CHAPTER III

FROM IDEOLOGY TO PRAGMATISM
The purpose of this chapter is to make an understanding of the communist ministry’s attempt to purify the educational scenario of Kerala and how far the society and press responded to their effort. The communists of Kerala, since the forties of this century functioned on pure ideological framework which was preset by Marx and Angels. Since they were working classes as well as the weaker sections of Kerala, they felt the need of some cardinal changes in the existing social formations of Kerala.

After two decades of their close association with the masses, the 1957 election to the Kerala Legislature Assembly voted them into power. This shift of the working class movement into a ruling class party created a little confusion in the cadre as well as in the leadership. This unexpected victory, and ideological as well as clean hand leadership’s first effort to put in operation of the ideological tenets which they imbibed their decades interaction with realities, one thing is that they were unaware of the caste equations and their influence in the mass media managements.
### Table III-1

**Schools in Kerala 1957**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Character</th>
<th>Government</th>
<th>Private</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lower Primary</td>
<td>2678</td>
<td>4385</td>
<td>7063</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upper Primary</td>
<td>456</td>
<td>1284</td>
<td>1740</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>217</td>
<td>617</td>
<td>834</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic Training</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non Basic Training</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nursery Training</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior Basic</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>441</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior Basic</td>
<td>219</td>
<td>319</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post Basic</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre Basic</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nursery (Kindergarten)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music, Dance, Arts</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical Schools</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fisheries Schools</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Education</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Certified School</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physically handicapped</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Schools</td>
<td>3680</td>
<td>6714</td>
<td>10711</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Malayala Manorama Year Book 1959 p. 350.*
As true communists in words and spirit, they turned their attention into the rotten educational scenario and janmi oriented land relations. Education agencies, janmi nexus, they are numerically less, they altogether controlled a sizable number of population. Since the 18th century the education field of this land was gradually and steadily monopolised by caste / religious organisations, viz Protestant, Catholics, Jacobites, NSS, SNDP, MES etc. In free India early vision and purity of most of the education agencies were denied away by the managements. The educational agencies used it as a lucrative field / enterprise. From appointment to admission all stages of establishment and functioning of schools in Kerala became a misnomer in corruption and exploitation.¹

¹. Within two months of the assumption of power by the new government, the then education minister, Prof. Joseph Mundasser, received about 6000 complaints from aided school teachers against their managers on such matters as extension of tenure, promotion, transfer and dismissal. For more details see discussions in C.N. Somarajan, ‘Aspects of Kerala Society and politics’, Trivandrum, p. 78.
Under paid and unpaid teachers looked for the mercies of management during every March for their continuation in the next academic year\(^2\). This was the true picture of literate Kerala in the fifties of this century\(^3\). Any how being true ideologists who were at the apex of Government of Kerala, education being a state subject, decided to purification. The net result was the birth of the Education Bill of 1957, under the stewardship of their Minister of Education, in the EMS ministry, Prof. Joseph Mundassery, a man of lofty ideals and an eyesore to the Catholic bureaucracy in the state\(^4\).

Above all the Communist Ministry was very particular for new socio economic relations in this land\(^5\). In addition to it the

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2 "There was discontent among the teaching staff with regard to low pay and unsatisfactory service conditions ...... consequently the teachers under private management were subject to all kind of discriminations and truly they were slaves to their wages and hunger". S.C. Joseph, Kerala the Communist State, Madras, 1959, PP 150-151.

3 41% literacy in the state as compared to the national average of 15%, Ibid, p. 148.


Education Minister immediately after the assumption to the office was in the task to nose-riding the notorious educational agencies of Kerala. Long before the publication of the Kerala Education Bill, Prof. Joseph Mundassery made several anti-management and anti-Catholic statements which provoked Catholic hierarchy chiefs. It was the after effect of Mundasseri's age old anti-church attitude. Being a college professor who worked under Catholic management for 27 years he had some first hand information about the true character and modus operation of the managements in Kerala. For a long time he was in tug of war with Catholic priestly hierarchy. Finally he himself was a victim of managerial high handedness in being dismissed from service for alleged political activities. Therefore before introducing the Bill he conducted a lecture tour to be little and ridicule the church hegemony in the education field.

