any other university for any other degree.

Madappally,  
24.08.2005.

  
SASI KUMAR. P <sup>24.08.05.</sup>

# CONTENTS

	<b>Pages</b>
Preface	i
Acknowledgement	v
List of Abbreviations	viii
<b>CHAPTER I</b>	<b>Introduction.</b> 1
<b>CHAPTER II</b>	<b>Dynamics of Socialism.</b> 18
<b>CHAPTER III</b>	<b>The Genesis of Congress Socialist Party.</b> 59
<b>CHAPTER IV</b>	<b>Congress Socialists and Quit India Movement.</b> 85
<b>CHAPTER V</b>	<b>Ideologues of Socialism.</b> 123
<b>CHAPTER VI</b>	<b>Praja Socialist Party.</b> 177
<b>CHAPTER VII</b>	<b>Samyuktha Socialists and Coalition Ministries.</b> 232
<b>CHAPTER VIII</b>	<b>Emergency and Aftermath.</b> 282
<b>CHAPTER IX</b>	<b>Conclusion.</b> 303
<b>APPENDICES</b>	
<b>BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES</b>	
<b>GLOSSARY</b>	
<b>SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>	

## PREFACE

Kerala is one of the regions where Left politics and ideology had gone into grass roots since the growth of nationalist movement in the 1930s. The Lefts included the Socialists also in its socio political organisations. In the early phase they united together in the Indian National Congress with their socialist and communist ideology. However gradually such ideologues left the Congress and organised their own political parties. In the 1940s the socialists were isolated both by the communist and the congress. Gradually as a political party the socialists lost their hegemony on account of the mainstream politics of the Indian National Congress and the Communists.

Although theoretical studies are available on left led movements in Kerala there is no proper study on the socialist movement in Kerala. The present research programme "The Role of Non-Communist Left Movement in Kerala Politics From 1942 to 1977" is a modest effort to trace the origin and growth of socialism in Kerala with their later disintegration into several splinter groups. It is an interesting fact to note that the socialists in Kerala had joined a movement for Liberation of Kerala in 1959 to pulling down a government led by the communists. Such ideological changes and programmes are quite

interesting for a student of history. This research programme is divided into nine chapters including an introduction and a concluding chapter. The objectives of the study, the importance of investigation, limitations, survey of previous work, methodology and details of sources are given in the introduction, over and above the discussion of the non-Communist Left movement.

The second chapter entitled 'Dynamics of Democratic Socialism' discusses various streams of ideas which contributed to the formation of Democratic Socialism. This chapter begins with the Utopian ideas of socialism spearheaded by Saint Simonions, the Fourerists and in Great Britain Owenites, who officially adopted the name Socialists. An attempt is made to evaluate the main features of Marxism as to distinguish it with Democratic Socialism. Further the ideas of Dadabhai Naoroji, Bipin Chandra Pal, Subhas Chandra Bose etc., are also analysed. How Socialist ideas spurted in Nehru after his visit to Russia and how far he is a Socialist is also discussed. The book *Why Socialism* and Socialists documents were made use of to analyse the democratic socialist idea of Jayaprakash. The Socialist concept of Ram Manohar Lohia as well as the Socialist thought of Gandhi was also analysed to get an overall idea about the concept of Democratic Socialism.

In the third chapter 'The Genesis of Congress Socialist Party' in Malabar was discussed. The growth and split of Socialist movement is

intimately connected with the growth of national movement. This chapter ends with the formation of the state unit of the Communist Party of India in 1939. After the deserting of the Communists, the CSP became a very feeble organisation without adequate roots among the people.

The fourth chapter includes a detailed discussion of the role played by the CSP in the Quit India Movement in Malabar. The sensational event of Kezhariyur Bomb Case and the role of K.B. Menon in organising CSP also are discussed. This chapter ends with the withdrawal of the Socialists from Congress.

The fifth chapter namely 'Ideologues of Socialism' describes the ideological visions of K.B. Menon and Kunhirama Kurup. It also evaluates the political contributions of Pattom A. Thanu Pillai, who was an efficient statesman and an able Chief Minister. The sixth chapter entitled 'Praja Socialist Party' delineates the political development since the inception of Pattom as Chief Minister. The role of PSP in '*Vimochana Samaram*' against the Communists as well as the Role of Socialists in the liberation of Mahe was also included in this chapter. Chapter seven 'Samyuktha Socialists and Coalition Ministries' deals with the role played by the Socialists as part of the various coalition ministries and how far their split and merger and reformulation resulted in the arrested growth of the Socialists.

The eighth chapter, entitled 'Emergency and Aftermath', describes how the Socialists with their limited resources and man power hoisted the flag of resistance against the authorities during the 'black days' of Emergency. The formation of Janatha party and its contribution in the politics and administration are also discussed in this chapter. In the concluding chapter an attempt is made to analyse the factors for the arrested growth of the Socialists and its prospects in the state of Kerala. It is quite apparent that the socialists had played a vital role in the political scenario of Kerala even though their numerical strength and popular support were meagre. It is evident that the political fortunes and misfortunes of the socialists were determined by the unity and disunity as well as the ability and commitment of the leaders. Some appendices are also given which included facts and figures on various elections, the names of the socialist members elected to the Assembly, the symbols of Socialist party etc.

guidance. I remember with gratitude the help rendered by my colleagues in the department of History, Govt. College, Madappally.

I am really thankful to my student and colleague Sri P.S. Jineesh who supported me throughout the process of fine tuning the final version of the thesis. I am also grateful to my students Sri. Riyas and Kumari Vini for their help in tracing the documents and translations. I remember with gratitude the veteran freedom fighters, socialist leaders and the victims of Emergency for their co-operation with this endeavor.

I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to the staff members of Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, Teen Murthi House, New Delhi; Tamilnadu Archives, Egmore; the Center for Advanced Studies in History, Aligarh; General Library, University of Kerala, Trivandrum; Library of Department of Politics, Karyavattom, Trivandrum; State Archives, Trivandrum; Regional Archives, Kozhikode; Legislative Library, Trivandrum; Legislative Library, Madras; C.H. Muhammad Koya Library and Library, Department of History, University of Calicut. Last, but not the least, I recognize the invaluable service rendered by the Library staff of Government College, Madappally as well as the Malabar Institute for Research and Development, Vatakara. I wish to express my sincere thanks to Mrs. Uma Sumodan for the neat execution of this thesis.

Finally, I recollect with gratitude the help rendered by all those who have been directly or indirectly involved in the completion of the thesis.

Sasikumar P.

Madappally,

24.08.2005

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AICC	All India Congress Committee
AICSP	All India Congress Socialist Party
AIML	All India Muslim League
AITUC	All India Trade Union Congress
CDM	Civil Disobedience Movement
COFEPOSA	Conservation of Foreign Exchange and Prevention of Smuggling Act.
CPI (M)	Communist Party of India (Marxist)
CPI	Communist Party of India
CSP	Congress Socialist Party
CWC	Congress Working Committee
DIR	Defense of India Rule
EMS	Elamkulam Manakkal Sankaran Namboodiripad
INC	Indian National Congress
INC (O)	Indian National Congress (Organization)
INC (R)	Indian National Congress (Ruling)
ISP	Indian Socialist Party
JP	Janatha Party
KKP	Kerala Karshaka Party
KMPP	Kizan Mazdoor Praja Party

KPCC	Kerala Pradesh Congress Committee
KSP	Kerala Socialist Party
KSSP	Kerala Samyuktha Socialist Party
KTP	Karshaka Thozhilali Party
LDF	Left Democratic Front
MISA	Maintenance of Internal Security Act
NAHC	National Ad Hoc Committee
NMM&L	Nehru Memorial Museum and Library
PSP	Praja Socialist Party
PUCLDR	People's Union for Civil Liberties and Democratic Rights
RSP	Revolutionary Socialist Party
RSS	Rashtreeya Swayam Sevak Sangh
SP	Socialist Party
SSP	Samyuktha Socialist Party
TTNC	Travancore Tamilnadu Congress
UDF	United Democratic Front

# INTRODUCTION

Sasi Kumar.P. “The role of non-communist left movement in Kerala politics from 1942 to 1977” Thesis. Department of History, University of Calicut, 2005



**CHAPTER I**

**INTRODUCTION**

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

The concept like socialism, democratic socialism, social democracy and communism are very difficult to define. The term socialism is derived from the Latin word 'socius' which means companion or comrade. Socialism is an economic and social doctrine, a political movement inspired by this doctrine and a system or order established when this doctrine is organized in the society. The socialist doctrine demands societal ownership and control of fundamental means of production and distribution to be achieved by reconstruction of the existing capitalist or other political system of a country. The terms like 'left' and 'right' are also used in connection with socialist theory and practice. These terms were first used as political terms during the French Revolution to distinguish the pro-revolutionaries and the anti-revolutionaries. During the last century, there had been ideological proliferation of Socialism in many colonial and independent countries all over the world. However, there had been variations in its ideology according to the local 'environment'. In Kerala Socialism has promoted several splinter groups which had assumed political power also through coalition ministries.

The term 'non-communist left movement' is used to denote the organizations, which adopted basic principles of Marxism and Leninism but were not ready to work in tune with the programmes of CPI. The organizations included in the non-communist left movement are mainly the Socialists and RSP, KSP and KTP. Most of them are not interested in internationalism. Unlike the communists, the socialists preferred democratic and parliamentary means to achieve socialism. In their political programme they never wanted to impose strict regimentation and hegemony of the party. They gave primacy to the protection of civil liberties. The socialists lacked the cadre nature of the communist party. They exhibited their inclination to leftism by taking part in movements for attaining the basic needs of the people. In their inception, both RSP and KSP advocated revolutionary methods to attain socialism. But they preferred to work in the democratic framework. Consequently, they abandoned revolutionary methods.

At the dawn of history, men lived in perfect peace and co-operation enjoying equal opportunities and rights, which was called primitive communism. But the development of agriculture and settled life led to the development of private property which in turn led to exploitation as well as social and economic authority. The basic idea of Socialism is equality which is a term or concept very dear but not near to millions of human beings. However, in real sense all human beings

are not equal. "In tracing the source of this evil, the socialist first of all encounters the biologist. He is told that human beings are not born equal, as the democrats love to repeat, but very much unequal. From birth we are said to differ in innate capacity - both in quantity and quality".<sup>1</sup> The inborn talents and abilities make few leaders and they appropriate more from nature which widen the gap between the haves and have-nots. But the Socialists pointed out that sometimes a rich man earned a thousand times more than a poor man but an "individual, no matter how clever, cannot possibly produce at any stage of productivity thousands of times more than others who are using the same means of production. They believed that the wealth of the rich were not the result of their own production, but the result of exploitation"<sup>2</sup>. Thus appropriation of surplus or exploitation results in the gap between haves and have-nots which the socialists resist. Apart from such resource control, the concept of socialism advocates the elimination of monopoly power structure in a social system.

Whenever and wherever exploitation occurred it resulted in the misery of human beings. There appeared philosophers and thinkers who guided popular movements. In Britain, series of attempts were

---

1. Bimal Prasad (Ed.), *Jayaprakash Narayan: Selected Works*, Vol. 2 (1936-39), (New Delhi, 2001), p. 5.

2. *Ibid.*, Pp. 9-10.

made and historical documents like 'Magna Carta', 'Petition of Rights' and 'Bill of Rights' were promulgated to protect human rights and equality. 'Liberty, Equality and Fraternity' were the war cry of the French revolutionaries. The American Declaration of Independence highlighted equality when it proclaimed all men are born free and equal. It is clearly evident when they stated that, "we hold these truths to be self-evident; that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty and pursuit of happiness; that to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed"<sup>3</sup>. But in spite of all these bloodshed as well as non-violent parliamentary means, inequality prevails among human beings.

Socialism as an idea had deep roots in Indian culture when it proclaimed '*Loka Samastha Sukihno Bavanthu*'. The Advaita concept of Sankaracharya, i.e., Atman is the part of Brahman, indicates the oneness of human being. But there is dichotomy in these concepts. All such concepts were in a theoretical level. The greatest apostle of equality in ancient India was Gauthama Buddha. The Buddha and Buddhism fought the institution of caste successfully and for over a

---

3. Christopher Hibbert (Ed.), *Twilight of Princes*, (New York, 1974), p. 116.

thousand years the pernicious effects of the institution were neutralized and checked in India and Indian culture and civilization blossomed forth and scaled new heights. Among the socialists Acharya Narendra Deva was one who knew the intricacies of Buddhism as he was well versed in Pali, Sanskrit and Prakrit languages. He held the opinion that the Buddhist order was also socialist in its basic nature. The Bhakthi saints from 12<sup>th</sup> century onwards propagated the idea that from Brahmin to the Chandala, everybody's Atman is the same. They believed in the idea of fatherhood of God and brotherhood of human beings. The Bhakti saints propagated the idea of equality in spiritual as well as material life. The Sufi peers also stood for equality. Such conceptualizations were seen in the realm of philosophical epistemology, but in practice there had been inequality in resources, wealth and status in India as well as elsewhere. But such ideas were not scientific.

The 19<sup>th</sup> century reformers and philosophers also gave adequate importance to the concept of socialism. The book 'Samya' written by Bankim Chandra Chatterjee for the first time mentioned the idea of socialism in India. Then onwards many a reformers, scholars, philosophers and political leaders enhanced the idea of socialism. The concept of socialism developed through different tributaries with the

growth of anti-imperialist agitation and the national freedom movement.

In Kerala the idea of equality was propagated by social reformers even before the concept of scientific socialism reached here. Swami Vivekananda condemned Kerala as a 'lunatic asylum' due to the narrow, rigid, sectarian, caste restrictions that existed there. He even brought the attention of the parliament members of Britain to the fate of the down-trodden people. In the last quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century Sree Narayana Guru preached the concept of "one caste, one religion and one god". He was against caste system and also fought for the economic upliftment of the downtrodden people. Chattampi Swamikal, Ayyankali, Swami Sivananda Paramahansa and Vaghatananda were some of the intellectual luminaries who through their teachings and intellectualism had strengthened the campaign against caste system and such evils in Kerala. The activities of these social reformers created awareness and it was in such a situation that attempts were made to spread socialist ideas in Kerala.

Leftism in India developed out of the particular situation which prevailed towards the end of the I World War. It was inextricably linked with the main stream of the nationalist movement. The left movement in India developed into two main streams; communists who functioned as branch of international communist movement

subordinated to Comintern and the congress socialist party, which functioned as the left wing of Indian National Congress. The congress socialist drew inspiration from the philosophy of democratic socialism. Both these organization drew support from the anti-imperialist sentiments that prevailed in India. In the present study, an attempt is made to analyse the activities and achievements of the democratic socialists of Kerala.

The Indian Socialists differed from the Communists not only in their tactics and methods but also in the attitudes and beliefs. The Communists relied mainly on Marx, Engels and Lenin. The Socialists regarded Marxism as a form of scientific socialism but they had other sources of inspiration. They were influenced to a certain extent by Gandhism and more particularly by the idea of western democracy. The socialists were not whole-hearted Marxists. They thought that the communists had converted Marxism into a dogma. The Indian Socialists gave their own interpretation to Marxism to show that it was not opposed to democracy.

The Indian socialists believed in the method of Sathyagraha as a means to reach their goal. They wanted to avoid violence and dictatorship and also wanted to combine socialism and democracy. They believed that violence and bloodshed is not required to usurp power in Indian situation. They believed that it might be possible to

come to power through democratic process. But they were also aware of the necessity of using coercive power for effecting economic transformation of society. Jayaprakash Narayan states: "Those who desired to construct a socialist society should have power and requisite sanction behind them to do so. Behind every piece of legislation lies the state power to pursue and ultimately to coerce" <sup>4</sup>.

The idea of CSP was born in Nasik jail under the leadership of Jayaprakash Narayan. In Kerala, the CSP functioned as a part of INC. But most of their leaders showed communist leaning. In the Pinarayi Conference of 1939, the communists all of a sudden transformed the CSP into Communist party. Those few socialists who remained in the CSP acted vigorously during the Quit India Movement especially in Malabar. After independence CSP severed all their relations with the Congress and formed Socialist party under the leadership of Jayaprakash. During this period Socialists had to face severe opposition from the Communists as well as Congress. In 1952, PSP was formed as a result of the merger of KMPP of Acharya Kripalani and Socialist party under Jayaprakash Narayan. Then onwards the history of Socialist party was eventful with split-merger and new formations. Even minute developments at national level reverberated in Kerala

---

4. Bimal Prasad (Ed.), *Socialism Sarvodaya and Democracy: Selected Works of Jayaprakash Narayan*, (Bombay, 1964), Pp. 3-4.

politics. The Socialists supported the democratic institutions, liberalism and individual freedom. They were against the centralized democratic system as advocated by the communists. In the heart of heart the socialists cherished the ideas of Fabians Socialism of gradual change instead of radical transition through revolution. This was the main ideological difference between Socialism and Communism.

There have been much discussions and debates among academicians regarding the globalisation, liberalisation, privatisation, and consumerism and market economy. This tendency had even crept into the fold of Indian socialist movement and there is dismay among leaders as well as laymen with regard to its fate. Even some of the firebrand socialists like George Fernandez had taken asylum in the capitalist block. Though due importance was given to the study of the role played by the Communists, as well as the Congress in Kerala politics, the role of non-communist left was either marginalised or ignored. The role of the socialists in making the secular fabric of our society has not been properly assessed or analysed. Therefore, the present study aims at the analysis of the genesis, growth, split, reunion and fragmentation of the non-communist left movement in Kerala. The significance and relevance of non-communist left movement in the socialist awakening in Kerala is analysed. Another question to be probed was why did Socialists drift far from Communist party and

even opposed them in various contests. The PSP played a key role in ousting the first communist ministry by participating in the *Vimochana Samaram*. They also played a key role in the fall of the second communist ministry headed by EMS.

The present study also emphasized the stand taken by the prominent socialist leaders in practical politics of Kerala. In the election to the Travancore-Cochin legislative assembly in 1954, though PSP had contested with the support of the communists, they evaded the communist after victory and formed the ministry with the outside support of the Congress. The ministry had fallen victim to the internal dissension in the PSP and the withdrawal of support by the Congress. As there is no proper cadre organisation for the Socialists, even after the success in elections they had given up their former allies and made new coalition for political gains. The measures taken by the ministry under the leadership of Pattom in re-structuring the existing social order, and the achievement of Pattom ministry have been analysed.

In the year 1959 Communist ministry in Kerala was dismissed as a result of the *Vimochana Samaram*. Much has been published regarding the role and involvement of the rightist as well as the caste groups. But the part played by the socialists has not yet been properly evaluated. Hence, the present study aimed to assess the role of the socialist groups in the so-called *Vimochana Samaram*. Socialists mainly participated

against communists but also against the authoritarian regimentation of the government which they felt as their 'moral duty'.

Many a study had been conducted pertaining to the life and career of various congress as well as communist leaders. But the life and activities of socialist leaders had not captured the attention of the historians. Hence, an attempt is made to analyse the personality of K.B. Menon as a champion of civil liberty and liberal ideology and Kunhirama Kurup as a simple Gandhian and the apostle of the right of farmers and laymen. Attempt is also made to analyse the personality of Pattom as a Socialist politician and administrator. Further the present work is also aimed to evaluate the measures taken by the socialist groups as part of various ministries of Kerala. Importance was given to their attitude towards the casteist and so called communal groups in Kerala politics. This had been from the formation of triple alliance amongst the Congress, PSP and the Muslim League, which directly elevated Muslim League to the forefront of Kerala Politics. How far did their relation with the Congress affect their functioning as leftist? Did it lead to the dilution of their revolutionary fervour? Did they make political compromises to remain in power? How far they succeeded in implementing socialist ideas? All these questions were raised and earnest attempts were made to reach an objective and logical conclusion. Further attempt was also made to see the RSP, KSP and

KTP as part of non-communist left movement. In short the role played by the socialists since the formation of the party in Kerala to the emergence of Janatha Party in 1977, is analysed in the present study.

To analyse the genesis, growth and fragmentation of non-communist left movement in Kerala, number of governmental records are available in Tamilnadu Archives, Egmore, and in Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, New Delhi. Both these archives were consulted. The absence of party archives of PSP or other socialist group was a limitation. However, it was overcome by making use of the records available in the private repositories like that of T.H. Asokan Master of Vatakara and Edakkad Narayanan Master of Muzhappilangad. Interviews were made with socialist leaders and freedom fighters like K. Kunhirama Kurup, Kurumayil Narayanan, Mangalatt Raghavan, K. Chandrasekharan and lot of others to derive firsthand information. But many of them could not recollect their memories due to their old age. Autobiographies of communist stalwarts like A.K. Gopalan, E.K. Nayanar and works of E.M. Sankaran Namboodiripad containing details regarding political events connected with socialist party had been made use of. However, all these contain the points of view of the Communists and not of Socialists nor were they impartial or objective. Even though Communists and Socialists stood for a common cause - the welfare of people - the means to achieve the end were different. On

many of the occasions they acted as enemies. So, it is not proper to depend wholly upon communist writers to glean socialists' history. But a critical study of these books will help us to understand the basic ideas. Intensive scrutiny of original sources in the form of newspapers, pamphlets and notices served much to make this endeavour fruitful.

As already noted only casual attention has been made to study the activities of the non-communist left movement in Kerala. Efforts have been made by historians to study the history of socialist movement in an All India perspective. An analytical study, *Socialism in India* edited by B.R. Nanda is an important work in this regard. Another book is *Evolution of Socialist Policy* by the eminent socialist Madhu Limaye. *The Indian Socialists - Search for Identity* written by Sonal Shah gives a detailed picture of the activities of Indian socialists as well as the ideological background. Recently a book was published in Malayalam namely *Keralthile Socialist Prasthanam* by Sri. Prasanth Mithran. As the author of the book is not a trained historian, the book lacks scientific precision and objectivity. Moreover, the political ideas of the author had influenced his interpretations to a great extent. However, it helped much in getting basic ideas. It is highly fortunate that Sri. O.P. Ralhan has compiled many of the PSP and SSP documents from the inception of the CSP in twenty one volumes. All these

volumes are available in the Kerala legislature library, Trivandrum and were very helpful.

The work, *Communism in Kerala*, by T.J. Nossiter sheds light on various aspects of communism and it indirectly refers to the non-communist left movement. A number of books and pamphlets had been published by the veteran communist, the late E.M.S Nambudiripad which threw light on the genesis and growth of communist party in Kerala. They describe in detail the socio-political scenario in Kerala. *How Communist came to power in Kerala*, written by R. Ramakrishnan Nair also gives details on the role of PSP in moulding the political conditions of Kerala.

The methodology followed in this study is descriptive and analytical which includes fact finding enquiries of different kinds. The accumulated facts have been put to severe criticism to find out the truth. This is to be assessed in an all India panorama of socialist movement led by Jayaprakash Narayan, Ram Manohar Lohia and other activists. Attempts were made to analyse the theoretical aspects of Indian Socialism on the basis of ideas of Jayaprakash Narayan, Ram Manohar Lohia, Jawaharlal Nehru and Gandhi. Attempts were also made to interpret the stands taken by the socialist leaders and the causes for the split among themselves.

For the present study primary sources were of immense value. *Mathrubhumi* newspapers and weeklies since 1935 are a storehouse of information in this topic and are available in the Calicut Archives of Mathrubhumi and were consulted. A bundle of original documents like party circular and notice in the custody of Edakkad Narayanan and T.H. Asokan were also consulted. Weeklies like *Ahwanam*, *Dina Prabha*, *Pravaham*, *Pon Pulari*, *Powran*, *Samadarshi*, *Sakhav* etc., containing details about various aspects of socialist activities in Kerala were also very useful. Details about the organization of Kisan Panchayath under the leadership of K. Kunhirama Kurup were written mainly depending on these documents. The articles of Jayaprakash, Asoka Mehta and Madhu Limaye were consulted to get an ideological perspective. The articles of Kerala Socialist leaders like K.B. Menon, R.M. Manakkalath, Kunhirama Kurup, B.C. Varghese and P.M. Kunhiraman Nambiar which were published serially have been consulted to get an authentic view of the activities of the socialists of Kerala. The Kerala State Archives, Kerala Legislature Library etc, were made use to trace the original sources. The documents kept in Nehru Memorial Museum and Library in New Delhi especially K.B. Menon papers; Indian National Congress papers etc., were also consulted. The Tamilnadu State Archives at Egmore houses a number of documents regarding the freedom movement as well as early political activities of Kerala. These

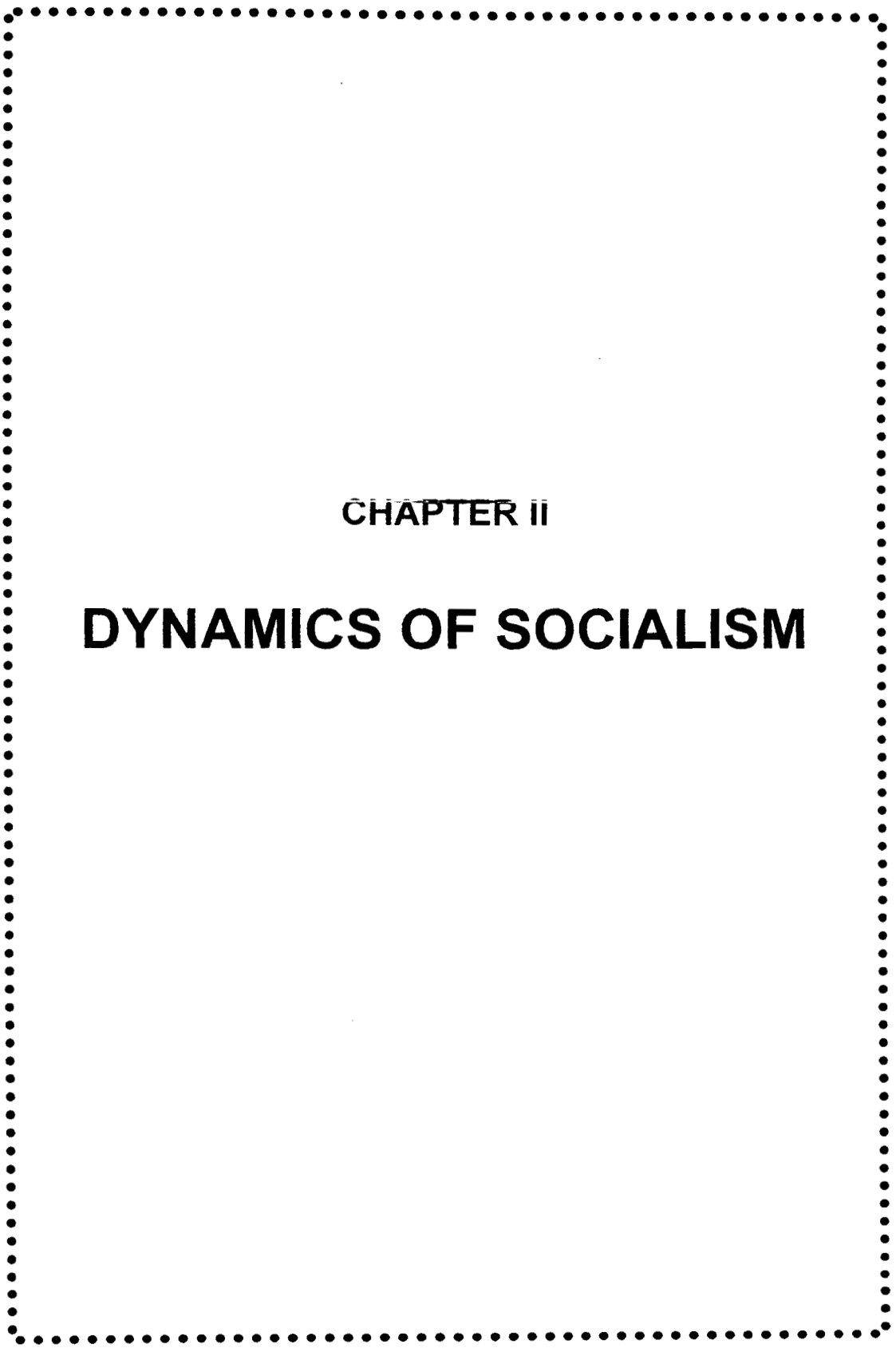
original documents helped much in tracing the freedom movement especially of Malabar in its first phase.

In addition to these, biographies and reminiscences of the veteran socialist party leaders were also consulted. In this regard the autobiography of K. Kunhirama Kurup, *Kazhinja Arupathu Varshangal*, the autobiography of P.R. Kurup, *Ente Nadinte Katha Enteyum* and *Erumpazhikkullil* by V.A. Kesavan Nair were very helpful. A good number of party souvenirs containing information regarding party activities and socialist ideology were consulted. Number of freedom fighters and socialist leaders and victims of Emergency were interviewed. Among them the prominent leaders like M.N. Sadanandan, Kurumayil Narayanan, K.P.C.C. Gopalan, all accused in Keezhariyur Bomb case deserve special mention. Veteran freedom fighters like Madhavan Kidavu, K. Kunhirama Kurup and K.P. Muhammed were interviewed. Socialist leaders and Emergency victims like K. Chandrasekharan and P.K. Sankarankutty and Naloli Balan were interviewed. The Socialist leader Mangalatt Raghavan who led the freedom fighters of Mahe was also interviewed. In this connection lot of books are available in the Calicut University Library and Library of Department of Politics Kerala University, University Library Karyavattom and Moulana Asad Library at Aligarh, Library at Nehru Memorial Museum, New Delhi, Library attached to Tamilnadu

Archives, Egmore and Library in Government College Madappally as well as Malabar Institute for Research and Development at Vatakara, which were utilised extensively.

# DYNAMICS OF SOCIALISM

Sasi Kumar.P. “The role of non-communist left movement in Kerala politics from 1942 to 1977” Thesis. Department of History, University of Calicut, 2005



**CHAPTER II**

**DYNAMICS OF SOCIALISM**

## CHAPTER II

# DYNAMICS OF SOCIALISM

There are number of ideas or systems in morals and politics which are beyond exact definition. Who can satisfactorily define democracy or liberty or virtue or happiness or the state or individualism? Socialism is such an idea, very difficult to define. There are number of definitions to socialism as there are socialist groups. It is not known who first used the terms 'socialism' and the 'socialists'. So far, as is known they first appeared in print in Italian in 1503, but in a sense entirely unconnected with any of their later meanings<sup>1</sup>. At present the term is attributed to a socio-economic condition in which equality prevails and where there is no exploitation. Inequality existed in human society since the introduction of private property. But the problem became acute with the heralding of modern age. The nineteenth century was a critical period in the long and chequered history of the world. The four factors, capitalism, industrialisation, science and technology and imperialism produced profound impact on

---

1. G.D.H. Cole, *Social Thought the Forerunners 1789-1850*, (London 1962), p. 1.

the course of humanity. The accumulation of capital and scientific and technological advancement combined to give birth to the Industrial Revolution<sup>2</sup>. Industrialisation created a new class of industrial labour destroying the old feudal relationship. The number of workers multiplied and they were huddled up in ugly and unsanitary factory towns. The conditions in the factories were appalling, the workers' houses or huts were even worse in the slum areas. They lived in great misery, little children and women worked incredibly long hours in dangerous situations<sup>3</sup>. They were forced to work for 14 to 16 hours in miserable conditions without subsistence wages even. Death from slow starvation and heavy work was the order of the day<sup>4</sup>. This was a severe problem which questioned the smooth functioning and the very existence of the society. It was in this circumstance the philosophy of 'equality' or egalitarianism emerged in Europe known as socialism. The first phase of socialism emerged during the period before Karl Marx and is known as 'Utopian Socialism'. The next stage is in between the publication of *Communist Manifesto* (1848) and the Russian Revolution. The third stage is the period after the Russian Revolution.

The shocking conditions of the labouring class touched the

---

2. Jawaharlal Nehru, *Glimpses of World History*, (New Delhi, 1997), p. 536.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 533.

4. *Ibid.*

sentiments of certain humanists. Robert Owen, it is said, was the one who first used the word Socialism. Owen pledged to fight against inhuman practices existing in the new factory system, which widened the gap between the haves and have-nots. Owen wanted to have workers co-operative societies and said that the workers should have a share in factories<sup>5</sup>. He established model factories in England and shared the management and profit with the workers. But he miserably failed to convert his brother employers or the government. Capitalism was growing with all its inherent weakness - cut throat competition and inhuman exploitation. Several solutions were suggested and they were grouped together under the name of socialism or collectivism or social democracy meaning almost the same. In 1827 the word socialist was used in the Owenite co-operative magazine to designate the followers of Owen's co-operative doctrine<sup>6</sup>. The groups thus originally dubbed 'socialist' were principally three, though there were many lesser groups representing broadly similar tendencies. These three were, in France the Saint Saimonians and the Fourerists, and in Great Britain, Owenites, who in 1841 officially adopted the name Socialists<sup>7</sup>. These reformers generally argued that the trouble lay in the private

---

5. G.D.H. Cole, n. 1, p. 1.

6. *Ibid.*

7. *Ibid.*

ownership and control of the industries. Neither Saint Saimon, Fourier nor Robert Owen thought at all in terms of a class struggle between capitalist and workers as rival economic classes. They all agreed that as things were, the workers were victims of exploitation. They all attacked the undue inequality of property and income and demanded regulation and limitations of property rights<sup>8</sup>. Owen wanted capital to receive only a fixed or maximum dividend all surplus profit being devoted to the development of social services for the general benefit and he also believed that in course of time, as the institutions of the new society developed, the desire to be richer than others would die out and the capital owners would voluntarily renounce their share<sup>9</sup>. The dreams of equality of these idealists miserably failed to evoke any response from the rich class. In 1839, the economist, Jerome Blanqui in his pioneer '*History and Political Economy*' characterised them all as 'Utopian Socialists', a name which was to become lastingly attached to them through its adoption by Marx and Engels in the '*Communist Manifesto*'<sup>10</sup>.

The second phase in the history of socialism began with Karl Marx. In the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century the European Universities like

---

8. G.D.H. Cole, n. 1, p. 5.

9. *Ibid.*, p. 6.

10. *Ibid.*, p. 4.

Berlin and Bonn became the centre of secular and scientific learning. A new class of scholars and philosophers emerged from this centre of learning. Marx, a German Jew who was a member of Hegelian Club was one among them<sup>11</sup>. He was not an ordinary 'traditional thinker', to quote Gramsci, an organic thinker who was always concerned with the miseries, agonies and travails of the downtrodden. According to Marx, "the history of hither to existing society is the history of class struggles. Freeman and slave, patrician and plebeian, lord and serf, guild master and journey man - in a word oppressor and oppressed"<sup>12</sup>. Marx showed a way through which the oppressed could liberate from the clutches of the bourgeoisie, i.e., Marxism. Marx expressed his life mission in this sentence, "So far philosophers have only interpreted the world, the point however is to change it". Marx had put forward a new practical method to transform the world in Scientific Socialism or Communism.

According to Marx material condition in the 19<sup>th</sup> century were ripe for such a qualitative change, from Capitalism to Socialism. The *Communist Manifesto* and the *Das Capital* exposed the novel idea. In the course of capitalist development a stage is reached when the

---

11. David McLellan, *Karl Marx, Selected writings*, (New York, 1988), p. 222.

12. *Ibid.*

contradiction between the capitalist and proletariat becomes so sharp that they can no longer co-exist. "While there is thus a progressive diminution of the number of capitalist there occurs a corresponding increase in the mass of poverty, oppression, enslavement, degeneration and exploitation, but at the same time there is a steady intensification of the wrath of the working class – a class which grows more numerous and is disciplined, unified and organised by the very mechanism of the capitalist means of production. At length, the mass of misery and hatred organised militant and class conscious to turn upon their oppressors. The new society is incompatible with capitalist husk. Then it bursts as under. The death knell of capitalist private property sounds, the expropriators are expropriated"<sup>13</sup>.

Thus, Marxian theory insists on a social revolution for that he suggests the extermination of the bourgeoisie in which bloodshed is justified. So also after the capture of power by the workers Marx insists on the dictatorship of the proletariat. The Marxian ideology reached its pinnacle when the poor peasants and factory workers staged a revolutionary upsurge in Petrograd and expelled the age old Tsarist regime and established the dictatorship of the proletariat. The third

---

13. Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. III, (Moscow, 1971), p. 846.

stage in the history of Socialism begins there onwards. The Russian communists attempted to spread communist ideology throughout the world under the auspices of Communist International.

The democratic socialists bid farewell to Marxian philosophy at that juncture. They were much attracted to the idea of non-violence and co-operation than violence or conflict. They also gave too much importance to individual freedom and personal right even after assuming power. The Indian Socialists like the Fabians and the British Labour Party, gave importance to evolutionary method and stood for slow change by working through parliament. The history of Indian socialism begins with the renaissance movement of the 19<sup>th</sup> century when Rajaram Mohan Roy visited England. There he met Robert Owen, the Socialist leader, and exchanged ideas<sup>14</sup>. Dadabai Naoroji, 'the grand old man of India' and the moderate leader, sought the support of British Socialists in his political crusades for the liberalisation of British rule in India. He came into contact with socialist thoughts through Hyndman with whom he had developed a friendship. Socialists in Britain criticised British imperialism and said that imperialism was bound to lead to exploitation. Indians who were

---

14. Sankar Ghosh, *Socialism and Communism in India*, (Bombay, 1971), p. 1.

struggling to end British rule in India also traced the poverty of the people due to British imperialism and exploitation. The attack of the Indian nationalists on British imperialism was in a sense as same as the socialistic attack. This criticism gradually led some Indian nationalists to a vague socialistic approach. Dadabai Naoroji in 1901 declared before a British audience that, "You have been regularly draining and bleeding us of millions of money. These millions do not go to make you any better off; they go in to the pockets of the capitalists". Dadabhai attributed the poverty of India primarily to the drain of the wealth of India to Britain<sup>15</sup>. Yet Dadabhai was by no means a Socialist.

Lala Lajpath Roy and Bipin Chandra Pal and many other leaders were also attracted by the Soviet experiment of 'Socialism'. Bipin Chandra Pal wrote "Socialism in the highest and truest sense of the term and not merely what it is understood to mean by the followers of Marx are the rudimentary concepts of our social and political philosophy"<sup>16</sup>. And it is in this context that Pal used the term 'Hindu Socialism'<sup>17</sup>. In 1930 when Rabindranath Tagore went to Russia he said that he had come on a pilgrimage. What impressed Tagore most in Russia was the absence of luxury, the spread of education and the

---

15. Dadabhai Naoroji, *Poverty and Un-British Rule in India*, (London, 1901), p. 203.

16. Bipin Chandra Pal, *Nationality and British Empire*, (Calcutta, 1916), Pp. 85-86.

17. *Ibid.*, p. 28.

devotion of workers. At that time the Communists in Russia were in a hurry to create a new social order and for this they had established a dictatorship. But Tagore was not prepared to support dictatorial rule in any sphere or in any country. He was distressed by the excess of the Russian experiment, its scant regard for individualism, its great belief in violence as means of social transformation<sup>18</sup>. Therefore he cautioned his countrymen against accepting Marxism as a dogma or the absolute truth<sup>19</sup>. Subhas Chandra Bose, who opted militarism against British Empire, also believed in socialistic concept. Bose said that an Indian form of Socialism would have to be devised which would be in harmony with Indian history and tradition. Subhas used to say that socialism in India did not derive its birth from the books of Karl Marx but from Swami Vivekananda's gospel for the upliftment of the poor or Daridra Narayana<sup>20</sup>.

Vivekananda was one of the first thinkers in India who offered a sociologically realistic interpretation of Indian history. Behind cataclysmic turmoil of political perturbations he sought to find out the running strand of social conflicts<sup>21</sup>. Once he declared, "I am a socialist not because I think it is a perfect system but half a loaf is better than no

---

18. R.P. Dutt, *India Today*, (London, 1940), p. 376.

19. Rabindranath Tagore, *Letters from Russia*, (Calcutta, 1960), Pp. 97-106.

20. *Selected Speeches of Subhas Chandra Bose*, (Delhi, 1962), p. 32.

21. *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, Vol. VII, (Almora, 1965), Pp. 326-28.

bread”<sup>22</sup>. He can be considered as a Socialist in two senses. First, he had the historical vision to realise that in Indian history there has been the dominance of the two upper castes – the Brahmanas and the Kshatriyas. While the later perpetrated political and economic exploitation of the poor sections, the former enchained the masses with new complicated ceremonies and rituals. He denounced caste oppressions and refused to recognise any social barrier between man and man. Secondly, Vivekananda was a socialist because he championed the concept of equal chance for all the inhabitants of the country<sup>23</sup>. This concept of equal chances is definitely in the Socialist direction and he entertained an egalitarian approach in social matters. Vivekananda wants to raise the lower strata of society by the advocacy of this theory. It reminds one of the concepts of equality of opportunity. He came to the conclusion that the next historical phase of human civilization would be dominated by the toiling classes. He wrote prophetically: “Yet a time will come when there will be the rising of the Shudra class, with their shudrahood that is to say not like that as at present when the shudras are becoming great by acquiring the characteristic qualities of Vysyas or Kshatriyas, but remaining Shudras

---

22. *Ibid.*, Vol. VI. p. 381.

23. *Ibid.*

will gain supremacy in every society”<sup>24</sup>.

Vivekananda believed in organic growth and did not sanction a violent revolution to effectuate the goal of socialism. He further stated that, Liberty is the first condition of growth. Material civilization is necessary to create work for the poor. India has to be raised, the poor are to be fed, and education is to be spread and evil of priest class to be removed. He demanded more bread and more opportunity for everybody. He exhorted that the only service to be done to our lower class is to give them education, to develop their lost individuality and he insisted men and women to go over the length and breadth of land preaching the gospel of help, the gospel of social rising, the gospel of equality”<sup>25</sup>.

When he visited Malabar he pictured Malabar as a ‘lunatic asylum’, due to the existing inequality on the basis of caste. His clarion call was to, “arise, awake and stop not till the goal is reached”. This goal was the liberation from bondage and poverty.

He was the first Indian who openly declared himself a Socialist and boldly predicted the advent of the new era where the toilers, the shudras, will be rulers. But he was distressed by the excess of the

---

24. Vivekananda, *The Complete works of Vivekananda*, Vol. VI, (Almora, 1950), Pp. 381-382

25. *Ibid.*

Russian experiment, its scant regard for individualism and its great belief in violence as means of social transformation<sup>26</sup>.

Jawaharlal Nehru, the Young Turk of the Indian Politics, visited Moscow in 1927 to attend the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations of the Russian Revolution and that made him an admirer of the Soviet Union. He was born in the midst of wealth and prosperity. His family was so pronounced that Jawaharlal Nehru in later life said, "I am a typical bourgeoisie brought up in bourgeoisie surroundings with all the early prejudice that this training has given me" <sup>27</sup>. During the course of his visit he came into contact with many ardent communists. He was impressed by the progress in education, female emancipation and improvement in the lot of the peasants that had been affected in Russia. As a result of this visit Nehru also developed a firm conviction that the Soviet Union was a great champion of anti imperialism and that Russia and India had a common interest in opposing British imperialism<sup>28</sup>. Nehru was more attracted to the planned economy and social progress. He believed that in a country of arrested economic growth such as India planning was essential for social progress. He further stated, I am all for tractors and big machinery and I am convinced wrote Nehru

---

26. R.P. Dutt, *India Today*, (London, 1940), p. 376.

27. Jawaharlal Nehru, *An Autobiography*, (London, 1955), p. 529.

28. *Ibid.*, p. 56.

“that the rapid industrialisation of India is essential to relieve the pressure on the land, to combat poverty and to raise standards of living, for defence and a variety of other purposes. Planning is necessary today in all countries of arrested growth like China and India which have strong traditions of their own”<sup>29</sup>.

In 1928, Nehru wrote the book '*Soviet Russia*' in which he explained the progress achieved by Soviet Union in the field of education, female emancipation and improvement in the lot of peasants<sup>30</sup>. In this book he stated that the Russian experiment was of great interest to Indians because conditions there were not dissimilar from conditions in India. Both were vast agricultural countries and both had to face poverty and illiteracy. If Russia could find a way to solve the problem of poverty and illiteracy, that was bound to help India. As a result of his visit to Russia Nehru also developed a firm conviction that the Soviet Union was a great champion of anti-imperialism and that Russia and India had a common interest in opposing British imperialism<sup>31</sup>. In 1933 Nehru wrote to his daughter explaining what he understood by Socialism. "Socialism I have told you is of many kinds. There is general agreement, however, that it aims

---

29. Jawaharlal Nehru, *Discovery of India*, (Calcutta, 1948), p. 448.

30. Jawaharlal Nehru, *Soviet Russia*, (Bombay, 1929), p. 17.

31. Jawaharlal Nehru, n. 27, p. 242.

at the control by the state of the means of production – that is land and mines and factories and the like, and the means of distributions, like Railways etc, and also banks and similar institutions. The idea is that the individuals should not be allowed to exploit any of these methods or institutions or the labour of others to their own personal advantages”<sup>32</sup>.

In ‘*Whither India*’, written in 1933, Nehru again spoke of his belief in socialism and stated that the Indian struggle was linked with the World struggle against capitalism and imperialism<sup>33</sup>. Nehru said that an ideology of social revolution was necessary. Nehru felt that a purely nationalist ideology, which has no economic or social content, could not fit in with the needs of the modern world. Indian Socialist had to be imbued and guided by a progressive ideology of social revolution, only then could India take an effective part in the socialist struggle as well as the economic and social struggle for freedom which was being waged throughout the world. Nehru made it clear that he felt that the only key to the solution of the world’s problem and of India’s problem lay in socialism. “When I use the word, I do so not in a vague humanitarian way but in the scientific economic sense. Socialism is however something more than an economic doctrine, it is a philosophy

---

32. Jawaharlal Nehru, *Glimpses of World History*, (New Delhi, 1997), p. 553.

33. Sankar Ghosh, *Socialism and Communism in India*, (Bombay, 1971), p. 182.

of life and as such also it appeals to me. I see no way of ending the poverty, the vast unemployment, the degradation and the subjection of the Indian people except through socialism. That involves vast and revolutionary changes in our political and social structure, the ending of vested interests in land and industry as well as the feudal and autocratic Indian states systems. That means the ending of private property except in a restricted sense, and the replacement of the present profit system by a higher ideal of co-operative service. It means ultimately a change in our instincts, habits and desires. In short, it means a new civilisation, radically different from the present capital order.<sup>34</sup>

In Lahore session of the INC Nehru reiterated, "I must frankly confess that I am a Socialist and a republican, and no believer in King and princes, or in the order which produces the modern kings of industry who have greater power over the lives and fortunes of men than even kings of old and whose methods as predatory as those of the old feudal aristocracy<sup>35</sup>. Even though, Nehru stressed Socialism and supported socialists he was reluctant to identify himself with any group<sup>36</sup>.

---

34. *Jawaharlal Nehru's Speeches, 1935-37*, (New Delhi, 1958), Pp. 4-14.

35. *Jawaharlal Nehru, Eighteen Months in India*, (Allahabad, 1938), Pp. 34-35.

36. Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru from Jayaprakash dt 23/11/38, NMM&L, New Delhi.

In 1929, Jawaharlal Nehru in addition to being the President of the INC was also elected President of the Trade Union Congress. Nehru said that he would seek to utilize his special position to bring those two organisations closer to each other, to make the Indian National Congress more Socialist and more proletarian and to induce organised labour to join the national struggle<sup>37</sup>. INC at its Karachi session of 1931 passed a resolution on fundamental rights and economic policy which stated, "the state shall own or control key industries and services, mineral resources, railways, waterways, shipping and other means of public transport<sup>38</sup>.

After being elected as Congress president in 1936 Nehru had included three prominent socialists in the CWC. Nehru believed that Socialism was bound to come to India as indeed throughout the world, and almost the only points in dispute are the pace and the methods of advance to its full realization. Poverty and inequality could not be ended except through socialism, though in achieving socialism India may evolve her own methods and may adapt the ideal to the genius of her race<sup>39</sup>. However, these resolutions on fundamental rights and

---

37. Jawaharlal Nehru, n. 35, Pp. 34-35.

38. P.L. Lakhanpal, *History of the Congress Socialist Party*, (Lahore, 1946), p. 30.

39. Jawaharlal Nehru, *India and the World*, (London, 1936), Pp.27-28.

economic policy of the Congress and measures of Nehru did not satisfy the Socialists who were in the Congress. They wanted not merely the nationalization of the key industries but also the nationalization of the essential means of production.

After independence the question arose whether Nehru who led the government would fully implement the socialist policies which he has so long advocated. In 1948 the industrial policy and the economic policy was announced which stood for mixed economy. The industrial policy contained no revolutionary programme and was welcomed by the business community, but denounced by the leftists as a retreat from socialism. The policy represented a compromise between the policies of Patel and Nehru. However, the policy which Nehru followed after independence was not a policy of rigid socialism but none the less it laid great emphasis on economic planning. By 1955 Nehru persuaded the Congress to accept at its Avadi session that its goal should be the establishment of a Socialist pattern of society. At the same time in 1958 Nehru said, "I do not want state socialism of that extreme kind in which the state is all powerful and governs practically all activities. My idea of Socialism is that every individual in the state should have equal opportunity for progress"<sup>40</sup>. Nehru also insisted that planning in India

---

40. Michael Breecher, *Nehru: A Political Biography*, (London, 1901), p. 146.

must be implemented within the frame work of political democracy and should not lead to totalitarianism. Nehru wanted to introduce socialism without violence and without dictatorship. He said, "I believed more and more in Socialism, more and more even in some parts of communism, not the action, but the theory part of it, a communist society somewhere in the future. But the methods in certain communist societies should be peaceful. Whether the two can be synchronized or not it is difficult to say. But I am deeply convinced that the methods in some communist societies, that are too much coercion and suffering, are not the right methods"<sup>41</sup>.

But Nehru was not a Socialist in its pure sense. He considered life and reality to be too complex and complicated to be capable of being confined within the four corners of a rigid theory<sup>42</sup>. According to Narendra Deva, Nehru did not believe in any particularism. He believes in some of the fundamental principles of scientific socialism, yet he is not prepared to swear by everything taught by Marx and Lenin. He does not subscribe to any rigid ideology. He considers himself free to examine the claims of every system of ideas and he was always revising his ideas in the light of new experiences gained"<sup>43</sup>.

---

41. Tiber Mende, *Conversations with Nehru*, (Bombay, 1956), Pp. 31-32.

42. Narendra Deva, *Socialism and National Revolution*, (Bombay, 1946), p. 206.

43. *Ibid.*

However, Nehru's policies and attitude attracted many Socialists even after independence. Even Jayaprakash wavered a while, when Nehru invited him to join the Central Cabinet. Asoka Mehta, another apostle of Socialism, accepted some honourable post under Nehru.

The greatest apostle of Indian Socialism was Jayaprakash Narayan. It was while studying at the University of Wisconsin that he came in close contact with some Communist students as well as Marxist Literature and became a convert to Marxism.<sup>44</sup> Jayaprakash Narayan wrote Marxism provided another beacon of light for me: equality and brotherhood. Freedom was not enough, it must mean freedom for all - even the lowest - and this freedom must include freedom from exploitation from hunger and from poverty<sup>45</sup>. He remained in USA for seven years working in fields, factories, restaurants, and stayed there while studying and took the Masters degree in Sociology<sup>46</sup>. After obtaining his degree he returned to India in the year 1929 with full of Marxian ideology in his mind. While he reached here the national struggle was going on. But Jayaprakash Narayan was shocked by the attitude of Indian Communists who not

---

44. Bimal Prasad, *Gandhi, Nehru and Jayaprakash*, (Delhi, 1985), p. 171.

45. Bimal Prasad (ed). *A revolutionary's Quest: Selected Writings of Jayaprakash Narayan*, (New Delhi, 1980), p. 183)

46. Bimal Prasad, n. 44, p. 171.

only kept away from the struggle but denounced the Congress leaders as agents of the bourgeoisies. This was mainly the result of the new policy towards nationalist struggles in colonial countries adopted in 1928 by the Communist International to which the communist party of India was affiliated. In accordance with the policies of the 6<sup>th</sup> Congress of the Comintern, fight against Gandhi and INC became the accepted programme of the Comintern as well as that of the CPI. M.N. Roy asserted that "bourgeoisie and democratic nationalist movements" were not worthy of Comintern support because they were not revolutionary and also because the nationalist bourgeoisie was likely to compromise with imperialism in return for some economic and political concessions to their class<sup>47</sup>. Thus during the thirty's the Indian Socialist movement was marked by the dominating influence of Marxism. The CSP which was formed in 1934 was Marxian in its inspiration. A statement on the nature and the policy of the party declared, "Marxism alone can guide the anti imperialist forces to their ultimate destiny". Party members must therefore fully understand the technique of revolution. The theory and practice of class struggle, the nature of the state, and the process leading to the Socialist Society<sup>48</sup>

---

47. B.R. Nanda, (Ed.) *Socialism in India*, (New Delhi, 1991), p. 24.

48. Lakhanpal, n. 38, p. 144.

The communists were advised to concentrate on building their own organisations and keep away from nationalist organisations. Neither Jayaprakash's nationalism nor his Marxism could stomach this and he considered the communist line as a perverted application of Marxism to the Indian situation.<sup>49</sup> He became convinced that the socialist movement in India could not be built under the CPI or with the guidance of the Comintern. Therefore Jayaprakash combined the movement for Socialism and the struggle for national freedom completely under Indian leadership. Jayaprakash on his arrival to India came in touch with Gandhi as well as Jawaharlal Nehru. As per the request of Nehru he accepted the post of the Chief of the Labour Research Department of INC.

During this period Gandhi was leading the freedom struggle on non-violent lines. In February 1922 Gandhi all of a sudden announced the withdrawal of the non-cooperation movement when the nation stood on the verge of a popular revolt.<sup>50</sup> For Gandhi, the Chauri Chaura incident was as he wrote to Jawaharlal Nehru, "the last straw I assure you that if the thing (civil disobedience) had not been

---

49. Bimal Prasad, n. 44, p. 173.

50. Sumit Sarkar, *Modern India 1885-1947*, (New Delhi, 1995), p. 225.

suspended we would have been leading not a non-violent struggle, the movement had unconsciously drifted from the right path"<sup>51</sup>. Gandhi adopted such a similar policy and suspended the civil disobedience movement in 1931. The extremist elements blamed Gandhi for pondering to form a government. Since that day many of them permanently lost faith in Gandhi and his techniques of non-violent struggle. They observed that, "If India will not have freedom conquered by violent means she will have to go without it"<sup>52</sup>.

