

# Appendix (iv)

## The Programme Explained\*

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### Introduction

*The adoption of the Programme of the Communist Party of India by its Seventh Congress, held in Calcutta from October 31 to November 7, 1964, while being the culmination of a process of intense ideological struggle in the CPI against revisionism and for unity of the genuinely revolutionary forces on the basis of a Marxist-Leninist understanding of the Indian situation and Indian developments, was also to be the beginning of another intense inner-Party campaign to consolidate the unity that had already been achieved during the discussions on, and adoption of, the Programme and to prepare the Party to shoulder the difficult tasks that had been placed on it by the new Programme.*

*But before the Party leadership could plan out this work, the Government struck at the Party and in a country-wide round-up arrested and detained over a thousand leaders and cadre of the Party. In this situation, Comrade E. M. S. Namboodiripad, who was out, took up the task of explaining the Programme and wrote a series of articles in the Party's weekly, People's Democracy dealing with various aspects of the Programme, relating it to practice and current developments and at the same time contrasting it with the Programme adopted by the Revisionists and exposing the bankruptcy of the revisionist*

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\*Published in December 1966 in the form of a Book with an Introduction by P. Sundarayya

*positions on major issues.*

*These articles were of great help in the inner-Party discussions on the Programme for consolidating the unity of the Party and preparing it to face its new tasks as also to explain and popularise the Programme among the Party's friends and supporters. It also helped to demarcate the Party's revolutionary standpoint on various current developments from that of the revisionists. We are now bringing out these articles, with necessary changes here and there in pamphlet form since we believe that they will continue to serve the same purpose in the coming period also.*

*Also getting ready is another pamphlet by B. T. Ranadive explaining the Programme more from the theoretical-ideological standpoint and contrasting it with the ideological-political positions of the revisionist Programme.*

*P. Sundarayya.*

## I

### **Ideological Bankruptcy— Whose?**

How is it possible, we were asked by several friends, to work out the Programme of the Communist Party without discussing, and coming to conclusions on the issues that are being debated in the international Communist movement?

Most of the friends who put this question were surprised that our Party was doing this. The decision of the Tenali Convention of our Party, held in July 1964, to exclude the discussion on the questions of international debate when we meet in the all-India Party Congress came in for a good deal of criticism—well-intentioned and otherwise.

Those belonging to the revisionist Party went to the extent of ridiculing our attempt to discuss the questions of our Party Programme without discussing the international questions. They attributed to us “ideological and political bankruptcy”, “escapism”, and so on. They were quite confident that

our inability to discuss the questions would lead us to greater and greater difficulties and contradictions which might even break us up.

More than two years have passed since our Tenali Convention. More than two years have passed since the Calcutta Congress of our Party had thorough discussions leading to definite conclusions on the Party Programme, but adopted a special resolution postponing the discussion on the questions concerning the international Communist movement.

The gloomy predictions made by our opponents that this would lead to inner-Party contradictions and break up the Party have all been belied. Our Party which has not come to conclusions on the international questions has not been faced by any internal crisis. On the other hand, the revisionist party, which adopted a resolution on these questions, is facing serious inner-party problems: that party is known to have been on the brink of a serious internal crisis following the well-known "Bhupesh Gupta Memorandum" a crisis which was averted with very great difficulty—at the very time when their Executive Committee was having "sweet dreams" of a so-called "political differentiation in the ranks" of our Party.

The question will naturally be asked: what is the reason for such a development? Why are the Dangeites who came to conclusions on international questions, faced with serious differences which led up to a near-crisis in the affairs of their party? Why is it that our Party, which honestly admitted its inability to discuss the international questions simultaneously with internal questions, has strengthened itself on the basis of the Programme adopted by its all-India Congress?

The reason is that, even though refraining from the discussion of international questions—which undoubtedly implies the existence of differences on these questions—our Party based itself on a correct and realistic assessment of the internal situation and problems.

The broad strategy worked out by us, the general direction for the working out of concrete tactics applicable to different circumstances in ever-changing situation, the guiding lines along

which specific and concrete problems are to be solved—these are in tune with the moods and sentiments of the people.

On the other hand, the strategy, tactics and the general approach to the problems of the Indian revolution, contained in the Programme of the Dangeites, are out of tune with what the broad mass of the people aspire after.

The internal political approach contained in the two Programmes came to be tested in a couple of months after the adoption of the revisionist Programme. The election in Kerala was the soil on which the two strategic-tactical approaches were tested. The result of this test has conclusively proved that the strategic-tactical line followed by the Dangeite leaders is out of tune with what the mass of members and sympathisers of the once-united Communist Party want.

As the National Council of the revisionist party itself admits: “Of the basic Communist mass which has been the common mass of the Party when it was united, only a minority has voted for our candidates this time, while the decisive majority of that mass voted instead for the candidates of the rival Party. Even where the rival Party did not put up its own candidates but offered its support to the SSP, the same thing happened, contrary to our earlier expectations. Thus, as far as the basic Communist mass is concerned, the election results in Kerala have shown that our assessment of the relative strength of our party vis-a-vis the rival Party among the masses was totally wrong.”

The support received from the members and sympathisers of the Communist Party, however, is only one index of the extent to which the bankruptcy of the revisionist leaders has been proved. Even on the most important ideological political question on which they have been campaigning against our Party—the question of the approach to China both in relation to the problems facing the international Communist movement and in relation to the India-China border dispute, the basic approach taken by these leaders has been proved bankrupt.

Let us, for instance, examine the resolution of the Bombay Party Congress of the revisionists on the ideological controversies with the present approach of the international Communist

movement. The revisionists base themselves on particular understanding of the problems of the international Communist movement which is that "the responsibility for the present state of disunity in the socialist camp rests on the leadership of the CPC".

The conclusion naturally follows that the main objective of the struggle within the international Communist movement is to force the Chinese Communist Party to accept the stand taken by the majority of fraternal Parties on theoretical and practical questions. This objective is to be realised by the continuation of the open polemics through which the Chinese Communist Party may be isolated and defeated.

"When a Communist Party", says their resolution, "or a group of Parties openly repudiate the common line, violate international discipline and seek to impose their views on others, such open polemics may become inevitable for the defence of Marxism-Leninism and the line of the world Communist movement."

This open denunciation of the Chinese Communist Party as "the source of all evil within the international Communist movement" and this open call for a bitter conflict with its leaders are based on a particular understanding of the situation in the international Communist movement which, it can be seen, is an open repudiation of the Statement of the 81 Communist and Workers' Parties issued in 1960.

Let us, therefore compare the two.

The 81 Parties declared in their Statement: "...the further development of the Communist and working class movement calls for continuing a determined struggle on two fronts—against *revisionism*, which remains *the main danger*, and against dogmatism and sectarianism." (Emphasis added)

The Bombay resolution of the revisionists, on the other hand, states : "*The main obstacle* hindering the further advance of the world Communist movement is *dogmatism and left sectarianism*, while the danger from revisionism also remains." (Emphasis added)

Let us leave it to the leaders of the revisionist party to explain how such an unconcealed repudiation of the basic formulation of the 81 Parties' Statement can be reconciled with their claim of

loyalty to that Statement. Let us confine ourselves to pointing out the differences between this approach of the revisionists and the approach taken by our Party.

Contrary to the impression created by the propaganda carried on by our political opponents (including the Dangeite leaders), we have not taken our stand either in support of, or in opposition to, the ideological-theoretical stand of the Chinese Communist Party. The Organising Committee formed at the Tenali convention adopted a resolution in August 1964 which deliberately refrained from expressing any opinion on the content of the debate in the international movement.

Far more important than the content of the debate according to the Committee, was the fact that “the differences have unfortunately taken an acute form and resulted in open polemics between different Parties”.

Naturally, therefore, the Committee was concerned over the methods being adopted by different sections in the international movement to resolve the differences; the Committee was convinced—and this is the crucial difference between our Party and the revisionists—that “great and patient efforts must be made to go back to the methods laid down in the 1960 Moscow Declaration for solving differences between brother Parties.

“For this purpose, it is necessary that mutual discussions take place between the CPSU and CPC and other Parties on the differences, and agreement must be reached in regard to the various aspects of the preparatory meeting, such as its composition, agenda, method of discussion, etc. Only then will a possibility arise for overcoming the differences and for achieving unity in the world Communist movement”.

Basing itself on such an assessment of the position in the international Communist movement, the Committee expressed itself firmly against the convening of a preparatory meeting in Moscow on the lines then proposed by the CPSU; it also expressed itself against the holding of another conference for which the Communist Party of New Zealand had then taken the initiative.

The essence of the Committee’s approach thus was that the open polemics within the international Communist movement,

which tends to divide the movement into a majority and a minority, should be stopped.

This stand was repeated by our Party when it met at the Party Congress in Calcutta in November. The resolution adopted by the Congress "On the Changes in CPSU Leadership" noted the fact that the term of the leadership of Khrushchov in the CPSU coincided with a period in the history of the international Communist movement when "relations between brother Parties and particularly those between the CPSU and CPC, the biggest contingents of the international Communist movement, were seriously strained. The international Communist movement was on the brink of a split and unity of the socialist camp was getting disrupted."

The Congress, therefore, expressed the hope that the removal of Khrushchov from the leadership of the CPSU would be followed by the necessary steps for improving the relations between the various fraternal Parties.

The crux of the difference between our Party and the Dangeites on the problem of Communist unity, therefore, amounts to a difference between partisanship on the one hand and earnest attempts at resolving the differences on the other.

No amount of argumentation by the leaders of the revisionist party can transform the earnest desire of our Party to so approach the problems of the international movement as to unify it, rather than widen the gulf, into partisanship with the Chinese Communists.

One cannot but recall in this connection that the Dangeite leaders have been trying to make it appear as if our refusal to take a partisan stand was a sign of our "ideological bankruptcy". How bankrupt such an approach to the struggle within the international Communist movement is, can be seen from the fact that no less an authority than the theoretical organ of CPSU the *Kommunist*, wrote as follows in the course of its comments on the March meeting of 19 Communist Parties:

"That one position or another is either correct or wrong will eventually be revealed by socio-political developments in the world and in the separate countries, as well as by the entire

process of joint struggle. This idea was repeatedly emphasised by Lenin who indicated that to overcome differences it would be necessary to take into account the practical experience, the course of events and the lessons of the struggle."

In marked contrast to this sober approach to the differences within the Communist movement is the shrieking calls for struggle against the "dogmatists", the "splitters", the "disruptors", the "neo-Trotskyites" and so on, in which the Dangeite leaders have been indulging throughout.

Let us now turn our attention to the revisionists' approach to the problem of India-China relations. Ever since that problem arose, they have been calling for "national unity against the Chinese aggressor" i.e., unity not only with the Congress but even with such parties as the Jan Sangha and the Swatantra Party, in order to solve the problem of India-China dispute through military means. Furthermore, they have been advocating the policy of "getting foreign military aid in order to beat the aggressor back". It was because we refused to the line on this issue that we were denounced as "pro-China".

The utter bankruptcy of this line has now been proved beyond doubt. The futility and harm of the political line of securing military aid from the imperialist Powers in order to organise the military defence of the country has now been recognised by several outstanding leaders of public opinion who have expressed it in no uncertain terms. This view is shared by no less a person than the President of the Indian Union, Dr. Radhakrishnan, who expressed his concern that our country has to spend the colossal sum of Rs. 900 crores per year of its defence budget because its relations with China and Pakistan are those of cold war. Even the central organ of the Dangeites, *New Age*, had to write an editorial giving at least formal support to Dr. Radhakrishnan for the speech he made on this.

Any impartial student of the documents and materials emanating from our Party Congress held in Calcutta in early November, and the documents and materials of the revisionists' Congress held in Bombay in December can thus see that our approach—the crux of which is refusal to toe the anti-China line

either in relation to international relations or on the India-China dispute—is far more correct than the Dangeite approach of denouncing anybody as “pro-China” who refuses to toe their own anti-China line.

This is, of course, not to deny that our inability to discuss the questions of international debate is a reflection of our ideological weakness. If we were sufficiently armed and equipped in the ideological sense, we would certainly have arrived at conclusions on every question which is of significance to the international movement. It is certainly regrettable that our Party Congress had to postpone the discussion on these questions. We may, however claim:

*That* in spite of the limitations arising out of our failure to discuss the content of the international debate, we have taken the correct position on the question of international Communist unity. Our anxiety not to become a partisan either of the CPSU or of the CPC, our desire for unity through the stoppage of polemics, stands in marked contrast with the violently denunciatory anti-China line of the Dangeites.

*That*, with regard to internal questions, including the question of India-China border clashes, our position has been proved to be far more correct than that of the Dangeites. How otherwise would it have happened that the “pro-China” Communists were able to secure greater support from what the National Council of the revisionist party calls “the basic Communist mass”, while the “patriotic” Dangeites should lose so heavily? Again, how is it possible that the concern expressed by our Party at the continuation of strained relations with China should now be shared even by the President of the Indian Union?

It is good that the leaders of the revisionist Party have thought it necessary, under these circumstances, to make a small change in their approach to our Party. Their four-point policy towards us includes as the first point “attitude of patience, reason and fraternity and maximum efforts for joint action on issues”.

Efforts have been made to translate this into practice by organising joint action on several issues and at several places. Efforts are being made also to transform these joint actions on

separate issues and at separate places into a common all-India action in which the two parties and all other socialist and left democratic elements will come together.

This, however, does not make the need for debates on ideological-political questions any the less. As a matter of fact, this has made it all the more necessary to continue the dialogue.

That is why we propose in the following articles to discuss the two Programmes adopted by the parties—our Programme adopted at Calcutta in November 1964 and the revisionist Programme adopted at Bombay in December 1964.

## II

### **Political Freedom and its Class Essence**

Was the new independent Government, installed in Delhi on August 15, 1947, “a strategic weapon in the hands of the people and an instrument of further advance”, or “a Government of national surrender, a Government of collaborators’, a Government of national compromise?” .

This question was posed within the Indian Communist movement in the months that followed the announcement of the well-known Mountbatten Plan for transferring power to the Congress Government in India and the League Government in Pakistan. Bitter and prolonged controversies raged within the then united Communist Party of India between 1947 and 1951.

One of the aims with which the Programme of 1951 was formulated was to put an end to this controversy. Experience, however, showed that Programme did not put an end to the controversy. Differences cropped up again in the years after 1954-55. They assumed such proportions that the 1951 Programme itself had to be abandoned and work on a new Programme started.

This, however, did not liquidate the differences which actually became more and more serious as the work on the new Programme proceeded. They in the end led to the emergence of two parties calling themselves Communist Parties, each with its own Programme.

A comparison of the relevant passages in the two Programmes would help us to correctly assess the crux of the differences between the two parties. Before doing this, however, let us make a general observation.

Experience of the last eighteen years has clearly shown that neither of the two approaches which dominated within the Communist movement in the 1947-51 period was correct.

It was, for instance, totally wrong on the part of the then leadership of the Communist Party to call the Congress Government in India and the League Government in Pakistan "strategic weapons in the hands of the people, instruments of further advance". This characterisation neglected the class character of the new regimes established in the two newly formed states. It blurred the distinction between the landlord-bourgeois classes and the people.

It was to the former and not to the latter that the new Government became "a strategic weapon", its establishment a new opportunity for "further advance". To call this an "advance" for the people, a weapon in their hands, etc. is nothing but ideological surrender to the bourgeois propaganda that the landlord-bourgeois classes are the people.

It was equally wrong on the part of the new leadership which replaced the old at the Second Congress of the Party (March 1948) to call the new "Governments of surrender". Behind this characterisation lies a total underestimation of the extent to which differentiation was taking place, and was bound to take place, between the monopolists of the imperialist countries and the young bourgeoisie of the newly free countries.

Completely misreading the new stage in the history of world capitalism, this assessment failed to take note of the growing contradictions between the various groups of the bourgeoisie, particularly those between the strong and dominant monopolists of the imperialist countries and the weak but growing bourgeoisie of the former colonies.

It failed to take note of the capacity of the new ruling classes of such countries as India and Pakistan to use the political power,

which was formally transferred on August 15, 1947, not only against the people of their countries but also against their stronger rivals in the imperialist countries. It failed to take account of the further advances which might be made by the new ruling classes if they try to utilise the new strategic weapon which came into their hands.

The shortcomings noted above were, however, not peculiar to the Indian Communist movement.

They were shared by the entire world Communist movement. It took several years after the end of the Second World War (which resulted in the emergence of a socialist camp) for the world Communist movement to make a correct assessment of the character of the new epoch whose beginning was made possible by the destruction of Hitlerism at the hands of the Soviet Red Army. A correct assessment was ultimately made by the 81 Communist and Workers' Parties who assembled in Moscow in 1960 and issued a joint Statement.

Analysing the various aspects of a complicated situation, the Statement underlined two important factors:

*One*, that the national bourgeoisie, i.e., those who are "unconnected with imperialist circles", are objectively interested in the accomplishment of the principal tasks of the anti-imperialist and anti-feudal revolution. The contradiction between them on the one hand and imperialism and feudalism on the other is, therefore, real.

*Two*, while thus objectively interested in the struggle against imperialism and feudalism, the national bourgeoisie is inclined to compromise with, rather than fight and defeat, imperialism and feudalism. This natural inclination to compromise is bound to get further intensified in the process of national development, since the contradictions between the new ruling classes and the people are bound to grow.

The two factors noted above, it is obvious, are contradictory to each other. While the first makes it possible for the mass of working people (who are interested in the full liquidation of all remnants of imperialist and feudal domination) to have limited agreements with the landlord-bourgeois ruling classes, the latter

brings them into bitter mutual conflict. How the two factors work on each other modifying or weakening the other trend—this depends on a variety of concrete forces and circumstances.

This is the essential basis on which the programme of the Communist Party of India outlined the tasks of completing the bourgeois-democratic revolution and laying the basis for its subsequent development into the socialist revolution.

This is, however, broadly true not only of India but of Pakistan as well. Both of them leaned, in the initial years, on the Anglo-American imperialist Powers for support in the economic as well as political sphere; they, however, did not completely identify themselves with the imperialists. This is the essence of India's non-alignment policy which in the early years had heavy anti-Communist overtones. This was shared by Pakistan as well.

In the second phase, the two States fell apart—Pakistan more or less identified itself with the imperialist camp, joining such military alliances as SEATO and CENTO while India started taking a relatively clear and forthright stand of anti-imperialism.

The next phase witnessed the modification of India's anti-imperialism, the growth of a new trend of compromise with it, while Pakistan maintained its old position. Recently, however, Pakistan has been improving its relations with the socialist powers; while India, in its turn, is losing her position as a leading anti-imperialist Power, even while new stresses and strains are developing between India and the imperialist Powers.

This should enable us to see in perspective the criticism usually made against the Communist Party that it did not see what everyone else did—that India attained Independence on August 16, 1947.

This argument obviously means that every country becomes really free when it becomes free formally. The concept of a fundamental difference between formal freedom and real freedom is supposed to be false; any attempt to make this distinction is dismissed as blindness to reality.

Is this correct? If it were, it would mean that there was no difference between Pakistan which till recently was a participant in the SEATO and CENTO military alliances, and India which

took a relatively forthright stand on anti-imperialist issues. It would mean that there is no difference at all between two phases in the development of Pakistan itself—the phase in which she was an active member of the anti-Communist alliance and that in which she has already become close and intimate with China and is trying to develop the same relations with the Soviet Union.