6. Kainikkara Padmanabha Pillai, op cit, p. 134
7. Ibid p. 150
8. Ibid pp. 153-154
9. S.C. Joseph, op cit, p. 15
10. See discussions, Joseph Mundasseri, op.cit, p. 225
Mundassery had lofty ideals. He believed that teachers had also sacrificed along with the managements in the field of education. But it was a truth that nobody was ready to shed a single drop of tear for their cause. Therefore he decided for the betterment of the teachers.\(^\text{11}\)

Education Minister's intention for the betterment of the teaching community and communist Anti-Christian feeling altogether paved the way for the preparation of an Education Bill.\(^\text{12}\) At this conjecture, the Christian Catholic community from the very inception cultured anti-communist feeling among lasting on different grounds such as materialistic philosophy, their anti-Christian deeds in USSR and China. They used the church pulpit for it.

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11 "Business enterprises are largely controlled by Christians and Muslims where as trade union leaders are invariably Hindus. No wonder that most of the conciliatory conferences held to settle trade union demands end up in failure.... Even though they are steeped in religion, the communist trade unions leaders keep it a secret under the banner of communism". V. Balakrishnan, op. cit, p. 63.

12 "The control of the education system is also an integral part of the communist programme of action". A. Balakrishnan Nair, *The Government and politics of Kerala*, Trivandrum, 1994, p. 231.
P.T. Chacko, the opposition leader in the Legislative Assembly declared that the Education Bill was intended to attain the political ends of the communists. The Communists claimed that the Education Bill was the Magna Carta of teachers. The Education Bill was intended to liberate the teacher/middle class employees in the state service from the torture and the exploitation in the private managements. Long before the communists coming to power, anti-communist attitude was very strong among the minorities particularly among the Christians. Thus the Communist Government was branded as a devil that tries to destroy Christianity and Islam, by the respective religious hierarchies and pious laities stood behind this anti-communist attitude of their religious leadership.

Above all church hierarchy feared that through the Education Bill of Joseph Mundassery they will lose both their assets as well as social relevance in the Kerala Society. For generations the church penetrated into the social life of Kerala through its educational function. Prior to the British arrival here existed jati based education through a native institution called Kalar/.
Kudippallikoodam. The incoming British missionary bands introduced the present day pattern of education. Since they got incorporated the Kalari / Kudippallikudam into their system of education with the function of elementary education\textsuperscript{16}. The traditional Kalari / Kudippallikudam system transformed as a church agency in the later period, and hence all walks of the life in the society irrespective of caste, class directly or indirectly indebted much to the church.

Through nationalisation of schools, they feared, they will lose their grassroot level socio-political influence in the Kerala society. To them the proposed Education Bill of the first communist ministry was an instrument of confiscation of church properties attached to schools and liquidation of church’s social


\textsuperscript{17} Velayudhan, ‘Kerala the Red Rain Land’, New Delhi, 1958, p. 127
relevance. The private school managers came to the conclusion that the Govt. was trying for educational nationalisation. The christian managements which opposed the bill were more apprehensive of indoctrination than were actuated by the desire to control their schools.

Long before the controversial Kerala Education Bill the Catholic Christians were waiting for an opportunity for defame / mutilate the Kerala Communist Ministry, which they believed was the product of Anti-Christian attitude taken by a sizeable section of Hindus particularly Nairs. To the Catholic Christians the Communist Government in Kerala was their chief enemy.