A group of radicals felt unhappy with the weak and watery reform of Gandhi. They questioned the emphasis on 'Swaraj' without a socio-economic dimension<sup>53</sup>. Gandhi's decision in 1933 to suspend the Satyagraha movement and concentrate instead on constructive work embittered many Congressmen against him and they viewed the withdrawal as proof of the failure of non-violent methods to achieve independence.<sup>54</sup> The idea of CSP was really conceived in the Nasik Road Central Prison by Congress men of Socialist and militant nationalists bend, who were in the prison in connection with the CDM.<sup>55</sup> His associates in the jail were Minoo Masani, Asoka Mehta,

---

51. B.R. Nanda, *The Nehrus: Motilal and Jawaharlal*, (London, 1962), p. 202.

52. M.N. Roy, *The Aftermath of Non-cooperation*, (London, 1926), p. 1.

53. Sumit Sarkar, n. 50, p. 227.

54. Sampurnanand, *Memories and Reflections* (Bombay, 1962), Pp. 50-62.

55. B.R. Nanda, n. 47, p. 11.

Achyut Patwardhan, N.G. Goray and M.L. Dantawala. They discussed the drawbacks of civil resistance movement, the growth of constitutionalism and the anti-national role of the CPI. They concluded that in order to avoid the errors of the Communists and to have a greater influence on the direction of the freedom struggle it was essential to form a socialist organization within the Congress. Jayaprakash Narayan initiated the movement mainly because he could not digest the negative attitude of the Communist towards freedom struggle. Acharya Narendra Deva, Rammanohar Lohia, Yusuf Meherally and S.M. Joshi were closely associated with Jayaprakash in the formation of CSP. The foundation of the CSP was laid at Patna in May 1934 when a meeting of the AICC was held there. A few months later the AICSP was officially launched at a conference in Bombay on October 21-22, 1934 in which Sampurnanand presided<sup>56</sup>. The Socialists had decided to form a party within the Congress and not as an independent organization because they believed that the Congress, despite its defects, symbolised the great national movement against British imperialism. Even though they disagreed with Gandhian method of agitation they recognised his dynamic leadership and mass

---

56. O.P Ralhan (Ed.) *Documents on Socialist Movement in India*, Vol. II, (New Delhi, 2000), p. 40.

support. The Socialist cherished the idea of equality but they did not go along with the Communist because they did not like to ally with an anti-national group.<sup>57</sup> The membership of the party was to be open only to the members of the Congress and non-communalists.<sup>58</sup>

The ideology of the CSP was a blend of Marxism, democratic socialism of the British Labour Party and Socialism tinged with Gandhism, with different leaders espousing each of the three ideological trends. But their object was to resuscitate and reinvigorate the Congress to rid it of its defeatist mentality and to draw into it the mass of workers and peasants.<sup>59</sup> Jayaprakash and Acharya Narendra Deva were the main exponents of the Marxist philosophy. However, in the 1940's Jayaprakash came increasingly under the influence of Gandhi and moved away from Marxism to Gandhian Socialism. M.R. Masani, Asoka Mehta, and Purushotam Trikamdas belonged to the Fabian Socialist trend. Later Masani gave leadership in the formation of the rightist Swatantra party. Achyut Patwardhan and Lohia were the more 'Gandhian' leaders in the party.

The most important window to Jayaprakash's mind is provided

---

57. Jayaprakash Narayan, *Why Socialism?* (Varanasi, 1936), p. 3.

58. CID Report on the Formation of Kerala Congress Socialist Party, Tamilnadu Archives, Egmore.

59. B.R. Nanda (Ed.) *Socialism in India*, (New Delhi, 1972), p. 11.

by his well known work, *Why Socialism?* The object of the CSP, as laid down in its constitution are the achievement of complete independence in the sense of separation from British empire and the establishment of a Socialist society.<sup>60</sup> The party resolution stated that the party would work for the establishment of a 15 point programme, which included social activities, agitations and administrative measures for transfer of power to the producing masses, development of the economic life of the country to be planned and controlled by the state, socialization of key and principal industries and state monopoly of foreign trade. The organisation of co-operatives for production and distribution, credit to the un-socialised sector of economic life, elimination of princes and landlords and all other classes of exploiters without compensation, redistribution of land to peasant and encouragement and promotion of co-operative and collective farming by the state are some other principles. They also insisted on liquidation of debts owed by peasants and workers and recognition of the right to work or maintenance by the State. "To everyone according to his need and everyone to his capacity" to be the basis ultimately of distribution and production of economic goods. Discrimination based on religion, caste, sex etc should be discarded. They gave much importance to adult franchise in the

---

60. Jayaprakash Narayan, *Why Socialism?* n. 57, p. 13.

democratic process. They also stood for the repudiation of the public debt of India.<sup>61</sup>

On this ideological background CSP worked inside the Congress systematically. In 1938 CSP scored an important victory within the Congress when they succeeded in getting Subhas Chandra Bose elected as Congress President.<sup>62</sup> When the II World War broke out, both the Congress and the CSP had opposed war preparations and British effort to involve Indians in them. The Socialists felt the war was an excellent opportunity to start a mass struggle against the British to demand complete independence. But CWC passed a resolution that if Great Britain would allow the formation of a National Government in India, it would enable the Congress to throw its full weight in the efforts for an effective organisation of the defence of the country. "A slave can have no obligation to defend his slavery. His only obligation is to destroy his bondage, I hope we shall know how to defend ourselves when we have achieved our freedom"<sup>63</sup> The Socialists campaigned against Indian involvement in the war and as a result CSP leaders including Jayaprakash Narayan was arrested. While Quit India Movement was going on Jayaprakash was in the Hazaribagh Jail. With

---

61. Jayaprakash Narayan, *Why Socialism?* n. 57, Pp. 17-18.

62. Sumit Sarkar, n. 50, p. 72.

63. Yusuf Meherally, (Ed.) *Towards Struggle*, (Bombay, 1942), p. 7.

the help of some of his trusted comrades he, together with five other prisoners managed to scale the prison walls on Diwali night, 8 November 1942. This daring feat, the news of which soon reached all parts of the country, at once made him a hero in the eyes of the Indian people<sup>64</sup>.

The CPI had been banned by the British government in July 1934. In 1936 the Communist Party decided that its members should join the Congress and attempt to give a revolutionary direction and that they should also co-operate with the CSP.<sup>65</sup> Within a short period they infiltrated into the Socialist Kisan Sabha, trade unions and student union and started acquiring important positions in them. In the CSP conference at Lahore the Communist tried to capture the party by proposing an alternative list of the national executive members. Jayaprakash Narayan realised the game of the Communists, and the Congress Socialist leaders rallied together to defeat them. In 1938 Masani found a secret communist circular, which indicated the details about the infiltration tactics for capturing the CSP.<sup>66</sup> Jayaprakash Narayan felt something drastic would have to be done about the

---

64. Bimal Prasad (Ed.), n. 44, p. 182.

65. Sankar Ghosh, n. 33, p. 313.

66. M.R. Masani, *The Communist Party of India*, (London, 1954), Pp. 69-70.

Communist double dealings, but a few months later he had second thoughts and felt the Socialist should make another serious attempt at unity. Number of leaders desired to expel the Communist from the party but Jayaprakash decided to give another chance. On this occasion M.R. Masani bid farewell from the party with protest.<sup>67</sup> But the role played by the Communists in the World War II and their anti-national attitude forced Jayaprakash Narayan to change his attitude towards the Communists. Moreover disturbing accounts of the Russian dictatorship made them increasingly critical of the Russian experiment. When the communists declared war openly on the CSP the party was forced to expose them. Jayaprakash Narayan himself convinced that the Indian Communists were the sworn enemy of the Congress Socialists. This decision was taken at the Ramgarh conference in 1940. But by that time one third to half of the party in Bengal and Punjab, and the greater part of the party organisation in Travancore, Cochin, Andhra and Madras were absorbed by the Communists<sup>68</sup>. However during the Quit India movement Congress Socialists played a daring role and became the beloved of the people. Jayaprakash played his role in the Socialist Party even after Independence. But after the second general elections held

---

67. Sonal Shah, *Indian Socialists Search for Identity*, (Bombay, 1994), p. 35.

68. n. 67.

in 1957 he decided to end his sleeping membership of the PSP.<sup>69</sup> By now he had lost complete faith in party and power politics and realised that while such politics might provide a path to power, it could not help in laying the foundation of the new society for which he had so long toiled and intended to toil in future also. The power oriented politics of the post independent period forced him to retreat from politics and he found solace in Sarvodaya movement. He once again came to the forefront of Indian politics to fight against the anti democratic forces in 1975. Jayaprakash Narayan has no comparison in Indian politics. He was the embodiment of simplicity and sincerity.

The ideological scenario of Indian Socialism will not be complete without a discussion of Ram Manohar Lohia. Lohia was both a theoretician of the Socialist Party and a leader of the Socialist movement. He tried to accommodate and assimilate some of the most important contributions of Gandhi on the theory and methodology of socialism. He developed his own frame of reference and accepted only as much of Gandhism or Marxism that fitted into the frame. He held the Mahatma in high esteem and yet like Marx he was wedded to revolution in thought, word and deed. It can therefore be rightly

---

69. n. 44, p. 217.

concluded that Lohia was a Gandhian among revolutionaries and revolutionary among Gandhians.<sup>70</sup> Lohia pursued political activities in a spirit of absolute dedication and self abnegation. He strongly felt that socialism in India could only be built on the solid foundations of nationalism. He was essentially a man of the revolution, a leader of the masses, having nothing to do with people living in ivory towers.

He agreed with a few fundamental principles preached and practiced by Mahatma Gandhi. He maintained that the Socialist programme for the progress of the society should have purity of means, Sathyagraha and the devolution of economic and political power. He thus emphasised the philosophy of his socialism in two 'big' words that is equality and prosperity. He stated that our state should be organised on a four-pillar basis- the village level, the district level, the provincial level and the central level.<sup>71</sup> The state he argued should not become a 'totalitarian monster'.

Lohia insisted on a six point programme for the achievement of Socialist pattern of society which includes, land to the tiller by immediate decree, land army for uncultivated tracts, industrialisation through small-unit machines, re-division of land with the minimum of

---

70. Prakash Shastri, *Socialist Thought in India*, (Jaipur, 1985), p. 5.

71. Madhu Limaye, *Chathustambha Rashtrm Oru Roopa Regha* (Mal), (Vatakara, 1974), p. 49.

20 bighas and a cow per family, parity between agriculture and industrial prices, and the four pillar state<sup>72</sup>.

Lohia had suggested to the government a week before independence to issue a proclamation abolishing landlordism. For solving the food problem he suggested cultivation of uncultivated land by the food army recruited by the government<sup>73</sup>. That will provide job for considerable number of people who were living in towns and villages without means of livelihood. He believed that to feed the hungry millions of India that is the only way. He believed in a four pillar state. In this four pillar state an attempt is made to synthesize the opposed concepts of centralization and decentralization<sup>74</sup>. In this system, the village, the district, the province and the central government all retain importance and are integrated in a system of functional federalism. The cohesive bond is provided by the performance of functions. The four pillar state implies the abolition of district magistracy which represents a notorious concentration of political power. In this system the district, village and city panchayaths are to take charge of policies as well as welfare functions<sup>75</sup>. The four pillar state is obviously not a mere executive arrangement. It is a way of

---

72. Prakash Shastri, n. 70, Pp. 87-98.

73. *Ibid.*

74. Madhu Limaye, n. 71, p. 4.

75. Ram Monohar Lohia, *Will to Power and Other Writings*, (Hyderabad, 1956), p. 132.

life and to all spheres of human activity, for instance, production, ownership, administration, planning, education and the like. The four pillar state provides a structure and way<sup>76</sup>.

After the II World War, Nehru asked Lohia to become the general secretary of the Congress Party. Lohia placed three conditions before Nehru, which however were not acceptable to the latter. One, the Congress president should not be a member of the Government to be put up by the British, two, the member of the CWC should not be a minister, and three, the Congress organisation should be able to criticise its own government in a friendly manner<sup>77</sup>. Lohia never showed any desire or passion for power.

In February 1947, Lohia was selected as Chairman of the CSP. He was a great upholder of Hindu-Muslim unity. He vehemently opposed the partition of the country. He believed that the communal disturbances are results of the propaganda and activities carried on by anti-national and reactionary elements in the country and encouraged by British imperialism to checkmate the national and progressive forces. When India was on the threshold of a new era of political and social changes, inevitably these forces took advantage of the general

---

76. Madhu Limaye, n. 71, p. 49.

77. *Pravaham*, dt. 4.8.1952.

backwardness of the people and tried to misdirect the mass discontent which has gathered phenomenal dimensions during the war years by setting one group against the other. The grim and ghastly tragedies recently enacted in this country are the result of the alliance between British imperialism and the vested interest in both communities sailing under the false banner of religious faith<sup>78</sup>. When communal riots broke out in India, Lohia went to the riot stricken areas one after another and risked his life in the streets of Calcutta to save the Muslim brothers. He was with Mahatma Gandhi during his fast at Calcutta and accompanied him at Noakhali.

Lohia was influenced by the socio-economic philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi who exercised the deepest influence over the value pattern and thought process of Lohia. To Lohia, Gandhi was the first in World History to be a revolutionary of the inner world and ways of conduct. Lohia propagated the ideal of noble vision and hated immoral means for the achievement of political goal. Lohia accepts the technique of struggle and philosophical frame work of Gandhism, but its approach to socio-economic problem especially its theory of trusteeship is not acceptable to him. Gandhi wanted that the rich

---

78. *Pravaham*, dt. 4.5.1952.

should become the trustees of their surplus wealth for the good of society. In case the rich would not become the willing trustees, sathyagraha was to be resorted against the holders of wealth. Lohia rejected Gandhian theory of trusteeship. He repeatedly asked Gandhi to give up his theory of trusteeship or at least mix it up with the abolition of private ownership of capital, for there is something extremely difficult in this voluntary abnegation. Regarding the Gandhian phrase 'change of heart', Lohia says that, first we have to organise those who are poor and exploited. Then they will be strengthened and then along with that they always try to change the heart of the rich people. But if we try to change the heart of the rich people through speeches and meetings and talking in the air, nothing will come out. The talk of detachment to property has been going on for five thousand years. We cannot improve upon it. We have to give them new ideas and instil enthusiasm to enable them to stand on their feet and fight.

Lohia always talked about equality between men and women. Women's socio-economic status should be raised in our society so that, she should feel herself as an equal partner in schemes of societal development. They should be provided opportunities like men in our society.

He stood for the replacement of the English language which he argued hindered out mental faculties. It should be replaced by Hindi and the administration should be run in accordance with the languages of the people. He propagated compulsory education for every child, male and female. He was in favour of adequate reservation for scheduled castes and scheduled tribes, backward castes including Adivasis as well as women. They should enjoy better socio-economic status and the feeling of inferiority complex if any, should be removed from their mind. "The caste system must now depart from India. It is our biggest problem. If the stumbling block of caste system is abolished, it would generate a might into Indian nationalism which by itself would become a menace to the British rule"<sup>79</sup>. Hence, the Socialist party passed a resolution about the destruction of caste. It stated, "The Socialist party views the caste system in India as the biggest cause of the present material and spiritual degeneration of the county"<sup>80</sup>. Lohia defines a revolutionary in the Indian context, as one who wages an all out attack on the basic premises of the caste system in India because on that basis the *Savarnas* have established their *hegemony* over the vast population of the backward sections of the society that include all the

---

79. *Pravaham*, dated 18.5.1952.

80. *Mankind*, Vol. 3, 11 June 1959.

shudras and untouchables and tribals of India.<sup>81</sup> Regarding the role of caste he says 'caste restricts opportunity, restricted opportunity, restrict ability, restricted ability further restrict opportunity'. Where caste prevails, opportunity and ability are restricted to ever narrowing circles of the people<sup>82</sup>. Thus, if we are eager to bring about any social transformation, the caste system must be made to forget the ruthless onslaught.

Ram Monohar Lohia was a leader who always stood to protect the right of the people. He said, "It is not necessary for people suffering from starvation to depend on Parliament or to wait expectantly for another general election. They have priceless, matchless weapon of civil disobedience in their hands. When injustice and oppression go beyond bearable bounds, when constitutional methods have proved incapable of achieving redress, it should be open for the people to violate unjust laws, and wrongs and injustice that are inflicted upon them. To violate laws, to court imprisonment, to invite punishment by authority even to the extent of death is the only satisfactory way of effecting change. In any case, this is specific contribution to political action which Gandhiji made"<sup>83</sup>.

---

81. Prakash Shastri, n. 70, p. 34.

82. Ram Manohar Lohia, *Marx, Gandhi and Socialism*, (Hyderabad, 1960), p. 33.

83. Ram Manohar Lohia, n.82, p. 127.

Gandhi was the guiding force in Indian politics since 1920s. He imbibed fully the environment of the Indian situation and social realities. According to him "we have no right to talk of Socialism, as long as there is hunger, unemployment and the distinction between high and low amongst us and around us.<sup>84</sup> For Gandhi Socialism was a mode of personal conduct and a form of social service, and was neither a gospel for the expropriation of the rich nor a programme for the socialization of the means of production. According to Gandhi, Socialism is a beautiful word and in socialism all the members of the society are equal, none low, and none high. In the individual's body the head is not high because it is (at) the top, nor are the soles of the feet low because they touch the earth. Even as members of the individual's body are equal so are the members of society. Therefore under Gandhian Socialism there was room for both the rich and poor. The prince and the peasant will not be equal said Gandhi, by cutting off the prince's head nor can the process of cutting off equalize the employer and the employed<sup>85</sup>.

Gandhian ideology also had found an important place in forming the principles of Indian Socialists. They derived their faith in

---

84. Pyarelal, *Mahatma Gandhi, The Last Phase*, Vol. II, (Ahmedabad, 1958), p. 133.

85. *Ibid.*

classless society from Marx, at the same time their belief in the possibility of effecting peaceful changes through Sathyagraha or civil disobedience from Gandhi. They believed that by evolving the method of Sathyagraha, Gandhi had made a unique contribution to revolutionary tactics. Before Gandhi, the peaceful method that the exploited could adopt to fight the oppressor were generally limited to agitation, and in the case of industrial labour, to strike and general strike. Beyond these limits the struggle was powerless to go except in a violent direction. In such circumstances, the struggle for social justice could not express itself adequately, but in Gandhi's method of civil disobedience and sathyagraha the exploited found a new weapon to carry forward the struggle.<sup>86</sup> The Indian Socialists combined the principles of western socialism with that of Gandhism. They believed in the achievement of socialism through ballot if possible, and if not, by the adoption of sathyagraha or civil disobedience. They argued that even Marx clearly conceived two ways of achieving Socialism, one peaceful and the other violent, which of these two ways should be adopted would depend on the conditions prevailing in a particular country.<sup>87</sup> The Indian Socialists were influenced by Marxism to a

---

86. Bimal Prasad, *Socialism, Sarvodaya and Democracy: Selected Works of Jayaprakash Narayan*, (Bombay, 1986), p. 95.

87. *Ibid.*, Pp. 49-50.

certain extent, influenced by Gandhism and, more particularly, by the ideas of Western democracy. Though the Gandhian creed of non-violence was not wholly acceptable to the Socialists the method of Sathyagraha formulated by Gandhi appealed to them. They wanted to avoid violence and dictatorship, and also wanted to combine socialism with democracy.

M.R. Masani was another prominent leader of the CSP. Masani was mainly attracted to western Liberal tradition. He became an advocate of Liberalism and an opponent of the Socialist theory of the Socialization of all the means of production.<sup>88</sup>

Acharya Narendra Deva, another leader of the Socialist retained his faith in democratic socialism till his end. He believed in a classless society, but he felt that Indian Socialist must remain wedded to the ideal of democracy and to the policy of effecting changes peacefully for the establishment of a new economic and social order. Narendra Deva did not accept Gandhi's doctrine of non-violence as a creed, but felt that Gandhi's method of Sathyagraha was the right method to be pursued for the attainment of desired ends, and that such a method was permissible even after independence was achieved.

---

88. *Congress Misrule and the Swatantra Alternative*, (Bombay, 1966), Pp. 159-69.

Thus at all India level there have been great thinkers of socialism and humanism like Jayaprakash Narayan, Acharya Narendra Deva, Lohia and many others who spearheaded Socialist thought and championed the cause of socialism through their writings and teachings. They could even create an impression among the people that socialism is an alternative way of life instead of colonial state or the communist state. Their ideals are embedded in a socialist society in a post colonial India. They could even attract the intellectuals as well as common man. However, their thoughts could not penetrate into Kerala at grass root level on account of different factors. One major lacuna was that there was no such eminent leadership in Kerala to cope up with their ideologies and spread it among the mass. Further the communist after the departure from the CSP had been propagating Marxism, Leninism as the foundation for a new society. As such the peasant association and trade union organisation have been highly influenced by philosophy of Marxism-Leninism. The leaders like K.B. Menon propagated Democratic Socialist thought but they failed to create mass followers<sup>89</sup>. (Also see K.B. Menon, *Democracy and Communalism*, NMM&L, New Delhi.) In fact, there were no intellectuals to guide the

---

89. K.B. Menon, *What is democracy?* (Unpublished article), NMM&L, New Delhi.

followers to secular and egalitarian social system. K.B. Menon who led CSP in the 1940s later shifted his activities to an all India frame work. Thus there had been a vacuum in Kerala with regard to the spread of socialist ideology. This situation had been much favourable for the Congress and the Communist to go along with their campaigns and programmes.

# THE GENESIS OF CONGRESS SOCIALIST PARTY

Sasi Kumar.P. “The role of non-communist left movement in Kerala politics from 1942 to 1977” Thesis. Department of History, University of Calicut, 2005

**CHAPTER III**

**THE GENESIS OF  
CONGRESS SOCIALIST  
PARTY**

## CHAPTER III

# THE GENESIS OF CONGRESS SOCIALIST PARTY

The state of Kerala is a narrow strip of land on the southwestern part of Indian sub-continent, bounded to the west by the Arabian Sea and to the east by the Western Ghats. It came into existence as a result of state re-organisation on Linguistic basis in 1956. Politically and administratively what is now Kerala was divided into three parts, Travancore, Cochin and Malabar. Malabar is in the northern part of the present Kerala and Travancore and Cochin were the two adjoining princely states<sup>1</sup>. At the end of the war with Tipu Sulthan East India Company conquered this area. They organised it as a district, which was called British Malabar. In 1800 the district of Malabar became a part of Madras presidency, which was under the direct control of the British. Therefore British impact was more spectacular in Malabar than in Travancore or Cochin. The three divided parts of Kerala responded in their separate manner to the call for the struggle for freedom. In

---

1. See Ward and Corner, *Descriptive Memoir of Malabar*, (Calicut, 1900) for the general description of the Province of Malabar.

Travancore and Cochin, this struggle, at its earliest stage developed as an agitation for responsible government. But in Malabar the struggle was part of the national movement for freedom from British rule.

The three parts of Kerala, Trivandrum, Cochin and Malabar had different political, communal and economic background when they merged to become one linguistic state according to the state re-organization scheme. In Travancore the freedom struggle had developed out of the communal demand for government jobs by the Christian, Ezhava and Muslim communities. The movement later developed into a political movement for responsible government when a sizable section of Nair community joined it. The subsequent twists and turns in the communal groupings had their inevitable repercussions on political developments.

In Cochin, also a Princely state, the freedom struggle did not assume mass proportion nor face severe repression. Communal grouping too had been virtually non-existent<sup>2</sup>. The Cochin Society had all along been essentially one of traders and businessmen. Up in the North, British rule did not bring any economic progress to Malabar. While the Travancore-Cochin rulers, with the help of

---

2. K.C. John, *The Melting Pot, Kerala: 1950s-1970s*, (Trivandrum, 1975), p. 32.

efficient administrators, concentrated on encouraging social services and even laying the foundation for industrial development, Malabar remained socially and economically backward. This provided a fertile ground for militant communism and massive communalism.

The Congress activities started early in Malabar. The formation of the District Congress Committee in 1910 with C. Kunhrama Menon as secretary was a landmark in the history of Indian National Congress in Malabar<sup>3</sup>. But regular political activities started in Malabar only with the formation of Home Rule League and partly by the formation of the Malabar Tenancy Association with branches throughout Malabar. When the Khilafat and Non-Co-operation Movements were launched the Congress organizational activities gathered momentum. By 1920 Kerala Pradesh Congress Committee was formed. The committee consisted of 10 members and the organisation had five district committees. The office of the committee started functioning in Calicut with an office secretary<sup>4</sup>. But political activity mainly confined to the formation of Congress committees convening meetings and

---

3. A. K. Pillai, *Congressum Keralavum* (Mal), (Kottayam, 1986), p. 37

4. *Ibid.*

organising annual district political conferences. Until 1920 Congress nationally and locally had been predominantly a Hindu organization. Gandhi's decision to support the Muslim Khilafat Movement was designed to rectify this and to gain reciprocal support from the Muslim leaders for his Non-Cooperation Movement. In 1920 district Congress conferences passed resolutions supporting Khilafat Movement and Khilafat Committees were established alongside existing tenancy and non-cooperation committees. In August 1920 Gandhi and Khilafat leader, Shaukat Ali addressed a meeting at Calicut<sup>5</sup>. The first state political conference was convened at Ottappalam in 1921. The conference passed a resolution asking lawyers to suspend practice and all shopkeepers not to sell foreign clothes<sup>6</sup>. During this period Congress was primarily an organization of educated professionals, especially lawyers and teachers<sup>7</sup>. The INC before the Civil Disobedience Movement had only limited popularity and it was not a mass movement. The KPCC could not even fulfill its membership quota fixed by the AICC<sup>8</sup>. Clear directions were issued to all

---

5. T.J. Nossiter, *Communism in Kerala, A Study in Political Adaptation*, (Delhi, 1982), p. 69.

6. A. K. Pillai. n. 3, p. 431.

7. K. Gopalankutty, *The National Movement in Malabar 1930-1947*, (Unpublished Ph.D. thesis), JNU, (New Delhi, 1985), p. 63.

8. *Mathrubhumi Daily*, 4<sup>th</sup> September, 1929

Pradesh Congress Committees from the AICC regarding the method to be adopted during the movement.

The Congress activities in Malabar acquired momentum with the beginning of CDM. The decision to start the movement was taken in the KPCC meeting at Vatakara on March 9, 1930.<sup>9</sup> There were doubts about the success of the CDM in Malabar and it was suggested that it would be better for the Congress activists to go to Vedaranyam for breaking the salt law<sup>10</sup>. But Kelappan declared that he will lead a march to Payyannur to break the salt law. It was in Payyannur that the 4<sup>th</sup> state political conference was held, in which Jawaharlal Nehru presided. Kelappan selected Payyannur as the arena of Salt Sathyagraha as he believed that the people were more politically aware and also it was a centre of Constructive Programmes<sup>11</sup>. The Jatha of sathyagrahis under the leadership of K. Kelappan, started on April 13, 1930 from Calicut to Payyannur<sup>12</sup>. They were given reception at Quilandy, Badagara, Tellicherry, Cannanore and certain other places<sup>13</sup>. The Jatha reached Payyannur on 22<sup>nd</sup> April and started violating the salt law. Another Jatha led by

---

9. *Mathrubhum Daily*, 11<sup>th</sup> March, 1930.

10. M.P. Manmathan, *Kelappan (Mal)*, (Kottayam, 1984), p. 142.

11. C.K. Moosath, *Kelappan Enna Maha Manushyan*, (Kottayam, 1982), p. 99.

12. *Ibid.*, p. 99.

13. Interview with K. Madhavan Kidavu in his residence at Pookkad on 5<sup>th</sup> October 1995.

T.R. Krishnaswami Ayyar started from Palghat also reached Payyannur on 24 April, 1930<sup>14</sup>. In continuation to this, salt law was broken in places like Kasargod, Tellicherry and Calicut. On May 12<sup>th</sup> salt preparation started in Kozhikode beach. A huge crowd assembled in Calicut beach. At that time Al-Ameen lodge was the centre of freedom fighters. From there around 40 persons marched to beach with tricolour flag in their hands. After the speech of leaders volunteers fetched water from the sea and started preparation of salt. Police all of a sudden started oppression with lathis and boots. Many workers were beaten scrupulously. Muhammed Abdurahiman, P. Krishna Pillai, R. Sharma etc became prey to brutal oppression. On June 8<sup>th</sup> the breaking of Salt Law was conducted in Vatakara. M.N. Pisharadi, P. Kunhikannan Nair, T.K. Gopalan Kidavu, Achuthan Vaidyar, K.S. Kunhiraman etc., were arrested<sup>15</sup>. Salt law was broken in several places including Kasargode, Tellicherry and Quilandy<sup>16</sup>. The movement was inhumanly suppressed by the Government. Around 700 Sathyagrahis were arrested from Kerala in connection

---

14. A.K. Pillai, n.3, p. 140.

15. Interview with C.C. Nair at Govt. College, Madappally on 15<sup>th</sup> August, 1996.

16. Interview with Kidavu, n. 13.

with Salt Sathyagraha<sup>17</sup>.

The CDM in Kerala was temporarily stopped on the basis of Gandhi-Irwin pact. But it resumed and continued until the formal withdrawal of the movement on 7<sup>th</sup> April 1934 by Gandhi. During this struggle a number of sathyagrahis were subjected to police atrocities. Those who picketed the toddy and foreign liquor shops at Calicut were arrested, beaten with batons and kicked with boots<sup>18</sup>. Even women were treated very brutally<sup>19</sup>. The INC at that period was not a mass organization. Almost all the leaders hailed from aristocratic families. Those who hailed from Jenmi families were assigned A or B class in the jail when they were arrested. Leaders like K. Madhavan Nair, V. Gopala Menon, Kongattil Raman Menon, R. Raghava Menon and T. R. Krishnaswami Iyer were all placed in 'A' class in the jail<sup>20</sup>. But all the freedom fighters belonging to the lower strata of society were put in 'C' class in the jail and poor quality food was served<sup>21</sup>.

During the civil disobedience movement those who broke the

---

17. Moosath, n. 11, p. 102.

18. *Ibid.*

19. Madhavan Kidavu stated that Sub-Inspector Kunkan Nair came to his house to warn him and when his mother interfered, the Sub-Inspector threw a coconut towards his mother.

20. Law (General) Dept.G.O.No.4456 dt. 22 October, 1930. Tamilnadu Archives, Egmore.

21. Madhavan Kidavu, n. 13.

laws became prey to suppressions. Those workers who were injured during the process of picketing did not get adequate nursing or consideration. They were ignored by the leaders who never visited the scene nor enquired about their condition. The aristocratic leadership of the Congress was willing to lead the volunteers but not ready to suffer baton charges or kicks. They were willing to court arrest and stay in 'A' class jail<sup>22</sup>. The differences between the leadership and the ordinary party workers in the Congress led to a conflict regarding its policy and programme.

When the freedom struggle became aggressive in Northern India a number of revolutionaries were put in jail even in Kerala. The Cannanore Central jail was such a centre in which the revolutionaries were imprisoned with the Congress Sathyagrahis of Malabar. Some of the sathyagrahis were attracted by the pamphlets supplied in the jail and attracted to revolutionary ideology<sup>23</sup>. They were fed up with Gandhian method and felt revolutionary ideas more applicable. It was in these circumstances, Socialist ideology became particularly attractive to the poorer sections of the Congress volunteers who had already drifted away from the conservative

---

22. N.C. Sekhar, *Agni Veedhikal (Mal)*, (Kannur, 1987), p. 135.

23. Vishnu Bharatheeyan, *Adimakal Enginai Utamakalayi*, (Mal), (Trivandrum, 1980), Pp. 70-72.

leadership. Even before the Socialist party was founded in Patna attempt was made by the people of Kozhikode to organise Socialists<sup>24</sup>.

A meeting of the Congress workers with Socialist leanings was held on 12<sup>th</sup> May 1934 at the Town Hall Kozhikode. The meeting was presided over by K. Kelappan<sup>25</sup>. In this meeting a resolution was passed to form an organization namely Congress Socialist Party. C.K. Govindan Nair became the President of the party while P. Krishna Pillai was elected as Secretary. The members of the committee were E. M. Sankaran Namboodiripad, P. Krishna Panicker, K.P. Gopalan, H. Manjunatha Rao and P. Kumaran<sup>26</sup>. It was stated that the object of the party is to establish Socialist government in India<sup>27</sup>. It was specified that Congress non-communalist and those prepared to work according to the programme of the party could be members<sup>28</sup>. The rules and regulations of the party were stated. It was instructed that party members should give 5% of their income to the party fund<sup>29</sup>. The party was to work within the Congress. The objects of CSP as laid

---

24. *Mathrubhumi weekly*, 18<sup>th</sup> January, 1932.

25. *Mathrubhumi Daily*, 15<sup>th</sup> May, 1934.

26. Moosath, n. 11, p. 28.

27. CID - Report on the formation of the Kerala Socialist Party (confidential Vol. No: 3), p. 17. Tamilnadu Archives, Egmore.

28. *Ibid*

29. *Ibid*.

down in its constitution were the achievement of complete independence, in the sense of separation from the British Empire and the establishment of a Socialist society. The second object of the party means that independent India must reorganize its economic life on a Socialist basis. The ultimate objective is to make the masses politically and economically free to make them prosperous and happy, to free them from all manners of exploitation, to give them unfettered opportunity for development. The dreams of founding fathers of socialist party were to transfer of all powers to the producing masses, development of the economic life of the country to be planned and controlled by the state, socialization of key and principal industries, state monopoly of foreign trade, re-distribution of land to peasants, encouragement and promotion of co-operation and collective farming by the state, liquidation of debts owing by peasants and workers. Thus there were fifteen dreams which they saw to change the lot of suffering and exploited millions. The constitution specifies, "To work very actively within the Congress to have the aims and objects and the programme of the Socialist recognised by the Indian Congress"<sup>30</sup>.

---

30. *Ibid.*

The Socialists decided to establish agriculture associations and trade unions in the country and also to interfere in that already in existence and to create a strong movement by participating in the depressed economic fight of agriculturists and labourers to secure complete independence and socialism<sup>31</sup>. They accused that the Congress leaders in Kerala had no contacts with Kisan Labours and students<sup>32</sup>. The party constitution highlighted the importance of organising Youth League, Women's association and Volunteers<sup>33</sup>. Another important policy of the party was to combat strongly all wars and to utilize such occasions to strengthen the national fight. They resolved not to enter into any pact or agreement with the British government in regard to the administration of the country. Another decision was to help the strikes of labourers and agriculturists and to boycott British goods and all organizations obstructing National progress<sup>34</sup>.

A close observation of the CSP organization reveals that the office bearers were in two levels in their ideological stand. K. Kelappan and C.K. Govindan Nair were purely Gandhians<sup>35</sup>. But

---

31. *Ibid.*

32. Ramachandra Rao, *Historical Notes*, NMM&L, New Delhi, p.73.

33. Fortnightly reports for the second half of May 1934. Tamilnadu Archives, Egmore, p. 18.

34. C.I.D. Report. n. 27.

35. Narayanan Nair, *Aranoottandilude* (Mal), (Kottayam, 1973), p. 152.

many of the CSP leaders showed Communist leanings. In this context an analysis of the party leadership will shower light into the nature of ideology. The communist ideas in general were introduced into Kerala very early. An organization called Communist League was formed in Trivandrum under the leadership of Ponnara G. Sreedhar and N.C. Sekhar<sup>36</sup>. The Communist League did not develop into the Communist party but N.C. Sekhar took a leading part in the formation of Communist party later.

The biography of Karl Marx in Malayalam was first published by Swadeshabhimani Ramakrishna Pillai in 1912, long before Russian Revolution. The Communist League was organised in March 1931 with seven members including Ponnara G. Sreedhar and N.C. Sekhar, both Congress activists. But at that time neither E.M.S. nor Krishna Pillai were the members of the League. During this period Krishna Pillai defended Gandhism against Communist criticism<sup>37</sup>.

The All India CSP emerged as an organization of those who were already dissatisfied with Gandhian ideology and methods. At the same time they were against communism also. Jayaprakash was

---

36. N.C. Sekhar, n. 22, p. 186.

37. *Ibid.*, p. 309.

an ardent communist when he returned from U.S.A, but later he opted for democratic socialism. In practice, All India CSP leaned more towards Gandhism than communism. However CSP leaders of Kerala including Krishna Pillai and E.M.S. showed communist leanings, few months after the emergence of CSP. The CSP in Kerala formed and functioned as a part of All India CSP. By the middle of 1935, E.M.S. had almost become a communist<sup>38</sup>. He took formal membership in Communist party in January 1936<sup>39</sup>. However they did not proclaim their communist relations. The distinction between communism and socialism was not clear to the activist. E.M.S. stated that they organized the Congress Socialist Party without any clear knowledge about the Socialist and Communist movement. They had no idea how these political trends differed in their goal, programme, method of work, organizational structure etc. If they had a clear knowledge of these questions, they would have joined the existing communist party even if it were very weak. However, the organization of CSP helped them to know the distinction between the two and join the communist party later<sup>40</sup>.

---

38. E.M.S. Namboodiripad: *'Two questions difficult to be answered'*. CPI souvenir at the IV Party Congress at Palghat, 1956, Pp. 29-30.

39. E.M.S. Namboodiripad. *Reminiscences of an Indian Communist*, (New Delhi, 1987), p. 51.

40. Namboodiripad, n. 38, p. 29.

At the same time Jayaprakash Narayan decided to admit Communists to its membership. As the Communist Party of India was then an illegal party, this decision was not given any publicity. As a result of this decision the CPI joined the CSP and thereby got admission into the Indian National Congress. Even though, there was basic difference between CSP and CPI, these differences were not brought to the forefront at that period. The CSP also wanted to transform the Congress into a revolutionary, anti-imperialist body. The CSP felt that their policy had certain common features with those of the communist and so welcomed all leftist elements within the CSP.

However, the difference between CSP and CPI was very evident. CSP aimed complete independence of India and Swaraj for the masses. They aimed to bring the working class and peasants into the anti-imperialist struggle<sup>41</sup>. The method of CSP was democratic and peaceful as far as possible. The CSP was a democratic mass organisation with membership to all members of the INC. On the other hand the aim of CPI was the class rule of the proletariat. For this they ensured working class hegemony in national freedom movement. They tried to organise working class

---

41. Narayanan Nair. n. 35, p. 150.

and peasants against capitalism. E.M.S. Namboodiripad wrote that the political institution, religion and literature have evolved to suit the main aim of capitalism – the extraction of profit. All these have to be opposed, as it is not possible to oppose the economic abuses alone of capitalism. It is for this that the workers have to organize politically<sup>42</sup>. They adopted a violent, conspiratorial and authoritarian underground work. They stood for a doctrinaire, dogmatic and violent line. The organization of communist party was on cadre basis with strict discipline and with centralised party system<sup>43</sup>. In 1936 an important development took place in Congress politics which was hailed by the communists. Jawaharlal Nehru, the Congress president, declared that he was a Socialist. In the same year CPI decided that its members should join the Congress and attempted to give it a revolutionary direction and that they should also co-operate with CSP<sup>44</sup>.

The CSP was growing in influence on an all India level. This led Gandhi to issue a statement showing his differences with the CSP. In this statement Gandhi affirmed his faith in the constructive

---

42. *Mathrubhumi weekly*, 26<sup>th</sup> October, 1936.

43. Interview with M. Kumaran, Ex-MLA in his residence at Vatakara on 23<sup>rd</sup> June, 1994.

44. Shanker Ghosh, *Socialism and Communism in India*, (Bombay, 1971), p. 313.

programmes, *Ahimsa* as a creed and equal commitment to both the ends and the means<sup>45</sup>. Majority of the Socialists leaders were against the Gandhian policy of non-violence. During the Congress committee meeting held at Shornur in October 1934, a resolution was moved which stated that the means to achieve the goal of Congress should be peaceful and based on Justice but need not be based on Truth and Ahimsa. The resolution was supported by Abdurahiman Saheb, the leader of National Muslims of the Congress, and it was passed. This incident was a blow to Gandhians and, therefore, C.K. Govindan Nair, the General Secretary of the KPCC, resigned from his post. E.M.S. Namboodiripad was elected to the post created by the resignation of C.K. Govindan Nair. The Socialist projected the Soviet Union as a model and they published number of articles in Malayalam. In the Mathrubhumi daily a number of articles were published during the year 1934. P. Narayanan Nair, who was the editor of Mathrubhumi assisted the Congress Socialists in this regard.

E.M.S. organised the party giving due importance to labour unions and Karshaka Sanghams. They spread their nest among the labourers in various sections. The press workers in Calicut, beedi

---

45. *Mathrubhumi daily*, 19<sup>th</sup> September, 1934.

workers in Tellicherry and the weavers in Cannanore were organized. The Baliapattam Labour Union and the Municipal Labour Union Cannanore were formed under the banner of Congress Socialist<sup>46</sup>. A.K. Pillai was elected as President of the weaving company's workers union at Calicut and H. Manjunatha Rao and P. Krishna Pillai secretaries<sup>47</sup>. Attempts were also made to form peasant organization. A conference of the peasants of Chirakkal Taluk was held at Parassanikkadavu on 1<sup>st</sup> November 1936. Resolutions on Socialist lines were adopted and a Committee was appointed to organize the peasants of the taluk. The peasant movement in the beginning was guided by the principles of Congress Socialism. But by 1936, the leadership of the Kerala CSP began to change over to the Stalinist outlook and naturally the leadership of the peasant union also accepted this ideology.

Thus the CSP spread their influence on almost all sections of the society. The Communist Party of India was a banned organization since 1934. So the imperialist government put the Communists under heavy surveillance, on the other hand the Congress organization were free to work. The soft approach to the

---

46. CID Report on the Formation of Kerala Congress Socialist Party (1936-40), Tamilnadu Archives, Egmore, p.19.

47. *Ibid.*, p. 20.

Congress by the imperialist government was a blessing to the Communist to carry on the organizational work. It was during this period that Jayaprakash Narayan put forward the idea of left unity. During this period large number of communists penetrated into CSP all over India. The Socialists including Jayaprakash Narayan believed that this would increase the popular base of the Socialist party. But the communists were creating a situation favourable to them and to enlarge their social base.

The Kerala state unit of the CPI was formed in October 1937 at Calicut as a secret committee including P. Krishna Pillai, E.M.S, N.C. Sekhar and K. Damodaran<sup>48</sup>. But the communists were not ready to reveal their identity because except a few leaders, the rank and file believed in the leadership of Jayaprakash Narayan and democratic socialism. The majority of the activists joined CSP because of the personality of Jayaprakash Narayan. They were quite aware that an untimely declaration of the formation of the communist party would mar the prospects of the party. So they decided to remain in the CSP and to develop their cadre with the support of the Socialists. But no satisfactory work had been done in Kerala for promoting the formation of a communist party at that

---

48. N.C. Sekhar, n. 22, p. 327.

time<sup>49</sup>. The second Kerala state meeting of CSP was held at Kozhikode in the year 1935 under the presidentship of M.R. Masani<sup>50</sup>. The third conference was held under the presidentship of Sampornanand at Tellicherry in the year 1936<sup>51</sup>. The 4<sup>th</sup> Kerala Socialist Conference was held at Cannanore on 20<sup>th</sup> June 1937 under the presidentship of Yusuf Meherally<sup>52</sup>. It was in the Cannanore session of the CSP a blue print of the transformation of the party was chalked out. The resolutions passed in this meeting clearly showed the deep imprint of the Communist ideas. By this time CSP recognized the need to use the national movement to advance Socialism, not in the expectation of converting Congress but of splitting it into progressive and reactionary wings. The CPI still regarded congress as the organ of the bourgeois nationalism and a counter revolutionary force with which no alliance was possible.

The speed with which individuals moved from Gandhism through Congress socialism to communism varied considerably. As early as 1934 Krishna Pillai and Communist league workers from Trivandrum met in order to concert activities. In 1935, Krishna Pillai

---

49. K.K.N. Kurup, *Agrarian Struggle in Kerala*, (Trivandrum, 1989), p. 2.

50. Narayanan Nair. n. 35, p. 157.

51. *Ibid*

52. *Ibid.*, p. 158.

was distributing clandestine communist literature at the Lucknow session of the Congress party, the CPI Journal of National Front was also in circulation<sup>53</sup>. During the CSP's first major venture into mass struggle - the forty day strike of tile workers at Feroke - the Communist leaders Dange and Sundarayya visited Calicut to offer advice on tactics. By 1937, if not earlier, the CPI was systematically working towards the transformation of the CSP in Kerala as elsewhere into an undeclared unit of the party. The CSP activists had established a Congress committee in almost every village in Malabar outside the Moplah zone, backed by reading rooms where local activists taught the illiterate to read socialist books and pamphlets and conducted study classes<sup>54</sup>.

The 5<sup>th</sup> Kerala Socialist Party meeting was held at Kozhikode on 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> of April 1938. The resolution passed in this conference demanded to vacate the restrictions imposed upon the Communist party. This meeting elected Krishnapillai as General Secretary of the CSP. Even though, Socialists were a prominent group in the state Congress, the Gandhians were still a dominating factor in the Congress. In order to capture the leadership in the

---

53. T.J. Nossitter, n. 5, p. 72.

54. *Ibid.*, p. 72.

party the Socialist sought the help of the Nationalist Muslim leader Abdul Rahman Saheb. As a result of this tactic Abdul Rahman Saheb was elected as President and E.M.S. as secretary in the election of January 1939. But the Gandhians did not co-operate with the state Socialist leadership. It was in these circumstances that the Bakkulam Conference of the Congress was held in the year 1939. The Gandhians did not participate in the conference. The entire activities of this Congress session were in the hands of the Communists. They waited for an opportunity to transform themselves into Communists.

The Communist atrocities in Russia were reported by 1937<sup>55</sup>. The Malayalam newspapers reported the Soviet atrocities, which included the murder of thousands of people<sup>56</sup>. The Kerala Communist Party defended the violation of human rights and cold-blooded murder. But the Socialist leaders like Madhu Limaye and Lohia refused to support the Soviet Union and they published articles condemning the brutal acts<sup>57</sup>. But the cadres trained by the Communists, through Trade unions, Kisan Sabhas and Student

---

55. *Mathrubhumi daily*, 31<sup>st</sup> January, 1937.

56. *Mathrubhumi daily*, 1<sup>st</sup> April, 1937 & 28<sup>th</sup> May, 1937.

57. Madhu Limaye, *Socialist Communist Interaction in India*, (New Delhi, 1991), p. 36

organisations, did not question this attitude<sup>58</sup>. They were taught that Gandhian techniques were ineffective and the only way for liberation was the way of Red Flag. It was during this period that the II World War broke out. After the Stalin-Hitler pact of August 1939 the anti-British attitude became strong.

The Communist party of India was a banned organisation since 1934. The Congress, on the other hand, functioned in public and no secrecy was attached to its organizational work. So to work as CSP members was an essential protective measure to the Communists for their existence. The difference of opinion between Congress and Socialist enlarged and the Gandhians organised a platform of their own to fight against the CSP namely the Kerala Congress Gandhi Sangh. This organisation came into existence on 23 January 1939 at a conference held at Perinthalmanna under the Chairmanship of M.P. Govinda Menon<sup>59</sup>. The Gandhians decided to participate in the Individual Sathyagraha, which did not evoke much enthusiasm<sup>60</sup>. The Communist decision to use this situation of war as an opportunity to fight against imperialism was highly

---

58. E.M.S, *Keralathile Desheeya Prasthanavum Communistukarum* (Mal), (Ernakulam, 1935), p. 39.

59. *Mathrubhumi daily*, 26<sup>th</sup> January, 1939

60. Interview with Kenathy Govindan at Keezhariyur on 17<sup>th</sup> November, 1996

acceptable to the freedom loving people.

But the declaration of II World War, however, stimulated the ideological polarisation in Kerala. In South India, where the CPI had generally operated through the CSP group within Congress, a distinct organization now became necessary<sup>61</sup>. The Congress Socialists held meeting in different parts of Kerala including Cheruthuruthi, Alappuzha, Perinthalmanna, Kozhikode, Puthuppanam and Feroke<sup>62</sup>. After the preparatory meetings, all the important cadres were called for a meeting at Pinarayi – a village geographically a remote area around 8 km from Tellicherry. About 100 delegates from all parts of Kerala participated in the meeting on 13 Oct 1939 to formalize the transformation of Kerala CSP into Kerala CPI<sup>63</sup>. Krishna Pillai disclosed to the delegates about the existence of the Kerala State Committee of the CPI. On 26 Jan 1940, the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Congress declaration of Independence as its goal – the party announced its existence with tarred slogans on walls, culverts and government offices<sup>64</sup>. Krishna Pillai stated that the Communist party has decided to intensify the struggle for

---

61. T. J. Nossitter, n. 5, p. 84.

62. N.E. Balaram, *Keralathile Communist Prasthanam* (Mal), (Trivandrum, 1990), p. 241.

63. T.J. Nossitter, n. 5, p. 84.

64. Interview with T.C. Kunhiraman Master, accused in Onchiyam Firing case in his residence at Onchiyam on 18<sup>th</sup> October, 2003.

freedom through direct action during the time of war<sup>65</sup>. Transformation of Kerala CSP to the Communist party was due to the failure of Congress and the CSP to develop a correct attitude towards war and struggle for freedom<sup>66</sup>. The CSP State executive meeting resolved to transform the party into the Communist party. All the party executive members except four supported this resolution. According to K.B. Menon it was pure treachery. "Unfortunately there were some 'rats' in the Congress Socialist party of Kerala. They gnawed at the very foundation of the party through various tricks like sneaking in, cheating and threatening and when the right opportunity came they converted the Congress Socialist party into Communist party overnight"<sup>67</sup>.

In August 1937 Jayaprakash Narayan and again in September 1938, M.R. Masani lighted upon certain communist documents which showed that Indian Communists did not consider the CSP as a Socialist Party at all<sup>68</sup>. Jayaprakash Narayan stated that the secret document found by him stated in substance that the CSP was not a Socialist party and that Communist party would never tolerate a

---

65. N.E. Balaram, n. 62, p. 241.

66. *Ibid.*, p. 244.

67. K.B. Menon papers. File No.11/Speeches and articles, NMM&L, New Delhi, p. 2.

68. M.R. Masani, *The Communist Party of India*, (London, 1954), Pp. 69-70.

rival party. It went on to say that the communist party was the only real Socialist party and that the CSP was to be developed merely into a platform of left unity<sup>69</sup>. From this Jayaprakash Narayan was convinced that the Indian communists were the "sworn enemy" of the Congress Socialists. In March 1940 the National Executive of the CSP resolved to expel the Communists, who had consolidated their position in the party and had captured a large part of the party organization. During this period the Communists managed to capture important posts in the INC, A.I.T.U.C, All India Kisan Sabha and the Students' Federation. This caused great damage to CSP especially in South, including that of Kerala.

With the Pinarayi conference, the CSP of Kerala disappeared. The national leadership failed to take immediate and appropriate action because almost all of them were in the jail due to their stand towards war. Some of the Socialist leaders condemned Jayaprakash Narayan for this and pressed him to take action against the Communists. Thus, by 1940 it was resolved to dismiss all the Communists from the CSP but, by that time majority of the Socialists were transformed into Communists. The remaining

---

69. Jayaprakash Narayan, *Towards Struggle*, (Bombay, 1946), p. 172.

Socialists were in jail due to their anti-war policy. In short, after the Pinarayi conference there was no Congress Socialists other than the unorganized group who initiated the Quit India Movement in Malabar.

# CONGRESS SOCIALISTS AND QUIT INDIA MOVEMENT

Sasi Kumar.P. “The role of non-communist left movement in Kerala politics from 1942 to 1977” Thesis. Department of History, University of Calicut, 2005

**CHAPTER IV**

**CONGRESS SOCIALISTS  
AND  
QUIT INDIA MOVEMENT**

## CHAPTER IV

# CONGRESS SOCIALISTS AND QUIT INDIA MOVEMENT

The Pinarayi Conference of the CSP activists made the political decision for the change over to the Communist party<sup>1</sup>. The situation created by the II World War was analysed and it was decided to intensify the struggle for freedom. Of all parties, CPI alone had such a programme. The refusal of CSP leadership to mobilise the people against war was the main reason for mass conversion to the CPI<sup>2</sup>. It was concluded that the gravest danger to world peace and democracy came from France and Britain. The political ferment of Kerala was overcast with anti British sentiments. Public meetings were held in different parts of Kerala for anti-war propaganda and exhortations were made to eject the blood sucking British devils<sup>3</sup>. Meetings were held in different parts of Malabar and along with this there appeared posters warning the people against joining the armed forces. The people responded to

- 
1. P. Narayanan Nair, *Aranoottandilude* (Mal), (Kottayam, 1973), p. 205.
  2. N.E. Balaram, *Keralathile Communist Prasthanam* (Mal), (Trivandrum, 1990) p. 240.
  3. G.O. P. No.2010, Public (General) Dept. Nov.17, 1939, Tamilnadu Archives, Egmore.

the call of non-cooperation with the war effort and they surged forward in organized groups displaying banners and placards. In a placard the following slogan was written in Malayalam which can be translated as follows, "Don't join the army, Hate the war, Fight for national cause and wrest freedom"<sup>4</sup>.

The Communists inspired anti-war activities were noticed by the government and repressive measures were taken against the Communists. But the situation changed all of a sudden because of the German attack on Russia. Nazism was regarded as most dangerous and Russia supported British war efforts. The Communists of Kerala accepted the peoples' war theory and proclaimed that they are ready to co-operate with the government<sup>5</sup>. The glory of Soviet Union was hailed and even the ordinary workers of the party sung the song which ran as follows:

*Soviet Ennouru Nadundathre,  
Pokaan Kazinhengil Enthu Bhagyam,  
Kashtam Njan Angu Pirannillallo,  
Ah, Pavana nattil pirannillallo.*<sup>6</sup>

---

4. *Ibid.*

5. *Mathrubhumi* daily, 7<sup>th</sup> July, 1942.

6. *Pravahan*, 6<sup>th</sup> December, 1952.

meaning,

*There is a country namely Soviet*

*It would have been very lucky to go there*

*Sorry for I was not born there*

*Not in that holy land.*

The Communist decided to co-operate with the war effort whole heartedly. Following the decision to support the war efforts of the Government unconditionally, the ban on the CPI was lifted on 22 July, 1942<sup>7</sup>.

The transformation of CSP into CPI had a damaging effect on the working of the Congress. The suspension of the KPCC and the creation of an ad hoc committee under Nanda Koliyar re-established the rightists in the top positions within the Congress organization<sup>8</sup>. Immediately after the declaration of the II World War, Congress initiated mobilisation of public opinion. Leaders like K. Madhava Menon, K. Kelappan and A.V. Kuttimalu Amma undertook tours of various taluks, organising anti-war meetings<sup>9</sup>. But the participation of the people, in the absence of the support of the leftist was very limited. The individual Sathyagraha also did not

---

7. *Mathrubhumi* daily, 23<sup>rd</sup> July, 1942.

8. *Mathrubhumi Daily*, 16<sup>th</sup> May, 1942.

9. *Mathrubhumi Daily*, November 5-26, 1939.

evoke any enthusiasm among the people<sup>10</sup>. The Individual sathyagraha was, inaugurated in Malabar, on 21<sup>st</sup> November 1940, by K. Kelappan. In total 149 members offered sathyagraha, including K. Madhava Menon, N.P. Damodara Menon and M.P. Govinda Menon<sup>11</sup>. Not only leaders but ordinary workers from remote rural areas were also selected to participate in the Individual Sathyagraha. For example Kenathy Govindan was selected as one of the Individual sathyagrahi. He marched towards Delhi shouting slogan 'Not to help Britain with men or money' and Mahatma Gandhi Ki Jai, and he was arrested at Coimbatore<sup>12</sup>.