Is it possible for a realistic political party to take such an approach, making no distinction between the various ways in which formal freedom is sought to be utilised by the landlord-bourgeois ruling circles? It is not possible.

The Communist Party, therefore, was correct in refusing to be taken in by the outward form of Independence won in 1947, in trying to go into the class content of the freedom won and the class character of the new State. For, the class character of the new State was the most decisive factor in shaping the destiny of the country.

The Party, however, did go wrong—go wrong in a very serious way. It was unable to see what is new in the objective conditions in which India and certain other countries attained freedom in the post-Second World War period.

Previously, imperialism was in undisputed sway over the world; there was only one socialist country which was genuinely fighting for the national freedom of all countries. Imperialism was then able to hatch plans of making it appear that freedom was conferred, while in reality imperialist domination was being maintained.

In the altered conditions of the world, however, it is not so easy to make a success of such neo-colonialist plans. It has become possible for the ruling classes of the countries which have become formally free to assert their independence.

Failure to take note of these possibilities was the basic shortcoming out of which an incorrect understanding of the reality of freedom arose.

The new epoch and its possibilities, however, do not necessarily make every instance of formal freedom an instance of asserting that freedom. It depends not only on the objective interests, but on the subjective factors working behind the ruling

classes as well, whether a particular country attaining formal freedom will be able to assert that freedom.

It is this complicated nature of the freedom which was won on August 15, 1947 that is concretely examined in the Programme of the Communist Party of India adopted by its Seventh Congress in Calcutta in October-November 1964. That Programme states:

“With the historic victory of the great Chinese Revolution and the formation of the world socialist system, one-third of humanity has broken away from capitalism. Imperialism and colonialism that enslaved nations after nations and ruined them is today fast disintegrating. Ours is the era of the abolition of the colonial system and transition to socialism. On the ruins of colonialism, new independent nations have emerged and are emerging on to the stage of history in Asia, Africa and Latin America. India occupies an important place among them.

“No longer is it possible for imperialism to hold back the march of history or block the way of national regeneration of the underdeveloped countries. It is the world socialist system and the forces fighting against imperialism, for a socialist, transformation, that determine the main content, main trend and main features of the historical development of society. If only the people of these countries that have won their independence take their destinies in their own hands, they can, with the disinterested assistance of the mighty socialist system with its ever-increasing capacity, rapidly overcome their economic dependence and backwardness, defend and strengthen their national independence and trail a bright future for the people.

“Our people hoped that the new national state would wipe out all the ugly legacies of the colonial past, would shatter all the forces and unleash the creative energies of the people. They fondly hoped that India would rapidly overcome her dependence and backwardness, abolish want and poverty, and emerge as a prosperous industrial Power, increasingly satisfying the material and cultural needs of the people. Their hopes were belied.”

What were the “hopes of the people” which were “belied?” The Programme answers:

“Although the working class, peasantry, middle classes and the progressive intelligentsia constituted the main fighting force against imperialist rule and bore the brunt of its fury, it was, however, the bourgeoisie that remained in the leadership of the liberation movement. After Independence, the national state headed by the big bourgeoisie has failed to fulfil these urgent tasks of the Indian Revolution. Afraid of the possible outcome that might follow such a thorough-going completion of the basic tasks of the democratic revolution, the big bourgeoisie compromised with imperialism and agreed that British finance capital would be allowed to continue its plunder, besides its acceptance to become a member of the British Commonwealth. In the background of mass upheaval in the native states which threatened to completely overthrow princely autocracy and feudalism, huge concessions were offered to feudal princes and their alliance sought to buttress bourgeois class regime. Landlords, the erstwhile supporters of British rulers, were welcomed into the Congress Party. The Congress rulers kept intact the British trained bureaucracy to suppress the masses. Thus the democratic revolution was neither allowed to gather momentum nor were its basic tasks fulfilled.”

The essence of the situation, in short, was that, while the external situation in the world was such as to make it possible for India to assert her freedom, the internal situation (the class character of the new state) created difficulties in the process of such assertion. The difference between India and Pakistan on the one hand and several countries—not only those like Vietnam which has correctly been included in the socialist camp but also some other countries like Indonesia, Burma, UAR, etc.—on the other was that the new ruling classes of the former were the landlords and bourgeoisie led by the big bourgeoisie, while, in the latter, these classes were made powerless.

It is this class character of the new state, the inclination of the ruling classes to compromise with imperialism and feudalism, which is virtually missed in the Programme of the Dangeites. Take, for instance, the following assessment of the new Government contained in their Programme:

“The Indian National Congress, which was leading the national movement, formed the first Government of independent India. The platform of the National Congress was to achieve an independent Indian state. As for the country’s future, the platform was one of developing an independent national economy—a platform that promised land reforms for the peasantry, certain fundamental rights and well-being for the working people, and a parliamentary democracy.

“The British imperialists knew that a consistent working out of such a platform would foil their game of reducing India’s independence to a formality. They could not but see that if India’s independence were consolidated and this second biggest country in the world took the path of establishing a real anti-imperialist democracy, it would have a profound impact on Asia and Africa.”

Is there anything to show in this or other passages in the revisionist Programme that the ‘radical platform’ of the National Congress was a weapon in the hands of the bourgeoisie directed as much against the people as against imperialism? No.

The whole story of how the imperialists manoeuvred against new India consolidating her freedom is typical of the revisionists whose hallmark is ideological surrender to the bourgeoisie. For, nowhere is it stated that some of these imperialist manoeuvres succeeded precisely because the Congress rulers were willing to submit themselves to these manoeuvres.

Take, for instance, the way in which, according to the revisionists, “invasion of Kashmir was foiled by the prompt intervention of the Indian army and the patriotic resistance of the people of Kashmir” Afterwards, however, “the Kashmir issue (was) taken to the UN and remained a weapon in the hands of the imperialists”.

Who took the Kashmir issue to the UN and under what circumstances—this is not explained. If it had been explained, it is obvious it could not have been stated that “the new Indian Government fought back and defeated the manoeuvres of the imperialists.”

For the authors of the revisionist Programme, the progress of the country since 1947 is an uninterrupted march from success to success. The historic event of India attaining freedom on August 15, 1947; imperialist conspiracies and manoeuvres against the consolidation of India's freedom; their defeat at the hands of the new Government and people—such is the picture drawn by them.

How unreal this picture is can be seen from the way in which the new state evolved itself, developed its economic, social and foreign policies. Each of these fields of the state's activity is witness to the fact that the Congress rulers are not "fighting and defeating" the manoeuvres of imperialism and feudalism but so using the state power in their hands as to strengthen the class domination of the bourgeoisie and, to this end, compromising with imperialism and feudalism. Once again to quote our Programme:

"The dual character of the bourgeoisie which manifested itself during the years of the freedom struggle in the policy it pursued of mobilising the people against imperialism on the one hand and compromising with imperialism on the other, manifests itself in a new way after achievement of independence. Despite the growth of contradictions between imperialism and feudalism on the one hand and the people, including the bourgeoisie, on the other, despite the new opportunities presented with the emergence of the world socialist system, the big bourgeoisie heading the state does not decisively attack imperialism and feudalism and eliminate them. On the other hand, it seeks to utilise its hold over the state and the new opportunities to strengthen its position by attacking the people on the one hand and, on the other, to resolve the conflicts and contradictions with imperialism and feudalism by pressure, bargain and compromise. In this process, it is forging strong links with foreign monopolists and is sharing power with the landlords. Thus, while not hesitating to utilise socialist aid to build certain heavy industrial projects, and to bargain with the imperialists and build itself up, it is anti-people and anti-Communist in character and is firmly opposed to the completion of the democratic, anti-imperialist tasks of the Indian Revolution."

### III

#### **A Revisionist Illusion**

Nobody who knows anything about the theory and practice of socialism will be taken in by the claims made by the leaders of the ruling Congress Party that they are building a socialist society in India. The Congress rulers are, on the other hand, seeking to build a typical capitalist society—a society in which not only are the mass of poor people getting more and more impoverished, but a handful of the rich are getting richer and richer. If one were to use the scientific terminology used by Lenin in his historic work, *Imperialism*, our ruling classes are building a capitalist society out of which is emerging the class of monopoly capitalists.

Every socialist in the world characterises a society as socialist only if all the main instruments and means of production, distribution and exchange are taken from the hands of private owners and brought under public ownership and management. The leaders of our ruling party, however, consider that this is a “doctrinaire” understanding of socialism. They maintain that India’s socialist society will, and should, indefinitely continue what they call a “mixed economy” i.e., the simultaneous existence and development of the private as well as the public sector.

The essence of the capitalist system, as is well-known to all students of socialist theory, is what is called “wage-slavery”, i.e., the system under which the mass of producers have no other property except their capacity to work (labour power, to use the scientific terminology); they, therefore, have to sell this capacity to work to a minority of people who have at their disposal the instruments and means of production without which the working people cannot labour and produce.

The pauperisation of those who own small properties, thus transforming them into wage-labourers who are forced to sell their labour power to those who own the instruments and means of production; the competition among those who are thus forced to sell their labour power which creates a favourable situation for those who buy labour power; the consequent bargaining between

the sellers and buyers of labour power which, in the end, obliges the workers to take such low rates of wages as can keep them and their families at the barest minimum living standards —such are the characteristic features of capitalist society in which the worker is, in the eyes of the law, “free and equal” to the employer but, in reality, is a slave to the wage system.

Any truthful student of the socio-economic scene in India can see that it is this system of wage-slavery which is fast developing in our country.

Peasants, artisans and other owners of small properties are losing their properties and are being thrown into the ranks of workers, forced to sell their labour power. Even those of them who are able to maintain their small properties are forced to seek jobs giving wage (or salary), which become their main source of income, (what they get from their small properties being only a minor part of their income). The ranks of wage- (or salary-) slaves are thus being joined every year by tens of thousands of new entrants.

This is at one end of the pole. At the other end is a small group of owners of property—those who were such owners previously becoming still bigger owners, while new elements enter their ranks from among those who were till very recently labouring people.

There is, therefore, not even the slightest justification for holding the view that India under Congress rule is building a socialist society. If the emergence and further development of the public sector were to be the sole criterion of which to base oneself in assessing the so-called socialist character of India’s society, one would have to admit that some of the most advanced capitalist countries (including the USA) are still more socialist. For, it has been calculated that the sphere of activity of public sector enterprises in some of these countries is even wider than in India.

It is, therefore, not surprising that the revisionist Programme is at one with our Party’s Programme in calling the socio-economic system developing in India under the Congress rule as capitalist.

“Despite the loud talk of socialism”, it says, “what is developing under the leadership of the Congress party and the Government is capitalism—private capitalism in the private sector and state sector”. The Programme then adds:

“It means that this development suffers from all inherent and inevitable contradictions, crises and serious limitations of the capitalist system and its basic laws.”

There is, however, a basic difference between the assessment made in the two Programmes.

The revisionist Programme considers that, though the ruling Congress party is developing a typical capitalist society with all the laws of capitalism operating here, it is nevertheless a progressive development. For it is a particular type of capitalist development independent of imperialism.

Let me quote the relevant passage from that Programme:

“There can be no doubt that the policy of imperialists to keep Indian economy within the semi-colonial bounds has received a rebuff. India, no longer linked to and dependent solely on the world capitalist market, has been able to advance along the road of independent industrial growth. If India had remained dependent on and linked, as before, only to the world capitalist market she would have never been able to take a step forward and pursue an independent foreign and home policy.”

This over-enthusiastic praise of the “independent” character of India’s capitalist development is, according to our Programme, totally wrong. Not that the existence and growing power of the socialist camp, with the Soviet Union as its most powerful partner, has not enabled the bourgeoisie to beat back the most shameless offensive of imperialist Powers and foreign monopolists. This, of course, they have been able to do; to that extent, one may say, the development of capitalism in India is independent relative to the situation prevailing before the formation of the socialist camp.

This, however, has very serious limitations—limitations arising out of the very character of economic planning undertaken by the ruling party and the Government. Here, for instance, are the broad facts relating to the way in which dependence on imperialism is growing:

“While the Government has refused to eliminate the exploitation by the already entrenched British and other foreign finance capital, they offered them liberal concessions, guarantees and new opportunities for fresh big inflow. In the name of building a self-generating economy and overcoming foreign exchange shortage, which again is largely the creation of their policies, the Congress rulers are inviting the monopolists of Britain, the USA, West Germany and other Western countries to come and invest their capital in India and earn huge guaranteed profits. The rapid growth of U.S. investments in certain key sectors brings to the forefront the growing danger of American penetration into our economic and consequently political life.

“Despite assistance of key importance from the socialist countries, despite the increase in trade with socialist countries, despite the fact that Indian capital has grown in volume, the most glaring fact of our economic life today is that the country’s economy as a whole is in many respects dependent on Western assistance and particularly U.S. assistance. Far from this dependence getting reduced, it is actually increasing year by year. About a third of the total investments in the Third Plan will have to be found from foreign aid mostly from the West. Apart from the foodgrains aid, India looks to the U.S. and other Western countries for aid even for maintenance imports. Simultaneously with our increasing needs of foreign aid, concessions after concessions are being given to foreign capital. Hundreds of collaboration agreements between India and foreign capitalists are being sanctioned.

“This heavy dependence of our economy on Western aid both for development of the state sector and for industrial raw materials and components, as well as for our food, and the concessions that are being increasingly given to foreign capital, as well as the increasing penetration of foreign capital into our economy by means of their collaboration with our private capitalists—all this constitutes a serious danger to our country’s future, and to our capacity to pursue independent policies both internal and external. It is this situation that breeds extreme right reaction in the country which openly advocates military alliances

with U.S. imperialism and total subservience to it in the economic sphere.

The difference between the approaches contained in the revisionist and our Programmes may, in a way, be said to be reflected in the title given to the second chapter of each Programme.

The revisionist Programme has the title: "Towards Independent Development". The content of the chapter is the narration of a story which will give satisfaction to any Congressman. For, it is a story of the gradual march of the Indian economy under Congress leadership from dependence on imperialism to genuine independence. It says, for instance, that:

Though the Indian bourgeoisie was "dictated by its own class interests of building an independent economy", the building of such an independent economy was, in the early post-independence year, thwarted "by the vacillation and compromising policies of the national bourgeoisie, which on certain vital issues signified a retreat from the accepted programme of the national liberation movement."

This early phase, however, was quickly over and a new phase started—a phase in which the national bourgeoisie "established firmer contacts with the socialist countries and formulated the Second Plan with its emphasis on heavy industries, development of the public sector and need for land reforms."

With this new phase was opened, the revisionist Programme continues, a conflict between two forces operating in India's socio-economic scene.

The national bourgeoisie which is at the head of the Government and which introduced such anti-imperialist and anti-feudal measures as the Industrial Policy Resolution of 1948, nationalisation of the Reserve Bank of India in 1949, nationalisation of the airlines and the Imperial Bank in 1953, nationalisation of life insurance companies and gold-fields in 1957, and so on.\*

Against them were ranged the imperialists and top groups of Indian monopolists.

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\* Life Insurance Companies were nationalised in 1956

And it is the former, and not the latter, that, according to that Programme, are coming out victorious in the conflict. The result is that, "despite her link and unequal relations with the world capitalist economy India has been helped so much and enabled to go forward even by her partial and limited economic relations with the world socialist economy."

There may be Congress leaders, of course, who would feel unhappy at the references made in the revisionist programme to the role played by the socialist camp in enabling our ruling classes to develop an independent economy, in the country. But the bulk of them would be happy that the programme calls the Indian economy independent though capitalist.

Our Programme, on the other hand, draws attention to the "danger of neo-colonialism". The second chapter of that Programme is entitled "Bankrupt Path of Capitalism Leads to Growth of Monopolies and Danger of Neo-colonialism".

Let us note in this connection that our Programme takes full account of the positive role played by the Soviet Union and other socialist countries in enabling our ruling classes to resist imperialist attacks. "The most outstanding feature of these Plans", it says, "is to be seen in the industrial expansion particularly in the setting up of certain heavy and machine-building industries in the state sector. This noteworthy gain would not have been possible but for the disinterested aid from the Socialist countries—mainly from the Soviet Union."

Our Programme, however, refuses to ignore or under-estimate the negative role of the class policies pursued by our ruling classes—the fact that their negative consequences far outweigh the positive. For, the root of these negative consequences is that:

"Despite the growth of contradictions between imperialism and feudalism on the one hand and the people, including the bourgeoisie, on the other, and despite the new opportunities presented with the emergence of the world socialist system, the big bourgeoisie heading the state does not decisively attack imperialism and feudalism and eliminate them. On the other hand, it seeks to utilise its hold over the state and the new opportunities to strengthen its position by attacking the people on the one hand

and, on the other, to resolve the conflicts and contradictions with imperialism and feudalism by pressure, bargain and compromise. In this process, it is forging strong links with foreign monopolies and is sharing power with the landlords.

The extent to which our ruling classes are able and willing to assert the independence of India and to build an economy which is independent of imperialism is, therefore, very limited. Being an economy developing on the basis of cooperation with and assistance from, private monopolies in the developed capitalist countries, it is sinking more and more into the morass of dependence on imperialism.

This is a fact which can be seen from official documents themselves. Here, for instance, is the assessment of the external economic relations of the country made in the Report of the Reserve Bank of India for the year-ending, June 30, 1965:

“The current difficulties in the external payments are mainly a reflection of the adverse developments in the internal economy. It is a disappointing feature of Indian economic development that while aggregate output has increased over successive Plan periods, the exportable surpluses have not increased to a corresponding extent; nor has there been sufficient recognition that for an economy so vitally dependent on imports and having a heavy external debt to service, exports must be allocated a fairly large share of additional output...

“Shortfalls in export performance have a two-fold impact on the country’s development efforts. First, they upset current programmes of investment and production. Second, they increase the need for current foreign assistance and in the process mortgage the country’s future exports for debt service. Already the burden of external debt servicing is growing at a rapid rate. As most of the loans contracted in the Second Plan Period and the early Third Plan Period will fall due for servicing in the Fourth Plan, a substantial part (as much as 25 to 30 per cent) of the foreign exchange earned through exports is likely to be absorbed by debt servicing” (*Economic Times*, September 23, 1965).

It is obvious that such a critical situation in the field of external payments is the result of what our Programme calls “the

bankrupt path of capitalism''. It is equally obvious that, if the trend noted above in the official report of the Reserve Bank of India is not reversed, the increasing dependence on foreign aid will lead the nation to growing danger of political dependence on imperialism. This will be the beginning of a process which, if not reversed, will transform independent India into a neo-colonial India.

Let it be made perfectly clear that this is not an inevitable development. The objective forces operating in the world—the existence of the powerful socialist camp with the Soviet Union as its vanguard; the ever-growing strength of the anti-colonial countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America; and above all, the ever-sharpening contradictions among the imperialist Powers themselves—are favourable to us.

So are the subjective forces operating within our country—the growing discontent of the people against “the bankrupt path of capitalism” taken by our ruling classes; the emergence of new forces of radical democracy and socialism; the trend towards the unity of these forces of radical democracy and socialism, etc—sufficiently powerful.

But the favourable—objective and subjective—forces can be fully utilised only if the Communists are conscious of their responsibility in telling the people that it is they, and not the ruling classes, who will preserve and strengthen India’s freedom and sovereignty. Not only does the revisionist Programme fails to do this, but it positively hails the ruling classes as the champions of independent development.