The ideology found communists in their maiden attempt to improve the life of Kudians, the most exploited serfs in the agrarian field moved with the Land Reform Bill. The Land Reform Bill brought aggressive resistance from the land owning

18. ibid, p. 127.
The chief losers of this bill was the Nair community of Kerala and gainers were Ezhavas. This bill infringed the economic interest of Nairs. This bill in its first appearance fell in the hands of Christians as a stick to beat the Communists as well as to win the lost confidence of Nairs. Nair community leader Mannathu Padmanabhan, staunch supporter of communists turned a bitter enemy of them and took an anti-communist stand. Mannam was initially tolerating the Communist Ministry as he felt that it was showing an anti-Christian attitude. But now when he found the claims of his own Nair community brushed aside, he vowed vengeance. As part of his strategy he made efforts to arouse communal feelings by giving currency to the view that the Government in power was pro-Ezhava and

21 See Mathrubhoomi daily 8th and 9th May 1959.
22 op.cit. p. 81
23 It was only when the Government began to attack the vested interests of the church and other powerful organisations that an effective alliance of its opponents came into being. See George Woodcock, op.cit. p. 268.
24 K.C. John, op.cit. p. 47
anti-Nair\textsuperscript{25}. This observation of Mannathu Padmanabhan, undisputed leader of the Nairs, had the effect of pouring oil on the communal flame of Kerala. This paradigm shift in the political scenario was accelerated by newspapers which was controlled by capitalist and communal interest of Kerala.\textsuperscript{26}

The Land Reform Bill of the first Communist Government being progressive and aimed to reduce socio-economic inequalities in the society, a handful Nair land owning class Janmies were not in a position to rise live cry against the Govt. because time would depict them as renegades/anti-progressives. So they waited for another chance. The Education Bill, was a golden opportunity to obstruct the progress of the Land Reform

\textsuperscript{25} C.N. Somarajian, op.cit. P 81

\textsuperscript{26} Christian owned newspapers took anti-Govt. Stand from the very beginning of the birth of the Communist Govt. After the publication of the land reform bill the Nair owned newspapers also joined the band wagon of Christian lobby. For further details see discussions in Cyriac Thomas, Church and Politics in Kerala, P.98, P. Antony, Op.cit, P.124 and Austin, op.cit. p. 25.
Bill to become an Act. Mannam who reacted communally, once was the advocate of the down-trodden and conducted savarna jata (upper class procession) for the cause of the equal treatment with savarna / upper caste Hindus.

The election manifesto of the Communist Party in 1957 proposed the reorganisation of the entire education system in Kerala. The last section of the manifesto gave the proposals for education. The Education Bill was the brain child of Joseph Mundasseri.

Where Sir C.P. Ramaswami lyer, a strong Diwan of Travancore failed to make any substantive control over school managers, Mundasseri attempted to impose some control over

27 C.N. Somaratne, op.cit. p. 81.
28 For further details see discussions, A. Sreedhara Menon, Survey of Kerala History, Kottayam, 1970, pp. 384, 385.
29 Quoted from P. V. Victor, Kerala Yenan of India, P. 69. The communist manifesto was printed in Malayalam and was circulated in Kerala. An abridged English translation was given in the New Age magazine 10th February, 1957.
the unbridled freedoms of this managers. The communist party gave green signal to the Education Bill under the impression that the bill would enhance its prestige and bring more support to it. Really Mundasseri was able to command the support of the progressive sections of Kerala Society beyond its caste stratification. A sizable number of teachers under the management schools were behind him. He was in good communication with all leading thinkers like Mr. I.C. Chacko etc. Mundasseri went to Punlinkunnu near Kuttanad to meet Mr. I.C. Chacko and to have discussions with him about the bill. While returning there was an

32. E. Balakrishnan, op.cit, p. 241.
34. It must be stated that I have not met a single teacher under private management who is not whole heartedly in support of the education act. I have no doubt in my mind that if a secret referendum is taken, a large majority of teachers would support it. The wearer knows where the shoe pinches, S.C. Joseph, op.cit, p. 163.
attempt on the life of Mundasseri at the boat jetty. The car driver of Mundasseri rescued him tactfully.\textsuperscript{36}

National newspapers like the Hindu, the Indian Express, The Times of India etc. had market among the elite class and these newspapers generally gave qualified critical support to the Education Bill. Non-Kottayam Malayalam newspapers like Mathrubhoomi and Kerala Kaumudi did not support the campaign. After the introduction of the Land Reform Bill Mathrubhoomi also joined the group of anti-Government newspapers.\textsuperscript{37} The opposition to the Education Bill was started from Kottayam based managers because it was the printing centre of half a dozen Malayalam dailies with capitalist/anti-Communist interest. These newspapers extended support and provided space to the managers.\textsuperscript{38} Newspapers day after day appeared with sensitive and infuriating headings. It boosted the morale of the school managers and generated tension among the ordinary readers. The Deepika newspaper on 18th June

\textsuperscript{36} Ibid, p. 51.