The German advance in Europe and the fall of France had changed the nature of the war. Britain sought Indian co-operation in the war effort. They sent Sir Stafford Cripps to India<sup>13</sup>. But the Cripps' proposal was, rejected by the CWC, as it did not promise immediate and full independence to India. With the failure of Cripps, Gandhi's attitude towards British underwent a fundamental change. Gandhi began to think of a mass movement to get rid of

---

10. Interview with Kurumayil Narayanan, the 11<sup>th</sup> accused in the Keezhariyur bomb case, in his residence at Malappuram on 8<sup>th</sup> October, 1995.

11. Interview with Kenathy Govindan Nair at Keezhariyur on 17<sup>th</sup> November, 1996.

12. *Ibid.*

13. Tara Chand, *History of the Freedom Movement in India*, Vol. IV, (New Delhi, 1983), p. 338.

British from India. In August 1942 the resolution asking the British to "Quit India" was passed in the AICC session at Bombay<sup>14</sup>. The AICC placed Gandhi in command of the movement but warned that a time might come when the Congress would be unable to issue instructions for peoples' guidance. "When this happens every man and woman who is participating in this movement must function for himself or herself within the four corners of general instructions issued"<sup>15</sup>.

Gandhi speaking before and after the resolution in exhorting the people to join in the movement laid stress upon a number of things. Among these the most important was 'Do or die', "either free India or die in that attempt". Gandhi's final call was, interpreted by various leaders, in different ways. On one end of the spectrum were the strict Gandhians who were determined to maintain absolute non-violence against person and property. At the other end of the spectrum were the advocates of violence, whom the most prominent was Jayaprakash Narayan. Immediately after passing of Quit India resolution the government reacted. The sudden and sensational arrest of Gandhi and the members of the

---

14. *Ibid.*, p. 374.

15. *Ibid.*, p. 375

CWC took Kerala as much unawares, as it did the rest of India. People were surprised and shocked and did not know what to do<sup>16</sup>. The National leaders were arrested early morning on 9<sup>th</sup> August. Congress leaders of Malabar like Madhava Menon and K.A. Damodara Menon were arrested on the same day<sup>17</sup>. K. Kelappan was arrested at Tellicherry under Section 26 of the Defence of India Rules on August 9, 1942 and was taken to Vellore<sup>18</sup>. In continuation M.P. Govinda Menon, C.K. Govindan Nair, A.V. Kuttimalu Amma, L.S. Prabhu, E. Moidu Maulavi and others were arrested<sup>19</sup>. Prohibitory orders were passed in Calicut, Eranadu and Valluvanadu taluks and Congress was declared as unlawful Association<sup>20</sup>. The KPCC office of Chalappuram was sealed off and the premises were kept under police custody.

With the arrest of Kelappan and other stalwarts, Congress became leaderless<sup>21</sup>. The policy of the Communists, were against the Quit India Movement and they supported the Allied war effort. On this occasion the government of India began to release the

---

16. N.Ramachandra Rao, *Historical Notes*, NMM&L, New Delhi. p. 2.

17. K.K.N. Kurup, *Quit India Samaravum Keralavum* (Mal.), (Calicut, 1993), p. 43.

18. *Mathrubhumi Daily*, 10<sup>th</sup> August, 1942.

19. *Mathrubhumi*. 10, 11, 12, August, 1942.

20. Public (General) Dept. G.O.No.2544, dt. 9<sup>th</sup> August, 1942, Tamilnadu Archives, Egmore.

21. Interview with K. Kunhrama Kurup at Vatakara on 22<sup>nd</sup> June, 1993.

Communists from prison and announced that the CPI had become a legal party. The CPI formulated a multi-national theory of the Indian sub-continent, widened the gulf which separated the INC from the CPI. In this juncture, the leadership of the movement was taken-up by the remaining Congress Socialists<sup>22</sup>. When the AICC was in session at Bombay the CSP group also met. They decided to evade arrest and work underground. The prominent leaders who participated were Ram Manohar Lohia, Suchetha Kripalani, Achuth Padwardhan and Aruna Asaf Ali. In this meeting few Socialists belonging to Kerala were also present. They decided to send K.B. Menon and four others to Malabar. Those who accompanied Menon were V.A. Kesavan Nair, N.A. Krishnan Nair, C.P. Sankaran Nair and Mathai Manjuran<sup>23</sup>.

V.A. Kesavan Nair was a native of Pavaratti near Chowghat. He had been in Bombay for 12 years as a journalist in Mathrubhumi. He had intimate connection with Congress leaders of Bombay as well as Congress leaders of Kerala like Kelappan and C.K. Govindan Nair. He later wrote *Irumbazhikkullil*. Another activist who belonged to the Bombay gang was N.A. Krishnan Nair.

---

22. Interview with Madhavan Kidavu in his residence at Chemencherry on 5<sup>th</sup> October, 1995.

23. A.K. Pillai, *Congressum Keralavum* (Mal.), (Kottayam, 1986), p. 409.

In 1932 he participated in the CDM and courted arrest and was sentenced to 18 months rigorous imprisonment. While working at Bombay he contacted Congressmen from Malabar who were employed there, and discussed Congress politics. N.A. Krishnan Nair, was found by the authorities as a wreck less politician who is out to overthrow the government by law in this country by violent means. Another member of this gang was C.P. Sankaran Nair who was a Congress activist from his early age. He went to Bombay in 1935 in search of a job. He got a job in Mysore Government Industries and stayed with V.A. Kesavan Nair<sup>24</sup>. The last among this Bombay group was the young fire brand leader Mathai Manjuran. These entire Bombay based socialist had some contact with the CSP all India leadership. They convinced the national leadership that they could do more in Malabar than in Bombay. Early in August 42, before the AICC met in Bombay a meeting was held at Krishnan Nair's residence where K.B. Menon, Krishnan Nair, C.P. Sankaran Nair and Mathai Manjuran were present<sup>25</sup>. They were highly concerned about the bad treatment the people of Kerala were receiving at the hands of the British authorities.

---

24. G.O.No.2431 - Confidential (Home dept.) 14<sup>th</sup> August, 1944, Tamilnadu Archives, Egmore.

25. G.O.No.1445 - Public (General) Dept. 11<sup>th</sup> May, 1944, Tamilnadu Archives, Egmore.

Therefore they decided to resign their jobs in Bombay and to reach Malabar to lead the Quit India Movement. Menon promised that he would collect necessary funds for organizing the movement. Accordingly all of them decided to leave Bombay separately and assemble at Calicut on a particular day with prior information. Thus with the blessings of the Socialist leaders Menon with his friends arrived at Kozhikode and gave leadership to the remaining Congress Socialists in the Quit India Movement<sup>26</sup>.

After the arrest of leaders like Kelappan, the grass root level workers came forward to shoulder the responsibility. When the news of the arrest of Kelappan and others reached Ottappalm, a huge meeting was organized near the Cornation Library. In protest against the arrest people took a large procession wearing black badges and holding tricolour flags<sup>27</sup>. Protest meetings and demonstrations were organized throughout the district. On September 9, 1942 hartals, processions etc., took place in different parts of Kerala as elsewhere in India. Hartals and processions were organized and observed in places like Kottuli, Kuthiravattom, Kakkodi, Eranjhippalam etc., by closing shops and establishments.

---

26. Kurumayil Narayanan. n. 10.

27. *Mathrubhumi Daily*, 11<sup>th</sup> September, 1942.

Students responded by strikes, which continued for a number of days. The nucleus of the students' agitation in Calicut was Zamorins College at Tali. Students' demonstrations paraded the streets shouting slogans and singing national songs. It seemed as if the people were all of a sudden possessed of a new consciousness of dignity, prestige and power.<sup>28</sup> Some students were dismissed some suspended few others were arrested and imprisoned<sup>29</sup>. Those who attended the classes recorded their protest by shouting slogans while in class rooms. Kumaran Ezhuthassan was a student of junior intermediate class in Zamorins College Calicut during 1941-42. He was dismissed from the college. However the principal, who issued the order hailed the student and wished him all success in life<sup>30</sup>. The unleashed pent up passions of the people however had to find a vent and it could not be checked until it had its full expression. It took around one month<sup>31</sup>.

An important incident occurred during this period, was the arrest of a Gujarathi boy namely Naveen Chand Iswarlal Shroff<sup>32</sup>.

---

28. Interview with K.P. Muhammed, freedom fighter, in his residence at Kozhikode on 7<sup>th</sup> June, 1995.

29. Interview with Kumaran Ezhuthachan, freedom fighter, at Trithala on 3<sup>rd</sup> October, 1995.

30. See Append I.

31. Ramachandra Rao, n. 16, p. 6

32. K.P. Muhammed, n. 28.

This young boy, like many others was excited over the political situation and participated in the demonstrations in the Zamorins School.<sup>33</sup> While he picketed the school gate he was arrested and punished with two months rigorous imprisonment and fine of Rupees 75/-<sup>34</sup>. It was instructed that if he failed to pay the amount he had to undergo one more month of rigorous imprisonment<sup>35</sup>. On his way to Alipuram jail his mother came to Calicut Railway Station to see off the boy. With agony his mother informed him that his father would pay the fine for his release. He threatened his mother that if any steps were taken for his release he will not come back.<sup>36</sup> She was bewildered. In the railway platform a number of students and members of his family were present to bid farewell to the boy. While the train was on the move the boy told his mother "I will come back only in a free India"<sup>37</sup>. Iswarlal who was around 20 was quite happy in the jail. He took initiative to start a Hindi debate club and also an Urdu class in the jail. Debates were conducted in the jail on various subjects in order to create awareness among the inmates<sup>38</sup>. The boy was very young and fair and his character was

---

33. Kumaran Ezhuthachan, n. 29.

34. V.A. Kesavan Nair, *Irumbazhikullil*, (Calicut, 1954), p. 85.

35. *Ibid.*, p. 86.

36. Interview with Umanatha Rao in his residence at Calicut on 6<sup>th</sup> June, 1995.

37. K.P. Muhammad, n. 28.

38. V.A. Kesavan Nair, n. 34, p. 86.

very attractive<sup>39</sup>. He was very active and roamed among the prisoners and tried to solve their problems and share their feelings<sup>40</sup>. Most of the prisoners mingled with him and he chalked out programmes to be implemented after his release from the jail. Iswarlal hailed from a well to do family of Gujarathi merchants. The coarse food provided from the jail was allergic to him. He was expected to be released on 2<sup>nd</sup> January 1943. But he was afflicted with fever and remained in his block. His friends considering his illness as an ordinary fever neglected it. But with in few days the fever turned to Pneumonia and the boy fell unconscious. He was shifted to Bellary Head Quarters hospital. But the fever was too severe and the pride of India passed away on January 1<sup>st</sup> 1943.<sup>41</sup> His mother who went to Bellary would not see the body of her son<sup>42</sup>.

After the first fury was over, the people gradually settled down to more deliberate acts of destruction and devastation. They also planned constructive work and formed institutions for better service to the people. The first case of arson happened in Chemenchery Village on 19<sup>th</sup> August 1942. The Sub Registrar Office of Chemenchery with all

---

39. K.P. Muhammad, n. 28.

40. V.A. Kesavan Nair, n. 34, p. 87.

41. *Ibid.*, p. 89.

42. Kumaran Ezhuthachan, n. 29

its records was burnt. Subsequent attempt was made to burn the Railway Station at Chemenchery. Another important incident was the attempt to demolish Ulliyeri Road Bridge. In this case three of the accused were given 8 years imprisonment each, while the remaining six who denied in the open court the right of the presiding Judge to try them and who therefore, refused to have anything to do with the proceedings were awarded an additional two years imprisonment by the judge for their daring act of non-cooperation<sup>43</sup>.

If, the incidents which occurred were sporadic, without any plan or leadership, the events that followed were the result of conspiracy and deliberate planning. The leadership was given by K . B . Menon and four others who came to Malabar from Bombay<sup>44</sup>. K.B. Menon and his lieutenants got in touch with the remaining local Congress leaders in Kerala. He traveled extensively in Malabar for creating confidence among the workers and supporters<sup>45</sup>. He met influential persons and persuaded them to co-operate with the Congress programmes and render all help in acts of sabotage. He was getting money from Bombay and also from local sources. He and his colleagues were given due respect wherever they went though their movements were clandestine. Some congress workers,

---

43. Ramachandra Rao, n. 16, p, 61.

44. A.K. Pillai, n. 23.

45. Kurumayil Narayanan, n. 10.

who were eager and enthusiastic, welcomed Menon and friends. The important local leaders were O. Raghavan Nair of Verkot house Chalappuram, Karayal Achuthan, Kuniyil Achuthan and D Jayadeva Rao. They organised meetings in which Menon and Bombay group participated and discussed the situation. They were able to build up an agreeable tempo by these discussions and the participants agreed to render any assistance against British hegemony. Even though, Menon had deep faith in the principle of non-violence, the situation compelled him to violate his principle. As a part of their activities, they planned derailling, destroying of culverts and roads, cutting of Telegraph wires, arson and setting fire to Village Offices. The Congress bulletins issued from underground exhorted the people "cut the veins of your tyrant and you will see him collapsed". We call for acts of non-violent sabotage against British Railways, telegraphs and roads in India<sup>46</sup>. During this period supporting these activities the resistance movement workers conducted a very popular and powerful underground weekly *Swathantra Bharatham*. Government was aware of the role of the press in instigating and guiding the underground movement as well as in raising the passions of the people. Hence, the Governor of Madras on 16<sup>th</sup>

---

46. *The Hindu*, 9<sup>th</sup> August, 1992.

November 1942 warned the printers, publishers and editors of newspapers against printing or publishing any newspapers or other document, any matter of the nature specified below unless it has been officially announced by the Government of Madras<sup>47</sup>. Reports of interruptions of any kind to road and railway communications, reports of acts of sabotage or attempted sabotage directed at railways, military or civil aerodromes, power houses, water supply installations, telegraph and telephone lines or any other public utility services, reports of strikes or interruption of work in factories engaged in producing material required military purposes, anything which is likely to invite the public to subversive activity, anything which conveys suggestion or instructions for illegal acts, anything which is an exaggerated report of an unfounded allegation regarding excessive use or misuse of their powers by the police, troops and other government servants or the treatment and condition of detenués or prisoners and anything which retards the public sense of security<sup>48</sup>. However certain newspapers especially *The Hindu* and *The Mail* published news regarding the attempted sabotage at Nadapuram, Pallikunnu, Cannanore and Chombala in Malabar district which came under the banned category of the press instructions. The District Magistrate

---

47. G.O. No.3832 Public (Press) Dept. 1<sup>st</sup> December, 1942, Tamilnadu Archives, Egmore.

48. *Ibid.*

of Malabar informed the Chief Secretary, that the local correspondents of *The Hindu* and *The Mail* in Malabar district had been sending to Madras items of exactly the same description which were prohibited news in Malabar. He also indicated that *Mathrubhumi* is indulging in subversive activities and that the paper needed very firm handling.<sup>49</sup>

Thus free and fair journalism became very difficult. In these circumstances the freedom fighters of Malabar published a very popular and powerful underground weekly namely *Swathantra Bharatham*. It was published from Kozhikode, Tellicherry, Chemenchery and Kudak. After publishing 17 issues, the press at Kudak was confiscated and an activist called Sankaran Vaidyar was arrested. Even after the capture of press in Kudak the news sheet was circulated. Unable to locate the press a force of 15 constables under a Head Constable was specially deputed to scour the country from one end to the other. The paper was secretly published from Chemanchery. However police detected it and the press was confiscated. A case was charged against K.V. Madhavan Kidavu, Kavil Appu Nair, Unni Nair and Uppissankandi Krishnan Nair<sup>50</sup>. Madhavan Kidavu evaded arrest for more than one year but he was arrested at Shornur and convicted with

---

49. Letter D/5/11483/42 from the Malabar District Magistrate's office, Calicut, to the Chief Secretary to Government of Madras, 1<sup>st</sup> January, 1943, Tamilnadu Archives, Egmore.

50. K.K.N. Kurup, n. 17, p. 46.

2½ years imprisonment.<sup>51</sup> This single sheet newspaper played an unusually big and popular role in the 1942 struggle. This news sheet gave proper guidance to the freedom fighters of Malabar.<sup>52</sup>

NB 4677

Conspirators met in the house of Raghava Kurup on 26th October 1942, and in the house of Karayal Achuthan several times. In all these meeting Menon was present and the last message of Gandhi was read and explained<sup>53</sup>. The message of Mahatma inspired and generated enthusiasm among the participants of the meeting. They felt that Gandhi had endorsed on them a great responsibility to lead the movement.<sup>54</sup> As a result of the discussion the conspirators agreed to opt violence and sabotage as a means to attain their goal. They decided to observe 8<sup>th</sup> November 1942 as All Kerala Sabotage day in Malabar<sup>55</sup>. The meeting also endorsed the responsibility of conducting the activities in different areas. Muhammed Naha a native of Parappanangadi was an active participant in the meetings and he was selected as the Treasurer of Wandoor and Manjeri Firkas<sup>56</sup>. He undertook to blow up the

---

51. Madhavan Kidavu, n. 22.

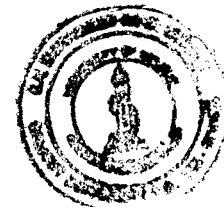
52. See Appendix II for the copy of *Swathantra Bharatham*.

53. Kurumayil Narayanan. n. 10.

54. *Ibid.*

55. Government of Madras vs. K.B. Menon and others, District and Sessions Court of South Malabar. File No. 21/1944.

56. Police Note, Fortnightly Report for the 1<sup>st</sup> half of July, 1943, Tamilnadu Archives, Egmore.



Parappanangadi Railway Station and a bridge nearby. He also took the responsibility of demolishing the road bridge at Panampuzha. He demanded 500 rupees, 6 dynamites, 4 hand bombs and 2 incendiary bombs for performing the task of sabotage.

To make the sabotage day a success, the conspirators decided to make bombs and dynamites. The meeting held in Kollam Charka club had decided to make arrangement to make explosive in Keezhariyur. As per the decision evolved out of the discussion, E. Vasudevan Nair sent Kuniyil Achuthan with an introductory letter to O. Raghava Kurup. The matter was seriously discussed in the meeting held at Chalappuram. They decided to contact Koyappalli Narayanan alias Karunakaran Nair, who was a retired technician from Indian Railway. He was a skilled mechanic and was very confident to make bomb. He agreed to make bomb on the condition that he should be provided with the necessary materials and chemicals and a secret place. He was taken to Raghava Kurup's house and the details of the programme were discussed. He gave a list of required chemicals and received a sum of Rs.250/- for the purchase of materials other than chemicals. Raghavan Nair and Karayal Achuthan went to Mysore from Calicut by bus. They met two contractors Gopalan Nair and Beerankutty in Mysore city and

purchased 200 sticks of Gelnite. They brought this by the Calicut Madras Mail concealing them in a basket of orange.

Keezhariyur was selected as the venue of bomb making as a result of the discussion among the active delegates of Quilandy. Keezhariyur was a remote village on the sleepy banks of Akalapuzha. As this place was surrounded on different sides by water, the conspirators believed that the hideout could not be detected easily. They had also made arrangements to give signal to the participants on the arrival of Police, by means of producing particular sound by guards<sup>57</sup>. With few exceptions of certain aristocratic families, majority of the population of Keezhariyur were lower middle class people whose main occupation was limited agriculture and petty business. The ideas of Congress were brought to the village by the merchants who went to Calicut in order to purchase goods. Thaikandi Pacher and Kurumayil Kelukutty were attracted with the ideas of congress while they met certain Gujarathi merchants of Calicut<sup>58</sup>. The majority of the villagers were not at all motivated by the Congress ideas. Those who had some soft corner

---

57. Madhavan Kidavu, n. 22.

58. Interview with C.M. Kanaran, close relative of Thykandy Pacher, accused in the Keezhariyur Bomb case, at his residence at Keezhariyur on 5<sup>th</sup> October, 1995

to the Congress hesitated to show it due to the fear of police.

After the Pinarayi conference, the Communists actively started functioning in Malabar<sup>59</sup>. When Communist party was banned, the workers of Malabar found in Keezhariyur safe shelters<sup>60</sup>. Kandiyil Meethal house belonged to Kandiyil Meethal Changaran, was the secret place selected for bomb making. Kurumayil Kelukutty extended his help to conspirators in arranging Kandiyil Meethal house for the secret endeavour, which continued for 10 days. In the process of making bombs Koyapalli Narayanan was helped by Kuniyil Achuthan and Kunhiraman. They did not take necessary measures to keep the matter a secret. They used to spread gunpowder in the yard outside to make it dry, without fear or hesitation. They even allowed visitors inside the house. During the trial some prosecution witnesses claimed that they had seen Narayanan and Achuthan inside the house, mixing powder of different colours<sup>61</sup>. They took very little precaution to keep the matter secret from the neighbours perhaps they felt that all were fully sympathetic with their aims and so they were more careless than they should have been<sup>62</sup>.

---

59. For details see K.K.N. Kurup. *The Kayyur Riot*, (Calicut, 1975) p. 16.

60. Kurumayil Narayanan, n. 10.

61. Government of Madras vs K.B. Menon. n. 55.

Within a short period the news regarding the manufacturing of bombs leaked out and the conspirators decided to change the venue. Then bombs were made in Mavutta mala for two or three days. During this period Kuniyil Achuthan, Koyappalli Narayanan and Kuniyil Kunhiraman ate and slept in the house of Paramal Kanaran. In the early morning they used to leave the house with a deal wood box covered with a mat and a bucket over which a paper was spread. They returned to his house for mid day meal again going out and returning in the evening. They spent the night with him for three days. The manufactured bombs were transported to Calicut in '*Kuriyal*'<sup>63</sup> and handed over to the office secretary of the Congress house.

Meanwhile the news of manufacturing bombs at Keezhariyur was leaked out and so the conspirators shifted their venue. In the shade of darkness they shifted the materials to Nellyyadi ferry and from there to Puthiyara to the house of Raghava Kurup. As they felt Kozhikode was not safe, the conspirators decided to change the venue to Parappanangadi. Mohammed Naha a native of

---

62. *Ibid.*

63. *Kuriyal*' is a long bag made of Palmyra leaf.

Parappanangadi was an active worker and he was ready to provide all the facilities there. All the necessary instruments and materials for the manufacture of bombs were taken to Parappanangadi by rail<sup>64</sup>. From the Railway station these materials were taken to Naha's Thanneerpandal house. But when this house proved inconvenient, the conspirators changed the venue. S.N. Vallil arranged the new premises with the help of E. Velappan Nair, who was a retired traffic inspector of Southern Railway. S.N. Vallil asked Velappan Nair to arrange a house for his friends who were coming to Parappanangadi to purchase second hand copper vessels. Velappan Nair owned two houses in the same compound which was known as Embran Veedu. S.N. Vallil arranged one of the houses in the early part of November '42 for a period of one month at a rent of rupees 3/- and 8 anas per month. After occupying the house, the materials for making bombs were shifted to the new premises.

Koyappally Narayanan and Kuniyil Achuthan reached Parappanangadi and started their work. Number of bombs was made in Parappanangadi which consisted of Zinc tubes filled with

---

64. Kurumayil Narayanan, n. 10.

gunpowder, glass pieces and pieces of gravel tied up together with a string. The zinc tubes were made by, Koyappally Narayanan sitting in the front veranda of the house. He made tubes by beating a zinc sheet with the aid of a hammer under the pretext of making candle stands. Meanwhile, meetings were held in Verkot house and in Kollam Charka Club. Eventhough, 9<sup>th</sup> November 1942 was fixed as the All Kerala Sabotage day the conspirators were forced to change the date, as the materials required were not ready. Therefore in the meeting held on 26<sup>th</sup> October 1942, in Verkot house leaders explained that the preparation for the manufacture of bombs were going ahead, that everything must be soon ready and that the date of the concerted action should be fixed later. Few days later, in another meeting, 17<sup>th</sup> November was fixed as the revised date for the "All Kerala Sabotage Day". By the stipulated period a number of bombs were manufactured and were supplied to different parts of Malabar.

Everything was set to observe All Kerala Sabotage day. In the night of 17<sup>th</sup> November 1942 several incidents like setting fire on schools, village offices and cutting of Telegraph wires occurred<sup>65</sup>. Although many incidents took place in different parts of Malabar,

---

65. For more details see K.K.N. Kurup, n.15.

All Kerala Sabotage day was not a success to the expectation of the leaders. In Quilandy it failed due to the poor response of the people. Even though K. Narayanan and others had made adequate propaganda in Payyoli and Kunnathara the number of people responded was very few. K. Narayanan who agreed to lead a party on the night of 17<sup>th</sup> November 1942 to join Kunnathara party in setting fire to Panthalayani Railway station and Quilandy sub Registrar office failed because people did not turn up as promised and expected. So the project was ultimately abandoned. Even though the leaders had concrete plan of action, the lack of mobilising and failure to make them aware resulted in the partial failure of the actions. Moreover it seems that majority of the people were not adapted to the policy and frequency of violence chalked out by the leaders. Again it can be said that the ideas of Gandhi, non-violence and truth must have influenced them deeply than the cult of violence.

The secret of making bombs was, exposed by certain participants. The Special Branch Sub Inspector of Cannanore somehow got information about manufacture of bombs. The Special Branch Criminal Investigation Department, Madras, had also through their own sources collected information of the presence of

an organized gang of saboteurs<sup>66</sup>. The Sub Inspector of Police, Special Branch CID Madras traced one Chathoth Raman Nair who was a toll collector of Payyoli. Raman Nair cleverly managed to get this information from blacksmith Unnikutty whose personal problems forced him to disclose the incident. Unnikutty suffering from certain disease approached Nair for financial help for his treatment. Raman Nair insisted to know about the bomb manufacturing at Keezhariyur as an essential pre-condition for giving money to Unnikutty. Forced by circumstances Unnikutty narrated how he and his companions were engaged in making bombs. This was reported to Circle Inspector of police Quilandy and he arrested Koyappally Narayanan and was questioned. Narayanan was forced to give details of manufacturing bombs at Keezhariyur as well as Nedua and also the names of people who assisted him.

But conspiracy in Parappanangadi was unearthed quite accidentally. Muhammed Naha who was deputed at the secret meeting to be the leader of the sabotage operations in Eranad taluk, received his quota of country bombs, incendiary bombs and

---

66. G.O. No.2431 - Confidential Home Dept. 14<sup>th</sup> August, 1944. Tamilnadu Archives, Egmore

gelignite from Karyal Achuthan to be used on 17<sup>th</sup> November and thereafter. Some of the consignments of the explosives he distributed to other saboteurs of his taluk who had got directions to work under him and the rest were kept with him to be used by himself and his assistants. Two active workers of Parappanangadi area, Chekkutty and Naha practised the function of the dynamites under the pretext of catching fish. This was detected by one Kunhimammed and he reported the same to the police. Moreover the prominent person behind the bomb conspiracy Naha, used the bomb to take revenge upon his enemy P. Kasmi. He with the help of his friend placed two bombs and some dynamites in the loft of the shop of Kasmi. He did it in the night and informed the police<sup>67</sup>. Police conducted search in the shop of Kasmi on 25 January 1943 and confiscated the explosives. Moideen Bava who planted the bomb disclosed the secret and Muhammed Naha was arrested on 30 July 1943. He was arrested under Rule 129 of the Defence of India Rules for acting in a manner prejudicial to the maintenance of public order. The Government of Madras directed to detain him for a period of two months at sub jail Calicut<sup>68</sup>. When Police searched

---

67. Kurumayil Narayanan, n. 10

68. Public (General) Dept. order (MS) No. 2197, dt. 6.8.1943, Tamilnadu Archives, Egmore.

Achampat house they found out a manuscript copy in Malayalam containing the alleged last message of Gandhi and two copies of *Swathantra Bharatham* and certain explosives<sup>69</sup>. Further search was conducted and two incendiary bombs in a damaged condition were found out from the tanks in the compound of Achampat house, Parappanangadi<sup>70</sup>.

Police detected the relation between Parappanangadi incidents and Keezhariyur. The man who controlled the entire movement behind the curtain was K.B. Menon. Therefore police charged a case against K.B. Menon as first accused and 31 others. Just after these incidents K.B. Menon went underground. He escaped narrowly many times from the police cordon. While living underground he reached Konnanattu Taravad, and this was informed to the police by one of his relatives. There were certain legal objections to arrest Menon from there, as Pymkulam belonged to Cochin State. But one of his relations persuaded him to go to Shornur Bridge, which was the border of Cochin Princely State. The moment he crossed the bridge Sub Inspector of Police, Pappali took him into custody. Between 23<sup>rd</sup> July and 19<sup>th</sup> September 1943, most

---

69. Police Note - Fortnightly Report for the 1<sup>st</sup> half of August, 1943, Tamiinadu Archives, Egmore.

70. Parappanangadi is about 35 kms away from Kozhikode.

of the accused had been arrested. Thaikandy Pachar of Keezhariyur village was arrested on 11<sup>th</sup> of August and Vannankandi Achuthan Vaidyar on 15<sup>th</sup> August 1943 in Tikkodi village. They were interrogated in the light of the information on hand regarding the part they had played in the sabotage activities of Malabar since 4<sup>th</sup> August 1942. Both the accused have confessed their complicity in full. Pachar admitted that he was one of those who assisted in the manufacture of bombs in Keezhariyur village by arranging a vacant house and helped the manufacturers and assisted in the transport and obtained accused Unnikutty to do some technical work to facilitate the manufacture<sup>71</sup>. Vannankandi Achuthan Vaidyar admitted that he received two bombs for the purpose of sabotage acts and that he had got together a few local militant congress workers to set fire to government buildings at Payyoli, which fizzled out as the patrols near the buildings were too vigilant for them<sup>72</sup>.

V. Chamu and K. Prabhakaran were arrested on 6.8.43 and V.A. Kesavan Nair was arrested on 7.8.43<sup>73</sup>. On questioning, Chamu

---

71. *Histry of Freedom Movement*, Police note, Tamilnadu Archives, Egmore, p. 127.

72. *Ibid.*

73. Order No. (MS) 2347, dt, 18.8.43. Public (General Department) Tamilnadu Archives, Egmore.

admitted that he attended the secret party meetings held at Calicut for the purpose of committing acts of sabotage throughout Malabar. He was the person selected to be in charge of the activities in Palghat area. He had distributed the bombs and explosives to his lieutenants accordingly. The Central party at Calicut had also supplied him the necessary funds. Prabhakaran was the nephew of Chamu He was an intermediary between Chamu and central party at Calicut<sup>74</sup>.

Koyappally Narayanan Nair alias Karunakaran Nair of Moodadi and Karyal Achuthan of Pudiya Calicut were arrested on 27.7.43 and Unnikutty of Keezhariyur and Kurumayil Kelukutty of Keezhariyur were arrested on 23.7.43. On questioning Koyappally Narayanan and Unnikutty admitted that they manufactured the bombs at the instance of the congressmen<sup>75</sup>. The charge sheet was filed on, 21<sup>st</sup> October 1943 by Quilandy Police. Sub Divisional 1<sup>st</sup> class Magistrate A. Appu referred the case to the court of M.A.T. Coello, Sessions Judge of South Malabar. The case against the accused were criminal conspiracy under section 120 (B) I.P.C. read with section 435 and read with rule 35 of the Defence of India

---

74. Police Report. Fortnightly Report for the 1<sup>st</sup> half of August, 1943, Tamilnadu Archives, Egmore.

75. Fortnightly Report for the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of July, 1943.

Rules read with section of ordinance No. III of 1942 and also read with section 3, 4 and 5 of the explosive substances Act VI of 1908 and Section 7A and 7B of Ordinance No.III of 1943. 27 persons were arrested and produced before the court<sup>76</sup>.

The absconding accused were Raghava Kurup, Chekkutty M.A. Sadanandan, Kunhیرama Kidav and Mathai Manjuran. Some of them actively participated in sabotage activities while they were wanted in this case. M.A. Sadanandan went to Goa and actively participated in the freedom struggle there under the nickname 'Manpat' which was the short form of his surname "Mannampath"<sup>77</sup>. In Goa, he did not reveal his identity but served as teacher in the Modern High School. But the arrest of Ram Manohar Lohia on 19<sup>th</sup> June 1946 kindled the revolutionary spark in Sadanandan and prompted him to lead a huge procession in Panji against the Portuguese. He enticed the people to follow him in the protest march. Near the National Cine Theatre he was stopped and detained by the police. As he was not allowed to move ahead he squatted there on the road where he was assaulted and kicked by the police<sup>78</sup>. He lay down on the road and showed the moral

---

76. For more details see Kurup, n. 15.

77. *History of the freedom struggle of Goa, Daman, Diu*, Vol II, (Panji, 1985), p. 344.

78. *Ibid.*

strength of a true sathyagrahi. He was arrested and later he was released on conditions. But after his release he managed to reach Kerala. In his absence the military court sentenced him to six years rigorous imprisonment at Kalapagni and forfeiture of civic rights for 15 years<sup>79</sup>.

Another absconding prisoner Kunhirama Kidavu, the worthy son of Kelappaji indulged in demolishing the Feroke Railway Bridge. The aim of the activity was to prevent the movement of the Austrian soldiers<sup>80</sup>.

The hearing was started in the sessions Court on March 6, 1944. On behalf of the accused the famous Advocate K. Bhashyam appeared. He was an executive member of the Indian Civil liberties union<sup>81</sup>. He reached Calicut and appeared for K.B. Menon and also brought an amount collected from Madras to meet the other expenses of the case. Advocate Gopinath also reached Calicut from Madras to appear for the accused. In order to conduct the case, a defence committee was organised in Calicut under the secretaryship of A.K. Raja, the editor of *Mathrubhumi*. Bombay

---

79. *Ibid.*

80. Interview with M.A. Sadanandan, an absconded accused, in the Keezhariyur Bomb Case in his residence at Chalappuram, Kozhikode on 31<sup>st</sup> May, 1995.

81. K.B. Menon papers. File No 1/1, NMM&L, New Delhi, p. 447.

friends of K.B. Menon financially helped the defence committee. The Mayor of Bombay M.R. Masani sent an amount of Rs.600/- to the defence fund. The committee arranged the service of advocates K.G. Nair, K.T. Chandu Nambiar and P.Govinda Menon. Advocate Kunhirama Menon of Kozhikode who was a relative of K.B. Menon also appeared for the accused.

In the sessions court trial went on for months. The number of witnesses examined for the prosecution was 91 and 14 witnesses were, cross-examined for the defence. Many of the prosecution witnesses were active participants in the conspiracy. Certain prosecution witnesses like Samuel Aron, Dr. M.K. Menon and Advocate Parasurama Iyar never gave any evidence against the accused<sup>82</sup>. Interesting incidents relieved the monotony of the trial. One of the prosecution witnesses swooned in the witness box uttering, "Menon is a good man" and the hearing had to be postponed for about one hour<sup>83</sup>. All the accused were happy and they were proud of their action. When Menon was arrested and brought to the Sub Jail Calicut, other accused in this case who were

---

82. Perunna K.N. Nair. *Keralathile Congress Prasthanam* (Mal), (Trichur, 1965) p. 94.

83. Interview with C.V. Chathu Master, freedom fighter, in his residence at Badagara on 4<sup>th</sup> March, 1994.

already in the jail felt happy because Menon took initiative to look after the well being of his colleagues. Even police and jail staff respected Menon<sup>84</sup>. Advocate Bhashyam once remarked that the accused went to the court like in a marriage procession, from the Sub jail<sup>85</sup>. Once in the course of the trial, all the accused were marched to the court handcuffed through the crowded streets of Calicut. At that time Section 144 was in force throughout Malabar and as soon as the procession left the prison gate the prisoners started singing National songs and shouting revolutionary slogans. A huge crowd followed them and joined them in the chorus until they reached the huzur ground<sup>86</sup>.

The eminence of persons involved in the case and the number of accused and the nature of charges all make this the most sensational case in the History of freedom struggle in Malabar. There were Muslims, Hindus and a Christian among the accused. Upper class Hindus as well as lower caste Hindus participated in the conspiracy. Among the accused around six of them were graduates. The first accused K.B. Menon was a scholar who had

---

84. Kurumayil Narayanan, n. 10.

85. V.A. Kesavan Nair, *K.B. Menon: Oru Thulika Chithram, Mathrubhumi Weekly* 18<sup>th</sup> March, 1947.

86. N. Ramachandra Rao, n. 16, p. 123.

secured Ph.D. from University of Colorado, U.S.A. Poor illiterate peasants and labourers as well as landlords and merchants were also involved in the case. The assessors in the case who consisted of two Hindus and two Muslims proclaimed unanimous verdict of not guilty in respect of all the 27 accused.

The Sessions judge acquitted Menon, because of the clever arguments of the advocates. They proved that Menon was not available in Malabar while the sabotage activities took place. Those who are convicted appealed against their conviction to the Madras High court while the government appealed against the acquittal of the Bombay group and others. The case was taken by, Justice Buyers on December 11, 1944. After hearing the case the Judge declared the verdict on 5<sup>th</sup> January 1945, which concludes as follows: "In the result the appeal by the crown is allowed, the acquittal of accused 1, 2, 3, 4 and 21 is set aside and they are convicted of criminal conspiracy under Section 120 (B) read with sections 435 and 436 of the Indian Penal Code and rule 35 of the Defence of India Rules, for which they are liable to enhanced punishment under ordinance III of 1943. There is little to choose between the first four accused who undoubtedly left Bombay in order to take a prominent part in the local agitation and to organise the proclaim of violence. I accordingly sentence each of them to

undergo rigorous imprisonment for 10 years. The 21<sup>st</sup> accused is a local man who like many of his companions was led astray by the leader of the conspiracy. I accordingly sentence him to the lesser term of seven years rigorous imprisonment. The appeals against the convicts by the learned Sessions Judge are dismissed.”<sup>87</sup> The judge found Menon as the leader of the conspiracy and accused that he misled many others. The conspiracy was proved beyond all shadow of doubt and Menon was given 10 years rigorous imprisonment. Menon was in Calicut Sub Jail from the day of his arrest for 4 months. He was imprisoned at Tanjore for 8 months as a detinue prisoner and one month in Vellore. He was in Alipuram jail for 14 months<sup>88</sup>.

The August revolt was a mass movement in which men and women of all ages, all castes and creed and also all strata of society joined together and adopted various methods. Keezhariyur Bomb conspiracy was a heroic episode in the annals of the freedom movement of Malabar particularly led by the Socialists. The urge behind this conspiracy was only love of freedom. Eventhough they did not achieve their final goal it was a leap towards the freedom of

---

87. Government of Madras vs K.B. Menon and others in the High Court of Madras. Criminal Appeals Nos. 422 to 427, of 1944.

88. V.A. Kesavan Nair. n. 85.

the country. Though, Communists supported British government what little incidents occurred in Kerala during Quit India movement was solely under the guidance and leadership of the Socialists.

The end of the II World War sounded the death knell of the British Empire. The freedom fighters including CSP workers were released from the jail. The absence of Socialist leaders resulted in the decay of the CSP. However, an attempt was made to organize CSP in all India basis as well as in Kerala. It was as a part of this *Yuvakh Sangh* was formed incorporating socialist youth of different areas. In Malabar initiative was taken by K. Kunhirama Kurup at Chombala<sup>89</sup>. The Kunnumakkare Yuvakh Sangh which later developed as the Kurumbranadu Yuvakh Sangh has contributed much for the revival of Socialists in Malabar<sup>90</sup>. K. Paithal was the president of Kunnummakkara *Yuvakh Sangham*. K.B. Menon and P.M. Kunhiraman Nambiar gave directions for its organization. *Yuvakh Sangham* was formed in various parts of Kurumbranad under the leadership of K. Kunhirama Kurup. P.M. Kunhiraman Nambiar gave leadership to the formation of Akhila Malabar

---

89. Interview with Kunhirama Kurup, n. 21.

90. K.K. Raghavan Smaranika, (Vatakara, 2003), p. 9

Yuvajana Sangha at Cannanore.

The prohibition imposed upon CSP was removed in 1946. There upon party activists spread their activities in remote areas with vigour and vitality. An elaborate meeting was held at Kozhikode for the formation of an ad hoc committee under the leadership of K.B. Menon. P.M. Kunhiraman Nambiar, Arangil Sreedharan and K. Kunhirama Kurup actively participated in this attempt. At this meeting an ad hoc committee for the Kerala unit of CSP was formed with P.M. Kunhiraman Nambiar as chairman<sup>91</sup>. K.B. Menon, R.M. Manakkalath and N. Sreekandan Nair were other members of the committee. After the formation of Malabar ad-hoc committee, the *Yuvakh Sangha* under the leadership of K. Kunhirama Kurup decided to merge with CSP. Around this time a Socialist group started functioning at Vatakara under the leadership of K.K. Raghavan<sup>92</sup>.

During this period, Jayaprakash Narayan visited Malabar and inspired the socialists. Number of study classes and rallies were conducted to invigorate the party workers. K.B. Menon was appointed as one of the Joint Secretaries of the All India CSP<sup>93</sup>. In

---

91. *Ibid.*, Pp. 8-10.

92. *Ibid.*

93. Kunhirama Kurup, n. 21.

Cochin as well as in Travancore, attempts were made to organize Congress Socialists under the leadership of Jubba Ramakrishna Pillai, K.B. Menon, R.M. Manakkalath and C.K. Parameswaran.

# IDEOLOGUES OF SOCIALISM

Sasi Kumar.P. "The role of non-communist left movement in Kerala politics from 1942 to 1977" Thesis. Department of History, University of Calicut, 2005



CHAPTER V

**IDEOLOGUES OF  
SOCIALISM**

## CHAPTER V

# IDEOLOGUES OF SOCIALISM

Jayaprakash was the greatest exponent of democratic socialism in India<sup>1</sup>. In the thirties he had favoured the United Popular Front with the Communists, but in March 1940, he denounced the popular front with them and since then he has been one of the foremost critics of the authoritarian regimentation of Russian Communism. His book, *'Why Socialism'*, was read widely by the Socialist aspirants of Kerala<sup>2</sup>. In the initial stage he was a Communist and praised Karl Marx. He hailed Joseph Stalin as the 'world leader of the present Socialist movement'. He even defended the violence in Russian politics as being 'political violence' for creating a new social order. To him, amidst capitalist paralysis and contradictions Russia was a symbol of steady economic success. But his close association with Gandhi during the course of freedom struggle changed his attitude and he became an apostle of democratic socialism. But the majority of the CSP leaders of Kerala

---

1. Bimal Prasad (Ed.). *Jayaprakash Narayan: Selected Works* (Vol. II), (1936-39), (New Delhi, 2001).

2. P. Narayanan Nair. *Aranoottandilude* (Mal), (Kottayam, 1973), p. 155.

were Communists. In the Pinarayi conference of 1939 the CSP of Kerala transformed itself into Communist party<sup>3</sup>. The remaining few, adhered to the policy of democratic socialism, followed Jayaprakash Narayan in their attempt to materialise their dream of attaining socialism<sup>4</sup>.

**K. B. MENON AND CIVIL LIBERTIES:** K.B. Menon was one of the stalwarts of democratic socialism and champion of Civil Liberties in Kerala. He had associations with Jayaprakash while he was a student in the United States<sup>5</sup>. Menon was an intellectual giant. He had knowledge in several subjects. He had relation with many social organisations and he was popular among the students. Frederick A. Bushee, Dean of the College of Economics, University of Colorado, praised his intellectual calibre and social adaptability in the following words: "We have found Mr. Menon to be an exceptionally intelligent young man with wide intellectual interests. He is an enthusiastic student of Social Science and has been a welcome addition to the intellectual life of our University. He has been a leader in a number of social organisations. The members of

---

3. N.E. Balaram. *Keralathile Communist Prasthanam* (Mal), (Trivandrum, 1973), p. 68.

4. Interview with K. Kunhirama Kurup, Veteran socialist leader and freedom fighter, at Vatakara on 22<sup>nd</sup> June, 1994.

5. Interview with C.I. Gopinath (Malayala Manorama), a friend of Menon, at Press Club, Kozhikode on 10<sup>th</sup> January, 1995.

the faculty of Economics department recommended Mr. Menon highly both for his personal and for his scholastic qualities"<sup>6</sup>. Extensive travel and contact with people enriched his knowledge and widened his outlook. Even when he was a student in America, he had noble ideas regarding Indian Nationalism. The remark made by Dr. Ben M. Cherrington, Director, Social Science Foundation, University of Denver, clearly shows his nationalist spirit. According to Dr. Ben, "Dr. K.B. Menon has lectured before our International seminars on several occasions during the past college year, 1929-30. We have found him to be a careful student of Indian History, both ancient and modern. He has an excellent grasp of present social and political problems in India, and while frankly holding the nationalist point of view, presents their cause with unusual restraint and moderation. We have considered ourselves fortunate in being able to secure one, who can so ably represent the point of view of the Indian Nationalist"<sup>7</sup>.

Menon had served as Professor in the University of California, Berkeley. He was also a visiting Professor of Harvard University. Menon had close relation with Jayaprakash who was in

---

6. K.B. Menon papers, Misc/File No. 3/3, NMM&L, New Delhi, p. 44.

7. *Ibid.*, p. 46.

America at that time. Menon's political career started from 1925 with his membership of the Ghadar party, which championed the Indian independence movement in America. A Journal, *Independent India* was edited by him during that period. An organisation called 'Sons of India' to help the national movement in India was also started. Menon believed that in the modern age of International inter-dependence and worldwide citizenship, every major agitation in any country has to obtain the sympathy and support of other countries of the world. He worked in America to gain the sympathy and support of the Americans for the struggle for Indian independence. He propagated the message of his country especially among the elite class students and professors of the University.

India's freedom struggle once again became turbulent with the beginning of civil disobedience movement. Gandhi felt that the involvement of all the Indians who were living outside India was very much necessary in the freedom struggle. So he appealed to all the eminent Indians living abroad to come back and participate in the national struggle for freedom. Responding to this call Menon returned to India in 1936. Jayaprakash Narayan introduced Menon

to Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru in 1937<sup>8</sup>. Nehru saw an eminent economist and a leader in Menon. Nehru invited Menon to participate in the Amritsar Congress meeting. After this meeting Menon became a full time politician. He became the Secretary of the Civil Liberties Union founded by Nehru<sup>9</sup>. The aim of the union was to solace the victims of atrocities of the government against the freedom fighters and make the civilians aware of their rights<sup>10</sup>. Jawaharlal Nehru guided and controlled the activities of the Civil Liberties Union. He showed much interest in the work of the organisation even at the micro level and was ready to correct Menon and help him<sup>11</sup>. Menon engaged in the activities of the Civil Liberties Union and attracted many service minded youngsters to the organisation. He stood for democracy and public rights and criticised the newly formed Congress government under the Act of 1935<sup>12</sup>.

The visit of Menon to Wardha Ashram was a turning point in his life. Menon described his historic meet with Gandhi, "When I reached there Gandhiji was busy receiving people from various

---

8. K.B. Menon papers, File No. 1/1, NMM&L, New Delhi, p. 98.

9. K.B. Menon papers, File No. 6/2, NMM&L, New Delhi, p. 57.

10. K.B. Menon papers, File No.11/1, *Civil Liberties under popular Governments* - Reprinted from the *Servant of India*, dt. 25<sup>th</sup> May and 1<sup>st</sup> June, 1939.

11. K.B. Menon papers, n. 8, p. 9

12. K.B. Menon papers, n. 10.

walks of life. He enquired their problems in a few sentences, explained to them, and within few minutes they were sent satisfied. Finally my turn came and at the first sight Gandhiji broke the silence 'Mr. Menon this is for you' – he handed over an orange to me. With that I felt Gandhi gave me some responsibility and I accepted the same".<sup>13</sup> Next day Gandhi entrusted Menon the responsibility of the financial matters of the ashram. From 1937 to 1942 he lived with Gandhi. He was influenced by the Gandhian ideals and way of life. He even changed his dress pattern and food<sup>14</sup>. After he met Gandhi he avoided coffee, tea and cigarettes and preferred vegetables and fruits. Menon abandoned his western dress and life style and fully adopted the simple way of life in the ashram. He continued his simple lifestyle even after he became a member of the Indian Parliament<sup>15</sup>.

Menon was a Liberal who stood for the fundamental rights and liberty of the people. He wrote: "Liberty is the life blood of human progress and development. Civil Liberties particularly freedom of thought and expression are the means by which

---

13. C.I. Gopinath, n. 5.

14. Interview with Balachandra Menon, relative of K.B. Menon, in his residence at Pymkulam on 28<sup>th</sup> June, 1995.

15. Interview with K.V. Surendranath, a relative of Menon, at P.V.S. College for Women, Kozhikode on 19<sup>th</sup> May 1995.

mankind climbed from barbarism to civilization”<sup>16</sup>. Liberalism is a part of the philosophy of capitalism. It preaches democracy and government by the people. It attacks all privileges as unjust and proclaims the principles of individual liberty, equal rights and free competition<sup>17</sup>. He was an upholder of personal liberties.

With the blooming of democratic system, in every stage there was an attempt to preserve individual liberty. In England the members of Parliament fought against monarchs to attain personal rights. The Magna Carta, the petition of rights and the bill of rights were landmarks in the history of Civil Liberties. The Americans fought for ‘Life, Liberty and pursuit of happiness’ while the French were inspired by the slogan Liberty, Equality and Fraternity. Menon highly appreciated western culture and admired their endeavour to protect human liberties. During his stay in America he had deep rooted association with many organisations and he imbibed liberal ideas. He was fascinated by American declaration of Independence. Menon writes, “The declaration of independence adopted on July 4, 1774 was not a mere announcement of the birth of a new nation, it set forth a philosophy of human freedom which was thence forth

---

16. K.B. Menon papers, n. 10.

17. *Ibid.*

to be a dynamic force in the entire world"<sup>18</sup>. The classic ideas of Voltaire, Rousseau and Montesquieu had a permanent influence on him. Thus the ideas of liberty and equality were very dear to him and he pledged to fight against authoritarian excesses. The growth and development of imperialism proved a threat to civil liberties. The English, who succeeded in dominating India, denied civil liberties and exploited them. It was in this context that Nehru invited him to organise the work of Civil Liberties Union, and Menon accepted it.

Once Menon accepted the Secretary ship of the organisation he devoted his entire time and energy for the activities of the Union. He managed to organise branches of Civil Liberties Union in different parts of the country. The central office of the Indian Civil Liberties Union collected information from various parts of the country. They published pamphlets and statements incorporating all news connected with violation of Civil Liberties. These statements were given to the press for publicity. Menon had decided to tap the biggest source of publicity namely the Vernacular press<sup>19</sup>. He found that a section of the press was very

---

18. K.B. Menon papers, File No. 11/3, NMM&L, New Delhi, p. 11.

19. K.B. Menon papers, n. 8, p. 61

responsive. He decided to translate the statements in different languages and cyclostyle and distribute them among the vernacular press. Many young men came forward to translate the statement in different languages. It showed the eagerness and dedication of Menon to make the people aware of those atrocities against their basic rights. But Nehru did not find this practical and so he instructed Menon: "It will be simpler for you to issue your communiques to the press in English; it is difficult for you to get them translated in to a number of Indian languages. The newspapers themselves usually get them translated. This saves us the trouble."<sup>20</sup>

The Indian Civil Liberties Union was an independent association. The members of the association hailed from different parts of the country and from different walks of life. Rabindranath Tagore was selected as the President and Smt. Sarojini Naidu as the Chairman.<sup>21</sup> By 11<sup>th</sup> January 1938, the election to the Executive Committee of the union was conducted. The committee comprised of personalities from different walks of life. They included eminent Congress leaders like Nehru, Maulana Abdul Kalam Azad and

---

20. K.B. Menon papers, n. 8, p. 73.

21. *Ibid.*, p. 269.

Congress Socialist leaders like Jayaprakash Narayan. The committee included eminent educationalist like Dr. Zakir Hussain, eminent lawyers like K. Bhashyam and K.F. Nariman.

The National council of Civil Liberties and the India League had decided to arrange a conference on 17<sup>th</sup> October 1937 at London<sup>22</sup>. The Chairman of the India League at that period was the famous philosopher Bertrand Russell. The theme of the conference was "Civil Liberties in India". Menon wrote to a number of Indian leaders and obtained their messages to the conference. He obtained messages from Mahatma Gandhi, Rabindranath Tagore, Sarojini Naidu, Jawaharlal Nehru and Subhas Chandra Bose.<sup>23</sup> The stalwarts of Indian Freedom Movement considered this meeting a good opportunity to make aware of the Liberals all over the world the position of Indian Civil Liberties and sought their help in redressing atrocities. Menon prepared a manifesto and circulated it among many liberals and leaders and requested them to sign the manifesto. This manifesto pictured the pathetic plight of Indian Civil Liberties. The manifesto says, "Under the rusty regulations of 1818 and the Criminal law amendment acts of Bengal, Assam, Punjab and

---

22. K.B. Menon papers, n. 8, p. 397.

23. *Ibid.* p. 45.

Frontier province and other provinces, more than 2500 citizens including some women were still in custody since 1930 without any trial whatsoever".<sup>24</sup>

During this period government banned CPI and the workers were persecuted. The production and possession of Communist literature was declared illegal and seditious. The government seized Leftist literature including those imported from abroad. Any person possessing such literature was convicted to long-term imprisonment. Several students and youth organisations were banned since 1932. Even though Menon was anti-communist he raised his voice against the suppressive measures taken by the government against the Communists. To him it was only an example of denial of civil liberty to a human being. He gave adequate propaganda to the oppressive inhuman measures of the government against Communist through his manifesto of Indian Civil Liberties Union.

Menon concluded his manifesto on civil liberties inviting the co-operation and help of liberals all over the world. He stated, "The Indian Civil Liberties Union earnestly hopes that while the struggle of the Indian people for their elementary rights and liberties has to

---

24. K.B. Menon papers, n. 8, p. 175.

be fought out by themselves – the heartfelt sympathy of enlightened and freedom loving men and women all over the world will be with the Indian people in the difficult uphill task which faces them”<sup>25</sup>.

Freedom of press was another idea, which was very dear to Menon. He was highly interested in upholding the right of the press. He had published a brochure with 52 pages entitled '*The Press Laws of India*'. He goes back into history of the press legislation in India and traces its development in each stage. The Indian Press (Emergency powers) Act was passed. The government clarified its position that there were “the unhappy prevalence and the serious extension of terrorist crimes”<sup>26</sup>. This claim was immediately refuted by, the Journalist Association of India. They declared that the bill though intended to deal with murder it would indiscriminately be applied to curtail the legitimate freedom of the press<sup>27</sup>.