Our programme, on the other hand, warns the people that the nation is in danger of slowly but surely losing its independence and sovereignty if it continues to march along the capitalist path taken by the ruling classes.

#### IV

#### **Foreign Policy—Its Class Content**

Intimately connected with the transformation of formal freedom into real freedom is the foreign policy adopted by the ruling classes of any state which won freedom in the days of successful

struggle against colonialism. For, the anti-Communist, anti-peace and pro-war demagogy of the imperialist camp headed by the United States was the means with which the newly-free states were sought to be drawn into the imperialist net.

The main difference between India and Pakistan in the 1950's was that, because of the new orientation in foreign policy inaugurated by the Indian ruling classes, India began to weaken her links with the imperialist camp. She began to get closer both to the socialist Powers, as well as to the colonial peoples' freedom movements in Asia and Africa. This enabled her to inaugurate the process of economic planning based on industrialisation without that large-scale dependence on "foreign aid" which had till then been considered unavoidable.

Pakistan, on the other hand, went along with the imperialist Powers in forming anti-Communist military alliances such as SEATO and CENTO and, in the process, weakened her national freedom, rather than strengthening it as India did.

The above-mentioned changes in India's foreign policy raised a furious controversy inside the Indian Communist movement in the middle of the 1950's. The Third and Fourth Congresses of the then united Communist Party of India became the scene of an ideological-political battle around the question of the significance of these changes.

According to one point of view, India had started marching along the path of peace and anti-colonialism, had irreversibly joined the camp of peace.

This, however, was not accepted by the Party. It did certainly welcome the new orientation given by the Government to its foreign policy—an orientation which strengthened the forces of peace in the world and freedom and democracy in India. It, however, warned against any complacent attitude, the attitude of taking it for granted that there cannot be any reversal of policy in a reactionary direction. In other words, the Party did not equate the new orientation brought about in the 1950's as sure and unmistakable indication that India had already taken the path of peace and anti-colonialism.

Much water has flown since those days of inner-Party controversy. Developments in the international world in general, and India's own foreign relations in particular, have clarified many points which had remained unclear in those days. It was in the light of these developments, and the experience drawn from them, that a new Programme was adopted by our Party. The revisionists, too, have adopted their Programme. Let us, therefore, compare the two Programmes in respect to India's foreign policy and try to find out where they differ from each other.

Our Programme proceeds from the class angle from which alone a Marxist can look at any phenomenon. It points out that the foreign policy of any state and its Government is, in the final analysis, "nothing but the projection of its internal policy and it reflects, in the main, the interests of the class or classes that head the Government and the state in question". It then goes on to state, "the foreign policy of the Government of India naturally reflects the dual character of our bourgeoisie, of opposition to, as well as compromise and collaboration with, imperialism".

The revisionist Programme, too, appears to base itself on the class character of the Indian state and its Government. The policy of "peace, non-alignment and anti-colonialism" which, according to the revisionists, is "in the main" the foreign policy of Government of India, "conforms to the interests of the national bourgeoisie" and it "meets the needs of India's development and reflects the sentiments of the mass of people of India".

The difference between the two Programmes are obvious. The revisionists do not take account of "the dual character of our bourgeoisie, of opposition to, as well as compromise and collaboration with, imperialism" which, according to us, is the crux of the class character of India's foreign policy.

The revisionists see nothing basically wrong in the foreign policy pursued by the Government of India; the only criticism which it has to make is that this policy "is sometimes vitiated by lapses and compromises". Despite these lapses and compromises, however, "as a whole, the main character of the policy has been generally preserved".

Our Programme takes pains to explain the objective material basis of our ruling classes' "opposition to imperialism as well as compromise and collaboration with it". "Unlike the monopolist bourgeoisie", it points out, "the Indian bourgeoisie for its very development needs world peace and is hence opposed to world war". But this opposition to world war is itself subordinated to the needs of advancing the class interests of the bourgeoisie. It, therefore, "seeks to utilise the contradictions between the camps of imperialism and socialism as well as contradictions and conflicts between U.S. and British imperialisms".

Making a concrete analysis of the way in which the foreign policy of the Government of India shifted from one position to another, our Programme says:

"In the early period after independence, while it was looking to the imperialists and particularly the USA for its industrial development, when it had faith in the invincibility of U.S. arms, the Government of India exhibited marked tendencies of succumbing to the blackmail of the imperialist camp and leaned heavily on it.

"Later, with the debacle of imperialist arms in Korea and Vietnam, with the growth in the economic and military might of the socialist world and the breaking of Western—chiefly U.S.—monopoly of nuclear weapons, with the new unprecedented upsurge in the liberation struggle in Asia and Africa, all of which further altered the world balance of forces in favour of socialism, peace and national independence, with disillusionment in its hope of getting massive aid for industrial development from the imperialists, with the growing possibilities of receiving from socialist countries disinterested aid for building industries of key importance, with the growth of the peace movement and mass radicalism in the country as revealed in the First General Elections, and with the conclusion of the U.S.-Pakistan agreement to enter into the SEATO military bloc with a view to pressing India, began a new phase in the Government of India's policy of non-alignment. This was the phase when the Government came out against military blocs, against imperialist aggression, in support of colonial peoples' struggle, for prohibition of nuclear

weapons and disarmament and for Afro-Asian solidarity...This new anti-imperialist content given to the policy of non-alignment played a positive role in international development.

“Beginning from the year 1958, however, the foreign policy of the Government of India has been passing through a new phase. Its role in the Congo, its refusal to recognise the Algerian Provisional Government, its refusal to take a forthright and firm stand on several anti-colonial issues, its equivocal role as Chairman of the International Commission in Vietnam and Laos...were all evidences of this new phase. It is noteworthy that several countries of Asia and Africa which shook off their colonial yoke only recently have taken a forthright and consistently anti-imperialist stand on these and similar issues. At a time when the world situation has become more favourable than ever due to the growing might of the socialist camp and the attainment of freedom by many countries of Africa and the upsurge of the freedom movement in the Latin American countries, one would have expected that the government of independent India would have carried forward the policy of non-alignment, peace and anti-colonialism in a more determined manner. Just the contrary has happened.”

Compare this with the story of the development of India's foreign policy as narrated in the revisionist programme. “In the earlier years”, it says, “India's foreign policy suffered from the impression of British pressures, an inheritance from previous dependence”. This, however, was temporary. For, “soon it underwent significant change. Disillusionment with Anglo-American foreign policy with regard to India and other South-East Asian countries, the contradictions between the consolidation of independence and independent development of the national economics of young countries and the neo-colonialist ambitions of imperialists, the self-confidence and strength born out of the consolidation of the Indian state structure, the rising tempo of the national liberation movement in Asia and Africa, the weakening and retreat of imperialism and the mounting strength of the socialist world and the strong peace-loving and anti-imperialist sentiments of the Indian people brought about a new turn in India's foreign policy”.

There was, according to the revisionists, no going back from this "new turn in foreign policy". Only once did a danger of reversal make its appearance and that was in October 1962 when "the Chinese invasion gave a rude shock to the Indian people. The anger of the people was sought to be used by extreme right reaction to attack India's policy on non-alignment and *Panchsheel*, the leadership of Nehru himself was assailed and his resignation demanded since he was the main architect of this policy. Immense pressure was put on Prime Minister Nehru to give up the policy on non-alignment and sign a defence pact with the Anglo-American imperialists".

The danger, however, was averted "thanks to the firm stand taken in defence of the policy of non-alignment by Nehru backed by the Indian people, the correct position taken by the Communist Party of India (revisionists—*E.M.S.N.*) in regard to national defence, the settlement of the Cuban crisis which averted a world war, the friendly attitude of the USSR and other socialist countries towards India and cease-fire by the Chinese after a short-lived advance, India's foreign policy survived the severest crisis it ever faced".

The revisionist Programme does not forget to mention those who oppose the foreign policy of peace, non-alignment and neo-colonialism. They are "monopoly-capitalist circles having strong links with Anglo-American capital and remnants of the feudal princely order who go with them". These opponents of the foreign policy are able to attack the policy both from within the Congress (through its right wing), as well as from outside (through some opposition parties). Despite these pressures from inside and outside, however, the policy is preserved.

The revisionist Programme also mentions "the serious vacillations on the part of the Congress Government which are not in conformity with India's general foreign policy". It gives several examples, such as, failure to give formal diplomatic recognition to the German Democratic Republic; lack of consistency and firmness in the Government's stand against neo-colonialist conspiracies and aggressive actions of imperialists; etc. All this, it is admitted, "tarnishes India's anti-imperialist, anti-colonialist image in the eyes of African and Asian nations".

Despite these vacillations “the policy of non-alignment has been preserved in the main”, as will be clear from the fact “that in the midst of the severe crisis created by Chinese invasion and the offensive of right-reaction, the Government of India supported the sovereignty of Cuba during the Caribbean crisis, continued to back the admission of the Chinese Peoples’ Republic to the U. N., endorsed the nuclear weapons test ban treaty, yielded to the popular demand to cancel the Voice of America deal, and rejected the imperialist offer of air-umbrella against China.”

It will be clear from the above that, according to the revisionist assessment, the only source of danger to an otherwise correct foreign policy of peace, non-alignment and anti-colonialism is the attitude adopted by China. Had it not been for the “Chinese invasion” of October 1962, there would have been no danger at all to that policy. Even this “Chinese-created danger” was averted because of the correct policy pursued by the Government of India.

This is unacceptable to us. Our Programme traces the weakening of the anti-imperialist content of the policy of non-alignment (which began about the year 1958) to “the growth of monopolies and Big Business in India and their growing links with imperialist monopolies which are actively encouraged by the Government, the increasing reliance of its five-year plans and aid from the Western countries, particularly from the USA, despite the vital industrial, technical and economic aid rendered by the USSR and other socialist countries etc”.

These were further accentuated by “the border dispute with China leading to a border war between the two biggest states in Asia and the state of cold war existing since then”. After listing the various examples which go to show that the policy of non-alignment has been “jeopardised and is getting emasculated”, the Programme adds:

“The contradictions between the Indian bourgeoisie and imperialism continue. This was sharply focussed on the issue of Kashmir and imperialist intrigues over it and when, due to popular pressure the VOA deal had to be abandoned.”

The difference between the two Programmes in relation to foreign policy, therefore, may be summed up in these words: While our Programme looks upon the policy as the instrument which the ruling classes are trying to use in their own narrow class interests, the revisionist Programme considers it as the joint instrument which is used in the genuine interests of the nation as a whole.

Which of these two approaches is correct—this question can be answered only if we examine how that policy has forced our Government to think of and plan a militarised economy and state. For, no peace-loving Indian can remain indifferent to a situation where India's five-year plans for development are being sought to be so "modified" as to serve the needs of "national defence".

This, too, at a time when no state or Government in the world (with the possible exception of Malaysia and Singapore) has thought it fit to support India in her war with Pakistan. Any truthful observer of international political relations would ponder over the question why, if India's foreign policy has been so correct as is made out in the revisionist programme the Government has had to make such a large-scale preparation for war with so little of international support?

This, however, requires a more detailed treatment.

## V

### **Foreign Policy, China and Pakistan**

Much water has flown under the Indian bridges since 1962 when the Chinese army was fast advancing into the NEFA region.

The leaders of the ruling Congress party had, at that time, placed before the people a programme of meeting the Chinese offensive with arms secured from the Anglo-American Powers. Technical and political missions were being exchanged between Delhi, London and Washington. Requests for military "aid" on India's part were countered by appeals to settle the Indo-Pakistan dispute, "so that a united stand might be against the Chinese invader".

Echoing the voice of the Congress leaders was the revisionist leadership of Indian's Communist movement who imposed on the Party the so-called "patriotic line" of relying on imperialist

military "aid" for resisting the Chinese invader. In the notorious resolution which they pushed through the National Council by 2 : 1 majority—a resolution which was applauded by the leaders of the ruling Congress party, they declared: "The Communist Party of India is not opposed to buying arms from any country on a commercial basis."

The specious argument in support of this line of welcoming the Government of India's effort at getting arms from the imperialist Powers—the argument that what is welcome is not imperialist "aid" but purchase of arms on "commercial terms"—cannot hide the truth, declared unequivocally by the international Communist movement—the truth that imperialist Powers are using even the "commercial terms" as the beginning of the end of the freedom of independent and sovereign countries.

Within less than three years of the Government's effort at securing imperialist military "aid" and the revisionists' welcome to it, however, both the ruling party as well as the revisionists have had to sing another tune. It has now become clear even to the blind that the British and American imperialists were trying to use the India-China conflict to force the Government of India to take the first step towards transforming this country into an imperialist satellite.

Our people's anger rose to the highest pitch when they saw that, while on the one hand the imperialists were offering "aid" to India against China, they were at the same time arming Pakistan to the teeth. Their anger burst into open hostility when they saw Pakistan using United States arms against India, first in the Rann of Kutch and subsequently along the entire border between India and West Pakistan.

Both the ruling party as well as the revisionist leadership have, therefore, been obliged to make militant public declarations against the Western Powers. Although directed more against Britain than against the United States, fire is in general concentrated against the Western Powers. Threats are held out that India would quit the Commonwealth, she would review the entire foreign policy in an anti-Western direction, etc. The Dangeite leadership loyally follows suit.

What is surprising in the whole process is that the Dangeite leadership is not even as honest as the Congress leadership is. Central Ministers and other leaders of the ruling party have been talking of a "reappraisal of policy". They express "disappointment" that India's Western "friends" have "failed" her; hence the need for "reappraisal of policy". The national Press is full of suggestions on how this "reappraisal" is to be made.

It was, however, left to the Dangeite leadership alone to defend the Congress Government's foreign policy as to make it appear that there was nothing wrong with it. It would appear from their assessment of that foreign policy that India has been winning victory after victory on the diplomatic and political fields. All this at a time when such spokesmen of the Government as Chagla, who had argued India's case before the Security Council in September, have made the candid admission that nobody supported India's case with regard to her war with Pakistan except Malaysia and Singapore.

Whether the revisionists admit it or not, the undeniable truth is that the foreign policy pursued by the Government of India has now reached a stage of crisis. Nobody can deny the fact that India has lost the large amount of goodwill from the non-aligned countries in the Afro-Asian world—a goodwill which was the biggest asset to our Government and people during the middle of the 1950's. No longer do they look upon India as their friend and guide, as they did in the years of Bandung and after. Most of them adopted the same attitude of neutrality towards our relations with Pakistan and China which, when adopted by the Soviet Union, was denounced by a section of the national Press as "helping the aggressor".

Many of the Asian-African countries are critical of several measures taken by China. None of them, however, is prepared to support the Indian case with regard to the India-China border.

Still worse is the position with regard to Pakistan and her claim to Kashmir. Most of them are swayed by Pakistan's slogan of "self-determination" and remain unconvinced about our claims.

Both on the India-China and Indo-Pakistan disputes, therefore, they would like India to settle her disputes through peaceful negotiations with the country concerned.

Why has such a situation arisen? Why should our friends in Asia and Africa take such an attitude which is of help to China and Pakistan? Is it because our foreign propaganda is "weak and ineffective", as is stated by some leaders of the Congress party and repeated even by the revisionists? Or, is there something wrong with the very foreign policy which it will be the job of the propaganda machinery to explain to our friends abroad?

The key to answering this question is provided by class essence of the foreign policy which, it may be recalled, "reflects the dual character of our bourgeoisie, of opposition to as well as compromise and collaboration with imperialism". (Our Party's *Programme*). The practical form which that policy took was, again to quote the Party Programme, "to utilise the contradictions between the camps of imperialism and socialism as well as contradictions and conflicts between the U.S. and British imperialisms", in order to "defend and safeguard the newly-won political independence of this country and to advance its (bourgeoisie's) own class interests."

Such a policy unavoidably comes into conflict with the requirements of the militant anti-colonial movements of Asia and Africa. Being countries with very little of bourgeois development, these countries have no such ruling "elite" at their top social circles as is interested in collaboration with imperialism. They, on the other hand, are interested in a militant programme of struggle against the remnants of colonialism, both internationally and in separate countries. The militancy of the Asian and African peoples and Governments stand in marked contrast to the more "mature", "sober", "balanced" approach taken by India towards the problems of anti-colonial struggles. This naturally ranged India in opposition to most of the Afro-Asian countries.

A half-hearted admission of this is made even in the revisionist Programme. It speaks of "marked failures in taking a consistent

and firm stand against neocolonialist conspiracies and aggressive actions of imperialists” which “tarnishes India’s anti-imperialist anti-colonialist image in the eyes of the African and Asian nations”. It, however, dismisses them as a few “lapses” from, and “vacillations” on, an otherwise correct anti-imperialist anti-colonialist policy. It does not consider these “lapses” and “vacillations” as the other side of the same picture—the collaborationist and compromising side of the dual character of the Indian bourgeoisie’s foreign policy, of which the other side is opposition to imperialism.

Inherent in the dual character of the Indian bourgeoisie’s foreign policy is the crisis that has been fast developing in that policy. The fine balance which was sought to be maintained between the oppositionist and collaborationist sides of the policy cannot be indefinitely maintained, particularly since the Afro-Asian countries and the imperialist Powers have been moving in two opposite directions—the former in the direction of a more consistent anti-imperialist stand and the latter of a more shameless drive for world domination.

India has either to march in step with the anti-colonialist movements of Asia and Africa, or forge stronger bonds of collaboration with the imperialist Powers. If she does the former, she will have to be less “sober”, “balanced”, “mature”, etc., on anti-colonial issues; if she takes up the latter position, she will lose the sympathy and support of the anti-colonial movements of Asia and Africa.

It was against this background that India-China relations came to a breaking point. As is well known, the dispute between the two countries took some time to reach the breaking point which it did in October-November 1962. There are, however, a few critical points at each of which the crucial question arose: will India try to settle her disputes with China through direct negotiations or, will she try to put pressure on her and, for that purpose, try to secure Western imperialist “aid”? These three critical points are:

- (a) the first half of 1959 when the Dalai Lama and his followers took refuge in India and started using Indian soil for anti-China operations;

- (b) 1960 April, when the Chinese Prime Minister Chou En-lai came to India and met the leaders of our Government. There are uncontradicted reports to the effect that a proposal was under the serious consideration of the Government to exchange the Aksai China region for the McMahon line. This proposal, however, was ultimately rejected under pressure from an influential section of the Central Cabinet, though the then Prime Minister and Defence Minister were inclined to agree to it;
- (c) the critical days of the latter half of 1962 when the Chinese army was entering into the NEFA region and the Government of India promptly asked the Western imperialist Powers for their help in resisting the Chinese.

Leaders of the ruling party as well as the revisionist leadership would have us believe that India was right and China wrong at every one of these critical points. Giving asylum to the Dalai Lama was, according to the leaders of the ruling party, an unavoidable political necessity, since it was a question of "human rights". It is difficult to see how the revisionist leadership can endorse this stand. For, they are at least formally committed to a resolution of the Central Executive Committee of the Communist Party of India, adopted in May 1959, which stated as follows:

"What happened in the Tibetan region of the Chinese People's Republic was a rebellion organised by a handful of serf-owners and bigoted lamas in order to block all reforms and thus perpetuate brutal oppression and tyranny. They wanted to deny to the Tibetan people the light of modern civilisation, so that they would remain sunk in the bottomless pit of backwardness, servitude and indescribable misery. In their rebellion, these reactionary circles were encouraged and even materially helped by the imperialists."