\textsuperscript{37} G.K. Lieten, op cit. p. 46. 47.

\textsuperscript{38} Joseph Mundasseri, op.cit. p. 228
came out with a call to prepare to lay down their lives for the cause of educational freedom.\textsuperscript{39} Malayala Manorama on 21st July 1957 appeared on the news stand with bold type heading, “Education Bill a total failure” - Pattom.\textsuperscript{40}

The effort of Joseph Mundasseri was to make the teachers a set of middle class employees of the state, who were respected by the society as gurus. Managers treated them

\textsuperscript{39} The Deepika came out with a declaration of the Vicar General of Changanacherry Arch Diocese that educational institutions were sacred to Catholics as the churches and that they were prepared to lay down their lives for the cause of educational freedom.

\textsuperscript{40} The Malayala Manorama paper published in July contained sensitive headings. The 13th July paper had the big heading, “all Bishops jointly oppose the bill”. The July 30th newspaper came with a big caption, “Alleppey witnessed a mammoth procession against the bill”. The Manorama on August 11th came out with ‘half lakh people met in Edathwa’. Anti-bill feeling was the creation of newspapers. In 1957 Edathwa was a very small town and was not in a position to contain half lakh people. Alleppey was the melting pot of communism and was never to have a mammoth procession against the education bill.
as slaves in all respects. To that extent the Education Bill was a historical document, where various Governments since Sir C.P. Ramaswami Iyer failed owing to the strong opposition of private school managers.

A primary teacher (their total strength as on 1-4-57 was 43417) who was drawing a salary of Rs.20 to 80 could not maintain a newspaper worth Rs. 2 per month. He could never be an influential subscriber section in the muster rolls of newspapers of Kerala. The covetous newspaper owners never saw the injustice which was practiced by these school managers and they always attempted to bypass this lot.

A lot of malpractices were practiced by the school managers through the years and it was pragmatized by the spiritual as well as social leaderships in Kerala. Let us see some of the corrupt practices. (1) Appointments were made often on the basis of money payment as a donation or bribe instead of

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41 The lower grade teachers are given a new status in society and dignity consistent with this function. See discussions in S.C. Joseph, op.cit, p. 163.
42 Ibid, p. 152.
qualification and competency of the candidates. (2) Managers used to get receipts from teachers for an excess of the actual amount paid as salary, usually 50% of the receipt amount was only paid. (3) Teachers had to give costly presents to the managers. (4) Promotions were given overlooking seniority in service. (5) Any displeasure of the Manager resulted in the termination of the teacher without proper notice and reason. These were some of the prerogatives enjoyed by a sizeable number of managers in this tiny state. The other side of the situation was quite funny. i.e., the managers whether it was Christian or not, saw the education scenario of Kerala as a small scale industrial sector with profit motives of high order.

George Kristoffel Lieten, a Professor in Holland who conducted an anatomical study of the communist period commends that "Fees kept rising unusually fast with the fame of the school and appointments became a sort of auction, the jobs going to the highest bidder, who anyway would lent up in a disgraceful situation in which they were treated as servants of the management". 

44. S.C. Joseph in his book, Kerala the communist state gives details of the corrupt practices in the educational field in Kerala.

45. G.K. Lieten, op.cit, p. 33.
Here the managements of the schools in Kerala functioned as industrial bourgeoisie. The state at that time had no industrial climate and so it was backward in economic terms. Therefore the monied class turned their direction towards educational field with economic interest. Therefore all anomalies of capitalist industrial structure can be seen in the education industry of Kerala during the first communist ministry.