The new Act was strictly enforced and on the basis of this Act, an amount of two and a half lakhs rupees was demanded as security from 166 newspapers within a period of 5 years. Menon criticised the Act and declared that it was unfair to demand a security when a newspaper apply for registration. The new press

---

25. K.B. Menon papers, n. 8, p. 179.

26. K.B. Menon, *The Press Laws of India*, (Bombay, 1937), p. 20.

27. *Ibid.*

should be asked to furnish security only if and when it was guilty of an offence. Secondly, he accused that it armed the executive with unbridled powers. Thirdly, the security demanded was in every case, excessive especially when the press involved was small. He also criticised the provisions regarding the right of appeal to the High Court. In concluding his brochure he stated, "Until and unless journalists are relieved from these choking restraints imposed by a cruel Press Act, they will not be able to continue to contribute their legitimate quota to national re-construction in future."<sup>28</sup>

Lord Linlithgow had decided to enforce the Act of 1935 earnestly and appealed to the Indians to take advantage of the Act and to work for all it was worth. In July 1937 the working committee resolved that Congressmen should be permitted to accept office. Thus Congress ministries were formed in Madras, Bombay, The Central Provinces, Bihar, Orissa and the united provinces. Shortly after in North West frontiers and in Orissa Congress ministries were formed<sup>29</sup>. These ministries were formed with a view to combating the new act on the one hand and of prosecuting the constructive programme on the other.<sup>30</sup> The

---

28. K.B. Menon, n. 26, p. 52.

29. V.P. Menon, *The Transfer of Power in India*. (New Delhi, Reprint, 1979), p. 56.

30. Pattabi Sita Ramayya, *History of Indian National Congress*, Vol. I. (New Delhi, 1969), p. 51.

Congress ministries, which assumed office in Eight provinces continued in office till October 1939.<sup>31</sup>

The acceptance of ministerial office by Congressmen brought about a rapid change in all these provinces. In the past, encroachments on civil liberties had been of various kinds. The Congress government could rectify many of them. It seemed as if a heavy burden had been taken away and people in towns and villages alike breathed more freely. They felt to some extent as if they had awoken up from a nightmare.<sup>32</sup> One of the brightest spots in the record of the Congress ministries during 37-39 was the visible massive extension of Civil Liberties.<sup>33</sup> The work in the council and ministries could also be used to build up self-confidence among the people and acquire prestige for the Congress and the National movement.<sup>34</sup> The extension of civil liberties in provinces gave stimulus to freedom fighters to organise students, trade unions and peasants even in rural areas.<sup>35</sup>

However the stalwart of civil liberty, Menon was not satisfied

---

31. V.P. Menon. n. 29. p. 58.

32. K.B. Menon papers, n. 8, p. 401.

33. Bipan Chandra, *Indian National Movement-Long Term Dynamics*, (New Delhi, Reprint, 1993), p. 10

34. *Ibid.* p. 44.

35. Interview with M. Kumaran, Ex-MLA and CPI leader, in his residence at Vatakara on 23<sup>rd</sup> June, 1993.

with the work of Congress ministries. He stated repression and suppression of civil liberties continued unchecked in Bengal. Hundreds of organisations were banned in the districts of Midnapur and Chittagong. Large numbers of detainees were kept in concentration camps without trial and unconvicted.<sup>36</sup> Menon criticised the government under the auspices of the Congress. He accused that even though Congress ministries were in power in several provinces there were numerous hindrances on the ordinary rights of citizenship. The new provincial government could not go, as far as they wanted on account of the difficulties raised by the Governors and Governor General. The permanent civil service also became a hindrance to the activities of the State Government. The Indian states, outside the British India also had suppressed Civil Liberties. Even in Travancore and Mysore, which were supposed to be the most advanced states, the question of Civil Liberty was a joke<sup>37</sup>. In this background he travelled not only in Malabar but also in Travancore and Cochin to spread the ideas of equality and democracy. He even went to Travancore by breaking the

---

36. K.B. Menon papers. n. 8, p. 403

37. *Ibid.*

prohibiting orders, with Asoka Mehta and R.M. Manakkalath<sup>38</sup> as the President of the Travancore Relief Committee appointed by the CSP.

Indian Civil Liberties union strained hard to uphold the right of the people of India. Menon being the secretary devoted his entire time and energy to focus on the cruelty of the British shown towards the Indians. He had given attention to individual cases like that of Khan Abdul Gafar Khan and Mr. Horniman. He brought out these issues to the notice of not only Indian Liberals but to the world conscience. He believed not in conflict but in co-operation. He even tried to exploit the Liberal sentiments of English royal officers. In many of the meetings of the Civil Liberties Union they were invited. Even Sir Strafford Cripps was invited in a meeting held under the auspices of Indian Civil Liberties Union. Menon succeeded in getting the co-operation even from his opponents as well as from his European administrators.

The efforts of the Indian Civil Liberties Union did not touch the heart of the imperialists, but it created awareness among the people. Gandhi actively prepared the people for struggle and patiently waited for their spirit to arise. The tempo of the movement

---

38. ROC No. 1872/46/CS - State Archives, Trivandrum, p. 152.

was slowly and gradually built up to correspond with the rising tempo of the people.<sup>39</sup> When Gandhi started the Quit India Movement, Menon went to Malabar and led the movement.<sup>40</sup> He set aside rigid Gandhian principles and indulged in sabotage activities in Malabar.<sup>41</sup> Even then he was very much particular that no harm should be done to human life and the exhortation of Gandhi was interpreted in such a way.<sup>42</sup> The third phase in his life started with his departure from the Congress in the company of Jayaprakash Narayan.

Menon took up the responsibility of organising the Socialist party of South India. During this period he stayed in Madras. The towering personality of Menon attracted many Keralites of Madras especially young students from Medical, Engineering and Law colleges, not only to him but also to the Socialist ideology.<sup>43</sup> Menon actively participated in organising the party especially among the labourers and students. Menon busily engaged in connection with the arrangements for the Socialist conference scheduled to take

---

39. Bipan Chandra, n. 33, p. 10

40. Interview with Kurumayil Narayanan, 11<sup>th</sup> accused in Keezhariyur Bomb Case, in his residence at Malappuram on 8<sup>th</sup> October, 1995.

41. K.K.N. Kurup, *Quit India Samaram Keralathil* (Mal.), Calicut, 1993, p. 64.

42. See Appendix II. *Swathantra Bharatham* (Vol. 14), 1943.

43. C. I. Gopinath, n. 5.

place in Madras in April 1950.<sup>44</sup> A big pandal was put up to accommodate around 5000 persons and named 'Meherally Nagar'. The conference was attended by leaders from all over India including, Jayaprakash and Asoka Metha. A five point organizational programme was drawn and discussions took place. The meeting decided to 1) evolve a comprehensive philosophy of Democratic Socialism, 2) to launch a campaign of education to raise membership through literature, journals etc., 3) to activate the membership of the party, 4) to create a network of mass organisation and, 5) to enroll a million party members.<sup>45</sup> The meeting denounced Communist terrorism.

In Malabar Socialists continued to exploit the food situation and soaring prices for criticising the government. K.B. Menon met local party workers and formulated plans to intensify activity on the Kisan front by organising Jathas in different centres and leading it to Kozhikode.<sup>46</sup> Menon also initiated to organise the Rashtra Sevadal with the aim of propagating the party ideals and advised the members of the Dal to enlist the co-operation of the youth of the

---

44. Fortnightly report for the 1<sup>st</sup> half of April, 1950, Tamilnadu Archives, Egmore, p. 29.

45. Fortnightly for first half of July, 1950, Tamilnadu Archives, Egmore, p. 89.

46. Fortnightly for the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of September, 1950. Tamilnadu Archives, Egmore, p. 129.

country for building up the party.<sup>47</sup> In short, Menon was very active in building up the Socialist party organisation during this period.

In 1952 the first public election after independence was conducted. The Socialist party fielded its own candidates in almost all constituencies. Menon led the election propaganda and even Jayaprakash Narayan reached Calicut and participated in the election campaign. But in Malabar, Socialists won only 4 seats. Menon was elected from Trithala Assembly Constituency.<sup>48</sup> As a member of Madras Legislative council he actively tried to solve the problems of the people. It was during this period that Malabar Tenancy act was passed. Many of the clauses were against the interest of the peasants.<sup>49</sup> Therefore under the leadership of Kelappan an agitation was started with the aim of changing some clauses of the Tenancy Act. Menon was in the forefront of the agitation and influenced Rajagopalachari and amended the anti-peasant clauses of the Act.<sup>50</sup> In the 'Muthukad agitation' also Menon played a prominent role, and he influenced the Madras

---

47. Fortnightly for the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of December, 1953. Tamilnadu Archives, Egmore, p. 379.

48. K.B. Menon papers, File No. 11/6, NMM&L, New Delhi, p. 15.

49. Fortnightly Report for the 1<sup>st</sup> half of January, 1953, Tamilnadu Archives, p. 276

50. C.P. Sivadasan (Ed.), *Karmayogiyaya Kunhirama Kurup*, (Orkkatteri, 1991), p. 134.

government to settle the issue in favour of the peasants.<sup>51</sup>

The Praja Socialist party was formed as a result of the merger of Kisan Mazdoor Praja party and Socialist party. Menon was a member of the National Executive Committee of the new party. Menon initiated alliance with Muslim League, when all other parties stamped League as communal. The ideology of the Muslim League is basically to advance the cause of the Muslims in the country.<sup>52</sup> In politics, the policy of the League had been formulated with a view to promote the sectional interests of the Muslims and for this purpose it had become either anti-communist or pro-communist and aligned with all important political parties and groups in the state at one time or the other as warranted by political expediency.<sup>53</sup>

Menon was quite aware of the nature of Muslim League. He stated, "In the two states of the South, Tamilnadu and Kerala, there are two well knit communal political parties actively functioning - Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam and the Muslim League".<sup>54</sup> However, he believed that our constitution has given the right to minorities' in

---

51. *Ibid.*, p. 122.

52. G. Gopakumar, *Regional Political Parties and State Politics*, (New Delhi, 1986), p. 50.

53. C. N. Somarajan, *Pressure groups and Democratic Politics*, (New Delhi, 1988), p. 51.

54. K. B. Menon papers, n. 48.

order to protect their inherited culture and their inherited religion, so long as they do not conflict with the political interest of the Nation.<sup>55</sup> Even though, he was aware of the nature of the Muslim League he assumed that ordinarily and normally they do no violence to public conscience. Their constitutions are democratic. Their leaders are men held in high esteem, their performances are ostensibly above board. He assumed that Muslim League have built a small niche for themselves in the political life of the country. They cannot be easily dislodged by bluff and bluster. Those who believe that communalism fouls public life must therefore act with care and caution and understanding.<sup>56</sup> He formed alliance with Muslim League by which PSP candidates performed well in the election. K.B. Menon was elected from Badagara Parliamentary constituency defeating the Communist party candidate P.R. Nambiar.<sup>57</sup>

Menon was against the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat and did not recognise authoritarian method of work.<sup>58</sup> Moreover, he was against regimentation of any type of liberties of the people. He stood for democracy and socialism.

---

55. K.B. Menon, *Communalism and Politics*, Article No.4, in K.B. Menon papers, NMM&L, New Delhi.

56. *Ibid.*

57. C.P. Sivadasan (Ed.), n. 50, p. 120.

58. C. I. Gopinath, n. 5.

According to him democracy is a generic term. Democracy is not the creation or contribution of any country or culture or civilization. Democracy is in the blood of man. It has a biological basis. No man is like another of his kind. Here is the uniqueness of man which biologists call 'variability'.<sup>59</sup> According to them variability within the species increases with progress in evolution and that the highest variability in the individual contributes to the potentiality of the individual. It is man's desire to be himself, to be different from others of his species that finds reflection in the social and political institutions he builds up. Democracy is the only system that can cater to this uniqueness of man. Any other system will be unnatural and unsuited to his full expression and full growth.<sup>60</sup> The ideals of Democracy can be translated into reality only when society can provide opportunities for the individual to be physically fit, mentally alert and spiritually alive. Every child should be given a chance to be born well, to grow well, to think well, to act well and to die well. Poverty and starvation, illiteracy and ignorance should be removed and disease wiped out.<sup>61</sup>

---

59. K.B. Menon, *Democracy & Communalism*, Article No.3, in K.B. Menon Papers, NMM&L, New Delhi, p. 2.

60. *Ibid.*

61. K.B. Menon, *Political aspects of National integration*, Article No. 6 in K.B. Menon papers, NMM&L, New Delhi.

Menon had deep rooted resentment to the Communist ideology, which regiments human liberty. He believed that the Communist party in Kerala was formed by treacherous means.<sup>62</sup> Menon remarked that the Communists obstructed the growth of democratic elements and prevented the freedom struggle of the people.<sup>63</sup> He accused communists as anti-nationalists who danced according to the tune of Russia.<sup>64</sup> The ideological differences and the accumulated aversion made Menon against the first Communist ministry. In a speech he stated that the Communist party came to power exploiting the moral rage and despair of the common people who were oppressed by so many issues, which remained unsolved, till then by the previous government. But they had only 35% of the electorate. Therefore it is clear that the claim of the communist that they are ruling with the mandate of the people is baseless.<sup>65</sup>

Within few months of the Communist rule, the opposition party levelled a number of allegations against the government. There were many specific grievances against the Communist government about corruption, favouritism, soaring unemployment

---

62. K.B. Menon papers, File No. 11, Speeches and articles. NMM&L, New Delhi, p. 2.

63. *Ibid.*, p. 5.

64. *Ibid.*

65. C.P. Sivadasan (Ed.), n. 50, p. 5.

and rising food prices. The PSP annual conference on 4<sup>th</sup> May, 1959 held at Kollam declared crusade against the government.<sup>66</sup> But Menon plunged into the agitation as he stated that, "it was not to redress these grievances, but it was directed against the insecurity of life of person and property that the Communist government had deliberately fostered to demoralise the people and make its ascendancy unchallenged".<sup>67</sup> Menon submitted a statement to the speaker of Lok Sabha on the breakdown of the constitution and rule of law in Kerala. He produced number of evidences to show interference in the work of the courts not only by executives but also by the members of the Communist party.<sup>68</sup> He condemned that government interfered with police and administration to enable the party members to terrorise the people. He put forward concrete evidences to show arrogance of governmental authority, of members of the Communist party and indoctrination in schools.<sup>69</sup> He requested to the Central Government, "to assure the security of life and property to the people of Kerala, which is the elementary and inalienable right of citizens of India in every part of our

---

66. Cherian Philip, *Kaal Noottandu* (Mal), (Kottayam, 1984), p. 69.

67. *Kerala Crusade against Communism*, A pictorial survey on Vimochana Samaram, (Kozhikode, 1959).

68. *Ibid.*

69. K.B. Menon, *Record of Communist Rule in Kerala* (Document submitted to the Lok Sabha) in K.B. Menon Papers, NMM&L, New Delhi.

country".<sup>70</sup>

The people of Kerala launched the liberation movement on 12<sup>th</sup> June 1959. For the first time the movement rallied together persons belonging to different religion, castes, classes and political groups in common defence of democratic rights and Liberties. Menon took part actively in the liberation struggle. He had travelled throughout Kerala to get direct first hand information from the people about Communist onslaught and termed his journey as fact-finding tour.<sup>71</sup> K. B. Menon with Amul Desai and Muslim League leaders like Syed Ummer Bafakhy Thangal led volunteers to picket Calicut collectorate. To bring out the atrocities of the communists, Menon published a pamphlet, which included a number of photos. The communist government fell down after 50 days of the liberation struggle. Menon remarked: "Legally I am guilty of committing an offence. But morally I have done my duty".<sup>72</sup> To him he fought in order to protect the basic liberties of the people.

Menon contested to Lok Sabha from the Badagara Parliamentary constituency in 1962 for the second time. But he was, defeated by a communist candidate. It might be a blow to the policy adopted by him

---

70. K.B. Menon papers, n. 10, p. 2.

71. Note. 67.

72. *Ibid.*

during the liberation struggle. Soon after his defeat in the election of 1962, his drift with the state PSP started. In the general election of 1957 PSP came out as the second party in India. But the election of 1962 pushed it down to the fourth rank. Menon asked the National executive of the party to resign, accepting the moral responsibility of the defeat. He himself tendered his resignation from the Executive of the party<sup>73</sup>. Moreover, Menon was not satisfied with the working of the Chief Minister Pattom Thanu Pillai. He questioned the corruption of the ministers who collected money in connection with the general election of 1962. He wrote: "Inefficiency and incompetence are writ large charges of corruption are being repeatedly hurled against them including the relations of the chief minister, in the Assembly and outside. Corruption is difficult to be proved but the stench of it sticks".<sup>74</sup> He was fed up with the politics in the Praja Socialist Party. So he swiftly drifted, disconnected all his affiliation with political parties and spent his time, spreading the ideas of democratic values under the Janadhipathya vedi. This organisation was formed by intellectuals, artists and literary figures, who had no connection with any political parties. Menon was an active member of this organisation from 1962 to

---

73. K.B. Menon papers. File No. I/2, NMM&L, New Delhi, p. 6.

74. K.B. Menon papers. File No. 11/2, NMM&L. New Delhi, p. 3.

1964.<sup>75</sup> Meanwhile he joined the Samyuktha Socialist Party and contested from Quilandy to the Kerala legislative Assembly. Although, he was elected in 1965 to the Assembly he was quite unhappy in the working of the socialist party. Therefore, after long and persistent thinking he resigned from the Socialist party and returned to the congress party.

In his last days Mr. Menon lived in Trithala and Kozhikode deserted by Socialist leaders but in the company of laymen. He passed away on 6<sup>th</sup> September 1967. On his death Kelappaji paid his last tribute in these few words: "He was a pure patriot, one who sacrificed everything for the country and an unselfish worker who believed totally in socialist principles".<sup>76</sup>

**K. KUNHIRAMA KURUP AND KISAN PANCHAYATH.** Hind Kisan Panchayath was an important association, which organised the peasants at an all India level and tried to spread socialist ideas. In 1949 an organisation namely Malabar Kisan Panchayath was formed in Malabar which served as a catalytic agent of Socialist party. K. Kunhirama Kurup who combined Gandhian philosophy with democratic Socialism was the champion of this organisation.<sup>77</sup>

---

75. M. Govindhan, *M. Govindhante Upanyasangal* (Mal), (Kottayam, 1986), p. 545.

76. *Mathrubhumi*, 7<sup>th</sup> August, 1967.

77. *K. Kunhirama Kurup Smaranika* (Mal.), (Orkattery, 1998), p. 15.

He was born on 22<sup>nd</sup> August 1915 as the son of Chappan Adiyodi and Madhavi Amma in an orthodox family of Kunnummakkara in Badagara Taluk.<sup>78</sup> His father was a Sanskrit scholar and so in his childhood itself he mastered Bhagavad Gita. The ideology of Gita i.e., 'Karma' or action influenced him and he worked hard for the amelioration of the lot of the rank and file.

The political career of Kunhirama Kurup began with his participation in the activities of Indian National Congress. Kunhirama Kurup was attracted to Congress activity during the salt sathyagraha. The Jatha under the leadership of Kelappan, during the course of their journey to Payyannur passed through Vatakara.<sup>79</sup> It created awareness among the people of Kurumbranad about Congress activities and stimulated the national movement. Kunhirama Kurup was attracted to the Congress activities by Sankaravarma Raja of 'Edavalath Kovilakam' of Kurumbranad taluk. Raja was a Congress activist and he organised number of meetings which explained the aim of the Dandi march by Gandhi. Kurup attended such a meeting and being a school teacher Raja

---

78. C.P. Sivadas (Ed.), n. 50, p. 1.

79. Interview with C.V. Chathu Master in his residence at Vatakara on 4<sup>th</sup> March, 1994.

invited him to another meeting held at Devarkoil<sup>80</sup>. Congress sympathisers in large scale from Purameri to Thottilppalam participated in this meeting.<sup>81</sup> The convention discussed about the civil disobedience movement and its impact. The participants eagerly heard about Gandhian ideas like boycott of foreign cloths, importance of Khadi, prohibition, rural sanitation, ahimsa and the upliftment of Harijans.

This was a turning point in the life of Kurup. Then onwards he participated in number of meetings and absorbed new knowledge about Gandhi and other National leaders. He organised meetings near his village and explained Gandhian ideals to the people. Police noted these activities and they instructed the villagers not to give any help to Kurup.<sup>82</sup> These instructions made him more active and he shifted the venue of his activities to Orkkatteri.<sup>83</sup> It was a period when All India leaders of Congress were visiting different parts of the country with an aim to spread the message of freedom. In this connection the Congress president Rajendra Prasad visited Malabar. Being a prominent leader of

---

80. K. Kunhrama Kurup, *Kazhinha Arupathu Varshanga,1* (Orkkatery, 1993), Pp. 20-21.

81. Devarkoil, Purameri and Thottilppalam are in the eastern part of Kurumbranad taluk.

82. K. Kunhrama Kurup, n. 4.

83. Orkkatteri is 6 kms north-east of Vatakara.

Malabar Sankaravarma Raja went to Palghat to meet Rajendra Prasad. Kunhirama Kurup accompanied him to Palghat and got an opportunity to see Rajendra Prasad.<sup>84</sup> Moreover through this journey to Palghat he got an opportunity to see some prominent leaders of Malabar like Ramunni Menon and Govinda Menon. When Rajendra Prasad toured in the Kozhikode district a grand reception was given to him under the leadership of Kunhirama Kurup at Orkkatteri. Kurup welcomed Rajendra Prasad in Hindi which almost resembled North Indian style and Rajan Babu appreciated it.<sup>85</sup>

By this time Kurup became more aware of the ideologies. The concept of equality of human beings, rights and liberties of man and other Socialist ideas took firm root in his mind. The prominent Congress leader of Malabar during this period was Kelappan. He had declared crusade against caste and untouchability. Kelappan linked the concept of Swaraj with anti-caste and anti-untouchability ideas. According to him as long as caste disabilities existed there could be no swaraj as they kept the people divided.<sup>86</sup>

---

84. C.P. Sivadas (Ed.), n. 50, p. 64.

85. K. Kunhirama Kurup, n. 80, p. 68.

86. *Mathrubhumi Daily*, 20<sup>th</sup> May, 1931.

Kurup was closely observing the status of the lower class around him. He noted that some of the so called leaders of the untouchables did nothing for the welfare of the caste. Therefore he personally initiated sharing food with lower caste as well as moving in their company.<sup>87</sup> As a result of this, certain Nair landlords made him an outcaste. They rarely invited him to marriage and feasts. Even though such incidents occurred and some people declared him as an outcaste Kurup continued his social activities.

From 1935 onwards Congress Socialists got upper hand in the Congress organisation. They decided to organise the peasants, factory workers as well as school teachers. Congress decided to organise the Aided Primary School Teachers with a view to broad-base the national movement.<sup>88</sup> The primary schools in Malabar were mostly run by the private individual with the motive of making profit. All the schools received an amount yearly according to the grant in aid rules.<sup>89</sup> The teachers working in such grant in aid schools were paid low salaries. An untrained teacher was given only seven rupees per month. Even this amount was not regularly

---

87. Kunhirama Kurup, n. 80, p. 46.

88. *Mathrubhumi weekly*, 26<sup>th</sup> October, 1936.

89. Interview with T.C. Kunhiraman Master, accused in Onchiyam Firing case, in his residence at Onchiyam on 18<sup>th</sup> October, 2003.

paid. Teachers made no complaints because there was no system of enquiry and the petitioner was victimised.<sup>90</sup> In short, condition of a school teacher was very pathetic.<sup>91</sup>

The managers of the schools were spending the amount according to their will. They were not bound to explain what they did with the grant received. Teachers were not given appointment orders and were dismissed without prior notice. Those teachers who underwent training were given better service conditions. But two years of teaching experience was required for a teacher to be selected for training. After completing the training he had to put in eighteen months of service as a teacher and get a verification certificate from the Inspector. If he failed to get such verification within three years he was regarded as an untrained teacher. The service condition of such teachers was very miserable.<sup>92</sup>

Attempts were made to form teachers union since 1931. But it was only by 1934 that regular teachers union activities started. An aided school teachers union was formed in Kalliassery in 1934. The branches of teachers union were formed in Kottayam

---

90. Interview with C.C. Nair, Teachers' Organisation leader, at Govt. College, Madappally on 15<sup>th</sup> August, 1996.

91. *Pravaham*, Vol. 6, 22<sup>nd</sup> July, 1951.

92. P.R. Nambiar, *Keralathile Adyapaka Prasthanam*, (Mal.), (Trivandrum, 1982), p. 85

Kurumbranadu and Valluvanadu Taluks. There were around hundred members in the Kurumbranadu Teacher's Union.<sup>93</sup> Kunhrama Kurup was selected as the Secretary of the Chombala branch of the organisation which included the Teachers of Azhiyur, Kunnummakkara, Uralungal, Onchiyam and Eramala.<sup>94</sup> Under the banner of the union teachers raised the demand for regular payment of salary as well as job security.<sup>95</sup> The second annual conference of the Union passed a resolution demanding the raising of the aided school teachers pay equal to that of the local board teachers pay. When the salary of the local board teachers were raised the aided school teachers demanded a proportionate hike in the salary.<sup>96</sup> The work of Kunhrama Kurup as a member of the teachers union enabled him to contact more people. That broadened his social base and it allowed him to conduct the Congress activities more vigorously. Kunhrama Kurup organised Jathas and worked for the success of the Congress candidates during the election to the provincial council in 1937.

Kunhrama Kurup was selected as the secretary of the

---

93. T.C. Kunhiraman Master, n. 89.

94. C.P. Sivadas (Ed.), n. 130.

95. C.C. Nair, n. 90.

96. *Mathrubhumi Daily*, 3<sup>rd</sup> May, 1937.

National Congress of Kurumbranad taluk. It was a time when the Communists were trying to impose their ideas among the Congress Socialists. As a result majority of the Congress Socialist leaders and followers were transformed into the Communist party in the Pinarayi conference. But Kurup remained in the Congress as an ardent disciple of Gandhi. He attempted to imbibe the political style of Gandhi as well as Kelappan and tried to extend his influence among the people. Kurup had studied Hindi with passion and obtained the degree 'Visarad'. He received the certificate from Mahatma Gandhi in the meeting organised near Mahe Puthalath temple.<sup>97</sup> Another area where Kurup showed interest was in the field of propagation of Khadi. Gandhi considered Khadi as a weapon to fight against imperialism. The poor villagers in and around Orkkatteri and Eramala were suffering from poverty. Most of them depended on agriculture for their existence. The spread of Khadi created an opportunity for the poor people to work. That allowed the villagers to raise an extra income from Khadi work. Again Khadi was a symbol of national unity and created sentiment

---

97. Interview with Mangalatt Raghavan in his residence at Chettamkunnu, Tellicherry, on 10<sup>th</sup> August, 2003. (Mangalatt participated in the Hindi class conducted by Kurup).

of Swadesi among the people.<sup>98</sup>

When Gandhi started individual Sathyagraha, Kurup decided to participate in the Sathyagraha. A sathyagrahi was expected to resign his job. Eventhough the family of Kurup solely depended upon his income as a teacher, he decided to become an individual sathyagrahi.<sup>99</sup> It was during this period that small pox spread in Kurumbranadu taluk. His father became a prey to this deadly disease, and presence of Kurup was very essential to nurse him. Therefore Kurup wrote a letter to Kelappan requesting him to give extension of time in joining the sathyagraha. Kelappan replied that nothing would come in the way of fulfilling the promise given to Gandhi. He directed Kurup to keep the promise and participate in the Sathyagraha at the earliest. By that time Kurup also became a prey to the deadly virus. Immediately after getting the letter from Kelappan, Kurup resigned his post of teacher. He started the individual satyagraha from 'Kacheri Maidan' near Orkkatteri on 22 February 1941. He decided to walk up to Madras if not arrested, shouting slogans against war. He travelled for 10 days in different

---

98. Interview with Madhavan Kidavu in his residence at Chemenchery on 5<sup>th</sup> October, 1995.

99. Kunhirama Kurup, n. 4.

parts of Kozhikode district. After that, he entered the Eranadu taluk where he was arrested in Nilambur at the end of March 1941.<sup>100</sup> For two and a half months he was remanded in sub jails of Nilambur, Manjeri and Kondotty. He was put in prison for two months in Cannanore Central jail and four months in Alipuram jail.

The Quit India movement was mainly lead by the Congress Socialists, in Kerala as elsewhere. The news of the arrest of Gandhi and the events occurring in different parts of the country induced the congress workers of Kurumbranad taluk also. A meeting of prominent Congress Socialists was held on August 14<sup>th</sup> in the house of M. Krishnan at Vatakara. The participants in the meeting decided to organise the Jatha from Chombala to Kozhikode. The Jatha captain was Kunhیرama Kurup.<sup>101</sup> On their way to Kozhikode Kunhیرama Kurup and Damodaran Nair were arrested at Atholi. They were handcuffed and chained and brought to Kozhikode city as a warning to the people.<sup>102</sup> During this period sabotage activities were conducted by the people of Chombala. They put bombs in the culvert near Kunhippally and tried derailing and attempted to cut

---

100. Interview with Smt. Padmini, wife of Kunhیرama Kurup, at her residence at Kallamala, Chombala on 19<sup>th</sup> August, 2003

101. K. Kunhیرama Kurup, n. 80. p. 22.

102. Interview with K.P. Muhammed, freedom fighter, in his residence at Calicut on 7<sup>th</sup> June, 1995.

telephone wires.<sup>103</sup> Thus the activities of Kurup and his Socialist followers aroused national sentiment among the people of Kurumbranad taluk. He contributed much to spread socialist ideas to Kurumbranad taluk especially in Chombala, Vatakara and Orkkatteri.

At the end of the II World War the freedom fighters arrested during the Quit India movement were released. On their release the socialist leaders found that their party organisation had been completely shattered. They were embarrassed and did not know what to do. However attempts were made on an all India level to organise the socialists afresh. The first stage in this re-organisation was the formation of Yuvak Sanghas incorporating Socialist followers especially youth.<sup>104</sup> In this circumstance Kunhrama Kurup came forward with the formation of Kendra Yuvakh Sangha at Kunnumakkara incorporating young labours. An integral part of this youth organisation was a volunteer core. From Kunnumakkara the Yuvakh Sangha spread to different parts of Malabar. Kunhrama Kurup organised one day seminar of the Yuvakh Sangha at Orkkatteri and K.B. Menon inaugurated the

---

103. K.K.N. Kurup, n. 41, p. 64.

104. Smt. Padmini, n. 100.

seminar. In this meeting it was decided to merge the Yuvakh Sangha with the Socialist party. An office of the Socialist party was open in Orkkatteri and the socialist flag was hoisted. The socialist organisation gradually spread its roots to the peripheral areas of Orkkatteri within a short span. A unit of Hind Kisan Panchayath was formed in Malabar in 1949.<sup>105</sup>

The peasants were organised and committees were formed in various parts of Malabar. The Malabar Kisan Panchayat unfurled the flag of protest against the exploitation of peasants. The government of Madras presented the Malabar Tenancy Bill in the Madras Legislative Assembly which Kisan Panchayath branded as anti-peasant. They highlighted the pro-Jenmi attitude of the government and started agitations. In Malabar, the party carried on vigorous agitations and riots against the proposed amendment to the Malabar Tenancy Act. A jatha consisting of 14 volunteers toured the districts and several public meetings were held in the district to criticise the proposed legislation<sup>106</sup>. In the second stage a jatha started from Ramanthali in Payyannur and ended in Kozhikode. The Jatha captain was Kunhirama Kurup and other prominent

---

105. Kunhirama Kurup, n. 80, p. 115.

106. Fortnightly Report, for the 1<sup>st</sup> half of July, 1953, Tamilnadu Archives, Egmore, p. 276.

members were Sreekanda Poduval, P.R. Kurup, K.K. Abu and Thayatt Balan.<sup>107</sup> The government did not give any importance to this token strike against the Tenancy Act so that Kisan Panchayath started the last stage of the agitation. Members of the Kisan Panchayath gathered at Palghat and decided to move to Madras. They aimed to stage a procession in front of the Madras Legislative Assembly.<sup>108</sup> The leadership to this protest was given by Kelappan, K.B. Menon and Kunhirama Kurup as well as the Praja Socialist party members of the Madras Assembly. In the FNR for July 2<sup>nd</sup> half of 1953 it is stated that

“The Kisan Jatha from Malabar which was organised by the PSP to protest against the proposed amendments to the Malabar Tenancy Act arrived in Madras on the 15<sup>th</sup> July. The Jatha was led by Kelappan, M.P. Kelappan met Chief Minister on the 16<sup>th</sup> and presented a memorandum criticising the proposed legislation.”<sup>109</sup> The Chief Minister assured that the government is not intending to impose upon the people of Malabar a bill which is not beneficial to them. He also assured that Kisan leaders will be consulted during

---

107. *Pravaham*, Vol. 9, 12<sup>th</sup> August, 1951.

108. Interview with Kuttiyil Narayanan, a veteran socialist, in his residence at Vatakara on 5<sup>th</sup> April, 2005.

109. Fortnightly Report for the 1<sup>st</sup> half of August, 1953. Tamilnadu Archives, Egmore, p. 291.

the final enactment of the bill. Then the protest succeeded and that agitation was a landmark in the history of the peasants of Malabar.

Kunhirama Kurup was designated as 'MUTHUKAD SARDAR' after the success of Muthukad agitation.<sup>110</sup> Kuthali Nair was a Jenmi who owned a large estate namely Kuthali Estate. The village of Muthukad was a part of Kuthali Estate in which large number of people lived as tenants. As Kuthali Nair had no heirs, after his death the estate was confiscated by the Government. The government ordered the eviction of 32 householders from the Muthukad village.<sup>111</sup> In order to execute the order a strong police force was implemented. Kisan Panchayath of Perambra started an agitation against this eviction. The police arrested the agitators and the tenants were removed. The evicted families organised a Jatha which visited various parts of Kurumbranad and reached Kozhikode Collectorate and started Sathyagraha.<sup>112</sup> At this point a 'Samarasamithi' was organised with Kelappan as president and Kunhirama Kurup as secretary. With the intervention of the Socialist leaders government turned ready for conciliation. The

---

110. Smt. Padmini, n. 100.

111. *Samadarshi*, 7<sup>th</sup> June, 1956, p. 3.

112. C.P. Sivadas (Ed.), n. 50, p. 122.

revenue board member Sathyanthan visited Muthukad and gave a detailed report to the government. On the basis of the report government released an order to give back land to the tenants.<sup>113</sup> Therefore PSP called off the agitation against the eviction of tenants from Koothali Nair's estate.<sup>114</sup> This incident is a good example of the humanist approach of the Socialist towards the problems of the downtrodden people. During the course of this agitation the Socialists helped those evicted people with food and accommodation. This incident elevated Kurup as a beloved leader of the peasants of Malabar. Kurup also gave leadership in the peasant agitation of 'Kattampally' and Mundayan Parambu.<sup>115</sup> Kisan Panchayath succeeded in both these agitations and the rights of the peasants were established.

Kunhirama Kurup was elected as the Kozhikode district secretary of the socialist party. When the Samyuktha Socialist party was formed Kurup became the secretary of the State Committee. He played a prominent role in forming an anti-congress alliance during State Assembly Elections in 1967, among CPM, CPI, SSP and other

---

113. P.R. Kurup, *Ente Nadinte Katha Enteyum* (Mal), (Kottayam, 1985), p. 252.

114. Fortnightly Report for the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of July, 1955, p. 2.

115. P.R. Kurup, n. 113, p. 185.

minor parties. Representing the Samyuktha Socialist Party he signed the election manifesto as well as in the seat allocation agreement<sup>116</sup>. Samyuktha Socialist Party won 19 seats in this election. In the co-ordination committee of the left parties Kurup served as the joint secretary.

Split, merger and re-organisation were the salient features of the Socialist party in between 1967-1978. The basis of the split was not at all ideological. Being an idealist and a pure Gandhian, Kurup was so wounded by the fissiparous activities of the Socialists. He resigned from the party in 1973 and joined in the INC.<sup>117</sup> He actively participated in organising peasants and became the leader of State Karshaka Congress.

The contribution of Kurup in the field of co-operative movement is laudable. At present, number of co-operative societies are functioning in Vatakara and surrounding areas. The spirit behind Azhiyoor Service Co-op Bank, Edachery Service Co-operative Bank and Chombala Service o-op Bank was Kurup.<sup>118</sup> He also contributed much in the formation of *Vayanasalas* in the villages. These *Vayanasalas* became the centre of dissemination of

---

116. C.P. Sivadas, (Ed.), n. 50, p. 70.

117. Kunhirama Kurup, n. 80, p. 120.

118. Kuttiyil Narayanan, n. 108.

political ideas. It served as a venue for the meeting of peasants, workers and students. These *Vayanasalas* played an important role in liberating the peasants and in spreading political consciousness among the rural folk. Under the initiative of Kurup three *Vayanasalas* in the name of Mahatma were founded in the Eramala Panchayath.<sup>119</sup>

Kunhirama Kurup played his role in spreading socialist ideology in his capacity as a journalist. He was the editor and publisher of *Ahwanam* fortnightly published from Orkkatteri.<sup>120</sup> He was also the Managing Editor of 'Malayala Janatha' published from Tellicherry. Another newspaper '*Padayani*' was also published from Tellicherry under his guidance.<sup>121</sup> An assessment of the political life of Kurup reveals the very fact that he did not decorate either the post of Minister or MLA but was contended with party leadership. But, he was so humble to accept the post of the Panchayath president in Eramala. Kunhirama Kurup passed away on December 26, 1995. He will be remembered not as the state secretary of the Socialist party but as a true ideologist a humanist and a faithful disciple of Gandhi.

---

119. *Ibid.*

120. *Ahwanam*, 15<sup>th</sup> May, 1962.

121. Smt. Padmini. n. 100.

## PATTOM, A. THANU PILLAI

Pattom guided the destiny of Kerala for a period of two decades. More than an ideologist he was a political strategist. He was born to Varadayyan and Eswari Amma on 15<sup>th</sup> July 1885. He had his studies in local schools and in Maharajas College, Trivandrum. After completing his B.A he worked in the Trivandrum Model High School. Then he took B.L degree and practiced under Parameswaran Pillai at Vanchiyoor.<sup>122</sup>

The political career of Thanu Pillai started in 1921 when he was nominated as Municipal Councillor of Trivandrum. He was also a nominated member in the Sree Mulam Popular Assembly. It was the students' strike of 1921 which paved way for the entry of Thanu Pillai, into the political arena. In the election held in 1932 Thanu Pillai contested against Anna Chandi, a Christian lawyer and came out successful. In the assembly Thanu Pillai heavily leashed out on the abstentionists for making Nairs their main target of attack. On July 24<sup>th</sup> 1935 he asked in the assembly, "Are not the Nairs, are not the caste Hindus, the people of this land? Have they not got a right to live in this land? Is one section of the people to

---

122. For more details see S.P. Sen (Ed.), *Dictionary of National Biography*, Vol. III (Calcutta, 1974), p. 37.

suffer because another section carries a violent and unreasonable agitation".<sup>123</sup> He also pointed out that caste Hindus refrain from agitating because they don't wish to embarrass the government. He insisted that the government should take all sections of the community equally into their confidence. They should not allow one section to ventilate its grievances before them without giving opportunities to others. Government ought to consult the views of every community to make reforms in respect of the legislature. They should hear all sides and go into the matter dispassionately and arrive at an impartial decision.<sup>124</sup>

The Travancore State Congress was formed in 1938 and Thanu Pillai was elected as the first President. He spearheaded the struggle for responsible Government. A committee under Thanu Pillai was authorized to draft a memorandum to be submitted to the Maharaja requesting him to grant Responsible government in no time. Thanu Pillai decided to commence a tour on 7<sup>th</sup> March 1938 to explain objectives of the State Congress to the people and also to establish local committees through out the state.<sup>125</sup> The government

---

123. *Sri Mulam Popular Assembly Proceedings*, Vol. VI, No. 3. (24<sup>th</sup> July, 1935), p. 335.

124. *Ibid.*, p. 336.

125. *The Hindu*, 8<sup>th</sup> March, 1938, p. 12.

tried to prevent the meeting by ban order. On 30<sup>th</sup> May, 1938 a memorandum listing many demands was sent by registered post to Maharaja. But Diwan C.P. Ramaswami Iyer considered them as personal allegations against him.<sup>126</sup> As a result of the submission of the memorial Thanu Pillai had to face many difficulties. District Magistrate banned meeting and processions by the State Congress with renewed vigour. A number of loyalist communal organisations were formed under the instigation of C.P. Ramaswami Iyer with a view to suppress and overpower state Congress. Due to Government's policy of repression, disturbances in meetings and the assault on leaders by agents, the State Congress decided to launch a Civil Disobedience movement from 26<sup>th</sup> August 1938.<sup>127</sup> On that day Pillai inaugurated Civil Disobedience movement at a meeting held at the Shangumugam beach, and addressed the meeting in defiance of the ban order. As a result he was arrested and imprisoned.

The constitutional developments in British India had their impact on the Indian states. In the House of Commons Prime

---

126. D. Daniel, *Struggle for Responsible Government in Travancore 1938-47*, (Unpublished Ph.D thesis), Madurai Kamaraj University, 1978, p. 60.

127. *Ibid.*, Pp. 78-81.

Minister Clement Atlee announced the British Government's decision to effect the transfer of power to 'responsible Indian hands'. But Diwan Ramaswami Iyer announced that "Travancore would assume and maintain an independent status even after the transfer of power by the British Government and the lapse of Paramountcy".<sup>128</sup> Thanu Pillai opposed the independent Travancore of Ramaswami Iyer and he was able to win the support of the NSS and the Communists. He called upon the people to observe 13 June 1947 as 'Constituent Assembly Day' and appealed to them to hold meetings and pass resolutions to elect representatives to the constituent assembly immediately. The government reacted sharply which led to terrible scenes of violence at Thodupuzha, Pala and Trivandrum. However on 18<sup>th</sup> July 1947 the Maharaja issued a royal Proclamation creating an independent Travancore.<sup>129</sup>

The unchanging attitude of C.P. Ramaswami Iyer in the face of the changing political scene earned him enmity inside and outside Travancore. On 22 July 1947 the State Congress appointed Thanu Pillai as dictator to take immediate steps towards the

---

128. ER.D.Dis.268/1947, Govt Press Note on 11<sup>th</sup> June, 1947.

129. R. Ramakrishnan Nair, *Constitutional Experiments in Kerala*, (Trivandrum, 1964), pp. 22-23.

achievement of responsible Government.<sup>130</sup> On 25<sup>th</sup> July, an unidentified assailant made an attempt on the life of C.P. Ramaswami Iyer at the Swati Thirunal Musical Academy at Trivandrum. Following the incident Thanu Pillai and several other state Congress leaders were arrested. The incident brought out far reaching changes in the realm of independent Travancore. The Maharaja agreed on July 30 1947 to join the Indian Union and release all political prisoners. Travancore acceded to the Indian Union on 13<sup>th</sup> August 1947.<sup>131</sup> In the year 1948 election was held to the Travancore State Legislative Assembly on the basis of adult franchise and Pattom became the Prime Minister.

Thanu Pillai's first popular ministry aimed at providing political as well as economic freedom to all.<sup>132</sup> He made strenuous efforts to raise production of paddy by providing farmers with all facilities for intensive cultivation and making available forest land for cultivation. At the food conference in Delhi Thanu Pillai appealed to the Union Government to allot more rice at cheaper rates to Travancore.<sup>133</sup> Large quantities of organic and chemical manure were imported and distributed to the cultivators at

---

130. *Mathrubhumi Daily*, 23<sup>rd</sup> July, 1947.

131. *The Hindu*, 15<sup>th</sup> August, 1947.

132. *Travancore Information & Listner*, Vol. 9, No. 1, (September, 1948), p. 7.

133. *Travancore Information & Listner*, Vol. 8, No. 10, (June, 1948), Pp. 11-14.

subsidised rates. The Governments effort brought an additional 3063 acres of fallow land and 75000 acres of *Punja* land under cultivation.<sup>134</sup> The government instructed the state welfare department to visit the factories and maintain close contact with the workers and endeavour to promote their general well being. They induced the factory owners to provide the workers with sanitary facilities, medical aid, canteen etc. Age of superannuation was fixed at 55.<sup>135</sup> Another most beneficial and far reaching reform introduced by Thanu Pillai was prohibition. Six taluks in Travancore, bordering the district of Madras Presidency went dry from 17<sup>th</sup> August 1948.

Due to internal party conflicts Thanu Pillai resigned the Chief Ministership as well as from the Congress, and he joined the Socialist party in the year 1950. In the election to the Travancore-Cochin legislative assembly held in 1954 PSP came out victorious in 19 seats. Again Pattom was elected as the Chief Minister. This was a great achievement of Thanu Pillai which proved beyond doubt his stature as a full fledged politician. The second ministry remained in power from 17<sup>th</sup> March 1954 to 10<sup>th</sup> January 1955. However, within the few years in the helm of affairs Pattom initiated number of

---

134. *Travancore Administrative Report. 1947-48*, p. 50.

135. *Travancore Information & Listner*, n. 132, p. 33.

programmes with a view to ameliorate the condition of the down trodden people. The ministry give utmost importance to the land reforms. Party decided to protect the peasants from the clutches of the landlords as their first and foremost duty. Pattom endorsed a committee under Revenue Minister P.S. Nataraja Pillai to initiate this programme. At the outset the ministry took a decision to declare moratorium to the loans taken by farmers for one year. Also an order was sanctioned to reduce the price of the ration rice. Thus within few weeks of inception, Pattom government gave an indication that the government is for the people. The committee under the chairmanship of revenue minister made number of suggestions for land reforms: The government controlled the price of paddy - in the Congress ruling state it was high. In Travancore-Cochin the price of one para (A unit of measuring rice) of paddy decreased to 2 rupees from 4 rupees. In the state of Madras under the Congress rule it was 3 or 3/30 for para.<sup>136</sup> Government took measures to provide drinking water. With the help of machine government started digging bore well. Unemployment was another acute problem. Government decided to increase the economic

---

136. *Samadarshi*, 5<sup>th</sup> January, 1956.

power, for that the government planned an anti-soil erosion programme with an expenditure of Rs. 6 crores within six years.<sup>137</sup> Another programme was colonization programme by which 40 thousand acres of forest was utilized to rehabilitate more than 5000 families. Over and above this it was proposed to give houses as well as agricultural implements. Minimum Wages Act was implemented to 9 industries including coir and cashew nuts. The salary of NGO's and teachers were increased. Initiative was taken to pass Land Reform Act. As a part of decentralisation of power PSP Government endorsed the Grama Panchayaths to spend an amount of Rs.10,000 in the budget of 54-55. During the Congress government it was only Rs.2000. Government declared middle school education free.<sup>138</sup>

Agricultural production increased to 7,46,000 tonnes in 1954-55 as against 6,25,000 tonnes in 1950-51.<sup>139</sup> More than 20 thousand acres of land were brought under the Japanese method of cultivation. The Neriamangalam Hydro-electric project was commissioned during this period. The minor irrigation and lift irrigation activities were transferred from the public works department to the Panchayats department. The Harijans were also

---

137. *Samadarshi*, 12<sup>th</sup> January, 1956

138. *Samadarshi*, 26<sup>th</sup> January, 1956.

139. *Travancore-Cochin administration report for the year 1954-55*, p. 2.

given 'purampoke' lands (the lands under the custody of the government) at concessional rates for construction of houses and for cultivation.<sup>140</sup> Education in 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> form of the L.P. schools was made free in both government and private schools.<sup>141</sup> More facilities were offered for the teaching of vocational subjects and introducing the basic system of education in schools. An agricultural college and a veterinary college were opened and various concessions were granted to students belonging to backward communities. Noon feeding and cloth distribution were arranged in the Pial schools<sup>142</sup>. The salaries of ministers were reduced from Rs. 750/- to Rs. 500/.<sup>143</sup> Moreover the government took measures to reduce the difference of salary between the higher and lower officers in the government service by enhancing the salary of lower class servants.

The third ministry under Pattom, remained in power from 22 February 1960 to 25<sup>th</sup> September 1962. After the *Vimochana Samaram*, Pattom was once again elevated to the Augustus post of the Chief Minister. But he could not complete his tenure due to the internal conflicts in the party as well as the Congress opposition. After

---

140. *Ibid.*, p. 4.

141. *Proceedings of Travancore-Cochin legislative assembly*, Vol. XII, No. 10. p. 789

142. n. 139, p. 3.

143. *Ibid.*, p. 789.

hectic political drama Pattom was elevated to the status of the Governor of Punjab.

No leader in modern Kerala has exhibited greater quality of leadership that captured the popular imagination and inspired unswerving allegiance than Pattom. Thanu Pillai was a great patriot who loved the heritage of Kerala. Basically he was against the secession of any part of the erstwhile Travancore. This was the reason why he adopted strict attitude towards the TTNC in the merger issue. When TTNC observed 'deliverance day' he did not hesitate to take stern actions which led to police firing, killing many merger aspirants. Thanu Pillai actively participated in the 'Vimochana Samaram' even though it was a communal oriented one. The main factor that prompted him to plunge into the struggle was his staunch anti-communist attitude. He considered communism as an evil. Thanu Pillai twice led the ministry even though his party had only few seats. It was due to his statesmanship and shrewdness that he managed to form coalition government in alliance with the Congress party. Even though the Congress party was the strongest coalition partner he did not give them a free hand. He was a great orator, statesman and a strategist. After Pattom Thanu Pillai's exit from the state politics PSP lost its hold in Kerala. Thanu Pillai was transferred from Punjab to Andhra

in 1964 and he remained there till 1968. After his retirement he returned to his native place Pattom, and died in 1970.

# PRAJA SOCIALIST PARTY

Sasi Kumar.P. "The role of non-communist left movement in Kerala politics from 1942 to 1977" Thesis. Department of History, University of Calicut, 2005

**CHAPTER VI**

**PRAJA SOCIALIST PARTY**

## CHAPTER VI

# PRAJA SOCIALIST PARTY

The attainment of independence was a turning point in the history of Socialist movement in India. During the period of struggle for freedom the Congress had functioned as a broad national front and its leaders had permitted members of other parties, whose objectives were not antagonistic to those of the Congress, to function inside the latter. So Socialists had been able to function both as members of the Congress and of the Socialist party. After the achievement of independence, however this arrangement could not continue for long. The Congress had to function now more as a political party than as a broad national front and could not allow its members to be simultaneously members of another political party. The Congress leaders who were eager to acquire power did not like to share it with the Socialists. The attack against the Socialists was led by Sardar Patel who felt that there was no room in the Congress for such organised opposition group.<sup>1</sup> He feared that if the Socialists, with their growing stature in the Congress and the country had remained in the Congress,

---

1. Sonal Shah, *Indian Socialists: Search for Identity*, (Bombay, 1994), p. 43.

the doors not only to the highest positions in that organization but also dominant influence therein would have opened out to them in due course. In January 1948, the constitution committee of the Congress decided to recommend that no person who was a member of any other party could be allowed to enrol himself as a member of the Congress. Some of the Socialist leaders had also served as members of its working committee.

Congress Socialists were also not willing to remain in the Congress without identity. Majority of the Socialists were still reluctant to take any hasty decision, which would result in their departure. But the death of Gandhi changed the situation for the Socialists. It broke one of the most important links the Socialists had with the Congress<sup>2</sup>. In this circumstance the CSP meeting held at Kanpur decided to abandon the word Congress from the name of the party<sup>3</sup>. In 1948, the CWC decided to amend its constitution to debar members of any political party, communal or otherwise, which had a separate membership constitution and programme, from enrolling themselves or continuing as members of the Congress. This forced the Socialists to take a decision. In the Nasik conference of March 1948 they decided to leave

---

2. *Ibid.*

3. Cheriyan Philip, *Swathanthriathinusesham* (Mal.), (Trivandrum, 1984), p. 167.

the Congress.<sup>4</sup> They justified their departure on the ground that the Congress was not and could never become an effective instrument for achieving socialism. However, as general secretary of the Socialist party Jayaprakash emphasized in his report not on how to secure power as quickly as possible but on how to function as a responsible opposition, always willing to co-operate with the ruling party in times of national crisis or for securing certain common goals with the Socialist party shared with the Congress. In the words of Jayaprakash, "That the country is passing through a great internal crisis and there are external dangers of incalculable gravity no one can deny. At such a time all parties in the state sharing common objectives and common ideals should come together and co-operate in facing the crisis. There is much in common between the Congress and Socialist party; their faith in secular democracy brings them nearer together than any other two parties in the country. This naturally means that the Socialist party shall ever be ready to fight for the defence of the state and democracy, and against the forces of communalism and reaction, and in this fight it would be happy always to join hands with the Congress."

When the Socialists drifted away from the fold of Congress another tendency was developing inside the Congress. It was the leaders of the

---

4. Sonal Shah, n. 1, p. 44.

freedom struggle who after independence decorated the key positions in the organisation as well as in the government. Acharya Kripalani was the President of the Indian National Congress on the eve of Independence<sup>5</sup>. Jawaharlal Nehru and Sardar Patel led the government. There was cold war between the leaders of the Congress and those who were in the governmental leadership, which finally led to the resignation of Kripalani. Acharya Kripalani, who contested for Congress Presidentship in 1950, was defeated by right wing candidate Purshottamdas Tandon<sup>6</sup>. After his defeat Kripalani slowly withdrew from the activities of the Congress. Kripalani and his followers met at Patna in May 1951 and decided to come out of the Congress and formed the Kisan Mazdur Praja Party. In Malabar K. Kelappan announced his decision to secede from the Congress at a public meeting held at Quilandy.<sup>7</sup> Kelappan explaining the circumstances under which they were seceding from the Congress accused the present government of corruption and nepotism. The rivalry between Kelappan group and Congress had become so pronounced that they used even producer-cum-consumer societies as additional political

---

5. Cheriyan Philip, n. 3, p. 108.

6. Sonal Shah, n. 1, p. 47.

7. Govt. of Madras Public (General A) Dept. D.O.No.P4/51-8, Tamilnadu Archives, Egmore.

platform. The groups made every election to these societies as a test of strength between them<sup>8</sup>.

In July 1951, under the leadership of Kelappan a convention of the Congress workers were held and decided to form the Kisan Mazdoor Praja party in the district with an ad hoc committee to organize the party's activities<sup>9</sup>. The committee included 35 members and an executive committee of 11 members. Attempts to secure support from the Socialists and other leftist elements were also made. Kelappan condemned the Congress ministry as inefficient and corrupt. Kelappan toured throughout Malabar contacting dissidents and ex-members of the Congress. At Palghat, the party succeeded in carrying a vote of no-confidence against the municipal chairperson who belongs to the Congress mainly with the assistance of Muslim League<sup>10</sup>.

Acharya Kripalani as part of consolidating Socialist forces throughout the country visited Malabar also in August 1951. During the course of discussion with party workers he told them that the Congress in spite of its present distemper was a powerful organization

---

8. Fortnightly report for the 1<sup>st</sup> half of May, 1951, Tamilnadu Archives, Egmore, p. 63.

9. Fortnightly report for the 1<sup>st</sup> half of July, 1951, Tamilnadu Archives, Egmore, p. 95.

10. Fortnightly report for the 1<sup>st</sup> half of August, 1951, Tamilnadu Archives, Egmore, p. 3

and unless the party rose to the occasion and built up an equally strong organization on solid foundation it would not survive<sup>11</sup>. Kelappan tirelessly toured throughout Malabar. A number of meetings were held in which speakers condemned the Government for its alleged favouritism and lack of interest in the poor. At the same time they condemned the Communists as the agents of Soviet Russia<sup>12</sup>.