Making a specific reference to the attitude adopted by the Government of India, and particularly by Prime Minister Nehru, that resolution stated, "it is a matter of deep regret that, on several occasions in recent weeks, he should have permitted himself to take positions and make utterances which cannot be reconciled with his own foreign policy and its guiding principles,

the *Panch Sheel*, on whose basis alone India's relations with the People's Republic of China can be upheld and carried forward".

Yet, the revisionist Programme does not have a word to say on the Dalai Lama's entry into India and the Government's attitude towards him. Does it mean that they have now gone round to the view that the help rendered to "the handful of serf-owners and bigoted lamas" from Tibet was in conformity with the policy of peace, non-alignment and anti-colonialism?

As for the second critical point in the development of India-China relations—Chou En-lai's visit to India and the reported proposal for India-China settlement on the basis of exchanging Aksai Chin for the NEFA, do the revisionists believe that the proposal would have "betrayal of national interests" if it had been agreed to by the Government? Even supposing that the proposal had not been made in those days, would they now consider it proper on the part of the Government to try to settle the India China dispute on that basis ?

We are not raising an abstract question. For, it is well-known that this proposal has been publicly made by some leading figures in the country, such as Jayaprakash Narayan. We may also refer to the conclusion arrived at by research student of the problem of India's border dispute with China on the entire border:

"In the present controversy", says J. S. Bains in his *India's International Disputes*, "in the Northeast, the area south of the McMahon line as shown in Indian maps prepared at Simla has been under the effective jurisdiction of India. This is quite evident because Indian defence forces successfully withstood the Chinese attempts to infiltrate into this area. Taking into consideration the topography, this was the kind of effective administration that could be possible. But the same is not true in the case of the Ladakh region of India where there seems to be a dispute between the border based on treaties, usage and custom and the extent of actual effective jurisdiction. In the final analysis, international law recognises the validity of those boundaries which whether based on principle, or usage, or some other criterion, are also effectively maintained by the parties concerned. In this case, therefore, while India is rightfully holding its own in the area

south of the traditional boundary in the eastern and central sectors, the *status quo* in the western sector is more favourable to China”.

Is it seriously suggested that a country and Government which gave asylum to and helped a group of rebels against a neighbouring country and failed to negotiate on the basis of ‘recognising actual political realities through mere “propaganda” that its case is just? All the more so if that country happens to believe in and practise the theory of securing western military “aid”?

Let us make it clear in this context that we do not for a moment suggest that everything China did in dealing with the India-China dispute was indisputable. However, it is necessary to note that the Government of India cannot evade its responsibility for the deterioration in the relations between India and China. It is impossible to hide the fact that the Government of India added to the difficulties by giving asylum to the Dalai Lama and his followers, by rejecting the proposal that the border disputes should be settled on the basis of existing political realities and by trying to secure imperialist military “aid”.

The question of Indo-Pakistan relations too reached a breaking point. It led to an open war followed by an uneasy cease-fire.

The heart of this question, as is well-known, is Kashmir. Now the question of Kashmir is not a foreign policy question, pure and simple. It is part of the question of internal democracy as well.

Kashmir being admitted to be a part of India does not solve the problem of its status. For, ever since the accession to India in 1949, it has continued to enjoy a status not enjoyed by any other state of India. The commitment made by the Government at the time of accession that the will of the people will be ascertained on the question of accession; the convocation of a separate Constituent Assembly and the framing of a separate Constitution for Kashmir; the Government of India’s acquiescence in the resolution of the Security Council with regard to a plebiscite in Kashmir—all these are unique features of the relation between the Centre and the state of Kashmir.

All this has its impact on internal democracy within India in general, within Kashmir in particular. The internal aspect we will consider separately. Let us in the meantime note that if our Government ignores the above facts of history and goes on repeating that Kashmir is in no way different from the other states of India, people outside our country are likely to become sceptical. We may, of course, silence them by saying that the continuation or ending of this special status is a purely internal matter in which outsiders have no business to interfere. It would, however, be difficult for the Government to convince the world that its case on Kashmir is as strong as is made out by its spokesmen.

Coming as this Indo-Pakistan question did against the background of our Government's failure in regard to the solution of the India-China dispute, it is not surprising that our Asian and African friends look upon India's relation with her neighbours as not in conformity with the spirit of peaceful solution of differences. It will be difficult to blame them if they hold the view that India is not taking a helpful and constructive attitude to her neighbours.

The revisionist leadership, however, is not prepared to take note of any of these weaknesses in the Congress Government's foreign policy. That policy, according to them, is the best imaginable. They stick to the dogma that the foreign policy of India under the Congress Government is one of "peace, non-alignment and anti-colonialism", even though the majority of her Asian and African friends have begun to entertain doubts on it.

It is obvious that our Party cannot subscribe to this point of view. It has to take note of the impact which this foreign policy is having on our friends abroad, particularly the Asian and African friends. We cannot take the stand that, if these Asian and African friends do not approve or endorse all that India says and does but, on the other hand, believe the Chinese and Pakistani propaganda, it is all due to the "inefficiency of India's propaganda machinery". We are of opinion that it is necessary for us to go deep into the question

of what is wrong with the policy and how it is to be improved upon.

And it is this that our Programme seeks to do when it lays down the policy of “strengthening Afro-Asian solidarity in every possible way” “making special and concerted efforts to peacefully settle the existing differences and disputes and establish friendly relations with India’s neighbours”.

## VI

### **Implications of Crisis in Capitalist System**

Every Marxist-Leninist in the world today is agreed that humanity is now going through the epoch in which, to quote the 1960 Statement of 81 Communist and Workers’ Parties, “the world socialist system and the forces fighting against imperialism, for a socialist transformation of society, determine the main content, main trend and main features of the historical development of society”.

Such a characterisation of the present epoch in human history is based on a scientific analysis of the stage of the crisis into which the capitalist system has fallen. Once again to quote the 1960 statement:

“A new stage has begun in the development of the general crisis of capitalism. This is shown by the triumph of socialism in a large group of European and Asian countries embracing one-third of mankind; the powerful growth of the forces fighting for socialism throughout the world and the steady weakening of the imperilists’ positions in the economic competition with socialism; the tremendous new upsurge of the national liberation struggle and the mounting disintegration of the colonial system; the growing instability of the entire world economic system of capitalism resulting from the growth of State-monopoly capitalism and militarism; the increasing contradictions between monopolies and the interests of the nation as a whole; the curtailment of bourgeois democracy and the tendency to adopt autocratic and fascist methods of government; and a profound crisis in bourgeois politics and ideology.”

This analysis of the world situation, one would have thought, would be the basis on which any group of people calling themselves Communists would proceed to discuss the perspective of development before a country like India. This, however, is precisely what the revisionists refuse to do.

Before examining the programme adopted by the revisionists at their Bombay Congress, let us refer to a revealing passage from a document published by the revisionists in June 1964—Dr. G. Adhikari's critique of the present writer's document on "Revisionism and Dogmatism."

"Is it possible", Dr. Adhikari asks, "for countries like India, Indonesia, etc., reach economic independence, that is, the stage of mature industrialisation and developed agriculture in the capitalist way?", and he answers:

"This possibility cannot be excluded in the context of the new world situation (new epoch and the third stage of the general crisis of capitalism) and also because of the possibilities it opens up for the national bourgeoisie as a whole to pursue its class aim of building an independent economy in the capitalist way."

In other words, it is quite possible for the Indian bourgeoisie to develop India in the same way in which the bourgeoisie of the Western capitalist countries did in the 18th and 19th centuries. Dr. Adhikari, of course, concedes that "such a development would be a protracted path, heaping burdens and suffering on the masses and involving danger for the nation", but he pleads for "recognising this possibility soberly".

It is not surprising that the draft programme formulated by the revisionists on the basis of such an understanding envisaged a form of National Democratic Front in which the bourgeoisie is not the vacillating and unstable, but firm ally of the working class: not only does the bourgeoisie *share power* with the working class but "*the leadership of the alliance of the patriotic classes is shared* between the national bourgeoisie and the working class".

Such a crude and shameless advocacy of "progressive role" of the bourgeoisie was too much even for the rank and file members of the revisionist party. They, therefore, have now given it up. The final version of the Programme as adopted by them in

Bombay does not openly talk of the possibility of “mature industrialisation through the capitalist path” nor of the “joint leadership of the bourgeoisie and the working class” in the democratic front. But, even in the revised version of the Programme adopted by them, the essence of their previous understanding remains, though they have tried their best to cover it up in more respectable terms.

Consider, for instance, the third chapter of their final Programme. Its heading is “Contradictions of the Path of Capitalist Development”. It may appear to a superficial observer that the revisionists are unmasking here the whole path of capitalist development resorted to by the Indian ruling classes. One may think that, according to the revisionist, too, the more the country goes along the capitalist path, the worse will be the position of the economy, politics and culture of the country, so that the country has to move away from the capitalist path if it has to develop itself as a modern nation.

This, however, is far from truth. For, what they have in mind when they talk of contradictions of the path of capitalist developments is only this: “this development suffers from all inherent and inevitable contradictions, crises and serious limitations of the capitalist system and its basic laws.”

Anybody who is familiar with the works of Marx and Engels, produced over a century ago, knows that the capitalist system does not work smoothly but through contradictions and crises. The great merit of Marx’s work, *Capital*, consists in his ability even in those early years to unravel all the inherent and inevitable contradictions of capitalism. It may be recalled that was the time when capitalism had not transformed itself from the competitive to the monopoly stage, the stage which Lenin called “the last stage of capitalism”. Marx was able to bring into the open the inherent contradictions of even that stage of capitalism.

It is not these “inherent and inevitable contradictions, crises and serious limitations of the capitalist system” that present-day Marxists have in mind when they speak of the general crisis of capitalism—and that, too, general crisis in its third stage. The specific features of this particular crisis—general crisis in its third

stage—have been analysed by present-day Marxist-Leninists who have come to the conclusion that any country which tries to take the capitalist path will, far from developing itself economically, politically and culturally, always be crisis-ridden.

Is this the understanding with which the revisionists analyse the post-independence development in the country? Do they base themselves on the idea that there is a profound crisis in the economy, politics and ideology of capitalism?

We will try to examine the revisionist programme from various angles with a view to showing how it fails to apply the above understanding to Indian conditions.

Before doing it, however, let us make the general observation that the revisionist Programme fails to make a concrete analysis of the specific feature of capitalist development in India. It is here that the main difference between their Programme and our Programme lies. Our Programme, for instance, points out the following specific features of Indian capitalism:

- (a) “The capitalist path of development the Indian bourgeoisie has chosen is in the period when the world capitalist system is fast disintegrating and has entered the third stage of the general crisis of capitalism.”
- (b) “Possessing neither the technical base of a heavy industry, nor a colonial empire whose loot gave the imperialists vast capital accumulation, the bourgeoisie employed the state power it had won for appropriating the fruits of labour of the common people for its own capital requirements and for developing the economy along the lines of capitalism.”
- (c) “Even though developing in the capitalist way, Indian society still contains within itself strong elements of pre-capitalist society. Unlike the advanced capitalist countries where capitalism grew on the ashes of pre-capitalist society, destroyed by the rising bourgeoisie, capitalism in India was super-imposed on pre-capitalist society. Neither the British colonialists whose rule continued for over a century, nor the Indian bourgeoisie into whose hands power passed in 1947, delivered those smashing blows against pre-capitalist society which are necessary for the free development of

capitalist society and its replacement by socialist society. The present Indian society, therefore, is a peculiar combination of monopoly capitalist domination with the caste, communal and tribal institutions.”

These specific features of capitalist development in India make the crises and contradictions of capitalism in our country far more protracted. For at the head of the state are all those forces which are backward and reactionary in the capitalist as well as pre-capitalist societies—monopoly bourgeoisie collaborating with foreign monopolists; former maharajas and zamindars; budding capitalist landlords; leaders of caste, communal and tribal institutions, etc. It is against such a combination of reactionary and backward forces that the conscious working class and its allies have to fight.

This being the position, no useful purpose will be served by making the abstract formulation that contradictions and crises which are inherent in any type of capitalist society, are applicable to the Indian capitalist society as well. What is required is the concrete analysis of the various manifestations of the crisis developing in a society in which there is the coexistence of the institutions, strata of society and ideologies arising out of the caste, communal, tribal, etc., social organisations at one end and the rapidly-growing monopoly capitalists at the other.

That is why our Programme declares: “It has fallen to the lot of the working class and its Party to unite all the progressive forces interested in destroying the pre-capitalist society and to so consolidate the revolutionary forces within it as to facilitate the most rapid completion of the democratic revolution and preparation of the ground for transition to socialism.”

The “progressive forces” mentioned above do, of course, cover a very wide ground. They include not only the working class, peasantry and the middle classes, but also the bulk of the bourgeoisie, i.e., bourgeoisie minus its monopolist wing.

On this question of the forces which join together on the side of the people, there is virtually no difference between the revisionist Programme and ours. There is, however, a basic difference on the question of the forces against which the above-mentioned progressive forces are to be mobilised, the objective with which the progressive forces are to be united.

Our Programme says that “replacement of the bourgeois-landlord state and Government by a state of People’s Democracy and People’s Democratic Government led by the working class on the basis of a firm worker-peasant alliance” is what is immediately required. The struggles waged by the working class and its allies, therefore, should be directed against the landlord-bourgeois Government headed by the big bourgeoisie, a Government around whom are rallied all the reactionary and backward classes and strata of capitalist as well as pre-capitalist society.

The revisionist programme, however, takes a different attitude. The essence of the contradictions and crises inherent in the capitalist system, according to them, consists in the fact that a differentiation is taking place between the monopolists and the rest of the bourgeoisie. The task, therefore, consists in utilising these differences within the bourgeois class and to strengthen the non monopoly bourgeoisie in its struggle against the monopolists. Unity with the progressive forces within the Congress is, according to them, the main lever to build the unity of the nation.

Our Programme for its part does not fail to take note of the differentiations and contradictions between the landlords and the bourgeoisie, between the monopolists and non-monopolists among the bourgeoisie, between the foreign monopolists and the entire Indian bourgeoisie, including the monopolists, and so on. It is necessary for the working class and other revolutionary forces to utilise these differences and contradictions within the ranks of the ruling classes.

Our Programme, however, bases itself on the reality that “the People’s Democratic Revolution inevitably comes into clash with the state power of the big bourgeoisie in India”. Again.

“The basic and fundamental task of the revolution in today’s context cannot be carried out except in determined opposition to and struggle against the big bourgeoisie and its political representatives who occupy the leading position in the state. They resist and oppose the carrying out of radical and genuine agrarian reforms and have embarked upon the path of reforming feudal and semi-feudal landlordism to serve their narrow class interests of allying with them in order to buttress their class domination.

They also are utilising their state power to protect the foreign monopoly capital and facilitate its further penetration unhindered. Further, with their policies of compromise and collaboration with foreign monopolists and alliance with Indian landlordism, they are vigorously pursuing the path of capitalist development which in turn is immensely facilitating the growth of monopoly capital in our country. Hence the People's Democratic Revolution is not only in irreconcilable opposition to feudal landlordism and foreign monopoly capitalism but together with them it is opposed to the big bourgeoisie which is leading the state and is pursuing policies of compromise and collaboration with foreign finance capital and alliance with native landlordism."

As opposed to this characterisation of the state and Government, i.e., it being an alliance of the landlords and the bourgeoisie led by the big bourgeoisie is the characterisation made by the revisionists: "the State in India," they say, is "an organ of the class rule of the national bourgeoisie as a whole". In this bourgeois state, the big bourgeoisie is not playing the leading role but only "wields considerable influence": as for the landlords, "the national bourgeoisie compromises with them", but they are not allies of the bourgeoisie in wielding state power.

Where such a characterisation of the state and Government leads the revisionists will be seen when we examine their analysis of the state structure in India.

## VII

### **Class Character of Present Indian State**

The revisionists would have us believe that the state in India today conforms to the description of the typical bourgeois state, made by the founders of scientific socialism in their *Communist Manifesto*. That description, it may be recalled, is as follows:

"The bourgeoisie has at last, since the establishment of modern industry and of the world market, conquered for itself, in the modern representative state, exclusive political sway. The executive of the modern state is a committee for managing the common affairs of the whole bourgeoisie."

Corresponding to this definition of the state is the appreciation of the role played by the bourgeoisie in social development: "The bourgeoisie, historically, has played a most revolutionary part...The bourgeoisie, during its rule of scarce one hundred years, has created more massive and more colossal productive forces than have all preceding generations together. Subjection of nature's forces to man, machinery, application of chemistry to industry and agriculture, steam navigation, railways, electric telegraphs, clearing of whole continents for cultivation, canalisation of rivers, whole populations conjured out of the ground—what earlier century had even a pre-sentiment that such productive forces slumbered in the lap of social labour?"

It is known to all genuine students of Marxism that such a description of the bourgeoisie as a revolutionary class is inapplicable to the new stage of capitalist development, the stage of imperialism. No more is the bourgeoisie the vanguard of the militant classes and strata of society, the champion of revolutionary changes in the social system, the leader in the process of destroying all that is old and outmoded. It is, on the other hand, interested in arresting the onward march of revolutionary social forces; it allies itself with the various conservative and counter-revolutionary classes and strata of society.

Corresponding to this change in the role of the bourgeoisie in social development is the change in its state-political set-up. The typical form of the bourgeois state, characteristic of the period in which the bourgeoisie was playing a historically revolutionary role, i.e., the bourgeois parliamentary-democratic state, is replaced by various forms of anti-democratic regimes. The most notorious among these latter is the fascist state of the inter-war years which was described by the Communist International "as the open terroristic dictatorship of the most reactionary, most chauvinistic and most imperialist elements of finance capital".

This particular form of the anti-democratic bourgeois state could arise only in those developed capitalist countries where the very process of capitalist development has thrown up a top layer of monopoly capitalists powerful enough to subjugate the state to their narrow sectional interests, rather than to the class interests

of the whole bourgeoisie. The fascist state came into existence only when the conflicts and contradictions between this top layer of the monopolists and the rest of the bourgeoisie reached such a stage that they could not be resolved within the confines of a state which till then used to "manage the common affairs of the whole bourgeoisie", a stage when the state should look after the interests either of the narrow stratum of monopoly capitalists or of the rest of the bourgeoisie. The typical bourgeois state, i.e., the parliamentary democratic republic, had thus to give way to a state which oppresses not only the toilers but large sections of the bourgeoisie itself.

Does this mean that the bourgeoisie of under-developed countries like India could play the same role as its counterpart did in the developed capitalist countries? Can the bourgeoisie in these countries play the same historically revolutionary role as was played by its brothers in the developed countries? Can India and other developing countries perfect and maintain the typical bourgeois state, the parliamentary democratic republic?

The revisionists believe that this is possible. Here, for instance, is the way in which they open the chapter of their Programme which deals with "Bourgeoisie and State".

"The state in India is the organ of the class rule of the national bourgeoisie as a whole, which upholds and develops capitalism and capitalist relations of production, distribution and exchange in the national economy of India."