Kerala, being a melting pot of communist movement and trade unionism, the poor teachers were not noticed by any of these movements, except by Prof. Joseph Mundasseri due to historical as well as social reasons. Due to weakness in organisation and the absence of the single and open voice against the management on the part of the lower grade teachers, their case was long neglected and perhaps this was a leading act of

47 Society considered teachers as gurus, living God on earth and the mould of future. Therefore it was quite difficult for a teacher to cross the social boundaries. So they were bypassed by trade unionism in the early stage.
cruelty, perpetuated on one of the most honourable professions of man." Here newspapers functioned as onlookers. The press must be accountable to the society and keep the sacredness of facts. The press ignored this basic truth/function. Each and every newspaper published from literate Kerala maintained specific interest which was either economic/religious or both.

As a result a polarization took place in the case of Kerala newspapers, viz pro-Government and anti-Government. Readership and money strength to anti-government newspapers were much higher than the rest and they were the part of calculated political game which was opened in the educational tracts. The press was indulging in vulgar languages and vituperative epithets. There were editorials written in newspapers in such a language as to distract people away from the normal methods of functioning and from creative activities.

The bill was truly a non-harmful instrument. The objectives of the bill were (1) To give departmental rules and

practices legal sanctions. (2) To regulate the choice appointment and conditions of service of teachers in private schools without curtailing the supervisory powers of managers (3) To secure authority for Government to proceed effectively against grossly mismanaged schools. (4) To take over any category of schools of any area if the Government was convinced of the desirability of such action in the interest of education. (5) To set up a high level advisory board to guide the Govt. in the matter of framing educational policies. 51

The true financial commitment of running educational institutions whether it was government or private was on the shoulder of state exchequer, i.e., salary and other recurring expenses are met out of the Government funds in the form of grant-in-aid. 52 The only legitimate right of the private school managers was the ownership of land and building. In most of the cases these buildings and land was created out of liberal donations collected from the public by the courteous entreprenerial school managers. 53.

53. Ibid
Hither to managers had appointed teachers of their choice with various considerations. The new Education Bill drafted by Joseph Mundasseri curtailed this right. Under section 2 of the new Education Bill, which was presented by the first Communist Ministry Kerala, teachers had to be selected from a roster drawn up by the Public Service Commission and that the P.S.C. had to follow the communal reservations which applied elsewhere in Government Service. Its defacto effect was that at least 50% of the teachers may be of backward communities and untouchables, which could not be tolerated by upper caste managers of Kerala. Nevertheless the Nairs under the leadership of Mannathu Padmanabhan extended their support to the education bill. But Mannam and Nairs became ardent enemies of the Government after two months of the passing of the Education Bill. It was because of the reason that the most progressive Land Reform Bill published in December, 1957 by the Government, made the Nairs the losers.

55. Ibid.
56. Somarajan, op.cit, p. 81
The draft bill on education was first published on 7th July 1957. It was first presented to the Legislature Assembly on 13th July 1957. The Legislature Assembly sent the Bill to a Select Committee consisting of 21 members. The committee was composed of both ruling and opposition MLAs. Never was there such a big select committee in the history of the legislature. The Select Committee travelled to different parts of the state and held sittings. The opposition parties tried to get a no signal from the Select Committee. The opposition parties brought thousands of illiterate persons before the committee to give evidence. The Select Committee was taking evidence at Alwaye Palace. A large number of persons wearing 'Thoppipala' came in lorries. They were illiterate and they came to oppose the Bill. These illiterate people signed and shouted "Education Bill in Arabian Sea" To them "Mundasseri was Mandasseri". But the select committee recommended the Bill.

58. Ibid, 247
59. "Thoppi Palai" is a cap made of the leave of Aracanut tree, which was used traditionally by Kerala farmers and farm workers to get protection from sun and rain.
60. Cherian Philip, op.cit. p. 34.
In the meantime much water had flown under the bridge. Several inner dramas were played. Political interest as well as caste interest equations were changed. A sizeable number of newspapers played a considerable role to fish in the troubled water. They exaggerated events and to a certain extent it crossed all boundaries of truth and reality. The leading daily Deepika reported on 20th August, 1957 about an anti-bill procession in Pala that, 'Human Ocean against Education Bill in Pala, four lakh persons assembled at Palai to protest the anti-democratic Education Bill of the Communist Government.'