After the Nasik session, the Socialist party decided to organise local committees in various parts of the country. The Socialist stalwart Achuth Patwardhan visited Kerala in the month of May 1948 with the aim of forming Socialist organization<sup>13</sup>. The first state level conference of the Socialists was held on 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> May at Kozhikode<sup>14</sup>. Achuth Patwardhan inaugurated the meeting and K.B. Menon presided. Delegates from Malabar, Travancore and Cochin attended this meeting. In connection with this meeting the Malabar Committee of the Socialist party was formed with P.M. Kunhiraman Nambiar as the Convenor. K.B. Menon, Arangil Sreedharan, K. Abdurahiman, P.K. Appa Nair, Mangalatt Raghavan, V.K. Achuthan, N.K. Balakrishnan and Chirakkal

- 
11. Fortnightly report for the second half of August, 1951, Tamilnadu Archives, Egmore, p.120.
  12. Fortnightly report for the 1<sup>st</sup> half of September, 1951, Tamilnadu Archives, Egmore, p. 143.
  13. Fortnightly report for the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of May, 1948. Tamilnadu Archives, Egmore.
  14. Interview with T.H. Asokan at his residence in Puduppanam on 28<sup>th</sup> March, 2005.

T. Balakrishnan Nair were the members<sup>15</sup>. Many of the Congress workers severed their relations with Congress and decided to propagate the socialist ideas<sup>16</sup>. These Socialists were highly disciplined and started working among the people to build up the Socialist party. The leaders criticized the government for its inability to put down black marketing and corruption and held out a threat to Government officials and ministers<sup>17</sup>. The Socialists involved in the local problems of the downtrodden class. For example in Anakkara (Malabar) the Socialists demolished a portion of the road constructed by a landlord through the land of his tenants. But these types of incidents were very few<sup>18</sup>. They formed *Kalasarthis* and music groups to propagate the ideas of Socialism<sup>19</sup>. The role of school teachers in spreading the ideas of socialism and organizing the party was highly commendable. P.M. Kunhiraman Nambiar started the weekly '*Swathanthra Bharatham*' from Cannanore to spread the ideas of the party. P.R. Kurup was another prominent member of the Socialist party. Panur division of the Socialist party was formed as a result of the organizational ability of

---

15. Interview with Mangalatt Raghavan in his residence at Chettamkundu, Tellicherry on 10<sup>th</sup> August 2003.

16. *Samadarshi*, 26<sup>th</sup> July, 1958, p. 19.

17. Fortnightly report for the 1<sup>st</sup> half of May, 1951, Tamilnadu Archives, Egmore, p. 73.

18. *Ibid.*

19. Interview with Edayath Krishnan in his residence at Puthur on 20<sup>th</sup> March 1994.

P.R. Kurup<sup>20</sup>. The Socialists of Malabar suffered much in between 1948 and 1951 from Communists as well as Congress. Clashes between Congress and Socialist workers were very frequent. Even leaders like P.M. Kunhiraman Nambiar and P.R. Kurup were attacked and admitted to hospital.<sup>21</sup>

The KMPP formed by Kripalani involved actively in constructive work, simultaneously with parliamentary activities. KMPP aimed at the economic progress and development of the common man through planning<sup>22</sup>. In Malabar an ad hoc committee of the party was formed consisting of 35 members and an Executive Committee of 11 members<sup>23</sup>. The important KMPP leaders of Malabar other than Kelappan were K.A. Damodara Menon, M.P. Govinda Menon, V. Sankara Narayana Menon, M. Narayana Kurup, Meleth Narayanan Nambiar, V.P. Kunhirama Kurup and M. Krishnan.<sup>24</sup>

On the eve of the general elections of 1952, KMPP leaders felt the need of some kind of alliance with another political party to fight against Congress. In Malabar, KMPP tried to reach an understanding with the Socialists but failed. In his article '*Kelappan Praja Partiyē*

---

20. P.R. Kurup, *Ente Nadinte Kadha Enteyum* (Mal.), (Kottayam, 1985), p. 146.

21. *Samadarshi*, 26<sup>th</sup> July, 1956, p. 7.

22. C.K. Moosath, *Kelappan Enna Mahamanushyan* (Mal.), (Kottayam, 1982), p.198.

23. Fortnightly report for the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of July, 1951, Tamilnadu Archives, Egmore.

24. C.K. Moosath, n. 22, p. 198.

*Vanjichu'* V.C. Narayanan Namboodiri stated that in Malabar, Socialist party and Praja party could not reach an agreement because of the attitude of Praja party. Kelappan and his followers believed that in Malabar they are powerful and they will contest in all the seats and they will win. If the socialists wish to contest in the election they will give two or three seats<sup>25</sup> Thus all the discussions between Socialist and Praja party did not find any result because of this attitude. After deliberations they made a pact with the CPI, which was the second strongest party after Congress<sup>26</sup>. It was an informal alliance with the Communists and the agreement seems to be that the two parties should not oppose each other<sup>27</sup>. This electoral alliance has led to some dissatisfaction on the part of some of the Praja party members in North Malabar<sup>28</sup>. Number of people resigned both from Praja party and Communist party due to this unholy alliance. In protest to this attitude Praja party members resigned from the party and one among them was A.P. Kunhikannan Nair, Puthukkai, P.O. Nileswaram (South Kanara). He in his resignation statement made it clear that the leaders of the Praja party joined with the Communist only for power. He joined in

---

25. *Pravaham*, 8<sup>th</sup> September, 1951.

26. P. Narayanan Nair, *Aranoottandilude* (Mal.), (Kottayam, 1971), p. 293.

27. H.F.M, Tamilnadu Archives, Egmore, p. 165

28. Fortnightly report for the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of November, 1951, Tamilnadu Archives, Egmore.

the Socialist party. Some of the workers of Communist party also did not like this alliance. For example Chandu Punathil Kunhikannan of Arikkulam resigned from Communist party and joined the Socialist party<sup>29</sup>.

The action was criticized not only by the party members but also by other parties. Kelappan justified the alliance by stating that the alliance was only for the purpose of the election and the sole object was only to present an effective united front to the Congress and to defeat the government in power<sup>30</sup>. The K.M.P.P. leaders actively believed that the four years Congress rule is a thorough failure. Acharya Kripalani stated that "with in the four years of Congress rule the moral and material happiness of the people disappeared, that nepotism and corruption were rampant and that if the situation was allowed to continue a violent revolution was inevitable". He said that the KMPP had been formed by him to avoid the impending revolution and to carry on the administration of the country on Gandhian principles and therefore exhorted the people to vote for the KMPP candidates. The Congress was criticized for its alleged capitalistic views and for misuse

---

29. *Pravaham*, 16<sup>th</sup> December, 1951.

30. Fortnightly report for the 1<sup>st</sup> half of December, 1951, Tamilnadu Archives, Egmore.

of policies which resulted in the starvation of the people<sup>31</sup>. K. Kelappan represented Kerala in the Committee.

Why did KMPP keep aloof from the Socialists? Even though, discussions were held on an all India level to form alliance with Socialists it did not materialise because both these parties held wrong notions regarding their popular support. Therefore, the Socialists decided to contest alone in the election. They were very optimistic of emerging as the national alternative to the Congress.<sup>32</sup> The KMPP-Communist alliance proved fruitful to the Communists. They became the biggest opposition party in the Lok Sabha.<sup>33</sup> K. Kelappan and K.B. Menon represented Malabar in the National Executive of the Praja Socialist Party.<sup>34</sup>

The Communists used this opportunity to spread their root deeply among the rank and file. The Socialist party contested in 2 parliamentary seats and 21 assembly seats of which 3 were reserved.

They won only 4 seats out of the 27 seats of Malabar to the Madras Provincial Assembly. The four Socialists who came out

---

31. Fortnightly report for the 1<sup>st</sup> half of December, 1951. Tamilnadu Archives, Egmore.

32. Sonal Shah, n. 1, p. 47

33. Cherian Philip, n. 3, p. 110.

34. See Appendix III for the other members of the National Executive of P.S.P.

victorious were Padmaprabha Gowdar and Velukkan from Wayanad, Moidu Haji Keloth from Vatakara and K.B. Menon from Trithala<sup>35</sup>. The result of the elections convinced both Socialists and the KMPP their limitations and drawbacks. The alliance with Communist was a big loss to the KMPP. Since the election number of KMPP workers joined the Communist party. In these circumstances KMPP decided to merge with Socialist party to form a joint opposition against Congress. The merger of KMPP with the Socialist party took place in the joint conference held on 24 and 25 September 1952 at Bombay<sup>36</sup>. The Praja Socialist party was formed with Acharya Kripalani as the chairman and Asoka Mehta as Secretary.<sup>37</sup> Behind this was a desire to reduce the splitting up of anti-Congress votes as far as possible and bring about a consolidation of Democratic and progressive political forces. As the Socialist party, under Jayaprakash Narayan's leadership had already adopted some of the tenets of Gandhism and the strategy of Gandhi, KMPP under the leadership of J.B. Kripalani was prepared to accept the principles of Democratic socialism. The merger of these two was in a sense natural and expected to prove helpful to the cause of socialism

---

35. *Assembly Elections since 1951*, Dept. of Public Relations, Trivandrum, p. 34.

36. O.P. Ralhan (Ed.), *Documents on Socialist Movement in India*, Vol. 16. (New Delhi, 2000), p. 8

37. *Pravaham*, 27<sup>th</sup> September, 1952.

as well as to the building up of a strong democratic opposition.

The PSP was firmly committed to Socialism and egalitarianism which require fundamental structural changes in the society as well as genuine co-operative allegiant participation of the people in the reconstruction of the country. The party felt alarmed at the destruction of values and canons of propriety and the degeneration on several fronts in the country's composite life<sup>38</sup>. It felt perturbed at the dismal failure in the implementation of land revenue policies and it expressed serious concern at the monopolistic concentration of wealth in the country, which created economic imbalance and terrific disproportion.

The policy of PSP in the foreign affairs was one of rational and practical. In the face of growing collision between Pakistan and China, PSP stated that the country must prepare for self sufficiency in conventional as well as in the nuclear armaments. PSP believed that the entire state of Jammu and Kashmir was an integral part of India and its accession to India was final, and irrevocable. PSP stressed the vital necessity of the recovery of Indian Territory lost to China and Pakistan.

PSP emphasized the necessity of the increase of the production of food grains and their equitable distribution. It demanded the

---

38. *The Merger: How and Why? Praja Socialist Party, (Bombay, 1952), p. 4.*

abolition of land revenue and to replace it by an agricultural Income tax. It declared that it would encourage co-operative farming and concentrate its efforts on the consolidation of holdings in all areas. It stood for effective rationing in the cities and also for the vast masses of the poor people. To control the alarming rate of mounting prices PSP suggested the elimination of middlemen and wherever possible their replacement of co-operative societies and socialization of the wholesale trade in food grains and other essential commodities. They also suggested bringing foreign trade under state control, fixing remunerative prices for agricultural products and suitable revision of the tax-structure.

Another grave problem faced by India just after independence was unemployment. For solving the problem PSP suggested setting up of cottage industries and the introduction of agro-industrial and labour intensive techniques, both in the rural and urban sectors. PSP envisaged that planning must be executed primarily at the base. They wanted district administration to become the principal agent of economic planning and the directing agency for the implementation of integrated land reforms<sup>39</sup>. It stressed the role of village Panchayaths in

---

39. Madhu Limaye, *Chathusthamba Rashtram Oru Roopa Rekha* (Mal.), (Vatakara, 1974), p. 16.

development activities. The PSP advocated special emphasis to be put on regional development. They emphasized the growth of medium and small enterprises. They were pledged to the nationalization of the basic key industries<sup>40</sup>. For the smooth functioning of the nationalized industries it advocated autonomous corporations with adequate representation of workers and technicians on them. PSP insisted on the immediate nationalization of banks as well as Insurance Companies. The PSP held that both in the nationalized and co-operative sectors, workers would be accepted as equal partners and would have representations in the boards of the corporations. The PSP advocated decentralization of economy. It championed the notions of equality and social justice and it pledged itself to limit the minimum and maximum income to the ratio of 1:10. It accepted the concept of ceiling on urban property and it wanted that the privy purses of the princes should be abolished.<sup>41</sup> The party advocated that priority should be given to scheduled castes and tribes in scheme of land distribution. Thus the PSP advanced all the Socialist principles and incorporated Gandhian ideology. Jayaprakash Narayan, Acharya Narendra Deva, Ram Manohar Lohia and Asoka Metha were in the helm of affairs of the new

---

40. *Pravaham*, 18<sup>th</sup> October, 1952.

41 *Ibid.*

party<sup>42</sup>. The political economic and social policies of the PSP was also accepted by the state unit and endeavoured to materialize that goal. But the implementation of this policy in the state was very difficult since the party did not achieve political power in its capacity as PSP.

The effect of Socialist - KMPP merger was evident in the practical politics of Malabar. In the Madras Assembly KMPP had 17 members in which 7 were from Malabar. The Lok Sabha members of KMPP, K. Kelappan, Netur P. Damodaran and K.A. Damodara Menon remained in PSP. The KMPP and Socialist party members of the Madras Assembly elected K.B. Menon as their leader in the Legislative Assembly. The Malabar unit of the PSP was reconstituted with K. Kelappan as President, K.B. Menon as Vice President and M.P. Govinda Menon as General Secretary<sup>43</sup>. The halo of the freedom fighters like Kelappan and K.B. Menon attracted people to the PSP. Some of the village committees of the Congress in Malabar as a whole transformed into KMPP and later into PSP<sup>44</sup>. Prominent leaders of the PSP of Malabar included M. Narayana Kurup, V. Sankara Narayana Menon, A. Balagopal, Netur P. Damodaran, M. Krishnan,

---

42 Cheriyan Philip, n. 3, p. 159

43 Fortnightly report for the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of February, 1952. Tamilnadu Archives, Egmore, p. 143.

44 Interview with K.P. Muhammed, freedom fighter, in his residence at Kozhikode on 7<sup>th</sup> June, 1995.

V. P. Kunhirama Kurup and Arangil Sreedharan<sup>45</sup>. P.K. Sankarankutty and K.P. Muhammed played a key role in organising labourers and strengthened the social base of the party<sup>46</sup>.

The first anniversary of the PSP was held at Badagara in the year 1954. The conference began with the hoisting of the flag by Kelappan in 'Subhash Nagar'<sup>47</sup>. The PSP had definite ideas on the state reorganization. On the first day the convention passed a resolution, which insisted that the state reorganization should be on the basis of language, geography, history, culture and administrative convenience. The convention insisted that the people of Kerala should not be forced to be a part of any other state against their desire. The conference put forward an idea of the formation of a state from Mookambika to Kanyakumari. The public meeting in connection with the convention was inaugurated by the PSP leader of Bengal P.C. Ghosh in which Kelappan presided<sup>48</sup>. The meeting included various sessions. As per the schedule on 16<sup>th</sup> March state reorganization conference was held, on 17<sup>th</sup> youth conference, on 18<sup>th</sup> cultural conference, 19<sup>th</sup> women's conference. A grand rally was organized on 20<sup>th</sup> which was highly

---

45 Edayath Krishnan, n. 19.

46 Interview with P.K. Sankarankutty, in his residence at Calicut on 8<sup>th</sup> November, 1995.

47 Interview with C. V. Chathu master, freedom fighter, in his residence at Narayana Nagar, Vatakara on 4<sup>th</sup> March, 1994.

48 Mangalatt Raghavan, n. 15

attractive not only because of the number of people participated but also for its extravaganza including elephants and horses. In the cultural conference C.H. Kunhappa and in the women's conference Kadathanattu Madhaviamma participated<sup>49</sup>.

In order to understand the formation of the Socialist party in Kerala it is necessary to trace the origins of the party in Travancore and Cochin. With the departure of Diwan C.P. Ramaswamy, Travancore politics underwent tremendous changes. In the year 1948 election was held to the Travancore Legislative Assembly on the basis of adult franchise<sup>50</sup>. In this election state Congress won 97 seats. On March 24, 1948, a three- man ministry with Pattom as Prime Minister assumed office in Travancore<sup>51</sup>. C. Kesavan and T.M. Varghese were inducted in to the ministry because they were the two leading lights of the state Congress party and represented two major communities of Travancore. According to George Wood Cock the very choice of men for the first Travancore ministry was an admission of power of communities. Thanu Pillai-Nair, C. Kesavan-Ezhava, T.M. Varghese-Christian communities respectively. Thanu Pillai presented the first budget of a free people's government in the state which he called an unforgettable

---

49 Interview with Kuttiyil Narayanan in his residence at Vatakara on 5<sup>th</sup> April, 2005.

50 C.N. Somarajan, *Aspects of Kerala Society & Politics*, (Quilon, 1987) p. 20.

51 *Ibid.*, p. 20.

event in the history of Travancore<sup>52</sup>. At that time Pattom was the president of the Travancore State Congress. But due to his aristocratic attitude there developed antagonism, which led to jealousy and anti-Pattom feelings among the party members. Even the rank and file of the party began to criticise Chief Minister's dictatorial way of doing things. They felt that Thanu Pillai was concentrating too much power in his hands in the double capacity as the President of the Congress party and the Chief Minister<sup>53</sup>. The question of non-confidence in the ministry was again brought up in the shape of memorandum, signed by 64 out of 90 members of the Congress parliamentary party on 9<sup>th</sup> October. After discussion, the resolution was put to vote and passed. In order to avoid the humiliation of being ousted through a formal no-confidence motion in the Assembly Thanu Pillai voluntarily tendered his resignation<sup>54</sup>. After resignation Thanu Pillai seldom took part in party affairs of the Congress. He developed interest for socialism which forced him to resign from Congress party. A group of active Congressmen who were very near and dear to Pattom which included 14 M.L.A's also resigned from the Congress. Among them

---

52 *Travancore Information and Listner* - Vol. IX, No.1, September, 1948, p. 11.

53 C. Narayana Pillai, *Pattam Muthal Panampallivare* (Mal.), (Trivandrum, 1976), p. 89.

54 .P. Sankara Pillai, *Democracy in Kerala and Pattom A. Thanu Pillai*, (Changanasseri, 1969), p. 54.

G. Ramachandran, K.P. Neelakanda Pillai and N.D. Jose were prominent. They formed the democratic Socialist group and participated in the legislative process in the opposition bloc.

The Socialists severed their relations with Congress in the Nasik conference of 1948<sup>55</sup>. The party decided to organise its units in every state and form students, labour and allied organisations, as to develop its popular base. A meeting of the Socialists was held in Trivandrum under the leadership of K. Prabhakaran<sup>56</sup>. The convention exhorted the socialists to come out from Congress and form a Socialist party. As a result certain leaders and their supporters came out from the Congress. They formed an ad-hoc committee with P.P. Wilson as the convenor, in the year 1949 which led to the formation of Socialist party in Trivandrum<sup>57</sup>. P. Viswambharan also played an active role in the formation of the Socialist party in Travancore. T. Chandrasekhara Menon and V. C. N. Namboothiri who represented Cochin in the Nasik Conference of the Socialists initiated the formation of an ad hoc committee with the aim of organising the Socialists of Cochin Socialists<sup>58</sup>. The committee appealed to the members of the other

---

55 *Pravaham*, Vol.7. 20<sup>th</sup> September, 1952. p. 10.

56 Kuttiyil Narayanan, n. 49

57 T.H. Asokan, n. 14

58 Interview with K. Chandrasekharan in his office at Ernakulam on 10<sup>th</sup> April, 2005.

parties to resign and join in the Socialist party. K.K. Kannan who represented the Kanayannore Constituency in the Assembly resigned his membership in the Assembly and joined the Socialist party. C. K. Parameswaran, Puthoor Achutha Menon, K. A. Sivarama Bharathi were other prominent leaders.<sup>59</sup> A newspaper named 'Express' started publishing from Trichur with the aim of propagating the ideas of socialism and to highlight the activities of the party. The owner and publisher of 'Express' was K. Krishnan. With the integration of Travancore and Cochin in the year 1949, the Socialist party of these states also merged. P.P. Wilson was nominated as the convener of the ad hoc committee of Travancore-Cochin Socialist party. Number of KSP workers under the leadership of R.M. Manakkalath also joined in the Socialist party.

After his resignation from Congress Pattom remained in the Assembly as the leader of Democratic Socialist Party<sup>60</sup>. But Pattom did not like to lead an insignificant local party. He wished to join in some other party with national background. Three options were before him - one was to go back to the National Congress and the other was to join in the Communist party. The third option was to join in the Socialist

---

59. Edayath Krishnan, n. 19.

60. A.R. Mankekar, *The Red Riddle of Kerala*, (Bombay, 1965), p. 72

party led by Jayaprakash Narayan. Return to Congress was quite difficult to a leader like Pattom who had a number of manias. He never liked to join the Communist party, which he considered anti-national. The only option left was to join the Socialist party.

Pattom informed his desire to join the Socialist party, which was objected by certain Socialist leaders. They argued that he is an orthodox, conservative and anti-labour and so not suited to lead the Socialists. However his ability as a leader was appreciated and even critics admitted that his entry will give a strong base to the Socialist party. The matter was discussed in the national executive of the party. Jayaprakash and Asoka Mehta desired the entry of Pattom in to the party while Lohia was suspicious<sup>61</sup>. However a meeting between Jayaprakash Narayan and Pattom was arranged on the occasion of the third National Conference of Socialist party at Madras. At the end of the discussion Pattom was given green signal to join the party. Pattom with his followers joined the Socialist party in the year of 1950. By that time the Travancore-Cochin unit of Socialist party was amalgamated and Pattom was installed in the leadership<sup>62</sup>.

The leadership of Pattom injected new vigour and enthusiasm

---

61. Victor M. Fic, *Kerala the Yenan of India*, (Bombay, 1970), p. 37.

62. A. Singh, *History of PSP (1934-57)*, (Lucknow, 1959), p. 1.

among the Socialists. Trade unions became more active and youth as well as student organisations were formed. The executive meeting of the Travancore-Cochin Socialist party held on March 5, 1951 at Trivandrum appointed sub-committees to form young Socialist League, Kisan Panchayath and Women's wing. Kaviyoor Prabhakaran Nair was appointed as the convener of the Young Socialist League. Women's wing under the leadership of P.S. Saraswathi Ammal was organised. Thudathil Kunjukrishna Pillai was appointed as Convener for organizing Kisan Panchayat. Even though separate associations were formed these associations did not fare well. During this period the socialist party national Executive Committee decided to render service to the people by entering in to constructive programmes on Gandhian method. Pattom himself took the leadership of the constructive programmes in the Travancore-Cochin area. The socialist volunteers shouldered the responsibility of constructing roads, canals, wells and houses for downtrodden classes. In connection with the service programme the Socialists submitted a memorandum to the Central Government in which they demanded the end of Zamindari system, end of eviction, and limiting income ratio to 1:10. By this service, the Socialists spread their idea of equality among the villagers. The first General election to the Lok Sabha and provincial assemblies were declared. It was scheduled to conduct the election in Travancore-

Cochin area between December 1951 and January 1952<sup>63</sup>. On the verge of general elections party members felt the dire necessity of a democratically elected State Committee. The ad hoc state committee of the S.P, Travancore-Cochin unit was held at Trivandrum on 1951 June 8 and 9. All India leader of the Socialist Party, Madhu Limaye actively participated in the proceedings. In the conference Pattom was elected as the Chairman of the Socialist Party of Travancore-Cochin. Pattom led the Socialists in the election and they contested in the election without support from any other party. They contested in 82 constituencies out of 108 assembly seats. Jayaprakash and Lohia visited Travancore-Cochin for the election campaign. The leaders explained the ideology of Socialism as well as the practical approach of the party in the light of the decisions of the Madras session of the party<sup>64</sup>. The electoral promises of the Socialist party were highly progressive. It highlighted national unity, eradication of poverty, rejuvenation of villages, industrial progress, eradication of unemployment and corruption, control of population etc. The other important issues were expansion of civil liberties and implementing land reforms.

---

63. C.N. Somarajan. n. 50.

64. Fortnightly report for the 1<sup>st</sup> half of July, 1950, Tamilnadu Archives, Egmore.

Even though the election manifesto included revolutionary ideas it did not influence the people much. When the election result was proclaimed the Socialist party won only third place. Socialist bagged only 11 seats.<sup>65</sup> On the other hand Communists and their allies bagged 32 seats and Congress 47 seats. Congress ministry was formed under the leadership of A.J. John on 14<sup>th</sup> March 1952 with the support of Travancore Tamilnadu Congress (TTNC).<sup>66</sup> Congress supported the Socialist party candidate K.P. Neelakanda Pillai and he was elected as speaker. By that time KMPP and Socialist party had merged in the national level and formed the Praja Socialist Party on 25<sup>th</sup> August 1952. The Socialist party of Malabar also merged with KMPP. The official declaration of the merger of Socialist party with KMPP was made in the Conference of Vakathanam near Kottayam. The conference was inaugurated by, Pattom Thanu Pillai under the president ship of R.M. Manakkalath<sup>67</sup>. Asoka Mehta attended the conference and declared the merger of the Socialist party with the KMPP and the birth of the new party nainely Praja Socialist Party. A new state level

---

65. The successful candidates were -1. T.S. Ramaswami, 2. A. Samraj, 3. M. Gopalan Nair, 4. P.S. Nataraja Pillai, 5. Pattam Thanu Pillai, 6. Dr. N.S. Pillai, 7. K.P. Neelakanda Pillai, 8. E. Krishnan Nair, 9. Vettikkavala Kochukunju, 10. A. Achuthan and 11. K. Balakrishna Menon.

66. N. Jose Chander (Ed.), *Dynamics of State Politics. Kerala*, (New Delhi, 1986), p. 35

67. T.H. Asokan Master, n. 14.

committee was formed with Pattom as the Chairman and P.P. Wilson as Secretary<sup>68</sup>. Other members of the Committee were - K.P. Sankaran Nair, C.G. Janardhanan, R.M. Manakkalath, K.K. Kannan, K.V. Kuriyakose, N.P. Joseph, A. Achuthan, V.I. George, M.V. Ibrahim Kutty, Tundathil Kunjukrishna Pillai, Chandrasekharan Nair, T.S. Ramaswamy, and Smt. Alamelu Ammal.

In the public meeting held in connection with the Vakathanam conference Pattom and Asoka Mehta explained the ideology of the party, which in essence aimed the welfare of the masses. The meeting planned certain programs including organizational works among the plantation labours, propagation of party literature, to help the newspapers which support the party, preparations for the agitation for the felt needs of the people, direct the legislative wing to pilot bill in the Assembly against eviction, to establish committees in Legislative Assembly segments. The meeting also made directions to raise party fund as well as disciplinary measures. The programme of the PSP was first outlined at its convention at Allahabad in December 1953.<sup>69</sup> The party has consistently warned the people against the disastrous

---

68. *Pravaham*, 11<sup>th</sup> October, 1952.

69. Myron Weiner, *Party Politics in India*, (Bombay, 1953), p. 28.

economic policies of the government and has at the same time pleaded for positive and concrete policies on problems of vital importance to the nation. The PSP in parliament and outside has been a symbol of vigilance for the defence of nation's freedom and sovereignty. It has remained a zealous watch-dog of the rights and interests of the common man and a pioneering force for a genuine democratic socialist movement in India<sup>70</sup>.

The party promised that it will suitably revise the existing land laws so as to bring about equitable distribution of land and make the tiller of the land its owner. The PSP will establish a definite relationship between the cost of products and the market price of commodities by eliminating the middlemen and by replacing him whenever possible by co-operatives, by suitable revision of the tax structure, by socializing the wholesale trade in food grain and other essential commodities and by bringing foreign trade under state control. The PSP will place greater emphasis on cottage industries, agro industrial and labour intensive techniques, both in the rural and urban sectors of the economy so that a condition of fuller employment is created in the near future.<sup>71</sup>

---

70. R. Chandidas (Ed.), *India Votes the manifesto of PSP, in A Source book on Indian Elections.* (Bombay, 1967), p. 78.

71. *Ibid.*, p. 81.

The principles and programmes of the PSP attracted many, especially youth of Travancore-Cochin area to the party. Thus with a vigorous leader like Pattom in the helm of affairs and with the support of a popular philosophy, the PSP started its career in the Travancore Cochin area. The PSP activists highlighted the felt needs of the people and tried to redress their grievances. An important incident was the Rama Nilayam Sathyagraha by which the PSP invited the attention of the government into the agony of the people. These types of activities proved fruitful to mobilise the people and strengthened the social base of the party.

The TTNC withdrew their support to A.J. John which led to the resignation of his ministry on 23 September 1953<sup>72</sup>. With the fall of the ministry a mid term election was declared to be held in February 1954<sup>73</sup>. The PSP planned to face the election on the basis of former experiences and the existing political situation. Their experiences convinced them that the Communists were not a party to depend upon. They also believed that Congress will be the biggest enemy in future. Therefore they reached the conclusion that Congress should be

---

72. C.K. Karim (Ed.), *Kerala District Gazetteer Trivandrum District, Supplement*, (Trivandrum, 1978), p. 16.

73. Sadhna Sharma, *States Politics in India* (Delhi, 1995), p. 151.

defeated at any cost. As a practical measure they decided to enter into electoral adjustment with the united front of the left parties led by the Communist. This front included the CPI, RSP and Kerala Socialist Party<sup>74</sup>.

The election to Travancore-Cochin legislative assembly was held in the month of February, 1954<sup>75</sup>. There was close co-operation and adjustment between the left front and PSP during the election campaign. However, PSP was not a member of the front<sup>76</sup>. In this election out of the 117 seats the united front won 40 seats. PSP came out victorious in 19 seats<sup>77</sup>. Congress secured 45 seats and TTNC bagged 12 seats. Pattom Thanu Pillai was re-elected from Trivandrum II Constituency defeating K.P. Nilakanta Pillai by a margin of over 7000 votes<sup>78</sup>. Pattom was elected as the leader of the PSP in the Legislative Assembly<sup>79</sup>. Just after the election the National executive of the PSP met at Madras. The main agenda of the meeting was the formation of Travancore Cochin ministry. The suggestions of the Communists to form a ministry under the leadership of Pattom with due participation

---

74. Sonal Shah, n. 1, p. 58.

75. C.N. Somarajan, n. 50, p. 22.

76. E.K. Nayanar, *My Struggles*, (New Delhi, 1982), Pp. 102-103.

77. R. Ramakrishnan Nair, *How Communists Came to Power in Kerala*, (Trivandrum, 1982), p. 65.

78. *Ibid.*

79. Sonal Shah, n. 1, p. 59.

to the Communists was discussed. The Communist tried their level best to win the support of the PSP to form a United Front government. But the PSP's ideal of democratic socialism and the experience of the Socialist parties of some countries made them wary of supporting the communist proposal<sup>80</sup>. The request of the Congress for the formation of a ministry with the support of the PSP was also considered. But the Executive Committee discarded their suggestions. The committee also decided not to form a ministry in alliance with the Communists. After long discussions and deliberations the National Executive declared that though they had only 19 seats in a 117-member house, they were prepared to form a government<sup>81</sup>.

The Congress leader in the Assembly was Panampally Govinda Menon. The Congress High Command persuaded the Congress party in Kerala to support the PSP to form a government of its own to avert Communist coalition ministry in the state<sup>82</sup>. Panampally Govinda Menon, the Congress leader offered its support to PSP<sup>83</sup>. The PSP having strength of only 19 in a 118 member assembly thus came to power. Thus on 16<sup>th</sup> March, 1954 Pattom was sworn as the Chief

---

80. Victor, M. Fic. n. 61, p. 42.

81. Sadhna Sharma, n. 73, p. 59.

82. R. Ramakrishnan Nair, n. 77, p. 99.

Minister of Travancore Cochin<sup>84</sup>. A. Achuthan, P.S. Nataraja Pillai and P.K. Kunju were the other members of the Cabinet<sup>85</sup>. It was the first Socialist ministry as well as the first non-Congress ministry in India<sup>86</sup>. Just after the formation of the ministry PSP state conference was held at Ernakulam from the 4<sup>th</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> of April 1954. In the annual report presented, P.P. Wilson, General Secretary, evaluated the political situation and performance of the party and suggested a framework for future programmes. The formation of Pattom ministry was hailed as the greatest achievement of the party. The conference put forward certain measures before the ministry as a guideline for its performance, in which importance was given to land reforms. The ministry performed well and achieved much in a short period<sup>87</sup>. But it was not as much as expected. There were certain difficulties in implementing the election manifesto as well as party policy. In a democratic system a party comes into power after getting majority in the election. The majority in the floor of Assembly is considered as the proof of the support of majority of the people. But when PSP accepted power in Travancore-Cochin it had no majority in the house. That, in a way

---

83. *Two years of Praja Socialist Party*, (A Praja Socialist party publication. 26<sup>th</sup> September, 1964, Bombay), p. 5.

84. Myron Weiner, n. 69, p. 63.

85. *Pravaham*, 8<sup>th</sup> June, 1954.

86. Ramakrishnan Nair. n. 77, p. 44.

87. Sadhna Sharma, n. 73, p. 151.

indicates that, the people did not accept the policies of PSP. Therefore the first limitation was that it accepted authority even before it was recognised by the majority of the people in the state as well as in the legislative assembly. In India being a federal setup power is divided into the state list, central list and concurrent list. In the concurrent list the state is bound to obey the instructions of the Central government. Of course when two parties with different ideologies is ruling the state and centre it will surely create problems. Even though Central government is issuing instructions people will think that it is the attempt of the state government. Many a times the PSP government of Travancore-Cochin had to shoulder the responsibility of the actions of the Congress government in the centre. For example the labour department of Travancore-Cochin was forced to implement many of the laws formed by the Congress government. Some of the clauses of these laws were against socialist ideas.

Second draw back was that a significant part of the state budget was the contribution of the centre. Around 20% of the budget of Travancore-Cochin depends upon the centre. Hence, if the state is not obeying their orders the result will be probably the denial of the budget allotment. Again the Indian constitution did not provide enough power to the State to amend it in the case of land reforms, nationalisation, equal distribution and limiting corruption. The government could not

go forward due to the hazard of the constitution. The 1V debacle was that in order to increase revenue the government should impose extra tax upon the industrial and rich class. But all other 26 states of India in and around Travancore-Cochin were ruled by Congress. If Travancore-Cochin government increases tax the industrialists will set up factories in other states so that the finance of the state will be further affected. More over almost all the higher officers were against socialist ideas and egalitarian principles. All these limitations will remain until PSP obtained power in the centre. In this situation PSP will not be able to undertake power in any other state until it got majority in the centre. The only practical way is to accept power in the state even before getting control of the centre and do as much as possible for the welfare of the people. Moreover party leadership believed that PSP can implement an administration better than that of the Congress. Even though it is not fully socialistic, it will provide some solace to the masses and that will enrich the parties' political base as well as its power. Their aim was to make use of the opportunity for the service of the people and thus the growth of the party<sup>88</sup>.

The life span of the Pattom ministry was very short. However, the Travancore-Cochin ministry functioned smoothly till Panampally

---

88. *Samadarshi*, Vol. 12, 13, 14, 1954.

Govinda Menon was elected as the president of the Congress party in Travancore-Cochin. Pattom and Govinda Menon had been bitter rivals because of narrow rigid sectarian interests. Govinda Menon always had the welfare of Cochin in mind where as Thanu Pillai stood for Trivandrum. Govinda Menon considered Pillai as a man of inferior quality whom fate had chosen to occupy the wrong place<sup>89</sup>. The progressive and pro labour policies of the ministry and the considerate support which the PSP had won among the trade unions made Govinda Menon jealous. The government had also earned the displeasure of the influential Christian planters of Travancore-Cochin by the Agrarian Bill presented by P.S. Nataraja Pillai, Minister for Agriculture, which imposed a ceiling on land holding. The downfall of the ministry was hastened with the demand for the formation of Tamil State. The Travancore Tamil Nadu Congress was formed with the aim of the merger of Tamil majority taluks with Madras<sup>90</sup>. (Tovala, Agastheeswaram, Kalkulam, Vilavancode, Neyyattinkara, Shencottai, part of Travancore-Cochin) TTNC was the most powerful political party of that area. Almost all the representatives from this area to the Travancore Cochin State Assembly belonged to TTNC. In the election

---

89. K.C. John, *The Melting Pot, Kerala, 1950's-1970's*, (Trivandrum, 1975), p. 8.

90. Nesamony. P, *Inside Travancore*, Tamil Nadu, Nagercoil, (Madras, 1948), p. 6.

Devikulam, and Peerumedu were Tamil majority areas which formed of 1954 TTNC won 12 seats. The majority of the people of these areas were illiterate peasants. So it was easy for TTNC leaders to organise an agitation demanding the inclusion of these areas into Madras province. The TTNC was strongly supported by Tamil leaders like C.N. Annadurai, N.S. Krishnan and Saraswati Pandurangan<sup>91</sup>. But the government did not recognise the demand of TTNC. On 11<sup>th</sup> August 1954, a fresh agitation demanding the merger of Tamil speaking areas into Madras started.<sup>92</sup>

The Communist party supported the demand of TTNC. The Communists had no root in these Tamil speaking areas. They feared that if this area remained with Travancore-Cochin it will adversely affect their prospective in the coming elections. But they stated that they supported the TTNC because they stood for the formation of State on the basis of languages. The support of the Communists encouraged TTNC. TTNC published a pamphlet, which instructed the Panchayaths and Municipalities of Tamil majority area to pass resolutions stating that the government of Pattom is not the Government of Tamilians. Further it directed the people not to pay any taxes to the government. It also induced people to boycott offices, courts and conduct picketing.

---

91. Sonal Shah, n. 1. p. 59.

92. K.C. John, n. 89, p. 7.

Their aim was to create disturbances and make the government inactive. The Tamils as a whole followed these directions and indulged in agitation, which was supported by the Communists. The regional parties like Tamizharasu Kazhakam and Dravida Munnettra Kazhakam (DMK) also supported the movement.

The government did not surrender to the demand of the TTNC. The action committee had decided to observe 9<sup>th</sup> August as 'Deliverance Day' for the Tamils in Travancore. It was intended to attract public attention towards the repressive and discriminating policy pursued by the State Government against the Tamils and mark their protest against police excesses. But as the notified day approached, a section of the employees of the State Transport department gave notice for a general strike on 11 August 1954. So that TTNC also postponed the 'deliverance day' to 11 August 1954. The State Transport buses did not operate on that day. Few vehicles, which operated were attacked by the mob. The mob pelted stones against police station and government offices. Pattom had already ordered the police to use all means to suppress the agitation and to maintain the prestige of the government<sup>93</sup>. A mob blocked the road in between Marthandam and London Mission Society compound and

---

93. Sonal Shah, n. 1, p. 59.

Martandam High School to prevent the police party. When the police party advanced and cleared the blocks the mob attacked them in the Thoduvetty market. In order to protect their life police fired, resulting in the death of Pappu Panicker and Ramayyan. In continuation to this, incidents occurred in certain other areas and five more persons were killed in the police firing<sup>94</sup>.

This firing, which took place under a Socialist government created a major conflict in the party. During that period Ram Manohar Lohia was the General Secretary of National Committee of the PSP and lodged in Naini prison for having spearheaded U.P. Irrigation rate Sathyagraha. In his speech at Kayeem Ganj and Farookhabad on July 14<sup>th</sup>, 1954 Lohia exhorted the people not to pay the newly imposed water tax. On the same day he was arrested<sup>95</sup>. The case was heard by the division bench of Allahabad High Court by Justice Desai and Chaturvedi. Lohia argued in the court that an Indian citizen has the right to break an unjust law, as well as to request the people not to follow that law.

Lohia dashed off a telegram from the Jail recommending that an

---

94. See Appendix IV for the sketch of the firing site.

95. *Pouran*, 12<sup>th</sup> April, 1955.

enquiry be ordered into the firing<sup>96</sup>. What Lohia wanted was to change the people's hearts. Along with this, for the interest of orderly progress, he wanted "the people's right to civil disobedience must be recognised as much as the government's right to arrest and imprison under due process"<sup>97</sup>. He also demanded the resignation of Thanu Pillai ministry, accepting the moral responsibility of this incident. On receiving the telegram Thanu Pillai said "our party leader is mad" and added that he would ignore Lohia's telegram<sup>98</sup>. Though a regional leader, Thanu Pillai boldly opposed the suggestion of the national leader and apprised the other leaders of the real state of affairs in Travancore Cochin. The National executive of the party passed a resolution, which ridiculed the firing but did not demand the resignation of the ministry<sup>99</sup>. The resolution demanded a judicial enquiry in this incident. Accordingly the government appointed Justice Sankaran as enquiry commission. The commission after proper enquiry presented the report in which the firing was justified<sup>100</sup>. Lohia argued that firing by the

---

96. Myron Weiner, n. 69, p. 32.

97. Lohia, *Marx, Gandhi and Socialism*, (Hyderabad, 1963), p. 64.

98. K.C. John, n. 89, p. 7.

99. Victor M. Fic, n. 61, p. 181.

100. Report of the enquiry into the action of the police firing in having resorted to firing on the 11<sup>th</sup> August, 1954. The Report concludes as follows "the police have been acting justly and properly and within the limits of their lawful authority and that they succeeded in maintaining law and order and peace by resorting to the use of the force justified by the situation".

police only be resorted to, if there has already been some killing or there was a possibility of further killing or the situation was insurrectionary. He had sent the telegram in his individual capacity and it was not a directive from the General Secretary. The issue in question was not a matter of the right of the General Secretary, but was the attitude of a Socialist government to the problem of law and order to human life and its worth<sup>101</sup>. The enquiry conducted by H.V. Kammath as per party direction also gave a clean certificate of non-guilty to Pattom. Even though Pattom ministry was saved, this incident led to the resignation of Lohia on July 21, 1955<sup>102</sup>.

The followers of Asoka Mehta agreed that as Congress accepted Socialist pattern as their goal in the Avadi Congress there is no reason for not cooperating with them. This was the opinion of the Bombay group, but other North Indians took this as an opportunity to oppose Asoka Mehta. Lohia came forward to question Mehta which ultimately led to the formation of the new party headed by Lohia namely the Socialist party in November 1955<sup>103</sup>.

Actually the Pattom firing was only an occasion and not a reason for Lohia's resignation from the party. The drift started when Nehru

---

101. Sonal Shah, n. 1, p. 60.

102. *Ibid.*

103. Victor M. Fic, n. 61, Pp. 46-47.

welcomed Jayaprakash to his ministry, and as a result Jayaprakash withdrew from the leadership of the PSP. His resignation itself became a major factor contributing to its disintegration. One faction led by Lohia pleaded for militancy and the other led by Asoka Mehta looked out for avenues of co-operation with the Government. The senior most leader of the party Narendra Deva could not keep these warring factions under check. When Lohia demanded the resignation of PSP ministry in Kerala for police firing as general secretary of PSP it was not accepted by the majority. On this occasion PSP at all India level was split under the leadership of Lohia, Madhu Limaye and Raj Narain. In Kerala their party had only few followers under the leadership of K.K. Abu and M.P. Veerendrakumar<sup>104</sup>.

However, Pattom could not save his government from peril. The incident, which led to the resignation of Pattom was created by the attitude of Congress. Even though in the opposition bench the Congress supported Pattom but they waited for an opportunity to withdraw their support to the government. At that time deliberations were going on regarding the second Five Year Plan.

Congress demanded the formation of a committee with their majority to submit direction in connection with the Five Year Plan. But

---

104. Kuttiyil Narayanan, n. 49.

the government did not give any prominence to this demand, which irritated Panampally Govinda Menon, the Congress leader.

Pattom was very much confident about the achievement of his ministry. During a Press Conference Pattom stated that "if we continue in power for some more time the Communist party will have to fold up in Travancore-Cochin." When the reporters asked about the future of Congress Pattom replied, "Yes of course, the Congress too would have to fold up"<sup>105</sup>. This statement irritated Panampally Govinda Menon and he turned Congress activists against Pattom. The progressive policies of the ministry and the considerable support, which the PSP had won among the trade unions, could have made Govinda Menon jealous.<sup>106</sup> Both these leaders all along were political rivals and always suspected each other. Their rivalry had an element of parochialism too. Govinda Menon treated Thanu Pillai as a man of inferior quality whom fate had chosen to occupy the wrong place<sup>107</sup>.

On this occasion the state Congress committee decided to withdraw their support to the ministry. To counter the attempts of Congress Pattom sought the support of the Communists and initiated negotiation with them. The Communists demanded the release of all

---

105. K.C. John, n. 89, p. 8.

106. Austin. H., *Anatomy of the Kerala Coup*, (New Delhi, 1954), p. 28.

107. K.C. John, n. 89, p. 8.

those sentenced to life imprisonment in connection with the Punnappa Vayalar revolt in return to their support. After consultation with his colleagues Pillai released a few Communist prisoners in January 1955<sup>108</sup>. But on 8<sup>th</sup> February 1955, T.S. Ramaswamy, moved a non-confidence motion against the Ministry. He was one of the early Socialists in the country who left the PSP after he quarrelled with the PSP Chief Minister for his anti-Tamil action<sup>109</sup>. Out of the 117 members 60 supported the motion and 30 opposed it. The Communists abstained from voting<sup>110</sup>. The non-confidence motion was passed and Pattom tendered his resignation before the expiry of his full term. Pattom was aware that he could not survive the non-confidence motion even with the communist support. Why, then did he bargain with the CPI and lose both its integrity and future? Pattom obviously thought, at the last minute some of the Congress MLAs would support him<sup>111</sup>. The Communists justified their neutrality by saying that there was nothing in the record of the Socialist party which merited its support. However it is clear that both PSP and the Communists gave prominence not to ideas or ideology but to power. After all, the PSP had formed a

---

108. C.N. Somarajan, n. 50, p. 23.

109. K.C. John, n. 89, p. 14.

110. *Pauran*, Vol. 4 (April, 1955), p. 3

111. K.C. John, n. 89, p. 15.

minority ministry with the support of the Congress although it had declared during the election that it would not ally with the Congress in anyway. The Communists had an electoral understanding with the PSP, which PSP ignored for the sake of power. Even an attempt was made to sack some of the Congress MLA's under the leadership of P.K. Kunju the PSP Labour minister. At the same time Panampally Govinda Menon made a move to sell "Avadi Socialism" to two of the PSP MLAs<sup>112</sup>. In short the moral degradation in political morality as well as tendency of 'horse trade' was evident even at that time. The morality behind the role of Congress in pulling down the PSP ministry was controversial. The explanation of the attitude of the Congress party, given by the party leader convinced only a very few. He said the support given by the Congress to the ministry was unconditional. Its implication was that the Congress members in the legislature should support the bills, resolutions and budget brought forward by the government. But that cannot be done without prior consultation. The PSP government did not come to make any such consultation. The Congress party therefore found it difficult to continue to register their votes like puppets for anything and everything brought forward by the

---

112. *Ibid.*, p. 19.

ministry.<sup>113</sup> Pattom denied these and said that the Congress party withdrawn its support because it had by the time succeeded in making an alliance with a political group in the assembly and thereby secured the requisite majority in the assembly to form a government.<sup>114</sup>

Soon after the PSP ministry was defeated Kodakara Kesava Menon and Vayala Idiculla, two PSP MLAs quietly disappeared. But they had already signed a statement saying that they had resigned from the PSP and joined the Congress because the Congress was now committed to work for a socialist pattern of society. Panampally was the earliest user of the party defection. It shocked and surprised other political leaders at that time. Pattom told the press conference that the Congress had seduced two of his party men and added "it is too high a price to pay for democracy"<sup>115</sup>.

After the resignation of Pattom, Panampally Govinda Menon leader of the Congress party became the Chief Minister in February 1955<sup>116</sup>. By that time the state re-organisation committee has submitted its report and within a short period the state of Kerala was formed. During this period the Socialists in Malabar had actively co-operated with the Liberation movement of French settlement at Mahe.

---

113. *Travancore Cochin Legislative Assembly Proceedings*, Vol. XII, No. 10, p. 840.

114. *Ibid.*

115. K.C. John, n. 89, p. 19.

116. *Gazette, Extraordinary*, 14<sup>th</sup> February, (Trivandrum, 1955).

## THE ROLE OF SOCIALISTS IN THE LIBERATION OF MAHE.

Though pre-independent India was under the hegemony of Britain, their arch rivals France also controlled a few colonies and one among them was Mahe on the Malabar Coast. Independence of India from the British in 1947 instilled a new vigour in the freedom movements in the French colonies. It was in 1948 these movements started public agitations against the colonial rule. The 'Mahe Mahajana Sabha' was the key player behind these agitations. The Sabha was organised by the activists of Indian National Congress and Congress Socialists. The socialist group was led by Mangalatt Raghavan, P.K. Usman, Kummaya Raghavan and I.K. Kumaran, better known as Mayyazhi Gandhi. They were considerably influenced by K. Kelappan, the Gandhian ideologist and the Congress Socialist leader of Malabar<sup>117</sup>.

The actual preparations for organised freedom struggles started in Mahe only in 1936. Colonialism was not the only enemy for the common people of Mahe. There were local feudalists to support the colonialists. They wanted the French Rule to continue in Mahe as they were patronised and pampered by the French. But the majority of the population of Mahe wanted the French to leave. With this goal in mind

---

117. Mangalatt Raghavan, n. 15.

the freedom movement became stronger in the 1940s. It was against this background that the Government of India arrived at an agreement with the French Government for a plebiscite in the French colonies regarding their freedom. Thus, it was decided to hold Municipal elections on 24<sup>th</sup> October 1948 in the whole of French India and later to conduct the plebiscite based on the decisions taken by the elected Municipal Councillors. But the Socialist party in Mahe was against this plebiscite. They had passed a resolution stating that Freedom was the birthright of the people of a nation and it should not be decided based on a plebiscite. The Mahajana Sabha headed by I.K. Kumaran was also against the proposal of the Government of India. The Socialists in the Mahajana Sabha also rejected the proposed plebiscite. However, the Congress group in the Mahajana Sabha, because of their obedience to the national party leadership, decided to co-operate with the proposed plebiscite.

Due to the withdrawal of the Socialist party, the Mahajana Sabha became weak to go ahead with the proposal. This schism in the Mahajana Sabha was a happy development for the French authorities. The communists who had some affinity with the Communist Party of France kept away from the main agitations. It was almost like the development of the Quit India movement in India in which the Communists had no dominance at all. With the support of the

Communists the French authority actively started plotting for the success in the elections. Similar to the stand taken during the Quit India movement, the Communists were not active in the movement on this occasion. The French authorities resorted to different kinds of clandestine strategies to win the elections. They had weaned the feudal leaders, excluded the anti-colonialists from the voters' list as much as possible and also lavishly used liquor, cash and kind for gaining support in their favour. In these circumstances the Socialists feared that if they kept away from the elections the colonialists would be the ultimate winners which would be a much bigger blunder than the blunder committed by the Government of India. So the Socialist unit of Mahe, with Mangalatt Raghavan as its Secretary, decided to support the Mahajana Sabha in the elections. This was a thunderbolt from the blue to the French plans. As a consequence they had to revamp their clandestine strategies.

The mere inclusion of one's name in the voter's list did not bestow on him the right to vote. Production of an identity card issued by the French authorities was mandatory for obtaining the ballot paper in the polling booth. As a last resort the French strategists decided to manipulate the process of distribution of the identity cards. They refused to issue cards to those belonging to the nationalist group. The activists of Mahajana Sabha and the Socialists who were denied the

cards marched to the Municipal Chairman, who was the leader of the French supporters, on 21<sup>st</sup> October 1948. But the Chairman denied his role in the distribution of identity cards and passed the buck to the Municipal office. Then the people under the leadership of I.K. Kumaran marched to the Municipal Office. When their demand was not met by the office they started an indefinite Satyagraha in front of the Municipal office. In the evening the authorities tried to close the office but the protestors pledged not to allow them to close the office till identity cards were issued. At this time the police intervened and tried to remove I.K. Kumaran and Narayanan Nair, a Socialist activist. When Nair responded to the police action physically, the protestors joined him and attacked the police. Outnumbered by the protestors, the Police had to flee from the scene. The uncontrolled mob ransacked the municipal office and destroyed the undistributed identity cards. The files and equipments in the office were thrown out and set on fire<sup>118</sup>. As the news spread, the entire large number of people reached the scene. Similarly armed Police and army personnel also assembled there. Seeing the armed forces some of the people fled from the scene. But Mangalatt Raghavan, the young socialist leader marched towards the armed forces, alone. Inspired by the bravery of their leader the crowd

---

118. C.H. Gangadharen, *Mayyazhi* (Mal.), (Mahe, 2002), p. 175.

also stood behind him. The police didn't resort to firing. The Administrator Periya and Commissioner Basava stopped the police from resorting to use gun fearing the consequences. Without provoking the people further, the administrator declared that the law would take its own course and the people responded that they would challenge the law appropriately. In this circumstance the Socialists and Mahajana Sabha decided to intensify their struggle against the French rule. . By that time hundreds of people moved into Mahe across the border and joined the freedom fighters. The confluence of people from Mahe and India swelled into a mighty crowd that marched towards the Police station. Among the crowd a Socialist leader, Sri. Kummaya Raghavan entered the police station and asked the police to surrender. Though initially the police commissioner Basava rejected the demand, he found him in a helpless situation and offered to surrender. Then the crowd ransacked the arms and ammunition in the station under the leadership of Mahajana Sabha activist Malikaveetil Vasudevan and Socialist worker C.H. Choyi. From that point the crowd was led by I.K. Kumaran and Mangalatt Raghavan to the office of the Administrator and from there to Naluthara, another place ruled by the French on the other side of the river. In short, on that same night the Indian nationalists captured all the institutions of French rule in

Mahe.<sup>119</sup>

The next day (22<sup>nd</sup> October), the French flag in the Government House was pulled down and Mahe witnessed the ascent of the Indian tricolour in its place. On the same day a five member defence council was formed to look after the administration of Mahe. Three of the council members, viz., I.K. Kumaran, P. Sisupalan and P.K. Raman were from Mahajana Sabha where as Mangalatt Raghavan and Kummaya Raghavan represented the socialists. Apprehending an imminent military intervention by France, Jayaprakash Narayan appealed to the Government of India to take up the issue at the United Nations. But the government refused to heed his request. As feared by Jayaprakash the French army arrived Mahe in 2 war ships. Initially an effort was made to sort out the issue in a cordial environment. But the French were adamant that they were ready to discuss the issue only after removing the Indian flag from the government house. The defence council members were not ready for such a humiliating compromise and so they decided to quit Mahe. Thus in the evening of 28<sup>th</sup> October the nationalists belonging to both Congress and Socialists left Mahe. In short, the first attempt for the liberation of Mahe was defeated due to the non-cooperation of the Government of India at

---

119. Mangalatt Raghavan, n. 15.

diplomatic level. However, the "October Revolution" could prevent the Municipal elections at Mahe.