From this they proceed to make their assessment of the role played by the bourgeoisie in the state-political development of the country: "In spite of the bourgeois class character of the state, the ushering in of the bourgeois democratic state was a historic advance over the imperialist bureaucratic rule over our country. The Constitution of the Republic of India provides for a parliamentary democracy based on adult franchise and certain fundamental rights for the people and directive principles for the state."

They agree that the parliamentary democratic republic is circumscribed by various limitations, but add: "even with these limitations, the existence of the rights in the Constitution can be

made the platform and instrument of struggles of the people for enlarging democracy and defending their interests. Although a form of class rule, India's present parliamentary democracy has enabled the people to a certain extent to fight the distortion of that class rule in the direction of an autocracy in the service of reactionary monopoly and landlord interests. India's Parliament has provided a forum for the people to intervene in the affairs of the state in a measure and to voice the cause of peace, national freedom and democracy, to counter imperialist conspiracies and demanding social transformations in favour of the people such as land reforms, working class rights, curbs on monopolies, etc.'.

Does this mean that the parliamentary democratic system, established by the bourgeoisie in India, can be used for the transition from the capitalist to the socialist system? The revisionist answer is that there are difficulties in its way, there are certain forces obstructing the process. What they are is explained as follows:

“Differentiation is growing within the ranks of the national bourgeoisie which is not a homogenous class. It has contradictions within itself. This is most sharply expressed in the emergence of monopoly groups. Their growing grip over the economy and political life of the country is coming in conflict with the vital interests of the masses, harming the interests of broad sections of the national bourgeoisie and endangering India's march towards economic independence itself. In the economic sphere they seek to annul the dominant role of the public sector, so essential for the development of national economy; they facilitate the penetration of foreign monopoly capital through anti-national collaboration agreements... In the political sphere, they seek to consolidate the right reactionary forces in the country, to bolster up the right wing in the ruling party. They unleash an offensive against all progressive and national policies and organise an anti-Communist offensive to defeat and disrupt the democratic forces.”

The way in which the agrarian question is sought to be solved is also producing “a new set of reactionary vested interests”. They are “landlords, usurers and wholesale dealers” who “often

combine in the same person”, and “constitute the modern parasites holding up the progress of agriculture and supporting right reaction”.

These two reactionary forces, i.e., “the monopoly groups and feudal circles represent the main anti-democratic forces of reaction in the country. Their constant effort is to exercise pressure to shift Parliament and Government policies to the right. Hence they oppose extension of democracy, support restrictions on parliamentary democracy and promote bureaucratic authoritarianism.”

The revisionist Programme, therefore, does not take the preservation of the parliamentary democratic system for granted. They warn the people that “with the growth of monopoly and right reaction a new threat arises aimed at undermining even the existing democratic liberties and parliamentary democracy as a whole.”

The essence of this analysis, it can be seen, is that India’s bourgeois parliamentary democratic system is inherently revolutionary and democratic; there is nothing basically wrong or undemocratic in it; the root of the difficulties which arise in the course of its working is the emergence and further strengthening of a top layer of monopolists within the bourgeoisie who, together with feudal and other reactionary elements in the rural areas, try to subvert the parliamentary democratic system. Remove the dead weight of reactionaries from the system and purify it—such is the naive prescription made by these doctors to heal this sickly political system.

Behind this understanding lies a completely unscientific, one-sided analysis of the way in which the economy and political institutions of capitalism have been developing in India. It fails to take into account the specific features of India’s capitalist development—features whose crux is briefly noted in our Programme and was referred to by us in the earlier article. Let us, however, recall, one of the most essential of these features which is:

“Neither the British colonialists whose rule continued for a century, nor the Indian bourgeoisie into whose hands power passed

in 1947, delivered those smashing blows against pre-capitalist society which are necessary for the free development of capitalist society and its replacement by socialist society. The present Indian society, therefore, is a peculiar combination of monopoly capitalist domination with the caste, communal and tribal institutions.”

Such being the origin of capitalism in India, the background against which it has been and is still developing, the new state which came into being on August 15, 1947, is not a revolutionary democratic state expressing the will of the anti-imperialist and anti-feudal classes and strata of Indian society. It is, on the other hand, a state which reflects the compromise between the bourgeoisie and the feudals, the comprador and oppositional wings of the bourgeoisie, and, above all, the feudal-capitalist classes in India on the one hand and foreign monopolists on the other.

It is true that, within the framework of such a compromise between the various sections of the ruling classes, the bourgeoisie is getting stronger than the feudals: in relation to foreign monopoly, too, the bourgeoisie is trying its best to strengthen itself. But this very strengthening of the bourgeoisie is within the framework of its compromise with the feudals and with foreign monopolies. Furthermore, within the class of the bourgeoisie itself, the monopolists are growing at the expense of the other sections of the bourgeoisie—a fact which is noted by the revisionists themselves, when they say:

“Even many industrialists, manufacturers, businessmen and traders are hit by the policies of the present Government and by the operation of the foreign and Indian monopolists and big financiers. Allocation of raw materials, transport facilities, import-export and capital issue licences are made by the Government and bureaucrats in such a way that the cream of capitalist development falls to the share of Big Business”.

Having made this admission, however, the revisionists shrink from the conclusion which naturally follows—the conclusion that “the foreign and Indian monopolists and big financiers” have a far greater hold on the state in India than the rest of the bourgeoisie; in other words, the big bourgeoisie is the leader of the national bourgeoisie as a whole.

Hence the verbal gymnastics through which they manage to concede that “in the formation and exercise of governmental power, the big bourgeoisie wields considerable influence,” but argue that the Indian people can use the fundamental rights provided for in the Constitution as “the platform and instrument of their struggles for enlarging their interests”.

Distinctions are made as between “the state which is the class rule of the bourgeoisie” and “the Government in whose formation and functioning the bourgeoisie pursues the policy of compromise with the landlords, admits them in the ministries and governmental composition, especially at the state levels.”

Contrast this with our Programme according to which the Indian state is “the organ of the class rule of the bourgeoisie and the landlords, led by the big bourgeoisie, who are increasingly collaborating with foreign financial capital in pursuit of the capitalist path of development”. The strengthening of the monopolists at the expense of the rest of the bourgeoisie; the collaboration between the Indian and foreign monopolists; the emergence of a new class of reactionary rural rich formed out of the old feudal and semi-feudal exploiters as well as out of the rising capitalist elements in the rural areas—all these are inherent in the character of the new state which emerged on August 15, 1947, a state which reflects the compromises between the Indian ruling classes (pre-capitalist as well as capitalist) and foreign monopolies.

There are, no doubt, differences, conflicts and contradictions within the camp of bourgeoisie. The conflicts and contradictions between the narrow stratum of monopolists and the rest of the bourgeoisie are particularly significant. The working class and its allies can and should use these conflicts and contradictions in order to isolate the monopolists. That is why our Programme envisages the building of a People’s Democratic Front in which the non-monopoly bourgeoisie, “having no links altogether with foreign monopoly or having no durable links”, would find a place.

This, however, should not make us blind to the class character of the present Indian state which is the political expression of the alliance of the entire Indian bourgeoisie (including, and led by,

the big bourgeoisie) with feudals and semi-feudals and of collaboration with foreign monopolists. That is why our Programme says:

“For the complete and thorough-going fulfilment of the basic tasks of the Indian revolution in the present stage, it is absolutely essential to replace the present bourgeois-landlord state headed by the big bourgeoisie by a state of People’s Democracy headed by the working class.”

“Dislodging the present big bourgeois leadership which has allied with landlordism from the leading position of state power and in its place establishing the hegemony of the working class over the state”— such is the basic task of the Indian Revolution envisaged in our Programme.

This struggle for dislodging the present big bourgeois leadership from the state machinery and for establishing the hegemony of the working class is denied by the revisionists. In place of this struggle around a particular state, struggle to replace the power of a particular class alliance by the power of another class alliance, they envisage struggle for replacing a particular Government by another Government. Listen:

“The *present Government*, which represents the national bourgeoisie and is pursuing the path of building independent national economy along the path of capitalist development, *is incapable of implementing this (national democratic) programme.*”

“Therefore, as the National Democratic Front becomes ever more broadbased, militant and powerful in the course of the rising tempo of the mass movement, it defeats the forces of reaction inside and outside the ruling party and comes to the position of taking governmental power into its own hands.” (Emphasis added).

## VIII

### **Bourgeois Democracy and Revisionism**

Mercilessly exposing the revisionists of his day, Lenin had ridiculed their talk of “democracy as opposed to dictatorship”. He exposed the hollowness of the idle talk about democracy and

dictatorship *in general*, and raised the question: Democracy for whom? Whose dictatorship? Democracy for, and dictatorship of, which class or classes?

Making a concrete analysis of “the most democratic state in history”, the bourgeois parliamentary democratic state, he unmasked it as providing a democratic cover for the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. On the other hand, he explained how the dictatorship of the proletariat is the rule of the hitherto-exploited majority over the exploiting minority and is, therefore, more democratic than any previous state.

The revisionists of present-day India faithfully follow in the footsteps of their counterparts in other countries. Exactly like the Russian revisionists against whom Lenin concentrated his fire, our revisionists, too, talk in laudatory terms of the democratic character of the bourgeois state. They praise the system of parliamentary democracy based on adult franchise, praise the Fundamental Rights and Directive Principles enshrined in the Indian Constitution. The establishment of such a system is hailed as a “historical advance”. In making such an assessment of democracy in India, they follow the revisionists of other countries, refuse to pose and answer the question: democracy for, and dictatorship of, which class or classes?

Functioning as they are in a stage in the history of the international working class movement when the Leninist analysis of the bourgeois class character of the parliamentary democratic state is proving correct and unassailable, our revisionists cannot but pay lip-service to that Leninist axiom. Not only have they to note the “bourgeois class character” of the Indian state, but they have to observe that “although the Constitution provides for certain fundamental rights, the people can exercise them only to a limited extent”.

“Many of these rights”, they proceed, “are misinterpreted, distorted and even violated by the authorities of the state in favour of the exploiting classes. Freedom of assembly is denied to whole areas and regions embracing lakhs of people by putting them under Section 144, even for months and years, under the plea of preserving law and order, which means preventing workers and

peasants from assembling to defend their interests. The Preventive Detention Act and DIR are used against democratic forces. The violence of the state organs becomes particularly brutal against workers, peasants and other toiling and common people when they act in defence of their rights in resolute manner. These anti-democratic tendencies were further demonstrated when the elected Communist-led Ministry in Kerala was removed by using arbitrary dictatorial powers of the President”.

The superficial character of this criticism of the bourgeois state in India will be clear from the fact that the revisionists are not prepared to go even as far as such a bourgeois democratic jurist as M.C. Setalvad, the former Attorney-General to the Government of India, has done. This is how Setalvad characterised “the existence of Fundamental Rights in the Constitution” which, according to the revisionists, can be used as an “instrument of struggles of the people for enlarging democracy and defending their interests”.

“The proclamation of Emergency issued by the President under Article 352 of the Constitution on the 26th October 1962 after the Chinese aggression continues in force. The order of the President made under Article 359(1) of the Constitution soon after the aggression also continues to be operative. The combined effect of these two measures is, firstly, that the rights of the citizen throughout the country under Article 19(1) of the Constitution remain suspended; secondly, the citizen is debarred all over the country from moving any court in respect of infringement of his rights under Articles 14, 21 and 22 of the Constitution. He cannot, even though imprisoned, apply to any court for habeas corpus. The Defence of India Act and Rules made under it which are emergency measures also continue to be operative. Some provisions of the rules which contravene Articles 14, 21 and 22(4), (5) and (7) and which were considered to be invalid by the Attorney-General of India before the Supreme Court, are being used to imprison and detain hundreds of citizens”.

Setalvad’s conclusion is that “in substance, the Executive has taken advantage of the Chinese aggression to constitute itself into what may be called a constitutional dictatorship”.

Setalvad is not alone in this respect. Increasing numbers of jurists and other intellectuals are coming out with their own forthright criticisms of the way in which the much-vaunted "democracy, Fundamental Rights and Directive Principles" are being trampled underfoot. Most of them are persons who would not have raised any objection if the parliamentary democratic state had, in fact, operated as the dictatorship of the ruling classes as a whole over the common people. Their objection is that, even for the ruling classes, there is no democracy in the real sense of the term; only such sections of the landlord-bourgeois classes as are prepared to toe the line of the ruling party, are allowed to enjoy their democratic rights.

It is against the background of such criticisms by bourgeois democrats that our revisionists are indulging in high appreciation of the parliamentary democratic system in India. Their main argument in justification of this stand is that the parliamentary democratic institutions established in India "provide the forum for the people to intervene in the affairs of the state in a measure". This is as true as of parliamentary democratic system anywhere in the world. It was precisely for making such general statements that the European revisionists of his day were sharply criticised by Lenin. Here, for instance, is what Lenin said about Kautsky:

"Bourgeois democracy, although a great historical advance in comparison with mediaevalism, nevertheless remains and under capitalism cannot but remain restricted, truncated, false and hypocritical, a paradise for the rich and a snare and a deception for the exploited, for the poor. It is this simple truth, which forms an essential part of Marx's teachings, that Kautsky, the 'Marxist', has failed to understand. On this fundamental question Kautsky gives us what is agreeable to the bourgeoisie instead of a scientific criticism of those conditions which make all bourgeois democracy only a democracy for the rich".

This is precisely what our revisionists do in relation to Indian democracy. They talk of "a historic advance over the imperialist bureaucratic rule over our country" which bourgeois democracy constitutes in India, but conceal the reality that this is no

democracy for the mass of our people. They laud the "Fundamental Rights and Directive Principles" which can be made the "platform and instrument of struggles of the people", they go into ecstasies over the institutions of parliamentary democracy which "enable our people to intervene in the affairs of the state". They, however, refuse to take that very attitude to the fundamental rights and parliamentary institutions which, according to Lenin, divide the Marxists from the revisionists.

"There is not a single state", says Lenin, "however democratic, which does not contain loopholes or limiting clauses in its constitution guaranteeing the bourgeoisie the possibility of despatching troops against the workers, of proclaiming martial law and so forth, in case of a 'disturbance of the peace', i.e., in case the exploited class 'disturbs' its position of slavery and tries to behave in a non-slavish manner. Kautsky shamelessly embellishes bourgeois democracy and hushes up, for instance, what the most democratic and republican bourgeoisie of America and Switzerland do against workers on strike. Oh, the wise and learned Kautsky remains silent about these things! This pundit and statesman does not realise that to remain silent on this matter is despicable".

It is in this very "despicable" manner that our revisionists remain silent on how the "fundamental rights" and parliamentary institutions are being utilised by the Indian bourgeoisie. They assert that India's Parliament has "provided a forum for the people to intervene in the affairs of the state in a measure and to voice the cause of peace, national freedom and democracy, to counter imperialist conspiracies and demanding social transformation in favour of the people such as land reforms, working class rights, curbs on monopolies, etc.". They, however, remain completely silent on the result of our people's activities, their using of this "forum to intervene in the affairs of the state". Let us once again go back to Lenin who had the following to say on the bourgeois parliament and the revisionists' attitude to it.

"Can it be the learned Mr. Kautsky has never heard that the *more* highly democracy is developed, the *more* bourgeois parliaments fall under the control of the stock exchange and the

bankers? This of course does not mean that we must not use the bourgeois parliaments (the Bolsheviks have made better use of them than any other party in the world, for in 1912-14 we captured the entire workers' *curia* in the Fourth Duma). But it does mean that only a liberal can forget the *historical limitations and conventional character* of bourgeois parliamentarism as Kautsky does. Even in the most democratic bourgeois state the oppressed masses at every step encounter the growing contradiction between *formal* equality proclaimed by the democracy of the capitalists and the thousand and one *real* limitations and restrictions which make the proletarians *wageslaves*. It is precisely this contradiction that opens the eyes of the masses to the rottenness, mendacity and hypocrisy of capitalism. It is this contradiction which the agitators and propagandists of socialism are constantly showing up to the masses *in order to prepare them for the revolution*. And now that the era of revolution has begun, Kautsky turns his back upon it and begins to extol the charms of moribund bourgeois democracy''.

Our revisionists are sure to point their accusing fingers on these quotations from Lenin and say that, since we are taking these quotations here, we are dogmatists and sectarians, having no faith in the proletarian use of bourgeois parliamentary institutions, particularly in an epoch in which the possibility for peaceful transition has opened out. The best answer for this would be that we are the very people who have been and are still advocating such an electoral line as will inflict as big an electoral defeat on the Congress, and secure as substantial and electoral victory for the left opposition parties as possible. We have been and still are accused of "harbouring constitutional illusions", since we are advocating this line of united fronts and electoral adjustments.

There is thus no question of our taking a negative attitude to the struggle in the electoral and legislative fronts. We are all for making the maximum use of the opportunities provided by the parliamentary institutions, including the use of majorities in particular legislatures where these can be secured. The question

really is whether we are to use the electoral and legislative struggles in order to “open the eyes of masses to the rottenness, mendacity and hypocrisy of capitalism”, as Lenin called upon every revolutionary to do, or, whether we would use these parliamentary institutions as the instrument for bringing about revolutionary social transformation as our revisionists argue.

Let us, however, note that we need not go to Lenin for an understanding of the bourgeois parliamentary institutions in India. We have our experience of working this system for more than fifteen years. That experience shows that our bourgeois democratic Constitution is not just a cover for the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie over the working people as Marx, Engels and Lenin taught. It is more than that. This “democracy”, so much lauded and praised by the revisionists, denies real democratic rights even to the oppositional elements within the ruling classes. That is why innumerable bourgeois democrats are now taking of “one-party dictatorship exercised by the Congress”.

If the revisionists were serious students of the political system in the country, they would have made a concrete historical analysis of how the political system has functioned during the last fifteen years. If they had done this, they would not have made the tall claims for democracy which they are doing in relation to the bourgeois democratic state established in India. Let us, therefore, examine how this system did function since its establishment.

## IX

### **Real Face of Bourgeois Democracy in India**

Three times did the people of India go to the polls on a countrywide scale since the Constitution of India was adopted—in 1952, in 1957 and in 1962. They are, at the present moment, on the eve of another countrywide general election which is scheduled to be held in early 1967.

Between the first and fourth countrywide general elections, mid-term elections were held in some states—in the former state of PEPSU in 1953; in the former state of Travancore-Cochin in 1954; in the Andhra state in 1955; in Kerala in 1960; in Orissa in 1961; and in Kerala once again in 1965.

Everyone of these (general and mid-term) elections was utilised by the people as “a forum to intervene in the affairs of the state”, as the Programme of the revisionists characterises such occasions. The people gave their votes in such a way as to make it clear that they have no confidence in the ruling Congress Party and the Government headed by it”.

As early, as at the time of the first General Elections in 1951, the people of India showed that they had lost whatever confidence they once had in the Congress. As the Central Committee of the Communist Party noted immediately after that General Elections:

“The main issue that was posed before the people by every party, including the Congress party, was whether the Congress Government should continue to rule the country. On this straight and simple issue, the people of India have given their verdict against the Congress party. In spite of the tremendous resources it commanded, including the use of administrative machinery, in spite of the denial of even ordinary civil liberties to the Communist Party and other democratic opposition parties, the Congress party could secure only 44 per cent of the votes taking India as a whole. Except in the small states of Coorg, Saurashtra, Bhopal and Delhi, in no state could the Congress party secure a majority of votes polled, the actual proportion of its votes to the total varying between 30 per cent in Travancore-Cochin state and 49 per cent in U.P., the home province of Pandit Nehru.” (*Statement of the Central Committee* issued on March 29, 1952).

