

## INDIAN CP FINDS IT A HARD ONE TO SWALLOW

By Kailas Chandra

BOMBAY -- Long accustomed to endorsing everything that came from Moscow, the Communist party of India (pro-Moscow wing) reacted initially to the ouster of Nikita Khrushchev in its characteristic manner. The Central Secretariat of the CPI, which met October 17, said that "any changes in the leadership are entirely the internal affair of the Soviet people and the Communist Party of the Soviet Union."

But the Secretariat could not suppress its dismay at the sudden removal of Khrushchev and, therefore, noted that "the anxiety which is today being expressed by peace-loving men and women everywhere at the resignation for reasons of health of Nikita Khrushchev is completely understandable."

It went on to "warmly welcome the clear-cut and emphatic declaration made by the new leadership" that the policy enunciated by the Twentieth and Twenty-second congresses of the CPSU would be "continued and carried forward."

As the mystery around Khrushchev's downfall deepened, and critical statements about the "method" by which he was ousted began to appear in the press, the CPI leadership began to give second thoughts to its earlier "complacent declaration."

An "editorial article" published in the CPI weekly New Age (October 25) promised its readers that the National Council of the CPI, meeting at Trivandrum (from November 2), would discuss the full meaning of the change in the Soviet leadership. Party chairman S.A.Dange, who was in Moscow recently, has arrived in time "to report to the meeting."

The "editorial article" in the New Age, however, stressed that "the latest change in the leadership of the Communist Party and government of the Soviet Union once again underlines the urgent need to make a searching and deep-going analysis of this problem [personality cult under Stalin], to devise safeguards and guarantees against the recrudescence of such a phenomenon by devising forms for further democratising the functioning of the Party and the socialist state, so as to enhance their leading and guiding role."

There is still this reference to the "leading and guiding role" of the CPSU in the world Communist movement but the CPI has been compelled to abandon its habitual display of complete servility. "It must, however, be emphasised," says the New Age article, "here and now, that whatever the mistakes made by Khrushchev, whatever the reasons from leadership. . . it would be a serious error to underline ONLY these mistakes and keep silent about his achievements. Any tendency to wipe out or obliterate the immense positive contri-

butions made by Khrushchev personally in the last decade must be avoided, and it is hoped that the reports put out by bourgeois newspapers [!] of the removal of all Khrushchev's books and writings are false."

The half-hearted demand for a "deeper analysis" of the growth of the "personality cult" in the Soviet Union reflects the questioning in the CPI. This ferment so far is restricted only to the ranks of the official Dangeite wing of the CPI. The left wing, which commenced its seventh national congress at Calcutta October 31, has kept silent over the Khrushchev ouster. Evidently they are waiting for a cue from Peking, although the hard-core group has welcomed the change as vindication of the Chinese struggle against Khrushchev's "revisionism."

Mohan Kumaramangalam, one of the prominent leaders of the CPI (right wing) has gone beyond the official party stand and has called for "an authoritative assessment of the roles of all Soviet leaders and in particular the two most important leaders, Comrades Kosygin and Brezhnev, during the period of Stalin's rule."

Kumaramangalam is one of the CPI leaders who has been demanding publicly (even before Khrushchev's ouster) for a complete re-assessment of the world Communist movement in the post-Lenin period.

Writing in the New Delhi left weekly Mainstream (October 31), Kumaramangalam provides a more fundamental criticism of the bureaucratisation of the Soviet state under Stalin though couched in the language of a "loyalist." Kumaramangalam recalls that Khrushchev was one of Stalin's closest colleagues during Stalin's rule and quotes also what Khrushchev said "at the time, referring to the verdict in the trial of Trotsky's followers":

"These infamous nonentities wanted to break up the unity of the Party and the Soviet power. . . They raised their murderous hands against Comrade Stalin. Stalin -- our hope, Stalin -- our expectation, Stalin -- the beacon of progressive mankind, Stalin -- our banner, Stalin -- our will, Stalin -- our victory."

"Comrades like myself," continues Kumaramangalam, "did not forget that Khrushchev also was a party to the excessive adulation of Stalin and therefore necessarily also has to bear a share of the responsibility for the crimes committed in the latter period of Stalin's rule."

The author appears to have been greatly influenced by the "testament" of Togliatti which criticised the Soviet leadership for not speeding up the "overcoming of the regime of restricting and suppressing the democratic and personal freedom introduced by Stalin."

Referring to the "charge-sheet" prepared against Khrushchev

by his successors, Kumaramangalam asks: "If Khrushchev had been guilty of all these mistakes then what was the collective leadership including the Central Committee doing when he was doing these mistakes? What attempts were made to correct him. . . If adequate answers were given to these questions, then perhaps there would not be this disturbing phenomenon of praising highly the merits of a leader of the Party one day and then immediately criticising him for committing serious mistakes -- so characteristic of the Stalinist method of dealing with individuals."

The CPI leader has demanded that the proceedings of the Presidium and the Central Committee of the CPSU be placed before the people of the Soviet Union and the world "so that all of us can judge what exactly were the mistakes of Comrade Khrushchev. . . ." The "secret Stalinist manner" in which Khrushchev was removed, according to him, has greatly "impaired the prestige of the Soviet Union."

"It is the duty of all Communists," he says, "to raise their voice of protest against the method adopted by the Central Committee of the CPSU. . . and demand that this method be abandoned, never to be resorted to again."

Like a considerable wing of former Stalinists, Kumaramangalam has had the illusion that the bureaucracy in the Soviet Union would be automatically democratised without a political revolution.

He also makes only casual reference to Trotsky and his followers. But says he: "One should not look upon this matter in an isolated way, as though it is a problem of an individual, Khrushchev, his rise and fall. It is a far deeper problem."

He raises several pertinent questions for the Soviet leaders who claim that they oppose the practice of the personality cult:

"Have you Soviet Communists taken steps to uncover and tear up the roots of this personality cult? Have you brought to life again the Leninist institutions and practices destroyed by Stalin and his colleagues? Have you established the collective leadership of Lenin's days about which you write so much but of which little evidence is seen in the Khrushchev affair? Otherwise how could the cult of Khrushchev's personality rise in these short nine years?"

"If these questions are not answered," warns Kumaramangalam, "then can we be sure that five or ten years hence, we shall not be faced with the cult of Kosygin's personality and his removal and denunciation by Pravda? For we must remember that Comrade Kosygin was a member of the Stalin leadership (prior to 1953), a member of Stalin's Politburo! Hence also the question arises of the need for an authoritative assessment of the roles of all Soviet leaders and in particular the two most important leaders, Comrades Kosygin and Brezhnev during the period of Stalin's rule."