Most of the leaders who were involved in the October revolution migrated to different parts of India adjacent to Mahe. But it was decided that those who were in the government service should remain in Mahe. The most important revolutionary thus continued to stay in Mahe was P.K. Usman. As the French considered him as one of their diehard enemies, he was arrested and sent to jail. Along with him some 11 nationalists were also arrested including Kummaya Raghavan. They were sentenced to 2 to 5 years' imprisonment. Throughout these five years Usman was continuously tortured by the jail authorities.

Though the nationalists moved out from Mahe they did not sit quite in India. Realising that the liberation of Mahe could be possible only with the support of the Indian Government they redirected their efforts in that direction. With this objective the freedom fighters of Mahe and other colonies in India organised a meeting in Bombay on 28<sup>th</sup> May 1951. In a resolution passed during this conference they appealed to the Government of India to cancel the agreement with the French authorities regarding the conduct of plebiscite in the colonies. Mahe was represented by C.E. Bharathan of Mahajana Sabha and Mangalatt Raghavan of Socialist Party. Following such resolutions, the Government of India had initiated some bold steps. The first of its kind

was to ban the transport of arms, armed French police and army personnel through Indian Territory. As a consequence Cherukallai and Naluthara areas of Mahe were isolated and the French almost lost control over them. These areas were liberated even prior to the liberation of other French areas in India.

By 1954, when liberation movements were rejuvenated, the political milieu of Mahe had taken a clear cut form and direction. At the national level the Socialist Party had become PSP. Almost all the Congressmen of Mahajana Sabha including I.K. Kumaran became members of PSP under the leadership of K. Kelappan. Therefore during this time most of the leaders who led the liberation movement belonged to PSP except people like C.E. Bharathan. The remaining Congress activists also worked with a PSP dominated Mahajana Sabha.

P.K. Usman who was arrested in connection with the October revolution was released from jail in 1953. It was he who was in the forefront during the second innings of liberation movement in Mahe. On 9<sup>th</sup> April 1954 he entered Mahe with an Indian flag in his hand and inaugurated a renewed agitation against the French. He was physically tortured by the French Police and sent to jail for a month. Following Usman, Koloth Madhava Kurup and Ponnayatt Balan Nair also intruded into Mahe and were tortured by the police.

Realising the folly of sacrificing the Nationalists in this manner the leaders of the freedom movement adopted a new method of agitation. They blocked the transit of goods to Mahe via land and sea routes. Exit and entry of people across the border was banned. The Government of India ensured rail and road transport without touching Mahe. This had resulted in the isolation of Mahe from the rest of the world. Food scarcity and other domestic difficulties pressurised the people and transformed even the ardent supporters of the colonialists into nationalists. Everybody wanted the end to French rule. Even the feudal leaders who had all along supported the French government came out of Mahe and supported the freedom movement. In the meanwhile there was a tragic incident at Cherukallai. There was an attempt to capture the police outpost on a hillock by a few workers under the leadership of the Communists. Unfortunately the attempt was miserably defeated and two communist workers viz., A.P. Anandan of Kodyeri and M. Achuthan of Gopalapettai were shot dead by the police. The next day (27<sup>th</sup> April) in a meeting of the Mahajana Sabha, Dr. Lohia paid last respects to the departed souls and called upon the people to march forward for ending the French rule with commitment for freedom.

When the siege continued the French authorities had to leave Naluthara. As a consequence on 8<sup>th</sup> May 1954 a free Naluthara came

into existence. The Nationalists considered this as a partial victory. Following this the entire band wagon of freedom fighters marched to Mahe under the stewardship of I.K. Kumaran for a total victory. The PSP leaders like K. Kelappan reached the border for blessing this march. Addressing the freedom fighters during this occasion Kelappan said, "Even if Shri. Kumaran, who is leading the volunteers to Mahe, is shot dead I will not shed even a single drop of tear .I will only congratulate him as a committed fighter who has fulfilled his responsibility." But nothing undesirable happened. Realising the need of the time the French authorities decided to leave Mahe in a friendly manner. In the discussions of 15<sup>th</sup> July the formalities for the withdrawal were decided. Accordingly on 16<sup>th</sup> July 1954 the French administrator, the Head of French military police and police officers left Mahe in a ship. Following this a committee headed by I.K. Kumaran took over the administration of Mahe. This rule lasted for 3<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> months which was followed by accession of Mahe by the Government of India along with other French colonies on 1<sup>st</sup> November 1954.

In the entire process of freedom struggle in Mahe the role of the Socialists was important. P.K. Usman who was in the forefront throughout the freedom struggle was the stalwart of Socialist party. He was born in 1924 and was a school teacher. Enraged by the misrule of

the French he had become a socialist and revolutionary. He was a member in the governing council which was temporarily formed immediately after the liberation of Mahe. The hero of Mahe's Freedom Struggle, I.K. Kumaran, was a Congressman for at least half of his lifetime and in the remaining half he was a Socialist. He was highly inspired by the activities of K. Kelappan. After independence he became the first administrator of Mahe and he retained his commitment to socialism until his last. However, in the twilight of his life he kept aloof from all political affiliations and was very active in Sarvodaya and Prohibition Movements. This development highlights that the socialists have actively participated in the agitation for freedom at Mahe. Their efforts had succeeded in throwing away the French authority at Mahe in collaboration with others. The Young socialist group in the Mahajana Sabha had been responsible for the liberation of Mahe through their agitation, struggle and sacrifice. This development highlights that Kelappan and the Socialists have actively participated in the agitation for freedom of Mahe<sup>120</sup>. In fact, they had been responsible to work as a catalytic agency to spread the ideology of freedom at the lower level.

---

120. C.H. Gangadharan, *Mayyazhi* (Mal.), (Mahe, 2002), p. 175.

# SAMYUKTHA SOCIALISTS AND COALITION MINISTRIES

Sasi Kumar.P. “The role of non-communist left movement in Kerala politics from 1942 to 1977” Thesis. Department of History, University of Calicut, 2005

**CHAPTER VII**

**SAMYUKTHA SOCIALISTS  
AND COALITION MINISTRIES**

## CHAPTER VII

# SAMYUKTHA SOCIALISTS AND COALITION MINISTRIES

The State of Kerala which formed on 1<sup>st</sup> November, 1956 comprised of major part of the erstwhile state of Travancore-Cochin (except the taluks of Thovala, Agasteeswaram, Kalkulam, Vilavancode and a portion of Shencottah which were ceded to the Madras State) and the Malabar district and the Kasargode taluk of the Madras State<sup>1</sup>. This state is the smallest among the 14 states brought into being under the State Re-organisation Act of 1956. With the de-linking of Tamil speaking areas the influence of TTNC dwindled. On the other hand, the inclusion of Malabar comprising the strongholds of the Communists created an imbalance in the Kerala politics. The loss of the support of TTNC and the inclusion of Malabar with Communist domination diminished the strength of the Congress<sup>2</sup>. However, the new formation was very helpful to the growth of the socialist party in Kerala.

The first Kerala State conference of the PSP was held on 6<sup>th</sup>

- 
1. *Kerala State Administration Report-1959-60*. Government of Kerala, Thiruvananthapuram, p. 1.
  2. Interview with M. Kumaran, Ex. MLA & CPI leader, in his residence at Vatakara on 23<sup>rd</sup> June, 1994.

January 1957 at Puthukkad in Narendradeva Nagar. The deliberations were mainly centered on two issues:- one was the formation of the state committee of the PSP, and the other was the formation of the strategies for the impending general elections. The state committee was formed with Pattom Thanu Pillai as Chairman and M.P. Govinda Menon as General Secretary. K.B. Menon, Arangil Sreedharan, P.R. Kurup, P.M. Kunhiraman Nambiar and K. Kunhirama Kurup were the other prominent leaders who represented Malabar in the committee<sup>3</sup>. In this conference heated debate occurred regarding the election strategy. Majority of the representatives from Malabar argued for keeping an equal distance with Congress as well as Communist parties, on the basis of the guidelines of the Gaya Conference. But, delegates from Travancore-Cochin argued for the implementation of the Bangalore resolution<sup>4</sup>.

The new Kerala state had a 126 member Legislature to which elections were fixed to be held between February 28 and March 11, 1957<sup>5</sup>. Certain Socialist activists pleaded for Communist alliance on the ground that the Communists had bid farewell to revolutionary method

---

3. Interview with K. Kunhirama Kurup at Vatakara on 22<sup>nd</sup> June, 1994.

4. The PSP National Council meeting at Bangalore recognised election adjustments with other parties at constituency level.

5. C.N. Somarajan, *Aspects of Kerala Society and Politics*, (Quilon, 1983), p. 24.

and they are ready to co-operate with democratic process<sup>6</sup>. However the discussion with the Communist leaders in this regard failed and CPI decided to contest in the election independently<sup>7</sup>. In this circumstance PSP continued the effort to form electoral adjustments with the Muslim League<sup>8</sup>. After series of discussions an agreement was signed between Muslim League leaders K.M. Seethi and K.B. Menon<sup>9</sup>. Menon was a democrat and he believed that in a democracy minority occupies a unique position. The political importance of the cultural and religious minority was duly analysed by Menon and he wrote "In North Kerala comprising Kasargode and erstwhile Malabar there are 18½ lakhs of Muslims which is  $\frac{2}{3}$  of the Muslim population of the whole state. Major portion of this is concentrated in the taluks of Ernad, Tirur and Valluvanad, which comes up to 90 to 95 percent. The constituencies where there are heavy concentrations of Muslims are Tanur, Tirur, Tiruvangadi, Kuttipuram, Malappuram, Mankada, Manjeri, Kondotti, Perinthalmanna, Koduvalli, Nadapuram, Ponnani and Andathode. There are large numbers of Muslims in Quilandy,

---

6. P.K. Appa Nair, *PSP and Public Election, Samadarshi*, 13<sup>th</sup> September, 1956.

7. M. Kumaran, n. 2.

8. Interview with Kuttiyil Narayan in his residence at Vatakara on 5<sup>th</sup> April, 2005.

9. *Ibid.*

Madai, Pattambi, Cannanore town and Kozhikode”<sup>10</sup>. He thoroughly estimated the political importance of Muslim minority. However, he did not consider this not only as political strategy but also as a policy of national integration and communal harmony. He decided to uplift the Muslim League which was considered “untouchables” especially by the Congress, to the main stream of national politics. He wrote “In a backward economy where the cultural and religious groups are subject to political exploitation, the problem of minorities become more complicated, delicate and difficult. Such minorities often times are relatively more backward, as in the case in Kerala with the Muslim community. An anchorage has therefore to be found in some political set up for these backward minority communities that they may be saved from political exploitations by interested individuals or institutions. In these backward communities, religion and culture are often the only two cementing factors that keep the community intact and ward off fissiparous tendencies, deliberately fomented by political interest, the only escape is to allow them to organize politically as well. These minorities as and when they come up educationally and economically on a par with other communities. They are almost to

---

10. K.B. Menon, Muslim Minority in Kerala State, NMM&L, New Delhi

merge their political interest with larger political parties organised on democratic lines<sup>11</sup>. The alliance with the PSP enhanced the prestige of the Muslim League which had been described by Nehru as 'dead horse', and at the same time it proved beneficial to the PSP also. The association with PSP leaders was whole heartedly appreciated by the Muslim League leadership. Even in the remote country side there was co-operation between the workers of both parties. Muslim league leaders like C.H. Mohammed Koya and Bafakki Thangal, while they were addressing the election meetings, required the assistance and presence of Socialist leaders like Arangil Sreedharan<sup>12</sup>.

In the election of 1957 PSP contested in 62 constituencies but won only 9 seats<sup>13</sup>. The IUML obtained 8 seats. K.B. Menon who contested in the Vatakara parliamentary constituency was also elected. The CPI became the single largest party in the legislative<sup>14</sup>. In a house of 126, the communist party had 60 members and the support of 5 independent members. The communists had a clear majority<sup>15</sup> certain developments during 1953-56 which indicated that the Communist Party of India had

---

11. *Ibid.*

12. Kuttiyil Narayanan, n. 8.

13. Please see Appendix V (A) for the names of 9 PSP MLAs.

14. C.N. Somarajan, n. 5, p. 24.

15. Victor, M. Fic, *Kerala Yenan of India*, (Bombay, 1970), p.62.

started believing in peaceful and constitutional means to achieve socialism, that the parties' attitude to the Nehru government was profoundly changed for the better, that the party was prepared to function as a parliamentary opposition, that the ideological difference between the Indian National Congress and the communist party as regards the goal had been considerably narrowed down with the formers adoption of the goal of socialist pattern of society. This change was responsible to a large extent for making a large number of non-political and non-communist people of Kerala, who were disgusted with the Congress regime to vote in the 1957 election for the communist party. Actually the people of Kerala were fed of the rule of the state by Congress and PSP. They wanted an alternative. They thought - "All right, now let us see what the communists are going to do and how they differ from their predecessors. If they fare well, then it is good otherwise they will also have the same fate as the Congress and the PSP."<sup>16</sup> As in the PSP National Conference Nov. 9, 1959 Basawan Sinha, chairman presented a resolution on Kerala which states, "In disgust the people voted Communists to power. This did not however mean that they had begun to subscribe to the basic tenets of

---

16. Interview with G. Kumara Pillai at Sreekrishna College, Guruvayur on 4<sup>th</sup> September, 1997.

communism<sup>17</sup>.

In the election of 1954 PSP secured 19 seats. But in the election of 1957 PSP got only 9 seats which did not show any progress in performance. Even though they had the co-operation of Muslim League they had no chance of getting a clear majority in the Assembly to provide a state government. On April 5<sup>th</sup> 1957, a CPI ministry with EMS Namboodiripad as Chief Minister assumed office in the state<sup>18</sup>. The Communist ministry introduced two significant pieces of legislations, the Kerala Legislation Bill and Kerala Agrarian Relations Bill. These bills were passed to redeem the pledge in the election manifesto of 1957. This aimed agrarian reforms for ameliorating the condition of agricultural labours. The anti-eviction ordinance offered protection to more than 20000 families<sup>19</sup>. The agrarian relations bill passed in June 1957 was opposed mainly by Nair and Christian landlords and supported by agricultural labourers and cultivators belonging mostly to the Ezhava community. The hasty introduction of agrarian reforms was sought to be justified by the prevalent food

---

17. O.P. Ralhan (Ed.), *Documents on Socialist Movement in India*, Vol. 21. (New Delhi, 2000), p. 205.

18. *Kerala State Administration Report. 1958-59*, Government of Kerala, Thiruvananthapuram, p. 3.

19. Election manifesto of the State Council of the CPI (1959), p. 24

shortage. An earnest attempt was made to improve the distribution system by setting up fair price shops. The induction of members of political parties mostly belonging to the CPI in local vigilance committees authorised to inspect fair price shops created problems<sup>20</sup>. The inclusion of party members in advisory council is only democratic but investing them with the executive power of inspection is both anti-democratic and illegal.<sup>21</sup>

The reform of the education system was also included in the CPI manifesto of 1957<sup>22</sup>. The education bill included provisions for ensuring the security of service of teachers and payment of adequate salary for them. Conferences were held by the education minister with leaders and managers in order to judge the acceptability of the proposed bill<sup>23</sup>. The Christian managements, which opposed the bill, were more apprehensive of indoctrination than were actuated by the desire to control their schools. One real purpose of the bill has been stated to be the injection of Communist ideology among students and the ultimate establishment of Communist dictatorship. The Malabar

---

20. Documented statement on Kerala submitted by K.B. Menon to the speaker of Lok Sabha. p. 3.

21. *Ibid.*

22. Election manifesto of the State Council of the CPI (1957). p. 36.

23. *Deepika*, 24<sup>th</sup> April, 1957.

Catholic Association and the protestant Christian associations in their resolution against the reform proposals stated that the government "wanted to effect a thorough change in the educational system, with the ulterior aim of injecting into the children atheism and other aspects of Communism". The campaign against the bill was intensified when the new school text books contained indoctrinating material<sup>24</sup>. The Christian church hoisted the flag of opposition against the education bill and the Nair Service Society became infuriated by the Agrarian Relations Bill. The ministry also failed to solve the two pressing problems- shortage of food and unemployment.<sup>25</sup>

In this situation Nairs and Christians under the leadership of Mannath Padmanabhan organised the *Vimochana Samaram* with the object of ousting the Communist from power. They were liberally assisted by the opposition parties particularly the Congress. In the PSP conference held at Kollam P.K. Kunju presented a resolution to support them. Then onwards PSP actively participated in the struggle to overthrow the communists. But some of the PSP leaders kept silence while passing the resolution because of fear of isolation and

---

24. Memorandum presented to the President by the Kerala School Managers Association. NMM&L, New Delhi, p. 14.

25. E.M.S. Namboodiripad, *Twenty eight months in Kerala: A Retrospect*, (New Delhi, 1959), p. 16.

manhandling.<sup>26</sup> Why did the PSP assist the communist casteist groups? According to K.B. Menon it is against the authoritarian cell rule of the communists that the PSP fought<sup>27</sup>. He justified his part in the 'Liberation Struggle' in these words "Legally I am guilty of committing an offence but morally I have done my duty".<sup>28</sup> According to him the PSP participated in the Liberation struggle against the failure of Communists to preserve the Civil Liberties of the people. Menon submitted to the speaker of Lok Sabha a statement regarding the breakdown of the Constitution and the Rule of Law. It stated "the conditions that have developed in Kerala state since the communists formed their government are fundamentally different from other states in the Union. These conditions have steadily worsened and it is now obvious that they formed part of a calculated design of administration wholly incompatible with our democratic constitution"<sup>29</sup>.

He brought forward illustratively some evidence that brings out the policies pursued by the Government of Kerala that have led to a

---

26. Interview with K. Chandrasekharan in his office at Ernakulam on 10<sup>th</sup> April, 2005.

27. K.B. Menon papers, *Record of Communist Rule in Kerala*, NMM&L, New Delhi. p. 3.

28. *Crusade against Communism - A Pictorial survey* (Kozhikode, 1959), p. 4.

29. K.B. Menon papers, n. 27

breakdown of administration there as envisaged by the constitution. He alleged that the executive as well as the members of the Communist party interfered in the work of Judiciary. Again he accused that the government interfered with police and administration to enable the party members to terrorise the people. Since the *Vimochana Samaram* was a mass upsurge the political parties also joined it for fear of isolation from the people. The real cause of Liberation struggle was not the radical reform measures but the fear psychosis of the peace loving public of Kerala.

The *Vimochana Samaram* started on 12<sup>th</sup> June 1959 which was declared as 'deliverance day'<sup>30</sup>. Day after day hundreds of people, including women participated in the picketing and other agitation programmes of the struggle, for nearly two months. Police opened fire at several places, used lathis to beat up volunteers and put thousands behind prison bars<sup>31</sup>. The agitation attracted world wide attention. The matter was discussed in the Parliament and Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru visited Trivandrum and held discussion with different sections of the people. On his way back to Delhi at the airport press reporters asked what he thought about the situation in Kerala. He hesitated for a

---

30. John John, P, *Coalition Governments of Kerala*, (Trivandrum, 1983), p. 76.

31. K.C. John, *The Melting Pot Kerala: 1950's - 1970's*, (Trivandrum, 1975), p. 65.

while and said that he thought it was 'mass upsurge'<sup>32</sup>. This sealed the fate of Communist ministry. The Central Government dismissed the Communist government on 31<sup>st</sup> July, 1959 and imposed President's rule. The role of PSP volunteers in this agitation may be meagre but leaders like Pattom and K.B. Menon actively participated and imparted an additional moral support to the agitation. The national conference of the party congratulated the people of Kerala on the victory in their struggle against communist misrule and paid its homage to those who made the supreme sacrifice of their life at the altar of freedom<sup>33</sup>.

The mid term elections held on February 1, 1960 was marked by the co-operation of all the democratic forces in order to avoid triangular contest and splitting of votes<sup>34</sup>. "Communism should be rooted out" - was the slogan heard from all the leaders of the rightists in the election campaign<sup>35</sup>. With a mutual understanding the Congress party contested in 80 seats, the PSP in 33 and Muslim League 12 seats among the total seats of 126. The elections were a fight between the Congress party and her allies on one side and the Communists and their allies on the other. An important theme of the election campaign

---

32. *Ibid.*

33. O.P. Ralhan (Ed.), n. 17, p. 324.

34. C.N. Somarajan, n. 5, p. 26.

35. John John, P. n. 30, p. 77.

was the demand for the complete eradication of Communism from Kerala. In the election Congress won 63, the PSP 20 and the IUML 11 seats<sup>36</sup>. While the coalition parties secured 94 seats out of 126, the Communist party and its partners secured merely 29 seats. As the INC-PSP, League alliance captured 94 seats in the house of 129 a new coalition ministry has to be formed.

It was time for the alliance to choose the Chief Minister. There was the PSP leader Pattom who never had doubts about his right to Chief Ministership. The Congress was unwilling to have him. But eventually it was the Congress central leadership that offered a compromise. Pattom would be the Chief Minister and the Congress leader R. Shanker would be his deputy. Reluctantly, the Congress unit accepted the formula. Thus the PSP leader Pattom Thanu Pillai assumed office on 22 Feb 1960<sup>37</sup>. Chandrasekharan and D. Damodaran Potti were the other PSP representatives in the ministry. The speakership was offered to Muslim League and Seethi Saheb became the speaker<sup>38</sup>. Chandrasekharan was one of the youngest members of the cabinet with socialist temperament. He belonged to Kottil Marath

---

36. See Appendix VI for election results.

37. C.N. Somarajan, n. 5, p. 26.

38. N. Jose Chander (Ed.), *Dynamics of State Politics in Kerala* (New Delhi, 1986), p. 152

Taravadu in Trichur<sup>39</sup>. He had his education in Trichur, Ernakulam and Madras. While he was studying in the Law College Madras, he came in to contact with K.B. Menon and Achuth Patwardhan and attracted to Socialist movement<sup>40</sup>. He was imbued with high socialist ideals and ambitions. But the very first meeting of the Cabinet, his enthusiasm became a laughing point for his leader Pattom. It happened when he suggested two things, first, the elimination of the princely heritage on cars used by the ministers. In the former Travancore state the royal family's cars had red number plates with 'state car' written on every number plate. Chandrasekharan suggested that the cars used by the ministers should not have this distinction and they should be like any other car used by a citizen. Pattom ignored the suggestion by saying "You know my young friend; Chandrasekharan is after all an idealist"<sup>41</sup>. The second suggestion was that there should be no police firing. Pattom reacted sharply to the suggestion. He said that it was an impractical suggestion. But the Home minister P.T. Chacko noted the suggestion and later two of them agreed to implement it. As Revenue Minister Chandrasekharan instructed his

---

39. K. Chandrasekharan, n. 26.

40. *Ibid.*

41. K.C. John, n. 31, p. 72.

district magisterial authorities not to issue any order for firing. Thus during the period of second Pattom ministry, in Kerala there occurred no police firing<sup>42</sup>.

A special conference of PSP was held at Aluva on 2, 3, and 4 of June. The purpose of the conference was to evaluate the working of the ministry and to make the PSP rank and file more enthusiastic. But what happened in the meeting was quite against the prospects of the party. Certain members attending the meeting showed their unrest and discontent at the performance of the party. They questioned the right of Pattom to hold the posts of party President as well as the Chief Minister<sup>43</sup>. This protest was only a prelude to the staunch attack upon Pattom in the next session. The fourth state conference of the PSP was held at Ernakulam. A resolution was moved questioning the right of Pattom to hold twin positions at a time. A heated debate took place and the resolution was voted out which in turn was a victory to the Chief Minister. However, open contest took place in this session for the post of the party chairmanship. C.G. Janardhanan was the candidate against Pattom and P.M. Muhammed Ali contested for the post of General Secretary against the official candidate Arangil Sreedharan.

---

42. K. Chandrasekharan, n. 26.

43. John John, P., n. 30, p. 87

When the election result was declared, Pattom came out victorious bagging votes four times than that of his opponent. Even though defeated, C.G. Janardhanan continued his fight against Pattom. Another PSP leader who hoisted the flag of protest against Pattom was P.K. Kunju. Both of them were dissatisfied because they were not included in the ministry. The state leadership discussed the matter and decided not to allow such fissiparous tendencies inside the party. However, C.G. Janardhanan continued his criticism against Pattom. The party state Executive Committee discussed this matter and decided to suspend C.G. Janardhanan from the party. Another leader, P.K. Kunju, who severely criticised Pattom was also dismissed<sup>44</sup>.

The third public election to the Lok Sabha made the situation more complicated. Pattom Krishna Pillai, the PSP candidate of Trivandrum, was the father-in-law of Pattom who had no PSP background. His candidature was questioned by P.S. Nataraja Pillai and Ponnara Sridhar. Nataraja Pillai submitted nomination against Pattom Krishna Pillai, but it was in vain. Thereafter, the party decided to expel P.S. Nataraja Pillai and Ponnara Sridhar. All the four candidates fielded by PSP including K.B. Menon were defeated in the

---

44. *Ibid.*, p. 89.

Lok Sabha election, which was a blow to Pattom<sup>45</sup>. Simultaneously, certain Congress leaders raised questions against the leaders. Pattom and Congress Deputy Chief Minister R. Shanker never liked or respected each other. But circumstances forced them to work in coalition ministry. It was a strain on both. On his return from foreign tour Shanker was not given back the portfolios of education which he held along with other portfolios before his departure. Congress demanded that it be given back to Sanker<sup>46</sup>. As the Chief Minister in charge of education, Pattom unilaterally approved his own list of new schools to be sanctioned for the next year. Congress felt cheated because its list of schools was not given the due share of recognition. A crisis in the relations between the Congress and the PSP developed. It was over this small issue that the Congress and the PSP ended their political alliance.

At this juncture V.V. Giri became the Governor of Kerala and Lal Bahadur Shastri became the Union Home Minister. Soon a close understanding evolved among Home Minister P.T. Chacko, V.V. Giri and Shastri. The Shastri-Giri-Chacko trio worked in consultation with

---

45. Interview with Edayath Krishnan, prominent socialist, in his residence at Puthur on 20<sup>th</sup> March, 1996.

46. K.C. John, n. 31, p. 69.

Shanker to resolve the deadlock that was by now affecting the administration. They decided to avoid Pattom from Chief Ministership without hurting him. At the end of the drama Pattom was appointed Governor of Punjab. He tendered his resignation from Chief Ministership to the Governor on 25<sup>th</sup> September 1962. After the abdication of Pattom, Ponnara Sridhar and P.K. Kunju returned to PSP. The PSP leadership evaluated this incident as treachery by the Congress. N.G. Goray, General Secretary of the PSP, commented on Thanu Pillai's acceptance of the new appointment, that "I can only pity the greed for authority that has prompted this veteran leader of Kerala to accept this appointment. He has not only betrayed the PSP but also the masses in Kerala with whose help he rose to such eminence."<sup>47</sup>

This matter was discussed in the national executive held at Madras. The party executive instructed PSP ministers D. Damodaran Potti and K. Chandrasekharan to resign from coalition cabinet. They resigned from the ministry obeying the party decision<sup>48</sup>. The resignation of these two ministers is a rare example of personal sacrifice for the larger interest of the party. The end of the coalition and

---

47. *The Hindu*, 27<sup>th</sup> September, 1962.

48. C.N. Somarajan, n. 5, p. 26

the alliance of the non-communist parties of Kerala gave the signal for the evolution of an alliance against the Congress. The Communist party which was trying for an anti-congress alliance tabled a non-confidential motion against the Congress ministry<sup>49</sup>. Even though it was defeated, the move started a series of political developments which ultimately pushed the Congress to the opposition benches.

The Aluva Conference of 1963 was a landmark in the history of the Socialists of Kerala. The All India chairman of the PSP, S.M. Jhoshi, and General Secretary, Prem Bhasin, actively participated in the proceedings. Highlighting the democratic character of the party a bitter contest took place for the post of State Chairman and Secretary. In this contest K. Chandrasekharan and P. Viswambharam were elected Chairman and Secretary respectively. It was Chandrasekharan who aided the destiny of State PSP when move for the merger between PSP and SP took place at the national level. The joint conference of these parties was held and it unanimously decided the name of the new party to be SSP<sup>50</sup>.

The poor performance of the 1962 elections brought abject

---

49. John John, P, n. 30, p. 97.

50. P.R. Kurup, *Ente Nadinte Katha, Enteyum*, (Kottayam, 1985), p. 323.

demoralisation and triggered off a process of rethinking within the PSP. Two main lines of thinking emerged in the party. The first line of thinking was put forward by Asoka Mehta who lost hope of the PSP ever becoming an instrument to play a major role in the development of the country. He reached the conclusion that PSP had no future and it would have no impact on policies if it remained in the opposition. As it was such a minor party, it had few funds and this restricted its activities. The Congress in the meantime was becoming more socialistic. Perhaps by joining the Congress and strengthening the Socialist element inside it. The party members could still play some useful role<sup>51</sup>. Another way of thinking was initiated by S.M. Joshi and his lieutenants. They believed that the party kept changing its strategies and so people had stopped taking it seriously. They felt that the party should be built upon its own strength without leaning on any other party. They attributed the poor results of 1962 elections to the fact that there were two Socialist parties, which confused the masses. Hence they pleaded for Socialist unity<sup>52</sup>.

The National executive meeting of the PSP after the elections of

---

51. Sonal Shah, *Indian Socialists' Search for Identity*, (Bombay, 1994), p. 106.

52. Edayath Krishnan, n. 45.

1962 gave a call for Socialist unity<sup>53</sup>. But the attitude of the Socialist party was negative. However after the Chinese aggression of 1962 there was a change in the attitude of Lohia. The Chinese attack re-kindled sentiments of patriotism and of the need for national integration to unify the badly divided country. A new phase in negotiations was initiated on January 28, 1964, when Lohia proposed that his party should merge with the PSP unconditionally. The majority of the party, who wanted Socialist unity, jumped at Lohia's call. The National Ad hoc Committee had its first meeting under the chairmanship of S.M. Joshi and formally effected the merger on June 7, 1964. The meeting unanimously decided to name of the new party to be Samyuktha Socialist Party<sup>54</sup>.

The aim and objectives of SSP were more or less same as that of PSP. The SSP pledged that the non-congress government which would be based on a coalition of several parties would implement the following programmes like abolition of land revenue, a seven year plan to provide irrigation water to all land where irrigation was possible, the balancing between agricultural and industrial prices was

---

53. Minutes of the PSP National Executive meeting, New Delhi, Sept. 25-27, 1963. (T.H. Asokan's Collection).

54. Sonal Shah, n. 51, p. 112.

also proposed. In order to check the evils of absentee land ownership a minimum level of production for all land was fixed. Another suggestion was to facilitate mechanised farming in private lands.

The programmes of the SSP included certain economic measures like placing limit on the expense of rich people and scientific, rationalization and modernization of production. It also suggested fixing the ceiling of earning of 1500/- a month. Like the PSP, the SSP also felt that for achieving prosperity through equality, the difference between the maximum and minimum earning should not be more than 10:1. Wasteful expenditure and needless extravagance had to be reduced. A ceiling of expenditure for everybody had to be fixed and not merely for the government employees. They were particular about confiscation of corrupt money, which had been proved to be corrupt, by an independent Enquiry Commission<sup>55</sup>.

The SSP was highly critical of the disappointment and frustration which had been the result of the uninterrupted rule of the Congress in the country. The SSP desired to enkindle new enthusiasm and hope among the desperate people by enforcing measures for

---

55. V.P. Varma, *Modern Indian Political Thought*, (Agra, 1991), Pp. 619-20.

equitable distribution of land, minimum wages for agricultural labour and property right for women. It wanted to provide equal opportunities for the backward sections like women, Harijans, Adivasis and minorities for their development. The party stood for universal education. It stressed that the expenditure on all kinds of primary schools should be the same. It insisted on closing all expensive primary schools within six months. The party insisted that the mother tongue would be the medium of education and English would cease to be a medium of instruction. The aim of SSP was to achieve a Socialist society, free from social, political and economic exploitation of man by man and of nation by nation and to finish the Congress.

The Socialist re-union at National level, in the beginning itself, faced with difficulties. The foundation conference of the SSP began in Varanasi on Jan 29, 1965. Immediately after the flag hoisting ceremony, argument ensued between two groups of delegates - Lohiaist and PSPist. During the same afternoon there was procession through the streets of Varanasi, in which two groups shouted slogan against each other and that ended in a clash. Harbhajan Singh a member of the NAHC from Punjab and Kamala Sinha a PSP delegate from Bihar was

insulted and maltreated<sup>56</sup>. The PSP members were highly insulted and they decided to leave the party. Representing PSP group H.V. Kamat read out a memorandum signed by 12 of the 14 member PSP delegation to the NAHC. The memorandum said that the merger of 1964 was tentative and that in view of this the PSP had decided not to go through with it. After the declaration the 12 members followed by 625 delegates represented the PSP left the Conference hall to hold a separate conclave<sup>57</sup>. The major factor in the separation was a belated realization that the outlook of the two parties was really not reconcilable. While the primary duty of the SSP was to overthrow the Congress even in co-operation with the Communists, the PSP considered itself as having an uncompromising opposition to both Communist parties<sup>58</sup>. The PSP elected N.G. Goray of Maharashtra as the Chairman of the party.

After the Varanasi Conference the PSP rushed to re-establish itself as an independent entity and regain control over the old local and state committees. In Kerala the attempt was a failure, because

---

56. K.Chandrasekharan, n. 26.

57. The twelve members of the PSP that walked out were - N.J. Goray, Prem Bhasin, Harbhajan Singh, H.V. Kamath, Brij Mohan Toofan, Hem Barua, S. N. Dwivedy, Sanat Mehta, Triloki Singh, Basawan Sinha, Debu Bose and Mukut Beharilal.

58. Victor, M. Fic. n. 15, p. 184

K. Chandrasekharan who was one of the 14 PSP delegates to the Ad hoc unification committee, refused to return to the old fold. He retained a substantial portion of the old PSP members with in the organization of the SSP in Kerala<sup>59</sup>. This was a significant development which weakened the democratic camp in Kerala and led to an electoral alignment of the SSP with CPI (M) in the midterm elections. This was another example of the vacillating and rather erratic behaviour of the PSP, another swing of the pendulum to the left and then its return to the old position which in its phase on the left had always proved immensely beneficial to the Communist movement. It was K. Chandrasekharan who guided the destiny of the state PSP when move for the merger between PSP and SP took place at the national level<sup>60</sup>.

In 1965, mid-term elections were declared to the 133 constituencies of the Kerala legislative Assembly. The elections as usual were characterised by opportune and communal alliances. The alliances were formed with the aim of establishing a stable government. Though the Muslim League was labelled as communal the alliance was mainly formed on the ground of ending the corrupt

---

59. K.Chandrasekharan, n. 26.

60. Interview with T.H. Asokan Master on 28<sup>th</sup>March, 2005 in his residence at Puthuppanam, 1985.

rule during the past many years. An agreement was reached between CPI (M) and SSP and at the same time SSP made certain electoral adjustment with Muslim League to avoid competition in certain constituencies.

The Kerala unit of SSP as a whole remained with the National SSP. But minority group under Attingal Gopala Pillai and B. Akhileshwaran declared their allegiance to PSP. When the election result declared SSP won 13, the CPI (M) won 40 and Congress won 36 seats<sup>61</sup>. However, SSP tremendously benefited from its cooperation and electoral adjustment of seats with the CPI (M). Yet SSP did not succeed in winning as many votes and seats as the old PSP had won in the last coalition with the Congress in 1960 midterm election.

The formation of a ministry by any single party became impossible because no single party got majority. However, K.B. Menon was one of the senior leaders elected. There was a rumour that this veteran freedom fighter Menon will give leadership to the formation of a coalition ministry with the support of CPI (M) and Kerala Congress. But the legislative assembly party meeting held at Ernakulam on 13 March 1965 elected P.R. Kurup as the leader of the party in the

---

61. *Assembly Election Since 1951*, (Trivandrum, 1985), p. 4.

assembly ignoring the claim of K.B. Menon<sup>62</sup>. On this occasion Eventhough Menon put forward his claim for party leadership, only very few supported this Gandhian ideologist<sup>63</sup>. P.K. Kunju also initiated the formation of a ministry but it did not materialise due to the stringent attitude of P.R. Kurup. Wounded by this bitter experience Menon resigned his membership in the SSP. The State Committee of SSP decided not to make any further attempt for the formation of the ministry but to support any ministry other than that of Congress. However, the Governor V.V. Giri did not give any chance to horse trade and dismissed the Legislative Assembly on March 24, 1969<sup>64</sup>. If K.B. Menon had been elected as the leader of the SSP Legislative wing there would have been chances for him to form a ministry<sup>65</sup>. Menon being a freedom fighter, a Ph.D holder in Economics, a celebrated Parliamentarian and a member of Madras Assembly was very much competent to lead the SSP in the assembly. Eventhough he raised his claim, the senior most was denied his chance and P.R. Kurup was

---

62. Interview with K. Balachandra Menon, a relative of K.B. Menon, in his residence at Pymkulam on 28<sup>th</sup> June, 1995.

63. K. Chandrasekharan, *The Face of Freedom*, (New Delhi, 1991), p. 18.

64. *Mathrubhumi Daily*, 25<sup>th</sup> March, 1969.

65. Interview with Surendranath, relative of K.B. Menon, at PVS College for Women on 25<sup>th</sup> May, 1995.

elected as leader<sup>66</sup>. Thus the Socialists lost an opportunity to form a ministry. But in the opinion of K. Chandrasekharan, Even though K.B. Menon was elected as parliamentary party leader there was no scope of forming a ministry due to the peculiar party position in the Assembly<sup>67</sup>. Once again Kerala came under Governor's rule.

Attempts were made to make the Socialist Party strong and more applicable to all sections of society. The first annual conference of the SSP of Kerala was held at Tellicherry on 4, 5 and 6 of February 1966. The meeting elected D. Damodaran Potti as Chairman and K. Kunhirama Kurup General Secretary<sup>68</sup>. The party decided to strengthen the foundation of the party by forming auxiliary association like youth wing and ladies wing. They decided to become a part of the newly formed anti-congress alliance of seven left oriented parties with the aim of contesting in the 1967 election. The leadership to this anti-congress alliance was given by the Communist Party of India (M). The other members of the alliance were CPI, RSP, Muslim League, SSP, KSP and KTP. Kerala went to the polls with the March 1967 General

---

66. K. Kunhirama Kurup, *Kazhinjha Arupathu Varshangal* (Mal), (Orkatteri, 1993), p. 119

67. K. Chandrasekharan, n. 26.

68. K. Kunhirama Kurup, n. 3.

Elections. In the triangular election Left Democratic Front came out successful. Amongst them CPI (M) got 52 seats and became the major party<sup>69</sup>. The SSP fielded 21 candidates and 19 of them were elected. Three candidates contested in the Lok Sabha elections and also won<sup>70</sup>. The members elected to Lok Sabha were P. Viswambharan from Trivandrum, G.P. Mangalathu Madom from Mavelikkara and Arangil Sreedharan from Vatakara. K. Chandrasekharan was elected to the Rajya Sabha.

A ministry under the leadership of EMS Namboodirippad assumed power on 6<sup>th</sup> March 1967<sup>71</sup>. P.R. Kurup and P.K. Kunju represented the Socialist party in the ministry<sup>72</sup>. P.K. Kunju was given the charge of finance and P.R. Kurup, co- operation and irrigation<sup>73</sup>. D. Damodaran Potti became the Speaker of the Assembly. An analysis of the nature of the portfolios would reveal the pre-dominance of the CPI (M). The SSP was given finance except agriculture, income tax and sales tax, which was included in the Revenue department. P.R. Kurup was given irrigation without agriculture.<sup>74</sup>

---

69. n. 61.

70. Please see Appendix VIII (A) for the elected SSP candidates.

71. Victor M. Fic, n. 15.

72. K. Kunhirama Kurup, n. 66, p. 119.

73. P.R. Kurup, n. 50, p. 118.

74. T.J. Nossitter, *Communism in Kerala- A Study in Political Adaptation*, (Delhi, 1982), p. 215.

Within two months after the assumption of charge there developed dissension among the ruling front. The situation became turbulent when the members of the ruling front questioned the big brother approach of CPI (M) and raised certain allegations<sup>75</sup>. The crisis became too acute when CPI (M) Chief Minister declined to order an enquiry into the allegations of corruption against the CPI (M) Food Minister and the Health Minister of KTP, a loyal ally of the CPI (M), on the ground that there was no *prima facie* case against them. The CPI, Muslim League and the Indian Socialist Party denounced Namboodiripad's act in giving a clean bill to his Marxist colleague and KTP Health Minister. They alleged that this was inconsistent with Chief Minister's previous action in ordering an inquiry into allegations against the ISP-Finance Minister. The Chairman of the ISP wondered whether the CPI (M) wanted the charges against the two ministers to lie in the outer space with no one to look into them.

In June 1969 the Chief Minister warned that the united front in Kerala was in grave danger and charged that CPI was mainly responsible for this situation. He called upon CPI to mend its ways, to abandon the path of slander, and to come round to bilateral and

---

75. John John, P. n. 30, p.138.

collective discussion of all controversial issues. The feud between the CPI (M) and the CPI in Kerala led to the formation of an anti-CPI (M) front within the United Front, consisting of the CPI, the ISP, the RSP and the Muslim League<sup>76</sup>. In June 1969 the CPI (M) warned other constituents of the front of the serious consequences of aligning themselves with the CPI against the CPI (M). But M.N. Govindan Nair, the CPI minister said that if the CPI (M) continued to pose as 'big party' and tried to dictate terms to others in the coalition, it would affect the smooth functioning of the government. He warned that the "reactionary and sectarian" attitude adopted by the CPI (M) with regard to the inquiry into the corruption charges against ministers would spell disaster for the United Front<sup>77</sup>. In July 1969, the Central Executive Committee of the CPI charged that Namboodiripad was functioning as the "Captain of the CPI (M) ministerial team rather than as the head of the council of ministers". The committee said "the leadership of the CPI (M) had been systematically using its strength and position not to sustain and strengthen United Front or its government, but to brow beat, weaken, if not eliminate, other partners

---

76. *Ibid.*, Pp.138-139.

77. M. Kumaran, n. 2.

in the front<sup>78</sup>” On October 1967 these four parties also described as the mini-front declared that the continuance of the Namboodiripad ministry was against the mandate given by the people to the United Front and that the United Front was wrecked by the sectarian big party bossism of the CPI (M).<sup>79</sup> The four parties accused that the Chief Minister had misused his powers and had adopted double standards with regard to the probe into corruption charges as was evident from the fact that when charges were made first against three ministers, one each of ISP, CPI (M) and KTP, the Chief Minister chose to order an inquiry against the ISP minister only and exonerated the CPI (M) minister and the minister belonging to the KTP, which was loyal to the CPI (M). Much offended P.K. Kunju resigned from the ministry. The ministry soon ran into rough weather and Chief Minister Namboodiripad resigned on October 24, 1969<sup>80</sup>.

In the mean time problems developed in the Socialist Party and the situation became more complex. An incident which occurred at the national level had reverberation in the Kerala politics and it shattered the foundation of SSP as well as the ministry. A new agreement was

---

78. *The Statesman*, 28<sup>th</sup> June, 1969.

79. *The Times of India*, 20<sup>th</sup> October, 1969.

80. n. 61, p. 8.

signed between Government of India and Pakistan by which strategic area of Rann of Kutch was handed over to Pakistan<sup>81</sup>. SSP questioned this agreement and started nationwide agitation against the transfer of Rann of Kutch. The party convention held at Gaya decided to direct the SSP ministers of Kerala and Madhya Pradesh to go to Kutch and give leadership to the agitation. They were also instructed to resign from the ministry and start popular agitation in their own states against Central government policy.

The State Convention of SSP held at Ernakulam on 15<sup>th</sup> April 1968 discussed the national council decision to compel the ministers to resign<sup>82</sup>. In the context the meeting resolved to sever all their relations with the national council. The Central Committee reacted soon and it suspended the state chairman K. Chandrasekharan and secretary K. Kunhیرama Kurup from the party<sup>83</sup>. An ad hoc committee was formed with K.A. Sivarama Bharathy as Chairman and A.K. Appu as secretary<sup>84</sup>. K.K. Abu was nominated as the legislative party leader in place of P.R. Kurup. Soon Sivarama Bharathy and K.K. Abu participated in the Rann of Kutch agitation and courted arrest.

---

81. Sonal Shah, n. 51, p. 125

82. K. Kunhیرama Kurup, n. 3.

83. *Ibid.*

84. Interview with A.K. Appu, Ex. MLA, in his residence at Kakkur on 18<sup>th</sup> November, 2003

In this circumstances amongst the 19 MLAs 13 were within the dissident group. All the members of Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha remained with the dissident group. In short the official wing was very weak except for their national relation. Meanwhile the state conference of the party was scheduled to be held at Calicut on May 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup>. But the official wing did not like to organise the meeting. SSP national joint secretary Jyaneswar Mishra exhorted the people to keep away from the convention. But majority of the Socialists attended the meeting<sup>85</sup>. On 17 May 1968 the delegates unanimously resolved to sever all their relations with the SSP. Another decision was taken to organise an all India level Socialist Party. The convention decided to accept the name KSSP till the formation of an All India level party. The veteran socialist leader P.M. Kunhiraman Nambiar left the party on this occasion because nobody listened to his call for socialist unity<sup>86</sup>. Both SSP and KSSP decided to organise state conventions. The majority of the socialists participated in the conference held at Palghat organised by KSSP. This meeting resolved to change the name of the party - KSSP - and accepted the new name Indian Socialist Party. This

---

85. K. Kunhirama Kurup, n. 3.

86. Edayath Krishnan, n. 45.

convention elected Arangil Sreedharan as the State Chairman, and K. Kunhirama Kurup as the General Secretary<sup>87</sup>. After the Palghat conference a meeting of the ISP was held at Delhi in which delegates from Kerala, Maharashtra, Delhi, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal participated.

Meanwhile P.P. Wilson, a supporter of the All India SSP raised allegations of corruption and nepotism against P.K. Kunju in the assembly<sup>88</sup>. Kunju categorically denied the allegations which he described as baseless and concocted. Chief Minister however announced that he would himself examine the charges to find out whether there was a *prima facie* case for ordering an inquiry<sup>89</sup>. He demanded that P.K. Kunju should relinquish the charge of the minister as a prelude to the enquiry. Much offended Kunju resigned from the ministry. By that time difference of opinion among various parties widened and it led to the resignation of EMS ministry on 24<sup>th</sup> October, 1969<sup>90</sup>.

---

87. K.Kunhirama Kurup, n. 3.

88. K.C. John, n. 31, p. 116.

89. *Deshabhimani*, 11<sup>th</sup> May, 1969.

90. *Deshabhimani*, 25<sup>th</sup> October, 1969.

## THE MINI FRONT OF 1969.

The fall of Namboodiripad ministry, however, left the legislation intact. A fresh alignment of forces within the Assembly followed and an 8-member council of ministers led by C. Achutha Menon was sworn in on November 1969<sup>91</sup>. The mini-front ministry consisted of two CPI members, two Muslim League members, two ISP members and one representative of the Kerala Congress<sup>92</sup>. But the new mini-front existed only for a period from 1967 Nov to 70 June. An important reason for the collapse was the internal trouble in the ISP a major component of the mini-front. P.R. Kurup who resigned the ministership did not resign his post of the leadership of the Legislative party of ISP. Soon Kurup and finance minister Seshan drifted apart when Seshan turned down the demand of Kurup with regard to the construction of sea protection wall<sup>93</sup>. The state parliamentary committee of the ISP decided to withdraw its Finance Minister, N.K. Seshan, from the Cabinet. It decided to install P.K. Kunju the former Finance Minister since the Kerala High Court has decided to quash the corruption probe proceedings against him. But Seshan ignored the demand and insisted

---

91. *Mathrubhumi*, 2<sup>nd</sup> November, 1969.

92. John John, P. n. 30, p. 157.

93. Edayath Krishnan, n. 45

that it would be done as per rules and regulations. Kurup felt insulted, denied the allegations and used his influence to expel Seshan from the ministry. These demands have nothing to do with policy or ideology. The question was either Seshan or Kunju should be in the Cabinet. Seshan had his own explanation not to obey his party's command for his resignation. Five out of the eleven ISP MLAs, two members of the Parliament and the majority of the district committee members had urged him not to resign. Meanwhile, party's Vice Chairman Smt. M.A. Sarojini stood against the party leadership on the Seshan issue.<sup>94</sup> P.R. Kurup leader of the legislative wing of the ISP spearheaded campaign against Seshan. B. Madhavan Nair led the pro-Seshan camp. Finally the ISP Finance Minister had to submit his resignation when he understood that the alternative would be dismissal. In continuation to this N.K. Seshan, B. Madhavan Nair, N.K. Balakrishanan, MLAs and P. Viswambaran and G.P. Mangalathu Madom, MPs left ISP. They joined with the state unit of the PSP headed by Attingal Gopala Pillai and V. Akhileswaran.<sup>95</sup> Thus, three splinter units of Socialists namely SSP, PSP and ISP functioned at this period.

---

94. *Indian Express*, 20<sup>th</sup> February, 1970.

95. Edayath Krishnan, n. 45

The PSP under the leadership of N.K. Seshan had already put in an application for the membership of the United Front. The ISP had announced its determination to resist it. This was another source of headache to the Mini-front. The ISP was carrying a conspiracy with the enemies of the ruling front and trying to overthrow the government. They threatened that they were going to ally with the Marxists with the purpose of forming another United Front government after breaking the present one<sup>96</sup>. The gulf between the ISP and the PSP widened and the ministry was weakened considerably. The Chief Minister had to choose between the support of the eight-member ISP or the three-member PSP group. But he needed the support of both and so he was forced to recommend the dissolution of the Assembly. The Achutha Menon ministry resigned on 1<sup>st</sup> August, 1970<sup>97</sup>.

Election to the 5<sup>th</sup> Kerala Legislative Assembly was held on 19<sup>th</sup> September 1970. The three socialist groups participated in the election with different fronts. In the CPI front, Congress I, PSP, Muslim League and RSP were participants. In the alliance led by CPI (M), SSP, ISP, KSP and KTP were the important factions. Another alliance was formed under the leadership of Congress (O), Swatantra Party and

---

96. *Mathrubhumi Daily*, 23<sup>rd</sup> May, 1970.

97. *Deshabhimani*, 2<sup>nd</sup> August, 1970.

Jana Sangha. Direct contest was held between Socialists in the three constituencies of Hosdurg, Mavelikkara and Trivandrum. When the election result was announced PSP bagged Hosdurg and Trivandrum while Mavelikkara was won by ISP. In the CPI alliance PSP got three seats, while the CPI (M) front SSP won 6 and ISP 3. Altogether the Socialists won 12 seats in the election but were divided in two fronts.<sup>98</sup> Once again C. Achutha Menon formed the ministry with 9 members in which PSP was represented by N.K. Balakrishnan. ISP and SSP remained in the opposition bench.

By this time Mrs. Gandhi nationalised 14 Commercial banks which was explained as a definite move towards the attainment of Socialist goal. On the basis of the Nationalisation of banks, Indira Gandhi disbursed the Parliament and fresh election was declared. In the election ISP and SSP which left the CPI front, attempted to form a Socialist front with other like-minded partners. But the attempt failed and SSP and ISP joined with the Grand Alliance formed by Janasangh, Congress (O), Swatantra Party and BKD. Out of the 19 Loksabha seats CPI Congress alliance bagged 16 seats, but no PSP candidate was

---

98. *Mathrubhumi Daily*, 21<sup>st</sup> June, 1971.

elected. SSP candidate C.G. Janardhan and M.P. Veerendra Kumar as well as ISP candidate Arangil Sreedharan was defeated. In short no socialists were elected in the Loksabha election of 1971.

Once again attempt was made to attain Socialist unity at an All India level. In 1971 June 20, PSP and SSP signed a merger treaty at all India level<sup>99</sup>. The national executive of the party instructed PSP members of the Achutha Menon ministry to resign. PSP National Executive Council Member P. Viswambharan and State Executive Members N.K. Seshan and V. Akhileshwaran demanded the resignation of the PSP minister N.K. Balakrishnan from the ministry. But another faction under the leadership of Attingal Gopala Pillai and State General Secretary of the party Palkkulangara Thankappan Nair raised the argument that PSP had the moral right to support and sustain the ministry. However, national executive of the party strongly insisted on the resignation of the PSP representative from the ministry. To discuss this matter a state conference of the PSP was summoned at Ernakulam<sup>100</sup>. In this meeting majority of the members of the council took a decision which was against the national leadership. When a

---

99. *Deshabhimani*, 21<sup>st</sup> July, 1971.

100. *Ibid.*

resolution to support the government was presented, around 150 members under the leadership of P. Viswambharan and N.K. Seshan left the hall. After they left the hall, remaining members decided to support the ministry. Thus once again there occurred a split in the Socialist fold.

Those who boycotted the meeting, under the leadership of P. Viswambharan declared their allegiance with national leadership. They formed a State Committee under the Chairmanship of N.K. Seshan. On July 19 the national leadership suspended the state committee under the leadership of Attingal Gopala Pillai and recognised the committee with N.K. Seshan as Chairman. All the three PSP MLAs declared allegiance to the state committee under the leadership of Attingal Gopala Pillai<sup>101</sup>.

The spilt in the PSP (Attingal) continued further. In 1971 September, five members of Congress joined the Achutha Menon ministry<sup>102</sup>. As a result of the induction of new ministers there was reallocation in portfolios. On this occasion Attingal Gopala Pillai made an attempt to withdraw N.K. Balakrishnan from the ministry and enter

---

101. *Mathrubhumi Daily*, 26 September, 1971.

102. A.K. Appu, n. 84.

himself into the ministry. But N.K. Balakrishnan protested and resigned and formed another group. G. Kuttappan, another PSP MLA, supported N.K. Balakrishnan and the new group was known as PSP and the Attingal group was known as PSP National<sup>103</sup>. Thus the Socialist split confirmed to the tradition of the party since independence. Power tended to split it. In subsequent years also the same trend was maintained. No other party in Kerala has suffered as much as the Socialist party because of power crazy politicians. The glory of the Socialist movement was repeatedly tarnished by a handful of men who put their personal interest always above the political needs of democratic socialist movement. However an organised attempt was made to consolidate the Socialist forces without further split.

As a result of conciliation talks held at national level the three factions i.e., SSP, PSP and ISP merged and renamed as Socialist Party with 9 members in the Assembly. Then onwards Socialists actively interfered into the felt needs of the people and tried to strengthen their social base. They joined with CPI (M), KSP, KTP and Kerala Congress and formed the Left Democratic Front and initiated agitation against

---

103. *Mathrubhumi Daily*, 23<sup>rd</sup> May, 1970.

food shortage, soaring price and the neglect of Kerala by the Central Government. Socialists actively participated in all agitations to highlight the felt needs as well as to focus against corruption of State as well as Central government. In short, Socialists once again became active under the leadership of M.P. Veerendra Kumar and P. Viswambharan. The activities of the Kerala Socialists reached its pinnacle when they hosted the National Conference of the Socialists at Calicut from 29<sup>th</sup> December 1974 to January 1<sup>st</sup> 1975. By that time, Jayaprakash commenced his Total Revolution Movement and the Socialists of Kerala were also attracted to the programme.