Further elaborating the point made in the statement, the Central Committee stated in a report that “a qualitatively new situation” has been created in Indian politics. The essence of this new situation is “a serious crisis for the ruling classes”; the fact that possibilities for the defeat of the Congress in several states have been created; “the myth of the invincibility of the Congress has been shattered”: the “monopoly position which the Congress enjoyed in the political life of the country has been destroyed”.

The significance of this new situation, the Central Committee went on, is the emergence of “*political instability* caused by changed correlation of class forces — the emergence of the Party

of the working class as a major force. It may mark the beginning of a political crisis for the ruling classes”.

Leaders of the ruling Congress party were behind none in recognising the significance of this “new situation in Indian politics”. They, therefore, made a two-pronged attack on the forces that were threatening the continued rule of their party.

On the one hand, *they used their control over the administrative machinery of the country* in order to prevent the emergence of non-Congress Governments in those states where the Congress was reduced to a minority in the legislature.

In two of these—Travancore-Cochin and Madras, they instructed the Raj Pramukh and the Governor respectively to allow Congress Ministries to be formed even though the Congress had no majority in the newly-elected state legislatures.

In the other state where the Congress had been reduced to a minority—in the state of PEPSU, they allowed the formation of a non-Congress Government led by the Akalis but including certain other forces. The Ministry, however, was dissolved by the President in a few months.

While taking these *administrative measures to tide over the immediate threat to Congress power*, the leaders of the ruling Congress party knew that they had to take *certain political measures of a more lasting value* if they had to retrieve the loss incurred by them between the attainment of independence and the First General Elections. They, therefore, reappraised their policy, made a show of radicalising both the internal as well as the external policies of the Government.

In the field of foreign relations, they took up a new anti-imperialist and pro-socialist posture. In the field of internal policy, too, they adopted radical slogans.

The obvious calculation was that such a reappraisal of policy would help them to “steal the thunder” out of the Communist, Socialist and other radical opposition parties which posed a real threat to their monopoly of power.

This, however, did not yield the results expected by the Congress leader. The Second General Elections held in 1957 showed that, far from arresting the process started at the time of

the First General Elections—the process of radicalisation of the people and the weakening of the position of the ruling party—the radical trend got further strengthened.

As the Communist Party noted in its review of the Second General Elections:

“The developments in Kerala where the democratic forces made a breach in the Congress monopoly of governmental power and established a Government led by the Communist Party have attracted worldwide attention and constituted the single biggest event in our national-political life. But Kerala was no isolated incident. It marked the highest level reached by the democratic movement in recent years, a movement which scored impressive successes in many parts of the country during this Second General Elections—as demonstrated in the victories of the Communist Party candidates from the major industrial areas, the serious weakening in the position of the Congress in a number of its former strongholds, such as U.P., Maharashtra and Gujarat, and the strengthening of the position of the Left in several state legislatures and in Parliament. The Communist Party with its twelve million votes has again emerged as the main opposition party in the country with added strength” (*Political Resolution of the Amritsar Party Congress, April 1958*).

While taking note of the fact that the Congress still “wielded very big influence in all states”, the Party, however, went on: “Its hold on the people is weakening, its mass base is shrinking. The revelations in the Mundhra enquiry, dealing a heavy blow to the prestige of the Government, have shaken the confidence of even many Congressmen in the professions of their leaders. Increasingly isolated from the advanced democratic masses, corroded from within by dissensions and factional squabbles, the Congress is in a state of political and moral decline, in a state of chronic crisis which has deepened after the general elections.”

The above assessments of the political situation in the country as it emerged after the 1952 and 1957 General Elections were made by the Communist Party which was then united. Now that unity is broken with two parties both of which claim to be the inheritors of the once-united party, the question naturally arises: which of the two parties accepts the validity of the above assessment?

Making particular reference to the revisionists, one would like to ask them whether they accept the assessment that the defeat inflicted on the ruling Congress party in 1952 was the beginning of a *serious political crisis* for the ruling classes. Do they agree that, despite the two-pronged attack launched by the ruling party between the First and the Second General Elections, the political crisis facing the ruling classes continues, rather than getting resolved? Or, do they believe with Congressmen that the crisis which broke out in 1952 was resolved by the new policies adopted by the Government in the post-1952 period?

So far as our Party is concerned, we have no doubt on this score. Summing up the impact of the policies and practices of the Government on the living conditions of the people, our Programme says:

“As a result of the anti-people policies pursued by the Government, the vast masses of the people are fleeced by soaring prices, rising taxation and reckless inflation. At one end while a microscopic few of the top exploiting classes and their hangers-on with their newly-earned riches are rolling in luxury, at the other end, millions are groaning under squalor and poverty. *The conflicts and contradictions between the people on the one hand and the bourgeois-landlord Government led by the big bourgeoisie on the other are steadily getting intensified.*” (Emphasis added.)

For the revisionists, however, the “conflicts and contradictions” are “not between the people and the bourgeois-landlord Government”, but “between the progressive and reactionary sections of the ruling classes”. This is writ large in every chapter of their Programme. To cap it all is the way in which their Programme misses the thoroughly anti-democratic character of the Central Government’s attitude to those states where the Congress was reduced to a minority and the opposition got the opportunity to form an alternate Government.

The revisionists have no doubt made reference to the use of “the arbitrary dictatorial powers of the President” in removing the elected Communist-led Ministry in Kerala. They, however, do not relate this to what the Central Government did in other states

under similar circumstances. If they had done this, they would have had to admit that the “democracy” of Congress-ruled India is transformed into its opposite if and when non-Congress parties are in a position to replace the Congress in the seat of governmental power.

We have already noted how in every one of the three states where the Congress was reduced to a minority in 1952, the Congress-led Central Government managed to bring the Congress back to power.

The same thing happened in Travancore-Cochin in 1954 where, as is well-known, the Congress was defeated in the election but managed to come to power again in a few months through a transitional PSP Ministry which was first installed and then overthrown by the Congress.

Again, in the post-Second General Elections period, the Congress managed in Orissa (where the Ganatantra Parishad threatened to replace the Congress), first to allow the Parishad to share power with the Congress and then to remove it from power.

The “use of the arbitrary dictatorial powers of the President in Kerala” was thus only a link in the chain of anti-democratic measures resorted to by the Congress party to maintain itself in power at any cost.

All these anti-democratic tendencies reached their high-watermark in Kerala in 1965 where the manoeuvres of the Congress had started even before the electorate was called upon to exercise their franchise. This election was organised under conditions as are unparalleled in the history of parliamentary democracy.

Almost the entire leadership of the biggest non-Congress party in the state was put behind the bars under the fascist-like provisions of the Defence of India Rules. When, despite the limitations imposed on them by this action of the Government, the voters expressed their confidence in that Party by returning it as the biggest single party in the legislature, the Government refused to accept the verdict of the people and continued to keep the leaders of this Party in jail.

Furthermore, even though every opposition party without exception expressed the confidence that a non-Congress Government can be formed if only the newly-elected legislature was allowed to meet, the ruling Congress Party acting through the Governor and the Central Government dissolved the legislature without even convening it for a day.

The conclusion is thus inescapable that the ruling Congress party is determined to use everything that is in its power—its vast financial resources; the enormous machinery of propaganda which is at its disposal; the pressures that can be put on the backward sections of the people through various dubious methods; and above all, the administrative machinery at the disposal of the Congress ministers at the Centre—to prevent the replacement of the Congress Government by an alternate Government.

The revisionists, however, appear to be supremely unaware of, or unwilling to, admit this anti-democratic character of India's "democratic parliamentary" system as it functioned in actual practice.

It may be noted in this connection that the first draft of their Programme, published in 1964, had no reference at all to what happened in Kerala in 1959. The critique of the class character of the state contained in the chapter on "Bourgeoisie and the State" mentioned the use of various restrictive provisions of the law, but did not take note of the use of "the arbitrary dictatorial powers of the President in Kerala" even in passing.

This omission, of course, was removed in the final version of the revisionist Programme, where, as has been noted above, the Kerala experience has been barely noted. Even this, however, does not draw the logical conclusion that the much talked of "democracy" of the Indian bourgeoisie is a cover for the one party rule of the Congress.

As opposed to this is the clear and forthright criticism made in our Programme: "When the people begin to use parliamentary institutions for advancing their cause and fall away from the influence of the reactionary bourgeoisie and landlords, these classes do not hesitate to trample underfoot parliamentary

democracy as was done in Kerala in 1959. When their interest demands, they do not hesitate to replace parliamentary democracy by military dictatorship. It will be a serious error and dangerous illusion to imagine that our country is free from all such threats. It is of the utmost importance that parliamentary and democratic institutions are defended in the interest of the people against such threats, and that such institutions are successfully utilised in combination with extra-parliamentary activities.”

## X

### **Peaceful Path: Possibilities and Limitations**

The foregoing discussion on the nature of parliamentary democracy as it is functioning in India would lead us to the conclusion that the Marxist-Leninist theory concerning the character of the bourgeois state and the need for its revolutionary replacement by the state of the proletariat is fully applicable to the specific conditions of India. It is a deception of the people to say that, our state, being “democratic” in character, can be transformed from a bourgeois state to a socialist one.

It is, however, necessary at this stage to address ourselves to a very important theoretical question which has of late come to the forefront—the question of “diverse forms of transition to socialism”. The question in its essence is: is it inevitable that the social transformation for which present-day revolutionaries are fighting—the transformation of the class state of the landlords and the bourgeoisie into the proletarian state which brings the socialist society into existence—will be brought about only through the armed struggle of the working class and its allies on the one hand and the class state of the landlords and the bourgeoisie on the other!

A good deal of uninformed talk is going on to the effect that, while the Marxist-Leninists had up till now considered armed struggle to be unavoidable, they no longer do so. The international Communist movement is supposed to have brought about a complete reorientation in its outlook which in effect means the renunciation of the Leninist critique of the bourgeois-democratic parliamentary republic.

But a study of the documents will show that the international Communist movement does not consider it possible to use the parliamentary form for revolutionary transformations except in some countries, and that too under very serious limitations.

The question, therefore, arises: in which category does our country come? Is it one of those where “capitalism is still strong and commands a huge military and police apparatus” and where, therefore, “the transition will be inevitably attended by a sharp class struggle”; or is capitalism so weak and the military-bureaucratic machine so undeveloped that the class struggle is less acute?

To pose this question is to answer it. Even the blind can see that ours is the *most developed capitalist country among the undeveloped countries*. As for the military-bureaucratic machine, our bourgeoisie is perfecting the well-organised and powerful “steel frame” which it inherited from the British rulers. It is obvious that the struggle to be waged by the working class and its allies *will be fierce; the enemy will use all means available to it*.

There is, therefore, no question of our being able to develop the parliamentary struggles in such a way that the bourgeois parliament can be smoothly transformed into the organ of the working class and its allies. This is the clear and unmistakable lesson that has to be learnt from the history of our republican Constitution as it works.

Does this mean that the parliamentary form of struggle has no role to play, that it will not be possible at all to win stable majorities in the legislative institutions and use them, in combination with revolutionary mass struggles, in order to smash the military-bureaucratic machine? *The answer to this lies in the extent to which the working class is able to play its leading role in uniting all the anti-imperialist, anti-feudal and democratic classes and elements with the worker-peasant alliance as its core. The broad lines along which the working class has to play its role and discharge its duty have been outlined as follows by our Party in its Programme:*

“The working class and the Communist Party, while not for a moment losing sight of its basic aim of building the People’s Democratic Front to achieve the People’s Democratic Revolution and the fact that this has to inevitably come into clash with the present Indian state led by the big bourgeoisie, does take cognizance of the contradictions and conflicts that do exist between the Indian bourgeoisie, including the big bourgeoisie, and foreign imperialists. They express themselves on the issues of war and peace, on the economic and political relations with socialist countries, on the terms of aid from foreign monopolists, on the question of finding adequate markets for our exports and on the questions of foreign policy and defence of our national independence. In the background of the daily-intensifying general crisis of world capitalism, the different contradictions obtaining in the national and international spheres are bound to get intensified. The Communist Party while carefully studying this phenomenon, shall strive to utilise every such difference, fissure, conflict and contradiction with the foreign imperialists to isolate the imperialists and strengthen the people’s struggles for democratic advance. Entertaining no illusions of any strategic unity or united front with the ruling Congress Party, the working class will not hesitate to lend its unstinted support to the Government on all issues of world peace and anti-colonialism which are in the genuine interests of the nation, on all economic and political issues of conflict with imperialism, and on all issues which involve questions of strengthening our sovereignty and independent foreign policy”.

Such an approach to the conflicts and contradictions within the enemy camp in order to strengthen the anti-imperialist, anti-feudal and democratic revolution makes it necessary for the working class and its Party to have that flexibility combined with adherence to principle, ability to use all forms of struggle without losing sight of the aims and objectives of the struggle, of Marxist-Leninists.

“The struggle to realise the aims of the People’s Democratic Revolution through the revolutionary unity of all patriotic and democratic forces with the worker-peasant alliance as its core,”

says our Programme, "is a complicated and protracted one. It is to be waged in varying conditions in varying phases. Different classes, different strata within the same class, are bound to take different positions in these distinct phases of the development of the revolutionary movement. The complexities arising out of these shifts in the positions taken by different classes, and strata in the same class, underline the need and importance of developing the Communist Party functioning as the vanguard of the revolutionary working class and bringing into its fold the most sincere and self-sacrificing revolutionaries. Only such a Party which constantly educates and re-educates its ranks in the spirit of Marxism-Leninism will be able to master all forms of action appropriate to the moment in accordance with changing correlations of class forces. Such a Party alone would be able to lead the mass of the people through the various twists and turns that are bound to take place in the course of the revolutionary movement."

Such a Party can take full advantage of the favourable changes taking place within the country as well as abroad. It will be able to unite the broad mass of the anti-imperialist and anti-feudal people around a programme of militant mass struggles combined with the struggles on the parliamentary front—a programme which will isolate and weaken the big landlords and monopolists, strengthen the democratic people. That is why our Programme pledges the Party to "utilise all the opportunities that present themselves of bringing into existence Governments pledged to carry out a modest programme of giving immediate relief to the people".

The role which the formation of such Governments can play in the development of the revolutionary movement is explained in a two-fold way: it will (a) "give great fillip to the revolutionary movement of the working people and thus help the process of building the democratic front", (b) it, however, would not solve the economic and political problems of the nation in any fundamental manner".

Taking these two implications of the formation of such Governments into consideration, the Programme calls upon the

Party to “continue to educate the mass of the people on the need for replacing the present bourgeois-landlord state and Government headed by the big bourgeoisie even while utilising all opportunities for forming such Governments of a transitional character which give immediate relief to the people and thus strengthen the mass movement.”

It is with this understanding of never-ending conflicts between two combinations of the class forces aligned against each other—the ruling classes headed by the big bourgeoisie on the one hand and the democratic masses headed by the working class on the other—that our Party looks upon the problem of peaceful transition. It declares:

“The Communist Party of India strives to achieve the establishment of People’s Democracy and socialist transformation through peaceful means. By developing a powerful mass revolutionary movement, by combining parliamentary and extra-parliamentary forms of struggle, the working class and its allies will try their utmost to overcome the resistance of the forces of reaction and bring about these transformations through peaceful means.”

Having thus taken note of the possibilities of peaceful transition, the Programme, however, adds: “It needs always to be borne in mind that the ruling classes will never relinquish their power voluntarily. They seek to defy the will of the people and seek to reverse it by lawlessness and violence. It is, therefore, necessary for the revolutionary forces to be vigilant and so orientate their work that they can face up to all contingencies, to any twists and turns in the political life of the country.”

It will be interesting in this connection to note that the relevant passages regarding the possibilities for, and the limitations of, the peaceful path are almost similar in our Programme and the Programme of the revisionists. This is the most telling refutation of the canard by the Congress rulers (which is very often echoed by the revisionists as well), that our Party stands for the insurrectionary method while the revisionists are the champions of the peaceful parliamentary path.

The revisionists themselves have to pay verbal tribute to the

absurdity of the idea of voluntary relinquishment of power by the ruling classes to the revolutionary forces, to be prepared to face up to all contingencies and so on; while our Programme makes a serious estimation of the possibilities of using the parliamentary institutions to bring Governments of a transitional character into existence.

The fact, however, remains that the processes of struggle envisaged in the two Programmes are different from and opposed to each other. It is in relation to this task of the revolutionary struggle—the task of combining the parliamentary and extra-parliamentary struggles to broaden and strengthen the unity of the revolutionary forces—that the National Democratic Front envisaged by the revisionists and the People's Democratic Front outlined in our Programme differ from each other.

## XI

### Leadership In The Democratic Front

What is the crucial difference between the “correct revolutionary slogan” of National Democracy (as conceived by the revisionists) and the “dogmatic-sectarian slogan” of People's Democracy? The question was answered in the clearest possible words by the revisionists when they formulated their draft Programme.

“National Democracy”, they explained, “differs from the State of People's Democracy, which we had put forward as our central slogan in our Programme of 1951. The class composition, as well as the programme, which were put forward for People's Democracy in our 1951 document are about the same as put forward for National Democracy here. The difference consists in this that, *in a People's Democracy the alliance of the patriotic classes is under the exclusive leadership of the working class. In the case of National Democracy, the leadership of the alliance of the patriotic classes is shared between the national bourgeoisie and the working class.*” (Emphasis added.)

Please note that what is shared under this concept between the bourgeoisie and the working class is not only the state power,

established in the course of the joint struggle of all the patriotic classes. Such a *sharing of power* by all those who jointly fight and defeat imperialism, feudalism and monopoly capitalism is inherent in the concept of the anti-imperialist, anti-feudal and anti-monopoly democratic front establishing itself as a state to the patriotic classes. *What is envisaged here is that, within the alliance of patriotic classes, leadership will be jointly exercised by the working class and the bourgeoisie.*

This is a shameless repudiation of all that Marx, Engels and Lenin have spoken and written about the leading role which the working class has to play in the democratic revolution. It is a repudiation also of the very concept of National Democracy as envisaged in the 1960 Statement of the 81 Communist and Workers' Parties—a statement on which the revisionists claim to base themselves in their talk of National Democracy.

That statement says:

*“After winning political independence the peoples seek solutions to the social problems raised by life and to the problems of reinforcing national independence. Different classes and parties offer different solutions. Which course of development to choose is the internal affair of the peoples themselves. As social contradictions grow the national bourgeoisie inclines more and more to compromising with domestic reaction and imperialism. The people, however, begin to see that the best way to abolish age-long backwardness and improve their living standard is that of non-capitalist development. Only thus can the people free themselves from exploitation, poverty and hunger.’ The working class and the broad peasant masses are to play the leading part in solving this basic problem.”* (Emphasis added.)

Classes and conflicts between various classes and strata, particularly between the bourgeoisie and the working people, reflect themselves in their respective concepts of the type of new society to be built after the attainment of independence. “The working class and the broad peasant masses” should, therefore, play the leading part in resolving this basic contradiction between the bourgeois and popular concepts of national development

—such, in short, are the leading ideas given expression to the 81 Communist and Workers' Parties who raised the new slogan of National Democracy.