Another heading of Deepika Daily was, "the Education Bill in its communist poison." The Dinamani daily reported the passing

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61 In 1957, Pala was only a small town, the total population of Kottayam District including present "Idukki District" as per 1961 censes was 1730436. In the 1957 election Pala and nearby four constituencies altogether commanded 89732 non communist votes. Therefore it was very difficult to collect 400,000 persons for a meeting in a least developed region like Pala and it was an exaggerated statement. For data see Malayala Manorama Year Book 1962 pp. 440, 441. Also see Deepika Daily 20th Aug, 1957 front page.

62 Deepika, 13th July, 1957
of the bill as an insult. The Chandrika newspaper published from Kozhikode came to the conclusion that "all these were to betray the people". The Pothujanam daily commended that by the education bill 'the ass is made a horse'. The leading Malayalam daily, Malayala Manorama reported on 30th August 1957 that "educational nationalisation was the ultimate aim of the Education Bill" in main heading.

The Malayalam newspapers used cartoons also to ridicule the Education Bill. The Deepika came out with a big cartoon on the front page of 20th June 1957 ridiculing the educational bill.

The Report of Select Committee was presented to the Assembly on 24th August 1957. The Bill was passed by the Kerala

64. Chandrika, 17th July, 1957.
65. Pothujanam, 18th July, 1957.
67. The Deepika cartoon had the picture of a small child with the name "education". Nearby was the picture of a big bear with the name nationalisation. The cartoon had the heading "a bear's embrace is the most fearful embrace" (Russian proverb)
68. Jitendra Sigh, op.cit. p. 37
Legislative Assembly on 2nd September 1957 with opposition from Congress and its allies. The Bill was reserved by the Governor of Kerala under Article 200 of the constitution of India for consideration of the President of India. The President referred the Bill to the Supreme Court under Article 143 of the Indian Constitution. Prime Minister Nehru said that since the question about the Education Bill was raised so much, it was desirable that the Supreme Court should give advice on the matter.

The President asked the opinion of the Supreme Court on whether the Bill infringed Articles 14, 30(1) and 266 of the constitution. The Education Bill came up for hearing before the Constitutional Bench of the Supreme Court on 29th April 1958. The State Government decided to fight for the Bill in the Supreme Court. Arguments of the government in defence of the Bill were submitted before the honourable court. The case was very decisive for the private managements as the bill sought to curb the unbridled powers of the private sector in education.

70. S.C. Joseph, op.cit, p. 158.
71. Ibid, p. 249.
The Supreme Court of India gave its verdict on 22nd May 1958. Section 3(5) of the Educational Bill was declared unconstitutional. The Supreme Court held that under Article 30(1) minorities have the fundamental right to establish educational institutions of their choice, and that the state could not refuse recognition and aid to their institution on the ground that the minorities were not prepared to surrender their fundamental rights. The Court at the same time, held that the state could impose reasonable regulations and conditions for the grant of aid. The verdict was given by a special bench of judges including the Chief Justice. The Chief Justice and five other Judges gave a uniform verdict. Justice Venkitta Iyer did not agree with them and wrote his dissenting view.

The President sent the Education Bill back to the Kerala Government for modification in the light of the opinions expressed by the Supreme Court. The Kerala Government modified the Bill.

accordingly and it was passed by the Legislative Assembly of Kerala on 26th November, 1958 in its modified form. The Education Bill received Presidential assent on 19th February 1959 and became law. Even though many clauses which irritated the Christian minorities were removed, they continued their anti-communist agitation with the help of newspapers of Kerala as well as with Nairs under Mannathu Padmanabhan.