#### **SPLINTER GROUPS OF NON-COMMUNIST LEFT**

In Kerala other than Socialist parties RSP, KSP and KTP were the important non-communist left parties. Those parties even though their numerical strength was meagre they played a vital role in the post independent Kerala politics. Especially their role in the coalition ministry was very important.

RSP developed out of the Revolutionary Anusilan group of Bengal. The RSP believes in a classless society and regards the proletariat as the only consistently revolutionary class<sup>104</sup>. The RSP

---

104. *Revolutionary Socialist Party of India - What Revolutionary Socialism Stands For*, (Calcutta, 1945), p. 7.

declared that World War II was an imperialist war and even after Germany's attack upon Soviet Union the party did not change its stand. In the early years RSP functioned as an organised group within the CSP, but in 1940 the RSP came to believe that the CSP had become pseudo Marxist and had deviated from Marxism-Leninism to social Gandhism. Therefore RSP formed itself into a separate party from the Congress Socialist and functioned as a separate party pledged to Socialism. In a thesis published in 1950, the RSP declared its adherence to the revolutionary socialist way founded by Marx, Engels and Lenin<sup>105</sup>. But it has never believed in proletarian internationalism which is an important component of Marxism-Leninism. In Kerala the RSP supported the Congress Party in the Liberation struggle and has been a participant in almost all coalition governments.<sup>106</sup> N. Sreekandan Nair and later Baby John were the prominent leaders of the party<sup>107</sup>. But this party also split due to sectarian outlook and group interests and still remains in Kerala with few disciples.

The Kerala Socialist Party was another non-Communist left party formed in 1947. The founding fathers of the KSP were members

---

105. *The Leninist Way*, (Calcutta, 1950), p. 3.

106. *Communism in Kerala. A study in Political Adaptation*, (Delhi, 1982), p. 223.

107. G. Gopakumar, *Regional Political Parties and State Politics*, New Delhi, 1956, p. 96.

of the CSP which was working within the Indian National Congress. The revolutionary elements within the CSP began to revolt against the leadership. The CSP convention in Feb 1947 at Kanpur was attended by leaders like Srikandan Nair, Mathai Manjuran, and R.M. Manakkalath<sup>108</sup>. When they returned from the convention, they reported that the CSP was in alliance with reactionaries so they lost all hopes of continuing within the Congress as well as the CSP in Kerala. Some of the active workers of CSP of Cochin were arrested by the government. Sreekandan Nair who involved in the Punappura Vayalar case was not rendered any help by the State Congress leadership in Travancore. So there was bitter feelings and antipathy against the Congress.

Further, the first cabinet formed by Pandit Nehru gave away all illusions against the Congress. According to these Socialists, his cabinet was composed of many persons who were stooges of British imperialism. They felt that the ruling Congress would no more cater to the needs of the workers and peasants. Mathai Manjuran issued a statement against participation in the colourful Independence Day celebrations. They accused that the Congress represented mainly the

---

108. Pavanan, *Parijayam* (Mal), (Kottayam, 1968), p. 136

interests of Gujarathi and Marvadi capitalists. According to Mathai Manjuran the Communist party betrayed the freedom struggle by aligning with the British as per the direction given by Moscow through the British Communist Party. The Socialists also complained that many of the Communists were behaving as agents of the police and revealing many of the secret activities planned by the socialists.

They believed that CSP very often was acting according to the dictates of the right wing leadership of the Indian National Congress. Having lost all hopes about these parties, they at last decided to have a new party working mainly in the interest of Kerala. They adopted Marxism Leninism as their guideline. The fundamental difference between KSP and the Communist parties is the difference in the approach of foreign powers interfering in the leftist revolutionary activities in India.

In the 1950 election KSP secured a seat when Mathai Manjuran was elected to the Rajya Sabha. In the Rajya Sabha the democratic front was formed with the help of some princes of which Menon became the secretary. In 1954 it ceased to exist. Then a Socialist front was formed with PSP and RSP. In the 1957 election the KSP supported the Congress party but was defeated. In the Liberation struggle of 1959 Mathai Manjuran was an active partner. In 1965 he contested election as an

independent candidate from Angamali but was defeated. He found relief in the United Front of 1967 and became a minister<sup>109</sup>.

### **KARSHAKA THOZHILALI PARTY**

The Christians, a minority religious group in Kerala were hard working and enterprising. The initiative and drive they exhibited was a model to other communities. The Christian missionaries, the English education, the colonial rule all had paved a challenging atmosphere for the Christians in Kerala. They were very hard working and encroached the unused and forest lands in the Ghats of Malabar and Travancore. No political party was ready to discuss this emerging interest group but were reluctant to identify specifically with them. The encroachers were initially warned but later encouraged indirectly by the issue of 'Pattas' or title deeds, which gave them legal validity for the encroachment<sup>110</sup>. They worked very hard, growing spices, tea, rubber, etc. and contributed to the progress of state economy. The KTP appeared in Kerala politics when the Pattom Ministry in 1960-62 took stern action against the encroachers<sup>111</sup>. The anti-Christian attitude of Pattom Thanu Pillai created tension. While other political parties

---

109. John John, P, *Coalition Government*, p. 113.

110. G. Gopakumar, n. 107.

111. N. Jose Chander, n. 38, p. 80.

hesitated, the vacuum was filled by a new party. The leadership in this regard was given by father Joseph Vadakkan, a former Communist turned Catholic priest with B. Wellington and M.M. Thomas. They organised the KTP on 4<sup>th</sup> March 1962. The main aim of the party was to resist the governmental measures to evict them and to establish their right over the lands they had seized.

The KTP soon projected a semi communal but an interest group image. It is anti-Communist and heavily leaned on Catholic support from settlers in High Ranges. Their main concern is the preservation of the economic interest of the settlers. The party believed in evolutionary 'Gandhian' Socialism. The membership of the party is open only to those who believe in God. Its programme is to educate its supporters to be conscious and vigilant of their rights. The party aims at the upliftment of the downtrodden through democratic means to create a welfare state. When Mathai Manjuran formed the United Front of the leftist alliance, Father Vadakkan came to oppose the movement and since then his main politics was to support the Congress and to oppose the Communists. Later when the 'Kottiyoor Eviction' threat and 'Amaravathy Eviction' came, Father Vadakkan joined hands with the Communists and formed the Malanadu Karshaka Union. He helped the Communist candidates against the Congress party and also the

Karshaka Union co-operated with the Communist led Kerala Karshaka Sangham in a large number of mass struggles including Sathyagraha against the Congress proposals for improving the Agrarian Relations Bill.<sup>112</sup> The KTP had electoral alliance with the Communists party in 1965.<sup>113</sup> The same alliance was continued in 1967. The KTP and the Communist party were brought closer when the later extended its active support to the peasants. The Communists could create an inroad to the Catholic Community by its co-operation with the KTP.

In the election of 1965 KTP secured one seat with the co-operation of CPI (M). It allied with the non-Congress coalition forged by the CPI (M) in 1967 and won two seats. B. Wellington was made Minister of Health in the EMS ministry. The corruption charges against Wellington created problem and became one of the causes for the decline of EMS Ministry. In 1969 KTP split, when Wellington and Thomas the two representatives clashed with each other. Thomas was suspended from KTP and he formed the Kerala Karshaka party on 16 June, 1969.<sup>114</sup> The Kerala Karshaka party was defeated in the 1970 midterm elections and later it merged with PSP.<sup>115</sup> The KTP travelled

---

112. EMS, *Kerala Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow* (Calcutta, 1967), p. 240)

113. John P. John, p. 114.

114. *The Hindu*, 17 June 1969.

115. *Mathrubhumi* 31 May 1972.

with CPI (M) and was one of the responsible factors for the breakup of non-Congress coalition. The KTP secured 2 seats in 1970 elections when it contested in alliance with CPI (M). However, KTP sat in opposition and once the CPI (M) withdrew its moral and physical support, they were actually dismembered. Later the KTP became defunct.

# EMERGENCY AND AFTERMATH

Sasi Kumar.P. “The role of non-communist left movement in Kerala politics from 1942 to 1977” Thesis. Department of History, University of Calicut, 2005

**CHAPTER VIII**

**EMERGENCY AND  
AFTERMATH**

## Chapter VIII

# EMERGENCY AND AFTERMATH

On the midnight of 14<sup>th</sup> August, 1947 India got independence from the British yoke. After the lapse of around 27 years yet on another midnight again she lost her freedom when Indian Union President signed the declaration of Internal Emergency as per the direction of the then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi on 25<sup>th</sup> June, 1975<sup>1</sup>. There was neither external aggression nor threat of civil war in India on the eve of the declaration of Emergency by the President Fakhruddin Ali Ahamed<sup>2</sup>. Since independence the Socialists have consistently striven against anti-democratic totalitarian tendencies of the Congress governments. They upheld the cause of civil liberties and played the role of democratic opposition and insisted on the establishment of healthy democratic traditions with other opposition parties. In spite of all such vigilance of the opposition party Emergency was declared by the power crazy Prime Minister. The clamping down of Internal

- 
1. Satish C. Aggarwala and Adish C. Aggarwal, *Legacy of Indira Gandhi* (New Delhi, 1985), p. 88.
  2. Fakhruddin Ali Ahamed was President of India from August 1974 to February 1977. A firm supporter of Indira Gandhi, during the 1969 split, and a member of her government thereafter, he was elected to this exalted position in 1971. He signed more ordinances than any other President to date.

Emergency and its operations over the next 19 months represents one of the darkest periods in the political history of India. For all practical purposes the Indian constitution was kept in suspense. Parliamentary democracy was trodden brutally underfoot and an authoritarian rule proclaimed.

The entire decade before the declaration of Emergency was ridden with abject poverty. Around 70% of the population were under the poverty line and went on increasing at an alarming rate. A 22% increase in the general price level was noted during the early 1970's. The economy was in a state of dysfunction with spiralling unemployment, wide lay-offs and a severely shrinking job market. The loot of the monopoly capitalist and of land lords was being ensured at the cost of misery of workers, peasants, employers, professional groups and small manufacturers. In this dysfunctional economic background, there developed series of political events that gave birth to the evil of Emergency.

The 4<sup>th</sup> general election depicted the unravelling of monopoly control of the Congress across the country<sup>3</sup>. The fall out was a severe internecine strife within the Congress itself. Two trends were evident, on one hand the 'syndicate' Congress chose to veer towards the Jana

---

3. Satish C. Aggarwala and Adish C. Aggarwala, n. 1, p. 84.

Sangha, Swatanthra Party political grouping. On the other hand there was a rift within the left democratic forces. It was the massive win that the Congress managed to post in the background of weakness of the left democratic that started the train of events. The grand success in the Bangladesh War made Indira Gandhi at the top of both party and the government<sup>4</sup>. Posing as a socialist, Indira Gandhi indulged in reckless counter-democratic ploys to win elections in states like Bengal while also triumphing elsewhere.

In the period preceding the Emergency several big movements took place. These included strike actions, particularly the 22 day railway strike that was brutally suppressed. There was rampant corruption in the central government and various Congress led state government. In Bihar students spearheaded an agitation against the corruption in the government demanding its dismissal. Jayaprakash Narayan, the hero of Quit India Movement, withdrawn from active politics was indulged in the Sarvodaya Movement. But he was closely observing the events which were taking place. When the youth of Bihar pleaded to Jayaprakash to accept their leadership, he in his old age assumed the leadership and proclaimed the idea of 'Total Revolution'<sup>5</sup>.

---

4. Shashi Tharoor, *India: From the Midnight to the Millennium*, (New Delhi, 1998), p. 247.

5. Janardhan Thakur, *Prime Ministers- Nehru to Vajpayee*, (Mumbai, 1999), p. 111.

As the government paid only deaf ear to the peaceful agitation, a mass rally was organised at Patna against the corruption in administration. The government of Bihar sought to suppress the agitation by all means and Jayaprakash was manhandled during the course of agitation<sup>6</sup>. The Prime Minister had supported the repressive measures adopted by the government against the agitation. At this movement a National co-ordination committee was formed on November 26 1974 with Jayaprakash as the Chairman<sup>7</sup>. The Socialist Party, Congress (O), Bharatheeya Jana Sangh, Bharatheeya Lok Dal and majority of the members of the Sarvodaya movement gave strong support. Jayaprakash visualised this movement not only as a political movement but also as a social movement aimed at an uprooted transformation of social evils. So he called it 'Total Revolution'.

Meanwhile, the trial of an election petition filed by the Socialist leader Raj Narayan in the Allahabad High Court against the election of Mrs. Gandhi was going on. The charges levelled against Mrs. Gandhi were the misuse of governmental machinery and powers of the Prime Minister, to win over the Lok Sabha election<sup>8</sup>. The judgement of Justice Jagmohan Sinha in this case came out on 12 June, 1975<sup>9</sup>. The Allahabad

---

6. *Ibid.*, p. 112.

7. *The Hindu*, 27<sup>th</sup> November, 1974

8. Satish C, Aggarwal, n. 1, p. 87

9. *The Hindu*, 13<sup>th</sup> June, 1975.

High Court declared the election of Mrs. Gandhi to Lok Sabha as null and void and she was disqualified for 6 years from contesting in the election<sup>10</sup>. But the Supreme Court of India granted an interim stay to Mrs. Gandhi against the judgement of the Allahabad High Court and allowed her to continue as Member of Parliament and Prime Minister pending final judgement of the Supreme Court. At this stage Jayaprakash exhorted the police, the civil servants and military personnel in a meeting held at Delhi to disobey unjust orders of the corrupt government of Indira Gandhi<sup>11</sup>. These developments caused ripples to rise against Indira Gandhi within the Congress itself. Rather than tender her resignation Mrs. Gandhi chose to declare an internal Emergency.

The declaration of Emergency resulted in the infringement of the right of the people to constitutional remedies. Number of laws like MISA, DIR, and COFEPOSA were enacted with the aim of arresting anyone without particular cause<sup>12</sup>. An ordinance was also promulgated by which it was made clear that those who are imprisoned under MISA need not be informed about the cause of their arrest. Number of organisations including RSS and Jama-At Islami and Naxalites were put

---

10. Pupul Jayakar, *Indira Gandhi-A Biography*, (New Delhi, 1992), p. 267.

11. Satish C. Aggarwala and Adish C. Aggarwala, n. 1, p. 87

12. K. Chandrasekharan, *The Face of Freedom*, (New Delhi, 1991), p. 38.

under ban<sup>13</sup>. The Socialists who were consistently striven against anti-democratic totalitarian tendencies rose to the occasion. They became the front row fighters of Jayaprakash the unquestioned leader of the Second Liberation Movement.

In the early morning of 26<sup>th</sup> June many of the opposition leaders and Jayaprakash Narayan was arrested<sup>14</sup>. Prime Minister wanted to convince the world that the Emergency had to be imposed in order to secure the nation from the right reactionary forces and from the ultra-left. But her arguments in favour of the Emergency were only attempts to justify authoritarianism. The CPI jumped on the band wagon of Indira Gandhi. It not only collaborated with the authoritarian regime of Mrs. Indira Gandhi but also acted as regime agent against the democrats. Thousands of members and leaders of opposition parties including Socialist Party, Congress (O), Bharatheeya Lok Dal, Jana Sangh, RSS, Naxalites and few CPI (M) members were detained under custody. Infact, resistance against Emergency was a historic event like the Quit India Movement. Just like the Quit India Movement the resistance against Emergency was not wide spread in Kerala. This was mainly due to the attitude of the Government headed by Mrs. Gandhi's

---

13. *Ibid.*

14. Uma Vasudev, *Two Faces of Indira Gandhi*, (New Delhi, 1971), p. 94.

followers. However, the Socialists of Kerala played their significant role in their attempt to protect the civil rights of the people even in the face of arrest and harassment<sup>15</sup>.

After the election of 1970, a coalition ministry under the leadership of C. Achutha Menon formed ministry in Kerala<sup>16</sup>. The coalition included CPI, Congress (I), Muslim League, PSP and RSP. The leader of Congress (I) K. Karunakaran, a prominent devotee of Indira Gandhi, was the Home Minister of Kerala during that period. The news of the declaration of Emergency reached Kerala also, and the immediate response was silence. A peaceful situation prevailed for a few days.<sup>17</sup> Immediately after the declaration of Emergency leaders of the banned organisations especially of RSS were arrested on large scale. Naxalites were also hunted. The KPCC hailed Emergency and declared the complete support to the Prime Minister<sup>18</sup>. CPI found the Emergency as a weapon against the Fascist forces which were emerging in Kerala politics and supported it. The RSP of Kerala considered Emergency as a challenge against the orthodox, right wing, reactionary force and

---

15. Interview with Nalontavida Balan at Mangattupara on 28<sup>th</sup> June, 2005.

16. N. Jose Chander (Ed.), *Dynamics of State Politics-Kerala*, (New Delhi, 1986), p. 168.

17. T.J. Nossiter, *Communism in Kerala: A Study in Political Adaptation*, (Delhi, 1982), p. 231.

18. Cheriyan Philip, *Kalnoottandu* (Mal.), (Kottayam, 1984), p. 341.

supported Emergency. Among the Left Democratic front the greatest opposition was from the Socialists<sup>19</sup>

The State Committee meeting of the Socialist party was held at Calicut on 28<sup>th</sup> June, 1975. This meeting took a decision to fight against Emergency at any cost. It was at this meeting that the first circular issued by George Fernandez against Emergency was circulated and discussed. The meeting unanimously resolved to defeat Emergency. However, they felt it difficult at this time to unite all the Socialists throughout Kerala and to form a common front against Emergency. Therefore, the state leadership gave directions to the District and Taluk committees to organise protests and stage demonstrations in their diverse capacities. But even before 28<sup>th</sup> June the Socialists at Trichur district violated the restrictions imposed by the Emergency by staging demonstrations. When N.G. Gore visited Trichur the number of meetings organised by the Socialists in honour of him was made an open platform against Emergency.<sup>20</sup>

The co-ordination committee under the leadership of Left Democratic front prepared for a grand agitation. On 29<sup>th</sup> June opposition leaders met at Calicut and decided that on 9<sup>th</sup> July the state

---

19. Interview with P.K. Sankaran Kutty, labour union leader, in his residence at Kozhikode on 8<sup>th</sup> November, 1995.

20. Prasanth Mithran, *Socialist Prasthanam Keralathil (Mal)*, (Trivandrum, 1999), p. 279.

leaders should break the ban by marching to the Collectorates. It was also decided that the District level leaders should march to District or Taluk offices. Further a hartal was planned on 11<sup>th</sup> July by persuasion and compulsion, if necessary, on the shop owners and by disrupting traffic. The opposition co-ordination committee had converted itself into a 'Samara Samithi'. Representatives of the National RSP, the opposition Muslim League, the Kerala Congress, the Congress (O), the Marxist Communist Party and the Socialists took the joint decision to spearhead the agitation<sup>21</sup>. E.M.S. Namboodiripad announced that he would participate in the action at Trivandrum. K. Chandrasekharan decided to lead the demonstration in Calicut. They also decided to meet together at Ernakulam on the afternoon of 7<sup>th</sup> July. The Muslim League had sent word that no one could attend the meeting. The Congress (O) representative was absent. However, Chandrasekharan decided to lead the group defying the ban under Section 144 CRPC on the 9<sup>th</sup> at Kozhikode.

Chandrasekharan reached on 8<sup>th</sup> morning at Calicut and stayed in a hotel. There he met other opposition leaders like Chathunni Master, M. Kamalam and Arangil Sreedharan. Their plan was to start at about 11 am on the 9<sup>th</sup>, a furlong away from the civil station, and

---

21. K. Chandrasekharan, p. 24.

march to the office of the District Collector, thereby defying the ban on processions imposed in the wake of the Emergency. On 9<sup>th</sup> at about 10 am, Chandrasekharan in the company of Chathunni Master, Kamalam and K.K. Mohammed left the hotel and reached a furlong away from the civil station at Malaparamba. The others who were to participate in the agitation appeared from the vicinity of the road, where they had been waiting here and there Chandrasekharan took out the party flag and held it aloft. Immediately they were cordoned off by the police and all fifty one of the agitators were apprehended and taken to the police vehicle. They were taken to the office of the Superintendent of Police, where they were served the order of detention.<sup>22</sup> The order stated that these leaders were a threat to public peace and therefore, deserve detention. Chathunni Master and Kamalam and the forty eight others who had been arrested in the morning, were charged under the DIR. Chandrasekharan, the Socialist leader, was the sole detainee under MISA<sup>23</sup>.

The other Socialists who were detained were P.K. Sankarankutty and Abraham Manuel. They were brought to the Cannanore prison on 9<sup>th</sup> of August. They had already completed a spell in the Calicut

---

22. *Ibid.*, p. 26.

23. He was imprisoned in the A Block VIII of the Central prison, Cannanore, along with eight Naxalites, two COFEPOSA's and two RSS men.

special sub jail for about a month, having been arrested under the Defence of India and Internal Security Rules. They were treated cruelly after their arrest in the police station.<sup>24</sup> They were put in prison without producing them to the Magistrate. When they were produced before the Magistrate's Court, their release had been ordered because the period in prison they had already spent was adequate penalty for the offence they were alleged to have committed. Immediately on release, they were re-arrested and taken to the Calicut city police control room. After a day spent there without any food, they were taken to the new building which was intended to house the Circle Police station and located very near to the Calicut Medical College campus. They were put five days in that black hole without proper food<sup>25</sup>.

The Chairman of the state Socialist Party in the Arangil Sreedharan was arrested from his house at Calicut on the 11<sup>th</sup> night and he was taken all the way to the Central Prison, Viyyur at Trichur. The police authorities did not want to put him with Chandrasekharan at Cannanore. Those Socialists who were arrested in the Southern districts were lodged in the Central Prison, Poojapura, at Trivandrum.<sup>26</sup>

---

24. P.K. Sankaran Kutty, n. 19.

25. *Ibid.*

26. K. Chandrasekharan, n. 12, p. 43.

There was not a single Communist-Marxist in the Cannanore prison till the end of September 1975. Both E.M.S. and A.K.G, who were taken to the Central Prison, Trivandrum on the evening of 9<sup>th</sup> July, 1975 had been released within a couple of days<sup>27</sup>. Apparently Mrs. Gandhi wished to indicate to the Socialist countries including Soviet Russia that the Emergency was really only against those who were anti-social and anti-national, and therefore, respected Communists leaders like EMS and AKG were not detained. The authorities tried to keep the number of Communists and Communist-Marxists in jail to the minimum. The Communist Marxist Party had planned some trade union agitation for early October and therefore, by end of September, most of the trade unionists among them were arrested and detained in the three Central prisons in the state.

The Naxalites and the RSS members were the other sections who were put to the wrath of police atrocities. A number of youngsters were arrested alleging their connections with the Naxal movement. On 1<sup>st</sup> November, 1975 four Naxalites a teacher, and agriculturist and two students—all youngsters were sent to Cannanore Central jail. The leader had been held in illegal custody for 27 days and the two students for nine days. This was the order of the day during Emergency. All of

---

27. *Ibid.*, p. 45.

them had been beaten black and blue. One of them had to be admitted to the jail hospital. Chali, a young engineering college student had been roughed up by the police during the period of custody without any charges. However, he survived and was ultimately released from jail. His colleague Rajan had also been subject to third degree methods and he died while in police custody. Abraham Benhur, a Research student and the state office bearer of the students union of Socialist party, was also arrested and put to inhuman punishments<sup>28</sup>

Favourable circumstances during the Emergency helped Achutha Menon to stay in power for this length of time. It is a fantastic distortion of the truth to state that the Emergency Governments were a success. In fact, the bureaucracy and the police wielded sole and unquestioned power during the period of Emergency. Even the Chief Minister and his colleagues were ignorant of what was actually happening in Kerala. In a strike held on 10<sup>th</sup> July at Tellicherry the agitators were handled by the police roughly and brutally assaulted. The socialist leader T.T.K. Anandan sustained serious head injuries during this incident.

Vatakara was always a centre of Socialist activists and during Emergency they responded actively. An important incident took place

---

28. P.K. Sankaran Kutty, n. 19.

was on 12<sup>th</sup> December, 1915, when the Chief Minister C. Achutha Menon visited Vatakara. Young Socialists who were given instructions by clandestine meetings met on 11<sup>th</sup> December night at various places. As the police managed to unearth the programme of the socialists, they tried to abort the plan of the socialists to show black flags to the Chief Minister. By 10'o clock in the morning the socialists managed to assemble near Bus Stand in Vatakara. The members who participated in this dare devil attempt were Koleentavida Balan (Orkkatteri), Nalontavida Balan, Puthiyottum Thazhakuni Kelappan, O.P. Damodaran, Pilavullathil Gopalan, Nanu Villiappally, Kolakkott Kunhikannan, and Malayil Gopalan. Nalontavida Balan showed the black flag and the demonstrators shouted the slogan against Emergency. The police all of a sudden cordoned the activists and they were taken to Vatakara police station, and severely tortured<sup>29</sup>. Socialist activists like M.K. Premnath, P.C. Thomas, A.P. Kumaran (Kurumpoyil), Kunnoth Sankaran, Mambrath Balan Nair, Paulose Thiruvambadi, Rajan Balussery, M.T. Sridharan (Chombala) etc., were arrested and jailed. M.K. Gopalan hoisted the black flag in the flag post of Government College Madappally on the night of 14<sup>th</sup> August <sup>30</sup>.

---

29. Interview with Nalontavida Balan, an Emergency victim, at Mangattupara on 25<sup>th</sup> June, 2005.

30. *Ibid.*

On 12<sup>th</sup> June, 1976 when George Fernandez was arrested, demonstrations were held in different places. In connection with the death anniversary of Lohiya on 12<sup>th</sup> October, 1976 posters were exhibited in different parts of Kerala inscribing "Silent Society, Curse". The district convention of the student organisation of the Socialists i.e., Independent Students' Organisation at Quilandy was a bold attempt of the Socialists to challenge the Emergency. The convention was inaugurated by P. Viswambharan.

In the district of Ernakulam direct action against Emergency started on 9<sup>th</sup> July 1975. Socialists actively participated in the agitation under the banner of left co-ordination committee and the leaders like Kochu Devassya and George were arrested. They were charged with DIR and sent to Mattanchery jail. The convenor of the District Co-ordination Committee was Alungal Devassya who was at that time the joint secretary of the Socialist Party. The protest against Emergency started in the districts of Kollam, Kottayam and Trivandrum also on 9<sup>th</sup> July, 1975. Kayyikkara Shamsudeen and Varinjam Vasupillai and Kottakkuzhi Sukumaran were arrested at Kollam. P.B.R. Pillai, M.T. Kuriyan, and O.J. Joseph were arrested at Kottayam. Charupara Ravi and four others were arrested while they led a march from

Trivandrum Railway Station to M.G. Road<sup>31</sup>. When the State Chairman Arangil Sridharan was arrested V. Kuttikrishnan Nair was nominated as the temporary Chairman. During the period of chaos and difficult condition he led the party for few months, but he also was arrested. After him O. Koran was elected as temporary Chairman.

In the meantime, the Indian Parliament and State Legislatures passed a law extending the tenure of the Lok Sabha and State Legislative Assemblies from 5 to 6 years. As a protest against this law, the Socialist leaders like Madhu Limaye and Sarad Yadav resigned their membership of Parliament. Opposition parties and non-political organisation like Sarvodaya Sangha and RSS unleashed all India agitation on their own capacities. At this time all those who were willing to subdue to autocracy jointly sought to form a Unified Democratic Rights Organisation. Jayaprakash who was released from the jail in view of his deteriorating health condition gave leadership to the new movement. The Unified Democratic Rights Organisation held its Congress at Delhi. The meeting analysed the political situation. They found that a large number of opposition leaders were in jail including 39 MPs. They condemned the Emergency as an assault against the people, and they had been robbed of their constitutional

---

31. Prasanth Mithran, n. 5, p. 283.

rights to democracy. The Parliament was deprived of all rights and privileges, censorship of the media touched horrifying proportions. Opposition ran autonomous institutions were set aside. Attempt was made to delete the fundamental rights from the constitution through the 42<sup>nd</sup> amendment. All kinds of meeting and peaceful procession of the opposition, trade unions and the toiling masses were prevented. All kinds of trade union rights were suppressed. It had become impossible for the common man to protest against suppression, exploitation and injustice.

To fight against the anti-democratic process and secure the right to fight a Peoples' Union for Civil Liberties and Democratic Rights (PUCLDR) was formed incorporating all people who were fighting for liberty and democratic rights. Jayaprakash was elected as president of the Union with Justice V.M. Tharkunde as working president and Kishan Kant Convenor. The PUCLDR had State and District units. Its Kerala unit was formed on 14<sup>th</sup> November, 1976 at Ernakulam. The Socialist leader P. Viswambharan, was elected as the secretary of this organisation. Besides the representatives of the opposition parties, there were Sarvodaya workers, congress reformists and socio-cultural leaders like Lakshmi N. Menon and C. Narayana Pillai in that

Committee.<sup>32</sup> The PUCLDR was organised in all Districts in Kerala in accordance with its action plan. These committees organised meetings in their respective districts to discuss the 42<sup>nd</sup> amendments of the constitution. In all such conventions the Socialist leaders P. Viswambharan participated and criticised not only the bill but also 'Emergency'. Even though at that time Viswambharan was not an office bearer of the Socialist Party, he earnestly tried to mobilise the people against 'Emergency'.<sup>33</sup> However, in this historical cross-road the Socialists played their role to protest against Emergency and strived hard to protect civil rights.

The period of the Emergency witnessed the deliberate perpetration of atrocities on a scale unprecedented in our history. In the wake of 1975 India had about 1100 jails. There were 3,75,000 prisoners out of which 16000 were women. Of the total number 17% were in the age-group of 16-21 years. In Kerala the resistance against Emergency was cruelly suppressed. After the Emergency the Janata Party sub committee enquired about the excess of Emergency and submitted a report. It stated that during this period due to torture 20

---

32. Interview with Kuttiyil Narayanan in his residence at Vatakara on 5<sup>th</sup> April, 2005.

33. *Ibid.*

people died in Kerala. Four of them committed suicide due to the torture of police. The number of women who were either put in prison or tortured was 11.<sup>34</sup>

Indira Gandhi was highly optimistic regarding the result of Emergency and she declared election to Parliament in January 1977. Certain provisions of the Emergency were relaxed and elections were held. But the results which were announced on March 20 showed that Indira Gandhi and her Congress was completely defeated.<sup>35</sup> Major political changes had taken place in Indian politics in 1977 following the intensive and extensive mass revolt. The Left ideology in India and anti-Congress approach had taken a new course in the politicisation in India. A political party under the title 'Janatha Party' with eminent persons like Morarji Desai, George Fernandez and Atal Bihari Vajpayee had been organised in anticipation of the general election to the parliament. Communal oriented political movements, which had anti-Congress ideology and programme took an active role in the formation of the Janatha Party. Even though they nourished anti-Congress sentiments and feelings, they were reactionaries and they were quite against the Socialist ideology programme and activities. In fact they

---

34. K.C. John, *Kerala Rashtreeyam Oru Asambandha Natakam* (Mal.), (Aluva, 1999), p. 222.

35. *Mathrubhumi Daily*, 21<sup>st</sup> March, 1977.

cherished diametrically opposite ideology in state craft and administration. In fact they were parasitic parties which sucked the life blood of Indian Socialism. The United movement established on the bedrock of anti-Congress policy elected Morarji Desai as the Prime Minister of India. He had been throughout, a conservative politician who had been responsible to create a conspicuous rupture in the ruling Indian National Congress in 1969 based on the policy of pro and against nationalization of banks and implementation of radical reforms.<sup>36</sup>

The then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi had been promoting at least some of the pragmatic visions of the forefathers of the freedom struggle. But Morarji's approach was quite orthodox and he was supporting the idea of laissez-faire and 19<sup>th</sup> century liberalism, which culminated in the growth of Indian capitalism. When such hard core champion of Indian Capitalism became the Prime Minister there was nothing to enjoy for the Leftist in India. In fact it was an honourable burial to the Socialist ideology in India. The United Front though the king-pin of Morarji Desai promoted capitalism. Communalism was also promoted by some sections of the Janata Party in the corridor of administration.

---

36. Sankar Ghose, *Socialism and Communism in India*, (Bombay, 1971), Pp. 218-219.

The Janata could not continue more than two years on account of conflicting ideologies and programmes.<sup>37</sup> The communal elements and vested groups organised their own party, i.e. B.J.P. They exploited the entire Indian situation to capture political power. They also established their sway over some eminent socialists like George Fernandez who had spent his life time in the promotion of Socialism and working class movement. However, the developments in the centre had no much impact in Kerala politics. Here the pattern of LDF, UDF system continued. The Janatha party supported the LDF and enjoyed political power as a segment of the coalition. After some years again there was split in the Janatha Party named respectively after their leaders and enjoyed power in the major alliances.<sup>38</sup> However, their participation in the ministries did not make any substantial contribution to the implementation of a socialist programme in Kerala.

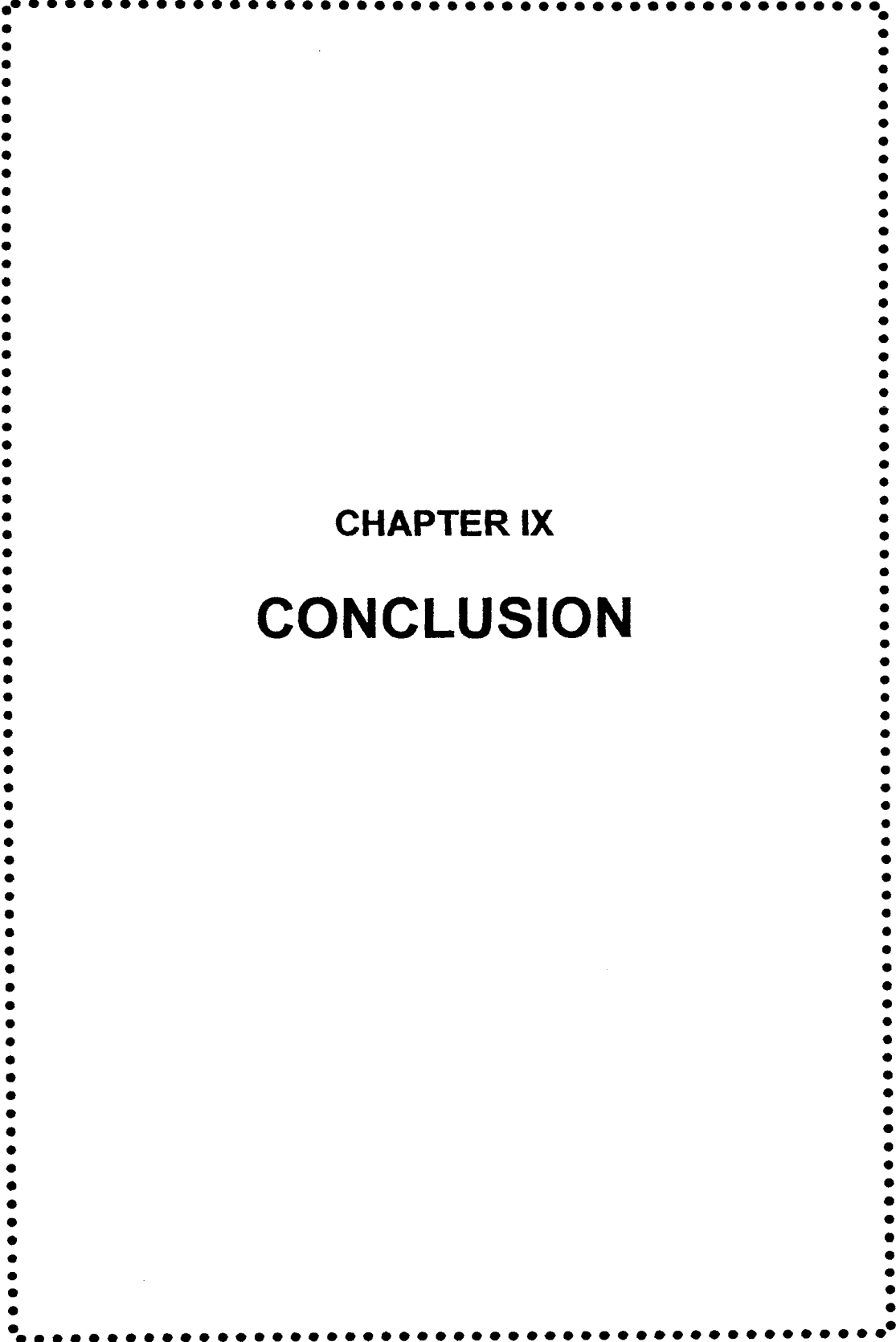
---

37. N. Jose Chander, n. 16, p. 174.

38. N. Gopakumar, *Regional Political Parties and State Politics*, (New Delhi, 1986), p. 105.

# CONCLUSION

Sasi Kumar.P. “The role of non-communist left movement in Kerala politics from 1942 to 1977” Thesis. Department of History, University of Calicut, 2005



**CHAPTER IX**  
**CONCLUSION**

## Chapter IX

# CONCLUSION

Socialism was the hope of millions of oppressed, depressed and exploited for centuries together throughout the world. Millions of unfortunate Indians also looked eagerly to this idea of 'equality' with hope and optimism. They found in Jayaprakash Narayan, Ram Manohar Lohia and few other leaders, a ray of hope, to ameliorate their lifelong miseries and agonies. A band of downtrodden and few intelligent exponents of egalitarianism in the south-western corner of India were also eagerly looking at the Socialist pioneers to lead them. Thus, the idea of democratic socialism with its stress on civil liberties, non-violence and gradualism also spread in the land of the so called Malayalees. The Keralites who inaugurated the 'Kerala Model Development' also substantially contributed to the growth of Socialist idea and its spread. Even though the Socialists are only a minority they played a crucial role in the political alignment and in the growth of the state. They spread the idea of equality, egalitarianism, non-violence and commitment to the cause of poor. The history of the Socialists in Kerala can be divided into three phases for the convenience of analysis. The first stage begins with the inception of CSP in 1934 up to 1948

when it severed all its connection with the INC. The second phase is in between the formation of the Socialist party and the abdication of Chief Minister-ship by Pattom A. Thanu Pillai. The period between 1963 up to the formation of the Janatha party, forms the third stage in which the party played a crucial role in the coalition ministries and guided the destinies in this political laboratory.

The CSP in its early phase functioned as an integral part of the KPCC. During this period the Socialists earnestly attempted to build up their rank and file among labourers, Kisans, students and youth and they succeeded to a great extent to create momentum in the socio-political atmosphere of Kerala, especially in Malabar. But the CSP under the leadership of EMS and Krishna Pillai tried to impose their hidden agenda of Communist domination. By 1939, the majority of the members of CSP bid farewell to the organisation and transformed it into the Communist Party. Those who left—only a handful—were the democratic socialists who further continued their work under the banner of Congress Socialists. When Gandhi launched the Quit India struggle these few initiated aggressive policy of sabotage activities partly closing their eyes towards the noble idea of non-violence. However, they could not organise mass movements in the frontline of the working class and the agrarian sector because these sections were controlled politically and ideologically by the Communists. Since the

Communists turned back to the call of Gandhi and the Gandhian leaders were arrested even at the initial stage, the Quit India Movement was lulled after its first fury. It was at that juncture that K.B. Menon and his Socialist friends arrived from Bombay and invigorated the Quit India Movement in Malabar. After their arrival Menon and his friends arranged several clandestine meetings in Kozhikode and premises which were attended by people from different parts of Malabar. In these meetings they decided to observe 'sabotage day' and to indulge in destructive activities. As part of this programme bombs were made from Keezhariyur and then from Parappanangadi and distributed among the activists. It was decided to cut telephone lines and obstruct the railway lines as well as to destroy public buildings throughout Malabar with bombs and by setting fire. But that did not happen as proposed and planned due to various reasons. It was not an easy task to co-ordinate the people of a wide area under the vigilant eyes of the Crime Branch as well as local Police. Moreover, the Socialists' attempt of sabotage did not succeed because of lack of proper response from the pure Gandhian Congress workers and also the Communists who did not co-operate with the movement due to certain ideological differences.

However, a number of events like cutting of telephone lines and setting fire to government offices occurred. But at the same time certain

plans of arson and demolition failed due to the poor response of the people. For example, the plan of setting fire to Panthalayini Railway station and Quilandy Sub-Registrar's office on 'All Kerala Sabotage Day' failed because people did not turn up as promised and expected. The making of bombs at Keezhariyur leaked out because people at the implementation level were not trained ideologists. They were ignorant of the gravity of their action, their responsibility and their ultimate aim. The man who revealed the secret of bomb making at Keezhariyur to the village officer did so for getting money to cure his disease. The secret of Bomb making at Parappanangadi leaked out because one of the activists used the bomb against his personal enemy. These incidents show that the ideology of freedom was not deep rooted in the minds of the participants. They were totally ignorant of the intensity, gravity and the dimension of their responsibility. It is a fact like daylight that majority of the Congressmen kept away from sabotage activities.

The analysis of the activities of the CSP during these years clearly shows the dearth of the popular leaders. Almost all top leaders of CSP abstained from the party and found an abode in the newly formed Communist party. It was only four delegates who opposed the transformation of CSP into Communist party at the Pinarayi conference. The few Socialists who remained in the CSP felt leaderless when Quit India movement was launched. It was the leaders like

K.B. Menon who were imposed from above guided and led the movement in Malabar. Even though they were sincere competitive and dedicative they had their own limitations in mingling with the laymen and influencing them as well as raising local funds. However, what little happened in Malabar during the Quit India Movement was spearheaded by the CSP. If the CSP activists did not come forward with their own programmes and activities, the role of Malabar in this heroic struggle would have been minimized. We need not compare the incidents that occurred in North India and in Malabar because in every stage of the development of freedom movement this disparity was there. Therefore, whatever be the number of people who participated and the magnitude of the action, their patriotic fervour, attitude of self sacrifice and commitment to ideology should not be underestimated.

The assassination of Gandhi was a turning point in the history of CSP. In 1948, the CWC decided to amend its constitution and debar members of any political party which had separate membership, constitution and programme from continuing as members of the Congress. In this circumstance Socialists decided to leave the Congress. The national level leaders like Achuth Patwardhan visited Kerala during this period to rejuvenate and reorganise Socialist party. A state level conference of the Socialists was held at Kozhikode and the Malabar Committee of the Socialist party was formed. The committee

included leaders like K.B. Menon and P.M. Kunhiraman Nambiar, but there was none to compete with Congress leadership which included a series of prominent leaders like K. Kelappan. In fact, most of the popular leaders were either in the Congress camp or in the Communist party.

In 1952, the Praja Socialist Party was formed with Acharya Kripalani as the national Chairman. The reconstituted unit of Malabar PSP was very strong including K. Kelappan, K.B. Menon, M.P. Govinda Menon, K. Kunhirama Kurup and Arangil Sreedharan. In Travancore-Cochin area Socialist leadership included P.P. Wilson, P. Viswambharan, C.K. Parameswaran and K.A. Sivarama Bharathy. Third National conference of Socialist party held at Madras gave green signal to Pattom to join the party. The elevation of Pattom to the leadership injected new vigour and enthusiasm among the Socialists. He became the unquestioned leader of PSP and headed PSP ministry twice. During his sway as Chief Minister he was the most prominent figure in the Socialist party as well as in Kerala politics. It was only during this period that the Socialists leaders' row became so strong. But his predominance over shadowed all other Socialist leaders including K.B. Menon. When Kelappan swiftly changed to the Sarvodaya movement Pattom commenced to dominate Kerala politics. Pattom, deliberately or otherwise, did not provide any patronage to any second

level leader to come up or to exhibit their calibre. He autocratically suppressed the attempt to question his authority to decorate the twin position of party leadership as well as Chief Ministership. However, at the end of political intrigues he was awarded the lofty office of the Governorship of Punjab and he left Kerala. His departure created a vacuum at the PSP leadership. Once again PSP felt dearth of a prominent leader. Pattom was not a hardcore Socialist ideologist, but was a sincere politician.

One cannot ignore the achievements of Pattom ministry to the development of the state. The most important act was the Land Reforms bill initiated by Revenue Minister K. Chandrasekharan. The noble measures taken in the field of education, industry and Harijan welfare are also commendable. But in total the contribution of the ministry headed by the Socialist leading to a Socialistic pattern was not commendable. The PSP ministry could not achieve much in restructuring Kerala society due to various reasons. First of all Pattom accepted the Chief Minister ship when there were only 19 socialists in the Assembly. Any drastic measure should get the consent of the Congress party which was more concerned with their political future than implementing socio-economic programmes. Secondly, in a democratic federal system like India any revolutionary piece of legislation should get the sanction of the parliament. At that time the

Government of India was under the control of the Congress party which did not want to allow the credit of such laws to an opposition party. Being a party based on democratic socialism and personal liberty it was beyond the capacity of the Socialists to implement any revolutionary measures, which obstruct personal freedom. Moreover, the chief minister has to satisfy each component of the coalition ministry before implementing a policy or initiating a law.

After independence the Socialist party had undergone a series of splits. A significant cause for the split is the role of ideology. Ideology is a cohesive force which binds the different groups and keeps the party together. The ideology of CSP from which the Socialist party, PSP and SSP evolved was a blend of Marxism, Liberalism, Nationalism and Democratic Socialism tinged with Gandhism. During the freedom struggle the ideological differences were set aside before the common goal of achieving independence and creation of a Socialist society. Ideological differences appeared after independence especially with the merger of KMPP with the Socialists. The emphasis of Socialist ideology declined because most of the KMPP workers were former Congressmen. Moreover, the liberalist ideology and the undue importance given to the freedom of expression prompted the Socialists to question the party policy as well as their leaders. Even Pattom Thanu Pillai was questioned by C.G. Janardhanan and P.K. Kunju for

occupying the posts of Chief Minister as well as that of the party leader.

The split occurred before 1964 was mainly ideological. The first split in the fold of PSP at the national level occurred due to the adamant attitude of Ram Manohar Lohia. Lohia, a true ideologue of democratic socialism firmly believed that a democratically elected government has no right to open fire against the people. When Marthandam firing took place Lohia demanded the resignation of Chief Minister Pattom Thanu Pillai. Even though Pattom was acquitted by the judicial enquiry as well as by the party enquiry, Lohia was adamant and that was one of the reasons for the first split at the national level. Another split was in connection with the Rann of Kutch agreement. SSP questioned this agreement and started nationwide agitation against the transfer of Rann of Kutch. The party national leadership directed the SSP ministers of Kerala and Madhya Pradesh to go to Kutch and give leadership to the agitation. They adopted this decision because of their commitment of nationalism and patriotism. But the party leadership of Kerala could not assimilate the patriotic feelings wholly and they decided to sever all their relations with national organs which resulted in a split in Kerala SSP. From these examples it is evident that the majority of the party executive members of Kerala gave more importance to political strategy than ideology.

They gave more importance to power and participation in ministry than in ideology or principles.

A party is kept together until the cohesive factors, which bind it remain strong. The personality of the national leaders like Jayaprakash Narayan, Lohia, Achuth Patwardhan, Asoka Mehta, Acharya Narendra Deva and Aruna Asaf Ali acted as a symbol of unity and binding force. In fact, it was the inspiring personality of Jayaprakash which attracted people even from Malabar to Socialist fold. But this national leadership of the Socialist party withered away soon after independence due to various reasons. In 1949 Achuth Patwardhan left the party and Yusuf Meharally died in 1950. In 1952 Aruna Asaf Ali left the party. In 1956 Acharya Narendra Deva died. After second general elections held in 1957, in which Jayaprakash did not participate, apart from issuing a statement asking the electorate to help the emergence of a strong opposition, he finally decided to end his sleeping membership of the PSP. The result was that the Socialists were left with a very small group of nationally known leaders which all the party could identify. Because of the shortage of nationally known leaders the Socialists clutched on to Asoka Mehta. However Asoka Mehta changed his approach towards Congress, when it adopted a political resolution pledging the party to work for a Socialist pattern of society. The Chinese attack of 1962 also contributed to change the attitude of certain PSP leaders. The crisis

rekindled sentiments of patriotism and of the need for national integration to unify the badly divided country. These feelings expressed themselves by calls not only for co-operation with the Congress party but return into the maternal body from which the splinter socialist groups had separated themselves in the past. The main promoter of co-operation with the Congress party and the government was Asoka Mehta one of the founders of the PSP and its former chairman. Mehta had accepted an appointment as one of four principal leaders of the Indian delegates to the 18<sup>th</sup> session of the General Assembly of the United Nations. Moreover Prime Minister Nehru appointed him as Deputy Chairman of the Indian Planning Commission. Mehta and his disciples joined in the Congress with the aim of strengthening the Socialists hands. After Lohia's death and Asoka Mehta's departure only a few Socialists remained in the party who were nationally known and were acceptable by the entire party. So whenever there occurred feud, rivalry or difference of opinion among the leaders of Kerala there was no national leader with capacity to command, negotiate, compromise and control the warring Socialist groups.

The Socialists of Kerala also suffered a setback from the withering away of the leaders. When the majority of the CSP activists transformed to Communist party, the popular leaders including

Krishna Pillai and EMS evacuated CSP. Further in 1948 when CSP severed their relationship with Congress the other remaining leaders including Kelappan was lost. However, after the merger of KMPP with the Socialists Kelappan once again returned to the leadership. But within few years he slowly withdrew from all political activities and deeply delved into the Sarvodaya movement. The veteran Socialist leader K.B. Menon also withdrew from PSP because he could not tolerate the power crazy attitude of the post-independent leaders. Another Socialist stalwart who deserted the party was P.M. Kunhiraman Nambiar who withdrew from the party politics in 1968 due to difference of opinion with the young generation. These strains aroused because of differences in orientation between the elder and younger leaders in the party. The founding leaders and those who were socialised into politics during the freedom struggle developed an ambivalent attitude to power because of Gandhian influence. Gandhiji stressed that power was not necessary to change society. The early Socialist leaders while logically accepting the need of a political party to pursue power simultaneously also felt contempt for the political process and political power itself. Jayaprakash himself was an example and in Kerala, K.B. Menon, P.M. Kunhiraman Nambiar and Kunhirama Kurup belonged to this category. But the younger generation in the Socialist party, who were recruited after independence, did not have

this ambivalence towards power. Especially after the withdrawal of Pattom from Kerala politics, the second row leaders came forward to occupy a berth in the various ministries led by LDF and UDF. During this process actual freedom fighters and Gandhians like K.B. Menon, P.M. Kunhiraman Nambiar and K. Kunhirama Kurup were pushed down and the less known leaders came forward and managed to enter into the Cabinet. Once they entered the cabinet they were not bothered about implementing programmes towards a socialist pattern of society, but were vigilant to stick on to the chair. The only exemptions were K. Chandrasekharan and Damodaran Potti who resigned their post in 1963 as per the direction of the leadership. Even the exit of Pattom from Kerala politics, was the result of power crazy attitude of some of his colleagues. Thus the craze for power invariably led to personal feud, allegations and unhealthy competitions.

Some of the Socialist leaders in the ministry like P.R. Kurup and P.K. Kunju had been charged with corruption in the legislature. Although they have been finally exonerated from the charges it is disheartening to see that the socialists had been involved in such charges. It was the common belief that Socialists should be beyond corruption. It was a tragedy that the Socialists who pledged a clean administration finally went down on charges of corruption. After the liberation struggle PSP contested against the Communists as a part of

the United Front of democratic parties. In this election even though PSP got only 20 seats Pattom became the Chief Minister. As a Chief Minister he initiated many programmes for the welfare of the people and the reconstruction of the society. But these measures did not attract the attention of the public, mainly due to want of propoganda. The magazines and newspapers under the control of the party were few and there was difficulty to propogate either the Socialist ideas or the achievements of the government. Among the few Socialist newspapers *Express* published from Thrissur circulated in a limited area. It did not penetrate into the 'red Taluks' of Malabar. The circulation of weeklies like *Pravaham*, *Ahwanam* published from Calicut were also limited. The Socialists failed to raise enough money for the publication of the newspapers.

At All India level there have been great thinkers of Socialism and its humanism like Jayaprakash Narayan, Lohia, Narendra Deva and many others who spearheaded Socialist thought and championed the cause of Socialism through their writings and teachings. They could even create an impression among the people that Socialism is an alternative way of life instead of colonial state or communist state. Their ideals were embedded in a Socialist society in a post colonial India. They could even attract the intellectuals as well as the masses, especially in North India. However, their thoughts could not penetrate

in Kerala at the grass root level on account of various factors. One major Lacuna was that there was no such eminent leadership to cope with these ideologies. There had been the leadership given by K.B. Menon during the Quit India movement. But later his activities were shifted to an All India frame work. Thus there had been a vacuum in Kerala with regard to the Socialist ideology. On the other hand the Communists after their departure from the CSP had been propagating Marxism Leninism as the foundation for a new society. As such, the Peasant Associations and Trade Unions had been highly influenced by the philosophy of Marxism Leninism. The situation had been much favourable for the Congress and the Communists to go along with their programmes and campaigns.

An overall analysis of the election results shows the poor performance of the party. The first General election to the Kerala State Legislature took place in the year 1957. PSP signed a treaty of co-operation with Muslim League and contested in the election<sup>1</sup>. Out of the 62 seats contested PSP secured only 9 seats and the Muslim League 3 seats. Communists bagged majority and formed the ministry under EMS. This clearly shows that the popular support to the PSP was minimum. However, in the mid-term election held in 1960 PSP allied

---

1. See Appendix V and V (A) for election results.

with democratic parties including Congress and Muslim League and secured 20 seats. Even though they secured 20 seats, Pattom headed the coalition ministry<sup>2</sup>. Though the coalition government was the child of the Liberation struggle, the 'big brother attitude' of the PSP played considerable part in bringing about an end to the coalition government. After Pattom's departure no Socialist became the Chief Minister of Kerala.

Once again political equations changed when SSP formed an electoral agreement with CPI (M) in the mid term election of 1965. Simultaneously they entered into an electoral adjustment with the Muslim League. When the election results were declared SSP won 13 seats, Muslim League 6 and CPI (M) 40<sup>3</sup>. But SSP could not succeed in securing as many votes and seats as the old PSP had won in the last coalition with Congress in the 1960 elections. SSP failed to play a leadership role at this juncture and the Assembly was dismissed by the President. In the election of 1967, SSP contested within the Left Democratic front<sup>4</sup>. It fielded 21 candidates and 19 of them were elected and joined in the coalition ministry headed by EMS. However, the

---

2. See Appendix VI for election results.

3. See Appendix VII for election results.

4. See Appendix VIII and VIII (A) for election results.

ministry fell down soon due to the internal dissension among the coalition partners.