This, it can be seen, has nothing to do with the joint leadership of the working class and the bourgeoisie over the other patriotic classes. On the other hand, it calls for a determined and systematic struggle between the two concepts regarding the further development of the revolution, struggle between two sets of policies, through which alone will the task of national regeneration and national development be accomplished —the concept and policies of the working class on the one hand and those of the bourgeoisie on the other. Only to the extent to which the concept and policies of the bourgeoisie are defeated and those of the working class are established as the concept and policies of the overwhelming majority of the people will the democratic tasks of the revolution be completed and the process of the revolution growing into the socialist stage begun.

Here, however, is a group of self-styled Marxist-Leninists who are dreaming of "establishing the joint leadership of the working class and the bourgeoisie over the rest of the people" and gives it the name of National Democracy. Does anybody require further proof for the proposition that those who formulated this programme are out-and-out revisionists?

It may be argued that the above formulation is a part of their Programme in its draft form and that it does not find a place in the final version of the Programme adopted by the revisionists at their Bombay Congress.

One may concede that they had to make some changes in formulations. The changes, however, have not made the slightest change in the understanding of role of classes in the patriotic alliance.

Here, for instance, is how the final version of their Programme explains the question of the leadership within the alliance:

"In this class alliance, the exclusive leadership of the working class is not yet established, though the exclusive leadership of the bourgeoisie no longer exists." Does this not mean another way of putting the idea of joint leadership?

Lest we should be accused of being one-sided and prejudiced against the revisionists, let us point out that the above formulation is followed by another which is:

“As the Government of the National Democratic Front, and the class alliance it represents, will be based on the worker-peasant alliance as its pivot, the working class will increasingly come to occupy the leading position in the alliance, as it is this class alliance which is the conscious initiator and builder of the National Democratic Front.”

This has the appearance of placing before the people the perspective of a constant growth in the political influence and leadership of the working class in the class alliance, with a corresponding decrease in the political influence and leadership of the bourgeoisie. We, for our party, would have no quarrel with such an idea if it were seriously meant.

Any intelligent person can see that the establishment of the leadership of the working class in the alliance of different classes including the bourgeoisie is a protracted and painful process. It is obvious that the bourgeoisie will continue to exercise its leadership over sections of the working people not only in the beginning but for some time to come, i.e. till the conscious ideological-practical activity of the working class itself, combined with the actual experience of the peasant and other masses, liquidates the last vestiges of bourgeois influence over the rest of the people.

The question, however, is whether the idea of a furious struggle, between the two contending classes—the working class and the bourgeoisie—within the class alliance is a part of the process of building the National Democratic Front. The answer can be found in the way in which the revisionists envisage the process of development through which the Front is born and grows.

They formulate the process as follows:

“Such a (National Democratic) Front is not in existence today because a section of the democratic masses still support the ruling Congress Party, while another section of these very democratic masses is fighting the anti-people policies of the ruling party. The

National Democratic Front will arise and take shape in overcoming the main rift among the democratic masses and uniting them. It will be forged in the course of countrywide national mass movements, parliamentary and extra-parliamentary struggles, which are aimed at isolating and defeating the forces of right reaction, and strive to bring about radical changes in the policies and the set-up of the Government, necessary for the implementation of the above programme”.

The target of attack in all the struggles through which the formation of the democratic front is envisaged, it can be seen, is not the landlord-bourgeois class state nor the ruling party which represents the alliance of the ruling classes. The targets are the so-called “forces of right reaction”. The objective of the struggle, too, is not to defeat the class policies pursued by the national bourgeoisie but “bringing about radical changes in the policy and the set-up of the Government”.

The idea is clear: there is nothing wrong with the Government and the ruling party. Left to themselves, they would pursue policies which, though not radical enough, are national and democratic. The trouble is that the “forces of right reaction” are putting pressure on the ruling party. Hence, “isolate and defeat” these forces.

Let us put the question straight: against whom are the democratic masses to fight—is it only against the “forces of right reaction” (inside and outside the ruling party), or is it against the ruling party itself? Whose policies are bringing the country to disaster—is it of the Government and the ruling party, or those of the Swatantra, Jan Sangh, etc., outside and the Morarjis and Patils inside the ruling party? This is the crucial question discreetly avoided by the revisionists when they use such nebulous expressions as “defeating the forces of right reaction”, “striving to bring about radical changes in the policies and the set-up of the Government” and so on.

Anybody with the minimum amount of commonsense can see that it is not the *policies proposed by the Swatantra, Jan Sangh, etc.*, on the one hand that have led to disastrous consequence: for

the country's economic and political life. It is, on the other hand, the *policies adopted and implemented by the ruling party and Government*, headed by no less a person than the late Pandit Nehru. It was this Government, and its leader Pandit Nehru, who adopted the capitalist path of development giving it the name "socialist pattern".

This path deliberately adopted by Nehru and his party is, according to the revisionists themselves, generating such acute conflicts and contradictions as have "condemned our country to a low rate of economic growth, stagnating agriculture, growing inequalities of income, continuing low standards of living of the broad masses". It is again this very path of capitalist development, adopted under Nehru's own leadership that has led to "the growing power of monopoly groups which, in alliance with feudal elements and in collaboration with foreign monopoly capital, are presenting an increasing threat to India's economic development itself".

And yet our revisionists would have us fight not the ruling party which pursues this path, but the so-called "forces of right reaction".

We have no quarrel with the idea of concentrating the main fire against the most reactionary sections of the ruling classes. Isolating and defeating these sections is, of course, quite in conformity with the strategy and tactics of the revolution advocated by Marx, Engels and Lenin. It is, therefore, quite understandable that such shameless champions of reactionary classes as the Swatantra and Jan Sangh outside, and the Morarjis and Patils inside, the ruling party sought to be isolated and defeated.

Our quarrel is with the way in which the revisionists are using the idea of isolating and defeating the forces of right reaction in order to embellish the ruling party, its perspective of national development the so-called "progressive and national" policies pursued by its leaders and so on.

We would like to put a few straight questions to our revisionists:

Do they, or do they not, consider it to be the main ideological-political task of the vanguard of the working class to systematically and mercilessly expose before the people, and

organise them in militant struggles against the capitalist path adopted by the ruling party as a whole (including its most progressive section)?

Do they, or do they not, agree that this path of capitalist development is in fundamental contradiction to the path of development which the overwhelming majority of our people should take if they are to be in a position to solve their problems?

Do they, or do they not, take upon themselves the task of explaining to the people that the nakedly and crudely reactionary policies advocated by the Jan Sangh and so on outside, and the Morarjis and Patils inside, the ruling party are the logical development of the capitalist path adopted by the ruling party as a whole?

Do they, or do they not, consider it necessary to call upon the people to reject this path of capitalist development, since that path is leading, and will continue to lead, the country to ruin and disaster?

The constant and bitter struggle between the bourgeoisie and the working class on the question of the path to be followed by the nation, as we saw in the beginning of this article, is inherent in the concept of National Democracy as envisaged by the 81 Communist and Workers' Parties in their Moscow Statement of 1960. If the revisionists are loyal to the idea (as they claim to be), they would agree that isolating and defeating the forces of right reaction is inseparable from exposing, fighting and defeating the path of capitalist development adopted by the national bourgeoisie and the ruling party as a whole.

It is to cover up their refusal to do this that they talk of National Democracy which is "neither under the exclusive leadership of the working class nor under the exclusive leadership of the bourgeoisie". This enables them to give a "respectable" cover for their essentially class-collaborationist idea of National Democracy.

The revisionists do, no doubt, talk about the disastrous consequences of the capitalist path of development adopted by the bourgeoisie, about the need for taking the non-capitalist path in its place. But, as we shall see, their understanding of the non-

capitalist path of development is as class-collaborationist as their idea of National Democracy.

## XII

### **Non-Capitalist Path and the Revisionists**

Lenin began his classical work, *The State and Revolution*, by expressing his holy indignation against the revisionists of the Second International who were distorting and vulgarising the doctrines of Marxism.

“They omit, obliterate and distort the revolutionary side of its doctrine, its revolutionary soul. They push to the foreground and extol what is or seems acceptable to the bourgeoisie. All the social chauvinists are now ‘Marxists’ (don’t laugh!). And more and more frequently, German bourgeois professors, erstwhile specialists in the extermination of Marxism, are speaking of the ‘national-German’ Marx, who, they aver, trained the labour unions which are so splendidly organised for the purpose of conducting a predatory war!”

Unfortunately for us, Lenin’s own contribution to the further development of Marxism has had to share the same fate which, according to Lenin, Marx’s doctrines had. Nor is this surprising; Lenin himself wrote that what was then happening to Marxism “had, in the course of history, often happened to the doctrines of other revolutionary thinkers and leaders of oppressed classes struggling for emancipation.”

We have been forced to make the above remark because of the way in which our own revisionists are today “omitting, obliterating and distorting the revolutionary side” of a very important contribution made by Lenin to the further development of Marxism—his idea that it is possible for certain countries, under certain conditions, to skip the stage of capitalist development, to pass from the stage of pre-capitalism to socialism and communism.

The possibility of such a transition from pre-capitalist to socialist society, visualized by Lenin, it is known, was the basis of what has now come to be known as the non-capitalist path of development. This concept, however, has been so distorted and

vulgarised by our revisionists that, if one may adopt the phraseology used by Lenin in relation to Kautsky, one may say that our revisionists have transformed Lenin into a "common or garden liberal."

Let us quote in full the passage in Lenin's "Report on the National-Colonial Question" presented to the Second Congress of the Communist International where this idea was fully and systematically formulated:

"The question was presented in the following way: can we recognise as correct the assertion that the capitalist stage of development of national economy is inevitable for those backward nations which are now liberating themselves and among which a movement along the road of progress is now, after the war, observed? We reply to this question in the negative. If the revolutionary, victorious proletariat carries on systematic propaganda among them, and if the Soviet Governments render them all the assistance they possibly can, it will be wrong to assume that the capitalist stage of development is inevitable for the backward nationalities. We must not only form independent cadres of fighters, of party organisations, in all colonies and backward countries, we must not only carry on propaganda in favour of organising peasants' Soviets and strive to adapt them to pre-capitalist conditions; the Communist International must lay down, and give the theoretical grounds for the proposition that, with the aid of the proletariat of the most advanced countries, the backward countries may pass to the Soviet system and, after passing through a definite stage of development, to communism, without passing through the capitalist stage of development.

"It is impossible to say beforehand by what means this can be done. Practical experience will suggest this to us. But it is definitely established that all the toiling masses of the most remotest nations appreciate the ideas of Soviets, that these organisations, the Soviets, must be adapted to the conditions of the pre-capitalist social system, and that the Communist Parties must immediately start work in this direction all over the world." (Emphasis added)

The above passage, particularly those parts of it which have been emphasised, would make it crystal clear that Lenin was thinking of a particular path of transition to socialism in such countries as have had no development of capitalism and, therefore, have not thrown up their own bourgeoisie or the proletariat. This, as a matter of fact, was explicitly stated by Lenin in the preceding paragraph where he stated:

“The practical work carried on by the Russian Communists in the colonies which formerly belonged to tsarism, in backward countries like Turkestan and others, confronted us with the question of how to apply communist tactics and policy amidst pre-capitalist conditions; for the most important characteristic feature of these countries is that pre-capitalist relations still predominate in them and, therefore, a purely proletarian movement is out of the question in them. In those countries there is almost no industrial proletariat. Nevertheless, even there we have undertaken and have to undertake the role of leader..... Our experience in this sphere is not yet very considerable; but the debates which took place in the commission in which several representatives of colonial countries participated, proved irrefutably that it is necessary to indicate in the thesis of the Communist International that peasants’ Soviets, Soviets of the exploited, are a useful weapon not only for capitalist countries but also for countries in which pre-capitalist relations exist; and we must say that it is the bounden duty of the Communist Parties, and of those elements which are associated with them, to carry on propaganda in favour of the idea of peasant’s Soviets, of toilers’ Soviets everywhere, in backward countries and in colonies; in those countries also they must strive to create Soviets of the toiling people as far as conditions will allow.”(Emphasis added)

Please note that the weapon with which Lenin says that pre-capitalist society in such countries can be transformed into socialist society is the development of the class struggle of the peasants and other toilers. This, it can be seen, is the practical application of the theory of class struggle to the concrete conditions of countries with predominantly pre-capitalist societies

but surrounded by countries in which capitalism is either predominant, or has been replaced by socialism. The main motive force of what is now called the non-capitalist path was thus the organised and militant struggle of the overwhelming majority of the toilers (headed by their revolutionary vanguard) against the exploiting minority of the predominantly pre-capitalist society. That is why Lenin insisted on the formation of peasants' or toilers' Soviets.

It was this revolutionary concept of transition from pre-capitalist to socialist society that formed the basis of the non-capitalist path envisaged in the 1960 Statement of 81 Communist and Workers' Parties. For, that Statement based itself on the reality that, after winning political independence, different classes and parties offer different solutions to the problems of post-independence development. The social contradictions, which had to a very large extent been subordinated to the national contradiction (imperialism vs the people) in the pre-independence years, now come to the forefront; the national, i.e., anti-imperialist, bourgeoisie strives to take the country along the capitalist path, while the people see in the non-capitalist path the only way of taking the country forward.

This contradiction between the bourgeoisie and the people regarding the path to be chosen is the major element which is "omitted, obliterated and distorted" by our revisionists. The authors of the revisionist Programme pose the question of path as one of "which path should India take in order to complete the national democratic revolution.....?" and answer it as follows:

"Life itself teaches our people that they cannot free themselves from exploitation, poverty and hunger along the path of capitalist development which India is following at present."

Any objective and truthful student of affairs, however, would see that the above poser is a wrong poser. For, no amount of argumentation can, in this seventh decade of the twentieth century, lead any sensible person to the conclusion that the capitalist path will lead the country to prosperity and progress. The real questions are:

*First*, can we skip the stage of capitalist development in the

way in which Lenin had visualized it when he talked of passing straight from pre-capitalist to socialist society?

*Second*, if we cannot, can we shorten the duration of the stage of capitalist development and reduce the people's sufferings which are inevitable for a country of developing capitalism?

*Third*, in either case, what are the political and organisational pre-requisites for realising what is desirable as well as practicable?

The answer to the first question is obviously in the negative. Ours is a country which has already entered the stage of capitalist development, which has gone far in the direction of capitalist development. India is admittedly the most developed capitalist country among those who threw off the colonial yoke in the post-Second World War period; not only is this capitalist development continuing after the attainment of independence, it is leading to a very rapid growth of what may be called emerging monopoly capitalism.

This is a reality which cannot be denied by the revisionists themselves. They have to admit that "despite the loud talk of socialism, what is developing under the leadership of the Congress and the Government is capitalism—private capitalism in the private sector and state capitalism in the State sector".

To which they add: "One of the most striking results of this path of capitalist development is the concentration of capital and economic power in the hands of a few big monopolists who seek to enrich themselves at the expense of the people and the broader sections of the national bourgeoisie to the detriment of the country's national independence".

Coming to the way in which the state machinery operates, the revisionists conclude that "even many industrialists, manufacturers, businessmen and traders are hit by the policies of the present Government and by the operation of the foreign and Indian monopolies and big financiers".

It is ridiculous under these circumstances to talk of our country skipping the stage of capitalist development. That is why we in our Programme state that "to talk of a non-capitalist path

of development and the establishment of a national democratic state to achieve this aim in India is unreal”.

Does this mean that, since our country has already embarked on the path of capitalist development, it has no other alternative than that of the emerging monopoly capitalism evolving itself into the classical state monopoly capitalism? Does it follow that the working class in this country has to organise itself and the rest of the people in the same way in which the anti-monopoly struggle is carried on in the imperialist countries?

The answer is, ‘No’. The path of development along which the country is now moving—the capitalist path leading to the concentration of economic and political power in the hands of a narrow circle of monopoly capitalists—can be altered: the grip which the big landlords and monopoly capitalists have on the country’s economy and politics can be broken; these reactionary classes can be dislodged from economic and political power; guarantees can be created that new exploiting classes do not grow within the newly-developing socio-economic system.

There is, however one essential pre-requisite for the attainment of these desirable objectives—the bourgeois-landlord Government headed by the big bourgeoisie (through whom the exploiting classes exercise their grip on the economy and politics of the country) should be dislodged from power.

As our Programme says:

“The Communist Party of India, taking into consideration the degree of economic development, the degree of political-ideological maturity of the working class and its organisation, places before the people as the immediate objective the establishment of People’s Democracy based on the coalition of all genuine anti-feudal and anti-imperialist forces headed by the working class. This demands first and foremost the replacement of the present bourgeois-landlord state and Government by a state of People’s Democracy and a Government led by the working class on the basis of firm worker-peasant alliance. This alliance alone can quickly and thoroughly complete the unfinished basic democratic tasks of the Indian revolution and pave the way to putting the country on the road of socialism.”

The task according to our Programme is thus not of fighting for the transformation of an essentially pre-capitalist society into a modern socialist society. The task, on the other hand, is the consolidation of all the anti-monopoly, democratic forces into a single front, a front which, in the course of its struggles against the bourgeois-landlord state and Government, will acquire sufficient strength to replace this state and Government by a new state and Government of People's Democracy. Without discharging this political task of successful struggle against, and replacement of, the bourgeois-landlord state and Government, it is idle to think of either completing the democratic revolution (elimination of all forms of pre-capitalist society), or of preventing the growth of monopoly capitalism, or of paving the way for the establishment of socialist society.

The authors of the revisionist Programme, however, look at it in a completely different way. The process of their thinking on the question is as follows:

- (a) There are two paths—the capitalist path taken by the present Government and the alternative path laid down in their Programme. “The Programme we have put forward is such an alternative path of development...This will open up for our people a path of development which, through far-reaching reforms, unshackles the productive forces in industry and agriculture, ensures rapid economic growth, rising living standards of the masses and their active participation in production. The intervening stage can be described as the stage of non-capitalist path of development. In this stage the main direction of the economy will be on such lines and the growth of capitalism will be progressively restricted and the pre-requisites created for putting our country on the road of socialism.”
- (b) Among *the classes which are interested in carrying through this programme of non-capitalist development* are “first and foremost, the working class.....second, the broad masses of cultivating peasants, including the rich peasants and the agricultural labourers....Third, the rising class of urban and rural intelligentsia....Finally, *the national bourgeoisie* (please note!) excluding its monopoly

section, which is objectively interested in the accomplishment of the principal tasks of the anti-imperialist, anti-feudal revolution, without which it knows truly independent national economy cannot be built, nor backwardness and impoverishment eradicated.”

- (c) The authors do, of course, pay verbal tribute to the concept of the bourgeoisie being inclined to compromising with internal and foreign reaction. But they add, “it is important to note that capitalist development has resulted in a certain differentiation in the national bourgeoisie; powerful monopolist groups have arisen, which, in alliance with reactionary parties outside the ruling Congress, as well as with Right-wing elements within it, are seeking to subvert national policies and bring about changes which will harm the interests of the bulk of the national bourgeoisie. Thus, in order to create the instrument for implementing the programme we will have to build a National Democratic Front, bringing together all the patriotic forces of the country, i.e., the working class, the entire peasantry, including the rich peasants and agricultural labourers, the intelligentsia and the non-monopolist bourgeoisie.”
- (d) They pay similar verbal tribute also to the worker-peasant alliance which, it is stated, “will be the basis and pivot of the front”. But the character of the front itself, and of the worker-peasant alliance which is its “basis and pivot”, can be seen from two conditions which follow:
  - (i) The key condition for bringing the National Democratic Front into existence is the overcoming of the division between the masses rallied behind the Congress and those who are loyal to the democratic opposition.
  - (ii) The aim and objective with which the National Democratic Front is to be brought into existence are “to bring about radical changes in the policies and set-up of the Government necessary for the implementation of the above programme”.