Under Mannathu Padmanabhan, a staunch supporter of Communists and Education Bill turned an enemy of both because of various reasons. Along with Mannam a set of Nair newspapers entered into the anti-communist camps. Desabandu, a Nair owned newspaper reported on 14th April that "the Nair was going to take over the administration from the communists". Mannam's anti-government, Jata (part of liberation movement) was reported by Desabandu daily in a feudal reactionary manner and was

75. Jose Chander, op.cit, p. 138.
76. Mannam's request for an Engineering College at Palakkadu under N.S.S. Management was declined by the Govt. In addition to it the land reforms bill became a matter of dissatisfaction to Mannam see Austin, op.cit, pp. 20, 22.
77. Desabandu, 14th April, 1959.
instigating anti-Government feeling among Nairs. Malayalee, another Nair owned daily depicted Mannam’s liberation movement as an Aswametha Yaga (horse sacrifice).

Every day newspapers produced eye catching anti-Government feeling generating news, for instance, “the Nairs have the ability today to throw into waste paper basket Mundasseri’s law. (Kerala Education Bill). Many managements decided not to reopen their schools in June, the beginning of the academic year. This information was given in the newspapers with a communal colour. Pothujanam, a Malayalam Daily reported that “Mannathu Padmanabhan and the Bishops

78. “A cavalry horse was led in front of the jatha...... there marched in military style volunteers with swords unsheathed in their hands...... the battle song played by a band created the impression that preparations for a battle are going on” How inflammatory report it is? See Desabandu, 15th May, 1959.

79. Mannam himself will take his horse to the secretariat building and have it tied to Chief Minister Namboothiripad’s office room. See Malayalee Daily, 28th April, 1959.


81. The Deepika Daily came out with headings...... Hindu ‘Schools to be closed’ ‘C.S.I. Schools to be closed’, ‘Marthoma Schools to be closed’. See Deepika Daily 1st May, 13th and 14th May 1959.
decided to stand together. On the same day Malayalarajyam daily came out with the heading, “the Hiranyaksha rule should end”, the battle starts on July 1st, the first step is to close the schools.

Newspapers did not consider Government Press notes and clarifications while reporting anti-Government news. They injected the spirit to violate general laws and rules of Government. After the amending of the old Education Bill, a new one was passed by the Legislative Assembly. Then Malayala Manorama made their observation that, “Denial of rights even in the amended Bill,” aimed to mislead the public.

All important political parties prior to the introduction of the bill demanded some enactments which would provide protection to teachers rights against managerial encroachments. Above all earlier governments, in the state moved in this direction. H. Austin rightly observes that, “through pastoral letters

83. Malayala Rajyam, Kollam, 25th May, 1959. Many newspapers bring an atmosphere of a war in the state. They all predict a forth coming battle.
85. C.N. Somarajan, op.cit, p. 79.
pastoral letters and pulpit speeches the Bishops organised violence”. 86

Then it was perpetuated by the press in Kerala. In the autobiography of Prof. Joseph Mundasseri, he cites an example from several of his experiences after the passing of the bill as follows,

“A school peon came to my house, bowed down and wept........ he got pay and allowance in full for the first time in thirty years.” 87

The salary paid by the government through its grant-in-aid and scheme reached in the hands of teachers through the managers who deducted their share from it. It was the age old prerogative and was a criminal act also. The crusade which was fought by Mundasseri was blacked out from the eyes of mass by the ecclesiastical hierarchy with the help of newspapers which had a vital position of the literate Malayalee life.

86  H. Austin, op.cit. p. 55
The Education Bill which was introduced in the floor of the Kerala Legislative Assembly by Prof. Joseph Mundassery, the then minister for education, bore lofty ideals and also a step forward. But it was being misrepresented by the Kerala Press because of various prejudices mentioned elsewhere in this chapter. Press and vested interests altogether highlighted a few dark/weak aspects of the Bill. Under the influence of the 'anti-bill' propagation of newspapers along with Christian educational agencies/managements, the brighter/noble aspects of the Bill were bypassed by the political society of Kerala.

The clauses which turned alien to school managers were, no doubt, later turned as revolutionary, progressive and model to successive governments of Kerala. They incorporated most of the trouble shooting clauses of the old Bill, which were deleted under the heavy political pressure, with the silent consent of the same educational agencies/managements.