The fifth General election to the Kerala Legislative Assembly was conducted in the year 1970. In this election the Socialists contested as part of two different alliances. SSP and ISP formed part of the CPI (M) alliance while PSP became a partner in the CPI front. There was direct contest between Socialists in Hosdurg, Mavelikkara and Trivandrum. Altogether the three Socialist groups won only 12 seats.<sup>5</sup> It clearly shows the decline in the seats perhaps due to the split or the lack of political strategy or the erosion of the popular base. However, the PSP joined the ministry under C. Achutha Menon, and ISP and SSP remained in the oppositio<sup>6</sup>. The above analysis shows that in the election of 1957 Socialists won 9 seats when it contested without alliance with either Congress or the Communists, but only co-operation with Muslim League. At the same time the number of seats increased to 20 when it allied with democratic parties in 1960. On the other hand in the mid-term elections of 1965, SSP got only 13 seats. In the 1967 election SSP got 19 seats. The same Socialists bagged only 12 seats in 1970 election in various alliances. However, the election results show

---

5. See Appendix IX for election results

6. For details of Socialist MLAs see Appendix X.

the erosion of the popular base of the Socialists.

The Socialists participated in the coalition government with the Communists and the Congress not on the basis of ideology but with the aim of securing power based on a minimum programme. The idea of the non-Congress coalition arose as an alternative to Congress government. Anti-Congressism was the only bond which knit the partners together. Therefore, they could not achieve as much as they could have achieved. Therefore, the Socialist should take up a stand with whom they should co-operate. Since the communist party has changed a lot in its policy regarding internationalism as well as violence. The Socialists can very well join with them to materialise the dream of an egalitarian society.

Socialism is a way of life, attitude of mind, and a certain ethical behaviour. What is not so universally recognised is that such a way of life, attitude, and behaviour cannot be imposed from above by dictates of the government or by merely nationalising industry and abolishing capitalism. The construction a socialist society leads fundamentally to construction of a new type of human being. The later, however, is beyond the power of the state to achieve. The emphasis in the Socialist movement must therefore, shift from political actions, aiming at the capture of the state to the task of re-construction of human beings. A Socialist society is one in which the individual is prepared voluntarily

to subordinate his interest to the larger interest of the society. Such a society cannot be created through the old dynamics of social change based on conflict of interests of society.

The demise of the communist system in the Soviet Union has bolstered old arguments and created some new ones that Socialism cannot exist either in the present world or as an ideal. It is a fact that the Soviet model of socialist society is dead but it does not mean that the untried forms of Socialism should be buried along with it. In the Indian context, after the expiry of more than 55 years of independence the dreams of the father of our nation have completely been dashed to the ground. Money and muscle power with the help of mafia groups shamefully dominated politics. Rivalry between the parties, corruption and nepotism threatened the very existence of the political system. Moreover, liberalization, privatization and globalization are threatening the very independence and existence of the country. The Congress which had pledged 'Socialistic pattern' had clearly shifted from their declared goal. At this juncture of history the Indian Socialists has to play a vital role in formulating better policies for social development and upliftment of the poor. However, the egoistic approach of the leaders, keep them restricted from the articulations of such policies. In Kerala politics the socialist party can contribute much to the struggle of the left forces in the transformation of the society. The

collective of the socialists, despite their party leanings, is the necessity of the time. It alone can positively respond to the challenges raised by the international capitalism. The socialist unity is essential to defend national interests and also to protect human rights from the onslaughts of the capitalists.

# APPENDICES

## Appendix I

The Zamieris College (Alent,

Chalappuram, P. O.

21st October, 1948

Ref: No. ....

P. Kumaran Azhuthassan was a student here in the Junior Intermediate Class during 1941--42 and in the Senior Intermediate Class up to October 1942. Except for the fact that he became excited like many other students over the present political situation and took part in demonstrations in the college, I have nothing but good to say of him. However in the interests of college discipline he had to withdraw from the college. I believe that in different surroundings he will prove law-abiding and good. I wish him success in life.

R. Ravi Varma





## Appendix III

### THE NATIONAL EXECUTIVE OF THE PRAJA SOCIALIST PARTY, 1952

1. Acharya J.B. Kripalani
2. Acharya Narendra Deva
3. Shri Asoka Mehta
4. Dr. Suresh Chandra Banerjee
5. Dr. Prafulla Chandra Ghosh
6. Shri N.G. Goray
7. Shri Halaldhar Bhuyan
8. Shri Hareshwar Goswami
9. Shri Jayaprakash Narayan
10. Shri K. Kelappan
11. Dr. Rammanohar Lohia
12. Shri Maganlal Bagdi
13. Shri B.S. Mahadevsingh
14. Shri Mahamaya Prasad Sinha
15. Dr. K.B. Menon
16. Shri T. Prakasam
17. Shri Purshottam Trikamdas
18. Shri. Sadiq Ali

19. Shrimati Sucheta Kripalani
20. Shri Surendranath Dwivedi
21. Thakur Piare Lal Singh
22. Shri Triloki Singh

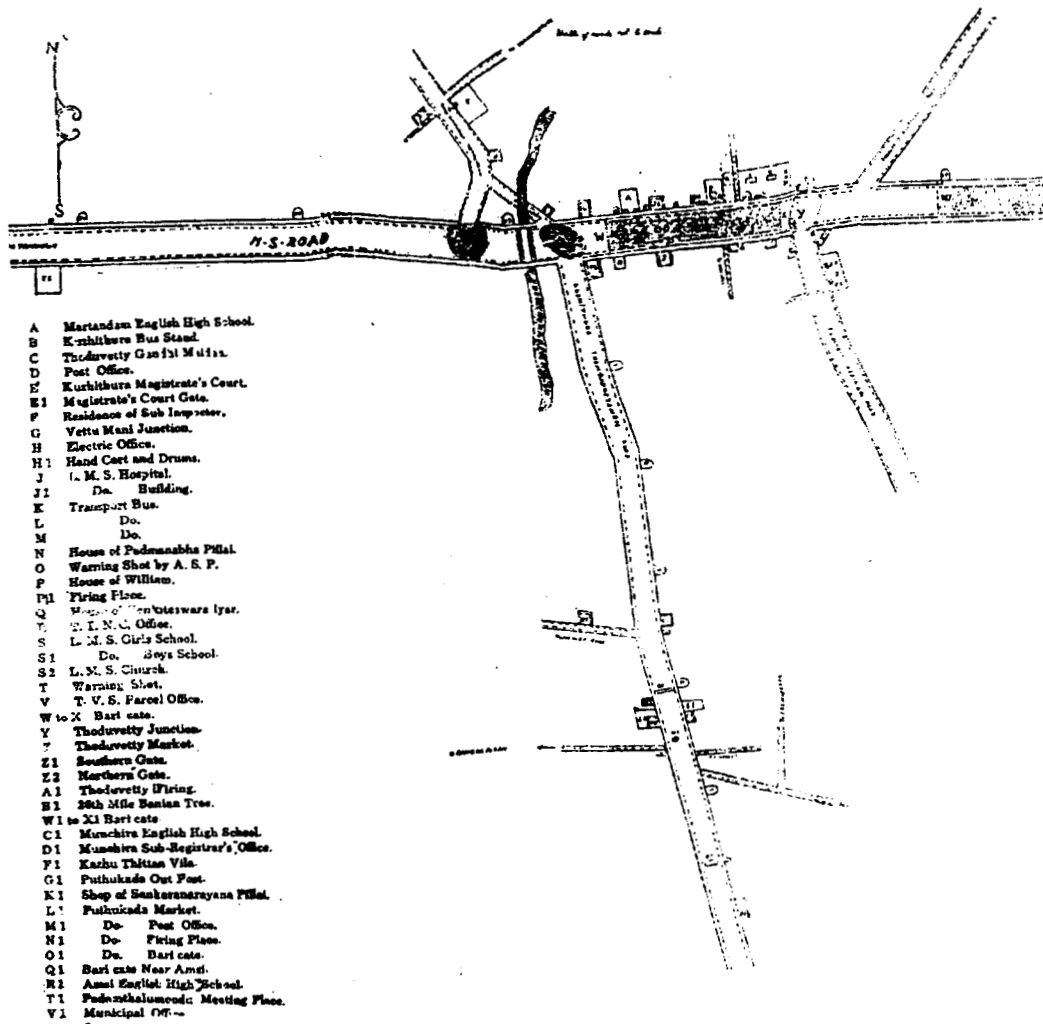
Source: O.P. Ralhan (Ed.), *Documents on Socialist Movement in India*.

# Appendix IV

## FIRING SITE SKETCH

DISTRICT, TRIVANDRUM

TALUK VILAVANCODE



Source: Enquiry Report. Police firing on 11<sup>th</sup> August 1954, at Martandam and Thoduvetty, (Kerala Legislative Library, Trivandrum).

## Appendix V

### KERALA ASSEMBLY ELECTION RESULTS, 1957

Party	Seats contested	Seats secured	Votes polled	Percentage of votes polled
Indian National Congress	124	43	2209251	37.84
Communist Party of India	100	60	2059547	35.28
Praja Socialist Party	62	9	628261	10.76
Revolutionary Socialist Party	28	-	188553	3.22
Independents*	75	13	751965	12.87
Independent (unopposed)	-	1	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>389</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>5837577</b>	<b>100</b>

Independents include 19 Muslim League candidates, of which eight were elected. The remaining five successful independents were supported by the Communist Party of India.

Source: Jose Chander, N., (Ed.), *Dynamics of State Politics Kerala*.

**Appendix V(A)**

**NAME OF PSP MLA'S IN KERALA LEGISLATIVE  
ASSEMBLY, 1957**

1. PONNARA SREEDHAR	VILAPPIL
2. E.P.EPPAN	THIRUVANATHAPURAM. II
3. PATTOM THANU PILLAI	THIRUVANANTHAPURAM. II
4. JOSEPH CHAZHIKKAD	PULIYANNUR.
5. C.G. JANARDHANAN	CHALAKKUDY.
6. M. NARAYANA KURUP	BALUSSERY
7. P.M. KUNHIRAMAN NAMBIAR	KOYILANDY
8. P.R. KURUP	KUTHUPARAMBU.
9. K. CHANDRASEKHAREN	HOSDURG.

Source: Moideen Koya, (Ed.) *Assembly Elections since 1951*, (Trivandrum, 1989).

## Appendix VI

### ANALYSIS OF KERALA ASSEMBLY ELECTION RESULTS, 1960

Party	Seats contested	Seats secured	Votes polled	Percentage of votes polled
Indian National Congress	80	63	2 789 556	34.42
Praja Socialist Party	33	20	1 146 028	14.14
Muslim League	12	11	401 925	4.96
Communist Party of India	108	29	3 171 732	39.14
Revolutionary Socialist Party	18	1	89 222	1.2
Kerala Socialists Party	12	-	5 052	0.06
Lohia Socialist Party	4	-	21 301	0.26
Jan Sangh	3	-	5 277	0.07
Independents	42	2	473 984	5.84
<b>Total</b>	<b>312</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>8104077</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Jose Chander, N., (Ed.), *Dynamics of State Politics Kerala*.

## Appendix VII

### KERALA ASSEMBLY ELECTION RESULTS, 1965

Party	Seats contested	Seats secured	Votes polled	Percentage of votes polled
Indian National Congress	133	36	2 076 435	32.80
Communist Party of India	78	3	501 898	7.93
Communist Party of India (Marxist)	73	40	1 257 869	19.87
Samyukta Socialist Party	29	13	509 543	8.05
Muslim League	16	6	242 329	3.83
Kerala Congress	54	23	796 291	12.58
Revolutionary Socialist Party	11	-	77 107	1.22
Jan Sangh	16	-	32 930	0.52
Swatantra Party	14	1	47 105	0.74
Independents	134	11	789 250	12.46
<b>Total</b>	<b>558</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>6 330 757</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Source: Jose Chander, N., (Ed.), *Dynamics of State Politics Kerala*.

## Appendix VIII

### KERALA ASSEMBLY ELECTION RESULTS, 1967

Party	Seats contested	Seats secured	Votes polled	Percentage of votes polled
Indian National Congress	133	9	2 225 275	35.42
Kerala Congress	62	5	475 112	7.56
Communist Party of India (Marxist)	59	52	1 476 456	23.50
Communist Party of India	22	19	537 824	8.56
Samyukta Socialist Party	21	19	527 662	8.40
Muslim League	15	14	424 195	6.75
Revolutionary Socialist Party	6	6	170 498	2.71
Kerala Socialist Party	1	1	32 974	0.52
Karshaka Thozhilali Party	3	2	68 954	1.09
Praja Socialist Party	7	-	13 991	0.22
Samastha Kerala Muslim League	6	-	3 680	0.05
Jan Sangh	24	-	55 584	0.88
Swatantra Party	6	-	13 105	0.20
Republican Party	3	-	2 176	0.03
Independents	55	6	178 392	4.52
<b>Total</b>	<b>423</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>6 281 152</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Source: Jose Chander, N., (Ed.), *Dynamics of State Politics Kerala*.

### Appendix VIII (A)

#### NAMES OF ELECTED SSP CANDIDATES TO THE KERALA LEGESLATIVE ASSEMBLY - 1967.

1. N.K. BALAKRISHNAN	HOSDURG
2. K.K. ABU	KUTHUPARAMBU
3. P.R. KURUP	PERINGALAM.
4. M. KRISHNAN	VATAKARA
5. P. KUNHIRAMA KIDAV	KOYILANDY
6. A.K. APPU	BALUSSERRY
7. V. KUTTIKRISHNAN NAIR	KUNNAMANGALAM
8. M. RAMUNNI	SOUTH WAYANAD.
9. K.A. SIVARAMABHARATHY	CHITTOOR
10. O. KORAN	KUZHALMANDAM.
11. N.K. SESHAN	VADAKKANCHERRY.
12. P.P. WILSON	EATTUMANOOR.
13. P.K. KUNJU	KAYAMKULAM.
14. P.N. CHANDRASENAN	ARANMULA.
15. G. GOPINATHA PILLA	MAVELIKKARA
16. D. DAMODARAN POTTI	CHATAYAMANGALAM.
17. MATTAPALLY MAJEED.	ARYANAD
18. B. MADHAVAN NAIR.	THIRUVANTHAPURAM. I
19. C.S. NEELAKANDAN NAIR	VILAPPIL

Source: Moideen Koya, (Ed.), *Assembly Elections since 1951*, (Trivandrum, 1989).

## Appendix IX

### KERALA ASSEMBLY ELECTION RESULTS, 1970

Party	Seats contested	Seats secured	Votes polled	Percentage of votes polled
Indian National Congress	55	30	1 380 655	18.7
Communist Party of India	31	16	710 338	9.7
Muslim League	20	11	559 220	7.7
Revolutionary Socialist Party	14	6	330 988	4.5
Praja Socialist Party	6	3	155 222	2.1
Communist Party of India (Marxist)	71	30	1 759 170	23.2
Samyukta Socialist Party	14	6	284 514	4.2
Indian Socialist Party	12	3	248 353	3.4
Kerala Congress	30	12	440 382	6.0
Indian National Congress (N)	38	-	229 482	3.0
Jan Sangh	8	-	45 079	0.6
Swatantra	1	-	7 982	0.1
DMK	1	-	1 682	0.02
Independants	204	16	1 324 808	14.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>505</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>7 477 875</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Source: Jose Chander, N., (Ed.), *Dynamics of State Politics Kerala*.

## Appendix X

### NAME OF SOCIALIST MLA'S IN THE KERALA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY 1970

1.	N.K. BALAKRISHNAN	PSP	HOSDURG
2.	ATTINGAL GOPALA PILLAI	PSP	TRIVANDRUM. I
3.	G. KUTTAPPAN	PSP	NEMAM.
4.	K.A. SIVARAMA BHARATHY	SSP	CHITTUR.
5.	V.K. GOPINATHAN	SSP	NATTIKA.
6.	P.B.R. PILLAI	SSP	ETTUMANNUR
7.	THALAVADI UMMAN	SSP	KUTTANAD
8.	K. SOMASEKHAREN NAIR	SSP	ARYANAD
9.	P. NEELAKANDAN	SSP	KAZHAKKUTTAM
10.	K.M. SOOPI	ISP	PERINGALAM
11.	M. KRISHNAN	ISP	VATAKARA
12.	G. GOPINATHA PILLAI	ISP	MAVELIKKARA

Source: Moideen Koya, (Ed.) *Assembly Elections since 1951*,  
(Trivandrum, 1989).

## Appendix XI

### ANALYSIS OF ASSEMBLY ELECTION RESULTS, 1977

Party	Seats contested	Seats secured	Votes polled	Percentage of votes polled
Indian National Congress	54	38	1757312	20.02
Communist Party of India	27	23	872309	9.94
Kerala Congress	22	20	734879	8.37
Muslim League	16	13	584642	6.66
Revolutionary Socialist Party	11	9	368642	4.20
Communist Party of India (Marxist)	68	17	1946376	22.18
Muslim League (Opposition)	16	3	390139	4.44
BDL (Janata)	27	6	690574	7.87
Kerala Congress (PG)	15	2	397814	4.53
Independents	313	9	1030959	11.75
<b>Total</b>	<b>569</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>8773646</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Source: Jose Chander, N., (Ed.), *Dynamics of State Politics Kerala*.

## Appendix XII

### ELECTION SYMBOLS OF SOCIALISTS



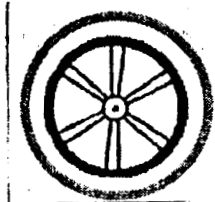
**Indian Socialist Party**



**Praja Socialist Party**



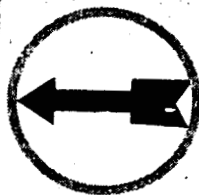
**Janatha Party**



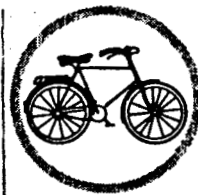
**Janatha Dal**



**Janatha Dal S**



**Janatha Dal U**



**Samajwadi Party**

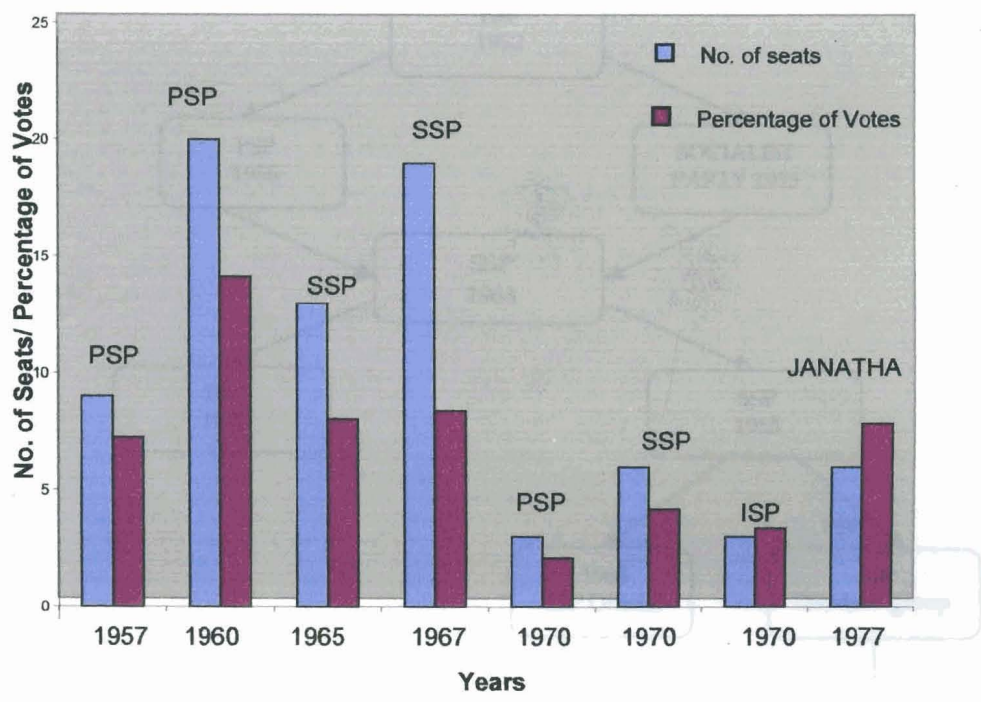


**R.J.D**

*The election symbols of the Socialists represent their ideological commitment to the people living under poverty line in the urban and rural areas of India. The progress and mobility have been envisaged as an ambition of the Socialist party.*

### Appendix XIII

## GRAPHIC REPRESENTATION OF ELECTION RESULTS







## BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

1. **Abdul Rahiman, Muhammad (1898-1945):** Born at Kodungallur in a middle class family. Educated at the Basel Mission College in Calicut and in Madras. Actively participated in Khilafat movement. Arrested in 1921 and released in 1923. Arrested during the C.D.M. Elected President of the KPCC in 1938-39 and 1940. One of the leaders of the Nationalist Muslims
2. **Amma, A.V. Kuttimalu-** Born at Anakkara in 1905. Belonged to an aristocratic family, Vadakath House. Married K. Madhava Menon. Became a member of the KPCC and a prominent Rightist leader. Toured parts of North Malabar in 1941 delivering anti-war speeches. Arrested during the Quit India Movement. Served as Member of Calicut Municipal Council and Madras Legislative Council.
3. **Kelappan. K (1889-1971):** Born in a Nair middle class family in Muchukunnu, Koyilandy. Graduated from Madras and served as teacher. One of the founder leaders of Nair Service Society in Travancore. Went to Bombay to study law, but discontinued and participated in the Non-co-operation Movement in 1920. Was one of the leaders of Vaikkom Temple-entry Satyagraha in 1924.

Leader of CDM in 1930 and lead jatha to Payyannur. Participated in Guruvayur sathyagraha. Was Editor of *Mathrubhumi*. Formed Gandhi Sanghams to oppose the socialists. Formed KMPP in Kerala. Later PSP leader. A staunch Gandhian.

4. **Menon, Kongattil Raman (1896-1936):** Born in wealthy Nair family in Chavakkad. Lawyer at Calicut. Detained during CDM. The secretary of the KPCC in 1936. In 1937 elected to the Madras Legislative assembly and became a minister. A leader of the right wing.
5. **Nair, P. Narayanan. (1909-1973):** Born in a lower middle class family in Chelakkara. After High School education worked as a teacher. Resigned the job and went to Madras. Joined *Justice* newspaper. Went to Guruvayur to report about the Guruvayur satyagraha. Joined *Mathrubhumi* in 1933. Member of CSP in 1934 and organized workers. Was elected to the KPCC and AICC. Served as the treasurer and the secretary of the KPCC in 1938-39. Arrested in 1940 joined CPI after release in 1942. Author of *Aranoottandilude* an autobiography.
6. **Achutha, Menon. C. (1913-1991):** Born in Trichur. Obtained BA, B.L. from Madras University. Entered politics in 1936. Kochi district congress Committee secretary. Joined in Communist Party in 1942. Member of first EMS ministry. In 1968 elected to Rajya

Sabha. CPI state secretary and National Council member. Leader of the Mini front in 1969. Elected as Chief Minister on 1<sup>st</sup> November, 1969. Chief Minister during Emergency.

7. **Kamalam. K (1926- ):** Started political career as a congress activist. Was the president of the district Congress Committee, Kozhikode, and Vice President of KPCC. Leader of the Congress (O), after split at the time of Mrs. Indira Gandhi. Actively participated in the resistance against Emergency. The Kozhikode district Committee Chairperson of Janatha party. In 1982 served as minister. At present Kerala Vanitha Commission Chairperson.
8. **Kurup, P.R. (1915-2001):** Born in Panur. After High school education served as teacher. Dismissed from the job due to political activism. Started political career in the Congress. Then leader of PSP and SSP. Panur Panchayath President for 10 years. President of Malabar Kisan Panchayath. Arrested in Kattampally agitation. Elected to Kerala Legislative assembly in 1957, 1960, 1965, 1967, 1977, 1987, and 1996. In 1967 Minister of irrigation. In 1996 Minister of transport.
9. **Viswambharan. P. (1925- ):** Participated in the Quit India Movement. One of the founding leaders of the Student Congress of Travancore. In 1948 joined Socialist party. Was the state Secretary of the PSP and SSP. Elected to the Travancore-Cochin

Legislative Assembly in 1954, Kerala Legislative assembly in 1960 and to Lok Sabha in 1967. Organizer of Co-operative movements. Trade Union activist. Guided the resistance against Emergency during 1975-'77. At present settled in Kovalam, Trivandrum. Janatha Dal Leader.

10. **Veerendra Kumar .M.P. (1936- ):** Scholar and politician. Obtained MBA degree. Was the state General Secretary of SSP. All India Treasurer, General Secretary and National Committee Member of SSP. Co-ordinator of the opposition Co-ordination Committee when Achutha Menon was Chief Minister. Served as minister in the Central Cabinet. At present chairman and Managing Director Mathrubhumi. Representing Kozhikode in the Lok Sabha.
11. **K.K. Raghavan (1927-1985):** Born at Vatakara. Participated in the Quit India Movement while studying in BEM High School, Vatakara. Formed Socialist Group in 1945 at Vatakara. Gave leadership to the activities of Yuvakh Sangh. Propagated Socialist ideology in Vatakara and suburban areas. Municipal Council Chairman of Vatakara during 1970-79. Leadership given during *Vimochana Samaram*. Janatha party Vatakara Mandalam president. Actively participated in the Organization of Co-operative movements and Labour Unions.

## GLOSSARY

Jatha	-	A procession on feet
Jenmi	-	Land lord
Kudiyar	-	Kisan tenant
Kurup	-	A sub caste of Nairs
Para	-	A grain measurement
Raja	-	Former ruler or chieftain
Taluk	-	A revenue sub-division of a district
Tharavad	-	A Marumakkathayam, usually Nair joint family.
Thiyyas	-	A caste group belonging to the 'backward' category.
Vayanasala	-	Reading room.
Kuriyal	-	A long bag made of palmyra leaf.
Lathi	-	A wooden stick used by police to beat.
Vimochana samaram	-	Liberation Struggle.
Menon	-	A sub Caste of Nairs.
Nambiar	-	A sub caste of Nairs.
Kalagamithis	-	Arts Club.

# SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY

## I. PRIMARY SOURCES

### A. ARCHIVAL SOURCES

#### a. Nehru Memorial Museum & Library, New Delhi.

1. AICC : Documents on Kerala, File No. P-15/1936, NMML, New Delhi, 1936
2. AICC : Documents on Kerala, File No. P-12/1937, NMML, New Delhi, 1937
3. AICC : Documents on Kerala, File No. P-11/1940, NMML, New Delhi, 1938
4. AICC : Documents on Kerala, File No. P-11/1941, NMML, New Delhi, 1941
5. AICC : Documents on Kerala, File No. P/42-46, NMML, New Delhi, 1942-46

#### K.B. Menon Papers :

1. File No.11. Speeches and Articles. NMM&L, New Delhi.
2. File No.1/1. NMM&L, New Delhi.
3. Misc/File No.3/3. NMM&L, New Delhi.
4. File No.6/2. NMM&L, New Delhi.
5. File No.11/3.NMM&L, New Delhi.
6. Historical Notes, N. Ramachandra Rao, NMM&L, New Delhi
7. File No.11/6 NMM&L, New Delhi.
8. File No.1/2 NMM&L, New Delhi.
9. File No.11/2 NMM&L, New Delhi.

10. Letter from Sarojini Naidu to K.B. Menon, NMM&L, New Delhi.
11. File No.3. Misc.Copies of Testimonials, NMM&L, New Delhi.
12. Indian Civil Liberties Union Manifesto. NMM&L, New Delhi.
13. Letter, dt. 2.10.1937 from Subhas Chandra Bose to K.B. Menon,
14. Letter dt. 22.5.1937 from Rabindranath Tagore to K.B. Menon.
15. Letter dt. 4.10.1937 from Jawaharlal Nehru to K.B. Menon.
16. Letter dt. 30.2.1937 from Jawaharlal Nehru to K.B. Menon.

**b. The Tamilnadu Archives, Egmore**

1. Government of Madras : Detention of K.P.R. Gopalan, G.O (M.S) public 1961/49, Tamilnadu Archives, Egmore, 1949.
2. Government of Madras : Banning Communist Party, (USSF No. 71/48), Tamilnadu Archives, Egmore, 1948.
3. District Magistrate : Report on Salem Jail Firing of Salem (GOMS House 713), Tamilnadu Archives, Egmore, 1950.
4. Government of Madras : Note on Communist Menace in Madras (USSF File No.17/50), Tamilnadu Archives, Egmore, 1950.
5. Public (General) (1940) : Dept. (MS) G.O. No 1613, dt. 14.08.1940.
6. Law (General) Dept. : GO. No.4456 dt. 22.10.1930, Tamilnadu Archives, Egmore.
7. Public (General) (1940) : GO. No.2380 dt. 03.12.1940, Dept. (MS) Tamilnadu Archives, Egmore.

8. CID Report : F.N.R, Vol. III - P17 -  
Tamilnadu Archives,  
Egmore.
9. Public (General) (1940) : GO MS. No.2135 dt. 29.10.1940.
10. Public (General) Dept. : GO. No.2544 dt. 09.08.1942,  
Tamilnadu Archives, Egmore.
11. Public (General) (1940)  
Dept. (MS) : No.1651 dt. 20.08.1940.
12. Fort Nightly Report : 2<sup>nd</sup> half of September, 1940,  
Tamilnadu Archives, Egmore.
13. Fort Nightly Report : 2<sup>nd</sup> half of December, 1953,  
Tamilnadu Archives, Egmore.
14. Fort Nightly Report : 1<sup>st</sup> half of January, 1953,  
Tamilnadu Archives, Egmore.
15. Fort Nightly Report : 2<sup>nd</sup> half of May, 1948, Tamilnadu  
Archives, Egmore.
16. Fort Nightly Report : 2<sup>nd</sup> half of November, 1951,  
Tamilnadu Archives, Egmore.
17. Fort Nightly Report : 2<sup>nd</sup> half of February, 1952,  
Tamilnadu Archives, Egmore.
18. Fort Nightly Report : 1<sup>st</sup> half of July, 1950,  
Tamilnadu Archives, Egmore.
19. Fort Nightly Report : 2<sup>nd</sup> half of July, 1955,  
Tamilnadu Archives, Egmore.
20. History of Freedom Movement. CID Report on the Formation of  
the Kerala CSP and its Activities.
21. History of Freedom Movement. CID Report relating to the  
origin and activities of Labour Unions, Youth League and Left  
Party in the Madras Presidency.
22. G.O. No. 2463 dt 30/8/43 - reg. detention of O. Raghavan Nair.
23. G.O. No. 2347 dt 21/8/43 - reg. detention of Chamu and V.A.  
Kesavan Nair.

24. G.O. No. 2389 dt 21/8/43 – reg. detention of Thaikkandy Pacher and Vannan Kandy Achuthan.
25. G.O. No. 2197 dt 6/8/43 – reg. detention of Muhammed Naha and six others.
26. G.O. No. 1688 dt 29/5/47 Extract from (proscribed) book *Raktha Geetham*.

**c. Kerala State Archives, Trivandrum**

1. Gazette, Extraordinary, Trivandrum, dated, 14<sup>th</sup> February 1955.
2. Police Report dated, 5/2/47 to the Dist. Magistrate, Kottayam, State Archives, Trivandrum.
3. R.O.C. No. 1872/46/CS dated, 7.2.47, Trivandrum. State Archives, Trivandrum.
4. R.O.C. No. 1715/46/CS - Notification dated, 3<sup>rd</sup> February 1947, Trivandrum. State Archives, Trivandrum.
5. C. 1/47/CS - dated, 1<sup>st</sup> January 1947, Trivandrum. State Archives, Trivandrum.
6. C. No. 1872/46/CS - dated, 26.1.47, Trivandrum from the Dewan of Travancore, to the Resident for the Madras State, Trivandrum. State Archives, Trivandrum.
7. History of Freedom Movement, 12<sup>th</sup> April 1936, 'The Socialist Era begins'. State Archives, Trivandrum.

**d. Regional Archives, Kozhikode.**

	<u>S/No</u>	<u>Book No.</u>	<u>Name</u>
1.	1257	A/1218	Police Report for the year 1946, 47, 48, 49, 50.
2.	1778	C/142	Census of 1911 Malabar District Village Statistics, Kozhikode, 1921

3. 2020 G/52A Gazetteers of Malabar  
(Mal), Part III, 1935.

**e. Court Records**

1. Judgement in Kezhariyur Bomb Case No. 21/44 Sessions Court, Kozhikode.
2. Judgement in Criminal Appeals Nos. 422-427 of 1944, High Court, Madras.

**B. NEWSPAPERS AND WEEKLIES**

1. *Ahwanam* (Ed. K. Kunhirama Kurup) 1962 May 15<sup>th</sup>, 1963 May 1<sup>st</sup>.
2. *CPI Souvenir* - IV Party Congress, Palghat, 1956.
3. *Deepika*, Kottayam, 24<sup>th</sup> April 1957.
4. *Deshabhimani*, 11<sup>th</sup> May 1969, 21<sup>st</sup> July 1971, 19<sup>th</sup> July 1979, 24<sup>th</sup> October 1969, 2<sup>nd</sup> Nov 1969, 23<sup>rd</sup> May 1970.
5. *Indian Express*, 20<sup>th</sup> February 1970.
6. *Malayala Manorama*, Kozhikode, 26<sup>th</sup> April 1995.
7. *Mathrubhumi Weekly* - 18 Jan 1932; 26 Oct, 1936; 18 March 1947.
8. *Mathrubhumi Weekly*, Kozhikode, September 1996.
9. *Mathrubhumi*, (Malayalam daily), (Calicut). 1934 - 1947, 7<sup>th</sup> April 1967, June 1964, 2<sup>nd</sup> Nov 1969.
10. *Mathrubhumi*, Kozhikode, 7<sup>th</sup> April 1967.
11. *Pouran* (Ed) R. M. Manakkalath, 1955, April 5, 12.
12. *Pravaham* - 1951, 1952, 1953 (Ed). V. C. Varghese.
13. *Samadarshi* (Ed) K. Kelappan, 1955, 1956.
14. *Swathantra Bharatham* - 14 - 1943.

15. *The Hindu* – 9<sup>th</sup> August 1992, March 1, 1954, 15<sup>th</sup> August 1947, 27 Sept 1962.
16. *The Indian Listener* (English Programme Journal of All India Radio, Vol. VII, No. 19, Sept 22, 1942).
17. *The Statesman*, 28<sup>th</sup> June 1969.
18. *The Times of India*, 20<sup>th</sup> October 1969.
19. *Travancore Information & Listener*, Vol 8, No. 10, June, 1948.
20. *Travancore Information & Listener*, Vol 9, No. 1, September, 1948.
21. *Tribune* – 23 May 1947.

### C. MEMOIRS AND AUTOBIOGRAPHIES

1. Bharatheeyan. V.M. Vishnu, *Adimakal Engine Udamakalayi* (Mal), (Trivandrum, 1980).
2. Kunhappa, Moorkkoth – *Smaranakal Mathram* (Mal), (Kozhikode, 1981).
3. Kurup P.R, *Ente Nadinte Katha Enteyum* (Mal), (Kottayam, 1985).
4. Kurup, K, Kunhirama, *Kazhinha Arupathu Varshangal*, (Orkkatteri, 1993).
5. Nair, P. Narayanan. *Aranoottandilude* (Mal), (Kottayam, 1973).
6. Nair, V.A. Kesavan. *Irumbazhikkullil* (Mal), (Calicut, 1954).
7. Nambiar, P.R, *Keralathile Adyapaka Prasthanam*, (Trivandrum, 1982).
8. Nayanar, E.K. *My Struggle: An Autobiography*, (New Delhi, 1982).
9. Sekhar. N.C. *Agniveedhikal* (Mal), (Kannur, 1987).

#### D. PAMPHLETS

1. Jawaharlal Nehru. : President Address, All India State's Peoples' Conference, February 1939, Ludhiana.
2. Praja Socialist Party : The Merger How and Why? (Bombay, 1952)
3. Menon. K.B. : Welcome speech in the PSP State Conference at Cannanore, Kozhikode, 1958).
4. CPI State Council : Election Manifesto 1957.
5. CPI state Council : Election Manifesto 1959.
6. Revolutionary Socialist Party : What Revolutionary Socialism Stands for? (Calcutta, 1945).
7. : Kerala Crusade against Communism- A pictorial Survey on *Vimochana Samaram*, (Kozhikode, 1959).
8. Revolutionary Socialist Party : The Leninist Way (Calcutta, 1950)

#### E. ORAL EVIDENCE, INTERVIEW

1. Amma Devi, a relative of K.B. Menon in her residence at Pymkulam on 28<sup>th</sup> June 1995.
2. Amma K. Padmini wife of K. Kunhirama Kurup in her residence at Kallamala, Chombala on 19.8.03.
3. Appu, A.K., Ex MLA, in his residence at Kakkur on 18<sup>th</sup> November, 2003.
4. Asokan T.H. Master in his residence at Puthuppanam on 28.03.2005.

5. Balan Nalontavida, an emergency victim at Mangattupara on 28.06.2005.
6. Chandrasekharan K., Socialist leader in his office at Ernakulam on 10.04.2005.
7. Chathu C.V Master, Freedom fighter. 4<sup>th</sup> March 1994 at Vatakara.
8. Ezhuthassan Kumaran. Freedom fighter. 3<sup>rd</sup> October 1995 at Trithala.
9. Gopalan, K. Accused in Keezhariyur Bomb case - Keezhariyur on 31<sup>st</sup> May 1995.
10. Gopinath C.I. - close friend of K.B. Menon at Press Club Kozhikode on 10<sup>th</sup> January 1995.
11. Govindan, K.P. Freedom fighter - Balussery on 25<sup>th</sup> November 2003.
12. Kanaran, C.M. close relative of Thycandy Pacher accused in the Keezhariyur Bomb case in his residence at Keezhariyur, on 5<sup>th</sup> October 1995.
13. Kidavu Madhavan, K.V. Freedom fighter. 5<sup>th</sup> October 1995, Pookad.
14. Krishna Edayath N, Prominent Socialist of Vatakara in his residence at Puthur, Vatakara 20<sup>th</sup> March 1994.
15. Kumaran, M. Ex. M.L.A. 23<sup>rd</sup> June 1994 Vatakara.
16. Kunhirama Kurup, K., Freedom fighter at Vatakara on 22<sup>nd</sup> June 1994.
17. Kunhiraman T.C. Master, accused in Onchiyam Firing incident, at Government College Madappally on 18.10.2003.
18. Menon Balachandran, K., a relative of K.B. Menon in his residence at Pymkulam on 28<sup>th</sup> June 1995.
19. Menon K.R. Mrs., a relative of K.B. Menon in her residence at Pymkulam on 28<sup>th</sup> June 1995.
20. Muhammed, K.P., Freedom fighter. 7<sup>th</sup> June 1995, Kozhikode.

21. Nair Govindan Kanathy, freedom fighter at Keezhariyur on 17<sup>th</sup> November 1996.
22. Nair, C.C., Teacher's organisation leader at Government College Madappally on 15<sup>th</sup> August 1996.
23. Nanu C.K., Socialist leader and M.L.A. Kerala, in his residence at Vatakara on 05.04.2005.
24. Narayanan Edakkatt, Muzhappilangad 7<sup>th</sup> August 2003.
25. Narayanan Kurumayil, 11<sup>th</sup> accused in Keezhariyur Bomb case, 8<sup>th</sup> October 1995, Malappuram.
26. Narayanan Kuttiyil, an early Socialist activist of Vatakara in his residence at Vatakara on 05.04.2005.
27. Pillai G. Kumara at Sree Krishna College, Guruvayur on 4<sup>th</sup> September 1997.
28. Raghavan Mangalatt, Socialist leader - Chettamkunnu, Tellicherry on 10<sup>th</sup> August, 2003.
29. Rao Umanatha, son of Jayadeva Rao, freedom fighter in his residence at Kozhikode on 06.06.1995.
30. Sadanandan M.A., an absconded accused in the Keezhariyur, Bomb case in his residence at Chalappuram on 31<sup>st</sup> May 1995.
31. Sadanandan, M.A. Absconding accused in Keezhariyur Bomb case - Kozhikode on 31<sup>st</sup> May 1995.
32. Sankaran Kutty, P.K., Labour Union leader, Kozhikode, 8<sup>th</sup> November 1995.
33. Surendranath K.V. a relative of K.B. Menon at PVS College for Women, Kozhikode on 19<sup>th</sup> May 1995.

## **F. PUBLISHED REPORTS**

1. Report of the Commission of Inquiry consisting of Shri. S. Velu Pillai in. re: Shri. P.R. Kurup
2. Report of the Commission of Inquiry by Shri. P. Govinda Menon reg. Shri. B. Wellington, Former Minister for Health

3. Report of the inquiry into the action of the police in having resorted to firing on the 11<sup>th</sup> August 1954 by Justice K. Sankaran.
4. Report of the Commission of Inquiry consisting of Shri. S. Velu Pillai in. re: Smt. K.R. Gowri, E.K. Imbichi Bava, Sri. M.K. Krishnan.

#### **G. ASSEMBLY PROCEEDINGS, (LEGISLATIVE LIBRARY, MADRAS).**

1. Madras Legislative Assembly Debates : Vol. XV, May 1954, Legislative Library, Madras.
2. Madras Legislative Assembly Debates : Vol. XXI, February 1955, Legislative Library, Madras.
3. Madras Legislative Assembly Debates : Vol. XXIII, March 1955, Legislative Library, Madras.
4. Madras Legislative Assembly Debates : Vol. II, June 1952, Legislative Library, Madras.
5. Madras Legislative Assembly Debates : Vol. XXIX, January 1952, Legislative Library, Madras.
6. Proceedings of Travancore Cochin Legislative Assembly : Vol. XII, No. 10.

#### **H. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS**

1. Sri Mulam Popular Assembly Proceedings, Vol. VI, No. 3. 24 July 1935.
2. Travancore Administrative Report, 1947-48.
3. Travancore-Cochin Administrative Report, 1954-55.
4. Kerala state Administrative Report 1958-59, Trivandrum, 1960.

5. Kerala State Administrative Report 1959-60, Trivandrum, 1961.

## II. SECONDARY SOURCES

### A. BOOKS

#### Malayalam

1. Balaram, N.E. : *Keralathile Communist Prasthanam*, (Trivandrum, 1973).
2. Ganghsdharan, C.H. : *Mayyazhi*, (Mahe, 2002).
3. Govindan, M. : *Em Govindante Upanyasangal*, (Kottayam, 1986).
4. John, K.C. : *Kerala Rashtrayam Oru Asambhandha Natakam*, (Aluva, 1999).
5. Kurup, K.K.N (Ed) : *Swathantriya Samaram Kasargode Talukil*, (Cannanore, 1984).
6. Kurup, K.K.N. : *Quit India Samaravum Keralavum*, (Calicut, 1993).
7. Limaye Madhu : *Chathusthursthambha Rashtram Oru Roopa Rekha* (Vatakara, 1974).
8. Manmathan, M.P. : *Kelappan* , (Kottayam, 1984).
9. Menon Kesava, K.P. : *Samakaleenaraya Chila Keraleeyar*, (Kottayam, 1974).
10. Mithran Prasanth : *Socialist Prasthanam Keralathil*, (Trivandrum, 1999).
11. Moosath, C.K. : *Kelappan Enna Mahamanushyam*, (Kottayam, 1992).
12. Nair, K.N. Perunna. : *Keralathile Congress Prasthanam*, (Trichur, 1965).
13. Namboodiripad, E.M.S. : *Communist Party Keralithil*, (Trivandrum, 1984).

14. Namboodiripad, E.M.S. : *Keralathile Desheeya Prasthanavum Communistukarum*, (Ernakulam, 1939).
15. Namboodiripad, E.M.S. : *Varecahttiyilninnu Eritheeyilekku*, (Trivandrum, 1983) (Crisis into Chaos)
16. Pavanan, : *Parichayam*, (Kottayam, 1968).
17. Philip Cheriyan : *Kaal Noottandu*, (Kottayam, 1995).
18. Philip Cheriyan : *Nethru Nira*, (Trivandrum, 1983).
19. Philip Cheriyan : *Swathanthriathinusesham*, (Trivandrum, 1984).
20. Pillai Narayana, C. : *Pattam Muthal Panampally Vare*, (Trivandrum, 1976).
21. Pillai, A.K. : *Congressum Keralavum*, (Kottayam, 1986).
22. Presannan, R. : *Adiyantharavasthayude Alayolikal (Niyamasbhayil Nissahayani)*, Thrissur.
23. Sivadas, C.P (Ed). : *Karmayogiyaya K. Kunhirama Kurup*, (Orkkatteri, 1991).

### English

1. Aggarwala, C. Satish & Aggarwala Adish, C. : *Legacy of Indira Gandhi*, (New Delhi, 1985).
2. Austin, H : *Anatomy of the Kerala Coup*, (New Delhi, 1954).
3. Bakshi, S.R. : *Ram Manohar Lohia, His Political Ideology*, (New Delhi, 1992).
4. Berki, R.N. : *Modern Ideologies - Socialism*, (London, 1974).

5. Breecher Michael : *Nehru: A Political Biography*, (London, 1901).
6. Chand Tara : *History of the Freedom Movement in India*, Vol. IV, (New Delhi, 1983).
7. Chander Jose : *Dynamics of State Politics in Kerala*, (New Delhi, 1986).
8. Chandidas, R. (Ed). : *A source book on Indian Election*, (Bombay 1967).
9. Chandra Bipan : *Indian National Movement - The Long Term Dynamics*, (New Delhi R.P. 1993).
10. Chandra Bose Subhas : *Selected Speeches*, (Delhi, 1962).
11. Chandra Pal Bipin : *Nationality and British Empire*, (Calcutta, 1916).
12. Chandrasekharan, K. : *Face of Freedom*, (New Delhi, 1991).
13. Chawdhari Sathyabratha : *Leftist Movement in India, 1917-47*, (London, 1965).
14. Cole, G.D.H. : *Social Thought The Forerunners*, (London, 1962).
15. Deva Narendra : *Socialism and National Revolution*, (Bombay, 1946).
16. Dutta Rabindra Chandra : *Socialism of Jawaharlal Nehru*, (New Delhi, 1981).
17. Dutta, R.P. : *India Today*, (London, 1940).
18. Edatata Narayanan : *Praja Socialism: Monopoly's power*, (Bombay, 1952).
19. Fic, Victor, M. : *Kerala Yenan of India*, (Bombay, 1970).
20. Ghose Sankar : *Socialism and Communism in India*, (Bombay, 1971).

21. Hibbert Christopher (Ed).: *Twilight of Princes*, (New York, 1974).
22. Jayakar Pupul : *Indira Gandhi a Biography*, (New Delhi, 1992).
23. John John, P. : *Coalition Governments of Kerala*, (Trivandrum, 1983).
24. John, K.C. : *The Melting Pot Kerala*, (Trivandrum, 1975).
25. Karim, C.K. : *Kerala District Gazetteer-Trivandrum District, Supplement*, (Trivandrum, 1978).
26. Kumar, G. Gopa : *Regional Political parties and State politics*, (New Delhi, 1986).
27. Kurup, K.K.N. : *Agrarian Struggle in Kerala*. (Trivandrum, 1989).
28. Kurup, K.K.N. : *The Kayyar Riot*, (Calicut, 1978).
29. Lakhan Pal, P.N. : *History of the Congress Socialist Party*, (Lahore, 1946).
30. Limaye Madhu : *Socialist Communist Interaction in India*, (New Delhi, 1991).
31. Lohia, Ram Monohar : *Marx, Gandhi and Socialism*, (Hyderabad, 1960).
32. Lohia, Ram Monohar : *Wheel of History*, (Hyderabad, 1970).
33. Lohia, Ram Monohar : *Will to Power and other writings*, (Hyderabad, 1956).
34. Maclellan David : *Karl Marx, Selected Writings*, (New York, 1988).
35. Mankekar, A.R. : *The Red Riddle of Kerala*, (Bombay, 1965).
36. Marx Karl : *Capital, Vol. III*, (Moscow, 1971).

37. Masani, M.R. : *A Short History of the Communist Party of India*, (London, 1954).
38. Masani, M.R. : *Congress Misrule and the Swatantra Alternative*, (Bombay, 1966).
39. Masani, M.R. : *The Communist Party of India*, (London, 1954).
40. Meherally Yusuf, (Ed.) : *Towards Struggle*, (Bombay, 1942).
41. Mende Tiber : *Conversations with Nehru*, (Bombay, 1956).
42. Menon, V.P. : *The Transfer of Power in India*, (New Delhi, R.P. 1979).
43. Moideen Koya (Ed.) : *Assembly Elections since 1951*, (Trivandrum, 1989).
44. Nair, A. Balakrishnan : *The Government and Politics of Kerala*, (Trivandrum, 1994).
45. Nair, Ramakrishnan : *Constitutional Experiments in Kerala*, (Trivandrum, 1964).
46. Nair, Ramakrishnan : *How Communist came into power in Kerala*, (Trivandrum, 1982).
47. Namboodiripad, E.M.S. : *History of Indian Freedom Struggle*, (Trivandrum, 1986).
48. Namboodiripad, E.M.S. : *Reminiscences of an Indian Communist*, (New Delhi, 1987).
49. Namboodiripad, E.M.S. : *Twenty Eight Months in Kerala: A Retrospect*, (New Delhi, 1959).
50. Nanda, B.R. (Ed.) : *Socialism in India*, ((New Delhi, 1971).
51. Nanda, B.R. : *The Nehrus: Motilal and Jawaharlal*, (London, 1962).

52. Naoroji Dadabhai : *Poverty and the British Rule in India*, (London, 1901).
53. Narayan Jayaprakash : *Towards Struggle*, (Bombay, 1946).
54. Narayan Jayaprakash : *Why Socialism?* (Varamasi, 1936).
55. Nehru Jawaharlal : *An Autobiography*, (London, 1955).
56. Nehru Jawaharlal : *Discovery of India*, (Calcutta, 1948).
57. Nehru Jawaharlal : *Eighteen Months in India*, (Allahabad, 1928).
58. Nehru Jawaharlal : *Glimpses of World History*, (New Delhi, 1977).
59. Nehru Jawaharlal : *India and the World*, (London, 1936).
60. Nehru Jawaharlal : *India's Freedom*, (London, 1965).
61. Nehru Jawaharlal : *Soviet Russia*, (Bombay, 1929).
62. Nehru Jawaharlal : *Important Speeches, 1935-37*, (New Delhi, 1958).
63. Nesamony, P. : *Inside Travancore, Tamil Nadu, Nagercoil*, (Madras, 1948).
64. Nossitter, T.J. : *Communism in Kerala. A study in Political adaptation*, (Delhi, 1982).
65. Pai, M.R., (Ed). : *Socialism in India. A Commentary*, Popular Prakashan, (Bombay, 1967).
66. Pal Lakhan : *History of Congress Socialist Party*, (Lahore, 1946).
67. Pannikar, K.M. : *Asia and Western Dominance*, (London, 1965).

68. Pillai Sankara, T.P. : *Democracy in Kerala and Pattom A. Thanu Pillai*, (Changanasseri, 1969).
69. Prasad Bimal (Edt). : *A revolutionary's Quest* (Collected Writings of Jayaprakash Narayan), (London, 1980).
70. Prasad Bimal (Ed.) : *A Revolutionary's Quest: Selected writings of Jayaprakash Narayan*, (New Delhi, 1980).
71. Prasad Bimal (Ed.) : *Socialism Sarvodaya and Democracy: Selected works of Jayaprakash Narayan*, (Bombay, 1964).
72. Prasad Bimal (Ed.) : *Gandhi, Nehru & Jayaprakash. Studies in leadership*, (Delhi, 1985).
73. Prasad Bimal : *Jayaprakash Narayan. Selected works. Vol. II, 1936-39*, (New Delhi, 2001).
74. Pyarelal : *Mahatma Gandhi: The Last Phase, Vol. II*, (Ahmedabad).
75. Ralhan, O.P. : *Documents on Socialist Movement in India, Vol. II*, (New Delhi, 2000).
76. Roy, M.N. : *Aftermath of Non-Co-operation*, (London, 1926).
77. Sampurnanand : *Memories and Reflections*, (Bombay, 1962).
78. Sampurnanand : *Indian Socialism*, (London, 1961).
79. Sarkar Sumit : *Modern India, 1885-1947*, (New Delhi, 1995).
80. Sen, S.P., (Ed). : *Dictionary of National Biography, Vol. III*, (Calcutta, 1974).

81. Shah Sonal : *Indian Socialists: Search for Identity*, (Bombay, 1994).
82. Sharma Sadhna : *States Politics in India*, (New Delhi, 1995).
83. Shastri Prakash : *Socialist Thought in India*, (Jaipur, 1985).
84. Singh Chandrika : *Communist and Socialist Movement in India*, (Delhi, 1987).
85. Singh Harkishore : *A History of Praja Socialist Movement in India*, (Lucknow, 1959).
86. Singh, A. : *History of PSP (1934-57)* Lucknow, 1959.
87. Sinha, L.P. : *Left Wing in India*. Muzaffarpur, 1965.
88. Sitaramayya Pattabhi : *History of Indian National Congress*, Vol. I. Second Print. (New Delhi, 1969).
89. Somarajan, C.N. : *Aspects of Kerala Society & Politics*. (Quilon, 1987).
90. Somarajan, C.N. : *Pressure Groups and Democratic Politics*, (New Delhi, 1988).
91. Tagore Rabindranath : *Letters from Russia*, (Calcutta, 1960).
92. Talwar, S.N. : *Under the Banyan Tree - The Communist Movement in India, 1920-64*, (New Delhi, 1985).
93. Thakur Janardhan : *Prime Ministers Nehru to Vajpayee*, (Mumbai, 1999).
94. Tharoor Shashi : *India from the Midnight to the Millennium*, (New Delhi, 1998).

95. Varma Vishwanath Prasad : *Modern Indian Political Thought*, Vol. II, (Agra, 1991).
96. Vasudev Uma : *Two Faces of Indira Gandhi*, (New Delhi, 1971).
97. Vivekananda Swami : *The Complete Works*, Vol. VI, (Almora, 1950).
98. Ward and Corner : *Descriptive Memoir of Malabar*, (Calicut, 1900).
99. Weiner Myron : *Party Politics in India*, (New Jersey, 1957).

## B. ARTICLES

1. Menon K.B. - Democracy & Communalism
2. Menon K.B. - Document on Communist Rule in Kerala
3. Menon K.B. - What is Democracy?
4. Menon K.B. - Musings from Abroad.
5. Menon K.B. - Muslim Minority in Kerala State.
6. Menon K.B. - Communism and Politics.
7. Menon K.B. - Political aspects of National Integration.
8. Menon K.B. - Record of Communist Rule in Kerala State.
9. Nair V.A. Kesavan - *Dr. K.B. Menon: Oru Thulika Chithram*, - 16.3.47 - *Mathrubhumi Weekly*.
10. Nair P.K. Appa, PSP and Public Election.

## C. UNPUBLISHED THESIS

1. Gopalankutty, K. : *The National Movement in Malabar, 1930-47* Ph.D thesis submitted to The Centre for