The above outline of the revisionist idea of non-capitalist path is revealing

*First*, it does not look upon the struggle around the question of path (capitalist vs non-capitalist) as a struggle between two *classes* which, though allies in the anti-imperialist, anti-feudal and anti-monopoly struggle, are opposed to each other on the question of socio-economic transformations. Everybody from the working class to the non-monopoly bourgeoisie is supposed to be interested in the rejection of the capitalist, and the adoption of the non-capitalist, path. This is obviously in contradiction to the Moscow Statement of the 81 Communist and Workers' Parties concerning the emergence and accentuation of class struggle within the alliance after the attainment of political independence.

*Secondly*, it characterizes as "national policies" the policies of the ruling classes as represented by the Government as a whole. The struggle for defeating this attempt at the subversion of "national", i.e., Congress policies is, in short, the essence of the struggle for building the National Democratic Front.

*Thirdly*, it places before the people the practical aim of "bringing about radical changes in the policies and the set-up of the government", rather than that of replacing the landlord-bourgeois Government by a Government of the anti-imperialist, anti-feudal, anti-monopoly democratic front. This too, let it be noted, has to be realised through the unity of the masses loyal to the Congress and those who are rallied behind the parties of the democratic opposition.

In short, the struggle between the bourgeoisie and the working people around the question of the path are shown as a struggle in defence of the present policies of the ruling Congress party (since they are "national policies"! ). To such an extent have they dragged Lenin's idea that peasants' and toilers' Soviets in countries with predominantly pre-capitalist conditions can become the major weapon for skipping the stage of capitalist development.

### XIII

#### Attitude to Congress and Other Right Parties

Having seen the *class content* of National Democracy and non-capitalist path, as understood and interpreted by the revisionist, it remains for us now to examine *the role which the various political parties in the country will, according to the revisionists, play in the National Democratic Front.*

It is admitted by them that the Indian National Congress is “the party of the Indian bourgeoisie” and, furthermore, “the ruling party”. One would, therefore, have expected them to define the relation of the party of the Indian working class to this bourgeois party, which wields state power, as one of basic opposition. All the more so since the revisionist programme itself at one place points out that “the working class, the peasantry, the middle classes and even the small and medium entrepreneurs and businessmen are hit by the policies of the Government and the growing domination of the monopolies. The discontent of the toiling people finds expression in various forms of struggle.”

The revisionist Programme, however, makes it clear that the authors are more concerned with embellishing this party and its policies, rather than laying down a programme of action through which “the discontent of the toiling people which finds expression in various forms of struggle” can be developed into a determined assault on the bourgeois state.

Let us quote in full the passage in which their Programme characterizes this party and lays down the line to be adopted towards it.

“The Indian National Congress, the party of the Indian bourgeoisie, is the ruling party today. The role it played in leading the struggle for national freedom and in taking measures to consolidate independence under Pandit Nehru’s leadership has given it a big mass base, which extends to all classes, including big sections of the working class, peasantry, artisans, intellectuals and others.

“The influence of the Congress, though much less than what it was in the days of the freedom struggle, is still vast and extensive. Thus the Congress has been and is still a very important factor in the political life of the country.

“The division between the masses that follow the Congress and the masses that follow the democratic opposition is the most important division in our democratic forces today.”

Nobody would quarrel with the idea that the Congress has a mass base. Nor would anybody deny that the section of the masses who are rallied behind the Congress should be won over

and brought into united action with the masses led by the democratic opposition. The question, however, is: can the Congress as a whole (including its leadership) be included in the "democratic forces" who should be united in the democratic front; or should it be exposed and fought as the most powerful anti-democratic force which has to be defeated through militant mass struggles?

It will be useful in this connection to compare the above characterization of the Indian National Congress with the characterization of the Swatantra and other parties. "The Swatantra Party", the authors explain, "is the open party of the monopolists and feudal classes, though these classes have not yet withdrawn their support from the Congress. They are trying to capture the leadership of the Congress through the extreme right within the Congress, and simultaneously they have set up the Swatantra Party in opposition to the Congress and other democratic parties. Their aim is to reverse the policies of the Congress in reactionary direction. The Swatantra Party tries to unify all anti-national reactionaries against the progressive aspects of Congress policies and acts as the centre of pro-imperialist conspiracies. It is growing in the wake of the monopolies and the compromises of the Congress Government with imperialism and feudalism."

Making similar characterization of the Jan Sangh and the RSS, the Muslim League and the Jamait-e-Islami, the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam and the Akali Party as communal, chauvinist, revivalist, separatist, etc., they conclude:

"The reactionary organisations exercise a pull over a section of the masses by utilising their elementary discontent against the anti-people policies of the Government and playing upon backward, feudal sentiments and prejudices. Very often the chauvinism and communalism of the rightist elements within the ruling party and the Government bring grist to their mill. The National Democratic Front cannot grow without firmly combating the reactionary communal chauvinist leaders of these organisations and weaning the masses away from their influence."

Comparing the two characterizations, one will be struck by the difference between the Congress and Swatantra Party. The former is the party of the Indian bourgeoisie—including the monopolists of course, but non-monopolists, too, and excluding the feudal classes. The latter, on the other hand, is the party of a section of the bourgeoisie (monopolists) and the feudal classes. The political struggle between the two parties is thus the struggle between the non-monopoly bourgeoisie on the one hand and the monopolists and the feudal classes on the other.

Furthermore, this struggle is becoming so serious that the monopolists and the feudal classes are trying to and may succeed in capturing the leadership of the Congress. Evidently, therefore, that leadership (barring, of course, a small section of its extreme right!) is anti-monopoly and anti-feudal.

From the above differences in the class character of the two bourgeois parties emerges the clear political line of collaboration with the Congress as against the Swatantra. This is the political content of the National Democratic Front envisaged by the revisionists.

We have already seen how they visualize the Front to grow. “The National Democratic Front”, we are told, “will arise and take shape in overcoming the main rift among the democratic masses and uniting them. It will be forged in the course of countrywide national movements, parliamentary or extra-parliamentary struggles, which are aimed at isolating and defeating the forces of right reaction, and strive to bring about radical changes in the policies and the set-up of the Government, necessary for the implementation of the above Programme”.

Unity with the Congress as a whole against the right reactionaries inside and outside the Congress is thus the essence of National Democracy as envisaged by the revisionists.

Lest we should be accused of misrepresenting them, let us frankly admit that the revisionists do not use the term “unity with the Congress as a whole”. They themselves cannot however deny that:

- (a) While they give a call for unity with the masses led by the Congress, they do not call for a struggle against the Congress leadership. The only struggle they envisage is

against what is called the right wing within the Congress leadership. Will it, therefore, be wrong to conclude that the Congress leadership minus the so-called right wing is not, according to them, a force to be fought and defeated?

- (b) The call for unity of the masses is confined to those who are rallied behind the Congress on the one hand and those behind the democratic opposition on the other. No effort for unity with the masses rallied behind the right reactionary and communal parties is to be made, even though these organisations are also admitted to have "a pull over a section of the masses". The reason given is that they exercise this pull only because they "utilise the elementary discontent of the masses against the anti-people policies of the Government" and "play upon their backward feudal and semi-feudal sentiments and prejudices". The main task in relation to these parties and the masses rallied behind them, therefore, is to "firmly combat the reactionary communal chauvinist leadership of these organisations and wean the masses away from their influence".
- (c) The revisionist idea of dealing with the Congress thus differs from their approach to the reactionary and communal parties in a very important respect.

In relation to the Congress, they want to unite with the masses rallied behind it, in defence of "national policies" adopted by its leadership, with a view to defeating the rightist section of the leadership as well as to bring about changes in its policies in a leftward progressive direction.

In relation to the right reactionary and communal parties, on the other hand, their approach is to firmly combat their leadership and weaning the masses away from them.

It is amusing that such a strategical-tactical line should emerge out of a Programme which in its analytical part is relatively more objective and exposes the policies and practices of the Government and the ruling party. This exposure is not confined to the right wing section of Congress leadership or to the right reactionary and communal parties. One would like to ask the

authors of the programme whether it is because of the policy of the ruling party as a whole, or of "right reactionaries inside and outside it", that "most of the increasing wealth is being concentrated in the hands of the exploiting classes";

"his [the worker's] share in the increasing wealth has fallen while that of his employer has risen";

"despite the acts abolishing landlordism, three-fourths of the peasantry have practically no land of their own to work on. Legal limitation on rents, provision of credits and loans, development of irrigation and other facilities have brought some relief to a certain stratum of the peasantry. But the high taxes of the state and the expropriatory activities of the capitalist market often nullify these gains";

"The agricultural labourers and poor peasants have no certainty of work or a living and in many backward areas they are treated no better than serfs";

"High cost of living and declining living standards" are the lot of the urban middle classes;

"Even many industrialists, manufacturers, businessmen and traders are hit by the policies of the present Government and by the operation of the foreign and Indian monopolies and big financiers."

And so on.

The disastrous consequences of the policies and practices of the ruling Congress party as a whole (not of the right wing of its leadership alone) are so serious that the mass discontent which arises out of them can be, and are admittedly being, utilised by the leaders of the right reactionary and communal parties. Yet the very authors of the revisionist Programme, who call for the line of firmly combating the leadership of these reactionary and communal parties, do not think it necessary to combat the leadership of the Congress which prepares the fertile soil for these reactionaries. As for the task of weaning the masses away from the leadership, it does not apply at all to the Congress masses.

To state all this is not to deny the essential differences between the declared policies of the Congress on the one hand,

of the Swatantra and similar parties on the other. Differences do undoubtedly exist among them. The essence of these differences consists in the crudely reactionary character of the latter and the apparently progressive character of the former. The differences should, therefore, be taken into account in working out the day-to-day practical plans of action.

But is it correct to point out these differences in order to conceal the fact that it is the Indian National Congress as the ruling party that has deliberately set the country along the capitalist path; that it is its policies that facilitate the growth of monopolies; that it is this party which is making ignoble compromise after ignoble compromise with foreign monopolies; that it is this party which is protecting the feudal vested interests although in a modified (increasingly capitalist) form; and so on?

Will it be honest on the part of anybody who calls himself a Marxist-Leninist to say that it is only the right reactionaries inside and outside the ruling party who are suppressing the democratic rights of the people and taking the state machinery in a semi-fascist direction?

Does it behove any revolutionary to think and talk of uniting with the masses rallied behind such a leadership without exposing, fighting and defeating this leadership?

The answer to the above questions is given in our Party's Programme which says:

“The basic and fundamental tasks of revolution in today's context cannot be carried out except in determined opposition to and struggle against the big bourgeoisie and its political representatives who occupy the leading position in the state.”

While making the above formulation on the attitude towards all bourgeois and feudal parties, our Party notes that “reactionary and counter-revolutionary trends in the country have found concrete manifestation in the programme of the Swatantra Party which is trying to unite all reactionary forces under its banner....The Communist Party will firmly combat the reactionary ideology and programme of the Swatantra Party”.

Furthermore, “religious obscurantism, communalism and casteism as well as bourgeois nationalism and chauvinism are

exploited by the reactionary vested interests to disrupt and retard the growth of the democratic movement of our people. Hindi chauvinism has already raised its head and in resistance to it other linguistic groups are raising separatist demands. Both of them are harmful to the united working class and revolutionary movement and as such the Communist Party will fight against them.”.

What about the Congress party? Does it fight for principles of democracy, secularism, socialism and so on? Is it better in this respect than the parties mentioned above? Our Programme answers:

“Many bourgeois leaders including the leadership of the ruling party demagogically use socialist phraseology for deceiving the masses. While declaring for socialism these bourgeois leaders actually try to keep the people away from the struggle for a genuine socialist path. They use socialist slogans as a cover for their attack on Marxist-Leninist theory and the Communist Party. The Communist Party explains to the masses that the measures of the Congress Government are not in the least socialist, that there is not an iota of scientific socialism in the theories of bourgeois leaders.”

It is only through such exposures of, and struggles against, the ideological positions and political-practical activities of all political parties representing the ruling classes that the masses rallied behind all the parties can be united with those rallied behind the parties of democratic opposition. Our revisionists, however, would not think of such unity of the masses against the class policies and practices of all bourgeois-feudal parties; they would rather have the Congress (minus, of course, the right wing of its leadership!) united with the democratic opposition against right reactionaries and communists.

#### XIV

##### **From Revisionism to Chauvinism**

Over five decades have passed since Lenin made his brilliant analysis of socialist opportunism which, according to him, “grew

up as a product of the preceding 'peaceful' epoch of development of the labour movement."

"This epoch", he continued, "taught the working class important methods of struggle, such as utilising parliamentarism and all legal possibilities, it taught it to create mass economic and political organisations, a widespread labour press, etc.; on the other hand, this epoch created the tendency to repudiate the class struggle and to preach social peace, to repudiate the very principle of illegal organisation, to recognise bourgeois patriotism, etc.

"Certain strata of the working class (the bureaucracy in the labour movement and the labour aristocracy which received a particle of the profits obtained from the exploitation from the colonies and the privileged position of their 'fatherland' in the world market), as well as petty-bourgeois fellow-travellers within the socialist parties, served as the main social support of these tendencies and the channels of bourgeois influence over the proletariat."

Nobody would suggest that the situation obtaining within the Indian Communist movement to-day is similar to what existed in the European socialist and labour movements in the days of Lenin. There are, no doubt, several vital differences, the most important being that, unlike the European labour movement of those days, our Communist movement operates in a country which, though dominated by native capitalists and landlords, is still under various forms of foreign pressures and domination; whatever "labour aristocracy" may have been thrown up here do not occupy "the privileged position of their 'fatherland' in the world market". This and other differences preclude us from drawing an exact parallel between the subjects of Lenin's sharp criticism and our own revisionists.

There are, however, certain undeniable facts which make it necessary for us to examine the present-day phenomenon of Indian revisionism from the method adopted by Lenin.

First of all, it would be noted, the sixth decade of the twentieth century was for the Indian Communist movement "the peaceful epoch of development" in more or less the same way as the latter

half of the 19th century was for the European socialist and labour movements. The Communist Party of India became the leading opposition party in those years; it came very near to forming coalition governments in two or three States and did actually form in one of them. The Party was able to utilise parliamentarism and all legal possibilities (from the Indian Parliament down to the panchayats, etc.). The Party became a force in the public life of the country and started actively intervening in important public affairs.

Secondly, these achievements (which enabled the Party to set itself on the path of establishing proletarian hegemony in the democratic movement) were combined with some very dangerous tendencies which in their totality may be called the extension of bourgeois influence over the proletariat. Without going into too many details, let us merely note that it was in this period that a strong and well-organised group within the Communist Party began to put up a dogged fight for the line of organising a broad national united front including the Congress on the one hand and the Communist Party on the other, and of making this broad national (Coalition) Government. This line was, of course, rejected at the Fourth Congress of the Party held at Palghat in 1966, but it is necessary to remember that it received as much as one-third of the votes recorded at the Congress.

Thirdly, this was the period which marked a certain degree of capitalist development with all its economic and political consequences. Expansion in the number of workers; the consequent entry of new sections of pauperised semi-proletarian elements into the working class; greater degree of organisation of industrial and intellectual workers leading to slight improvements in their conditions of employment—all this generated illusions of growing prosperity and of the possibility of further improvement without furious class battles.

It was in this context that the well-tested class weapons of partial and general strikes were, to a certain extent, replaced by non-proletarian forms of struggle such as satyagraha, peaceful picketing, hunger-strike, etc. (It is, of course, not suggested here that these particular forms of action are always wrong; as a

matter of fact, they can be used on some occasions as the means through which the less class-conscious and less organised sections of the working class can be organised and brought into struggle. What is wrong is to use them as alternatives to the proletarian class form of action—the strike.)

The above-mentioned opportunist trends were strengthened by (a) the distorted interpretation given to the assessment of the new epoch, the non-inevitability of non-peaceful forms of transition, etc., made by the Communist Party of Soviet Union at its 20th Congress; and (b) the victory of the Communist Party at the 1957 election to the Kerala State Legislature.

The former gave some sort of theoretical “respectability” to the right opportunist line advocated and rejected at the Fourth Congress of the Party; the latter consolidated them politically and practically. The result was that the entire Party became the battlefield in which conscious and well-organised groups of revisionists and their political opponents fought each other.

It was against this background that differences cropped up in the international Communist movement, too. This was very cleverly utilised by the most conscious representatives of the above-mentioned (right-opportunist and revisionist) trends to push their anti-proletarian viewpoint; they tried to create the self-image of Marxist-Leninists fighting for the correct line, against sectarianism and dogmatism. Anybody, who opposed their right-opportunist practices and revisionist theories, were denounced as sectarians, dogmatists, anti-internationalists and so on.

Matters did not rest even here. For, right-opportunism and revisionism got a further opportunity to divide and disrupt the working class movement and the Party when India-China relations became strained and actual military clashes broke out between the two countries. It was in this situation that our revisionists “advanced” from positions of opportunism and revisionism to those of chauvinism. Once again to quote Lenin:

“Social chauvinism is opportunism ripened to such a degree that the existence of this bourgeois abscess inside the socialist parties as it has existed *hitherto* has become impossible.

“Those who refuse to see the very intimate and indissoluble connection that exists between social-chauvinism and opportunism snatch at individual ‘cases’—this or that opportunist, they say, has become an internationalist, this or that radical has become a chauvinist. But this is a positively frivolous argument as far as the development of *trends* is concerned. First, the economic foundation of chauvinism and opportunism in the labour movement is the same;.....Secondly, the political and ideological content of both trends is the same.”

After examining in detail the position occupied by the opportunists in each European social-democratic and labour party, Lenin concluded:

“On the whole, if we take trends and tendencies we cannot fail to admit that it was the opportunist wing of European socialism that went over to chauvinism.... The gigantic power of the opportunists and chauvinists comes from their alliance with the bourgeoisie, with the governments and the general staffs. This is often overlooked in Russia, where it is assumed that the opportunists are a section of the socialist parties, that there always have been and will be two extreme wings within those parties, that the thing to do is to avoid ‘extremes’, etc.—all the stuff that one finds in philistine copybooks. In reality, the formal adherence of the opportunists to workers’ parties does not by any means remove the fact that, objectively, they are a political detachment of the bourgeoisie, that they are transmitters of its influence, its agents in the labour movement.”

Once again, cautioning against making exact parallels, let us, however, note that the soil of opportunism prepared within our Communist movement in the earlier part of the fifties took into its bosom the seeds of chauvinism which sprouted into the full tree of chauvinism in the early sixties.

It is necessary in this connection to note that, in our Party, it is not a question of this or that individual having been a right-opportunist and revisionist, but the whole Party being a victim of these dangerous trends for some time.

The Sixth Congress of the Party held at Vijaywada had characterized a particular formulation in the unanimously adopted

resolution of the Amritsar Congress as “reformist”. The crux of that reformist line was that “the Communist Party and the democratic forces, if they unite and undertake their mass tasks seriously right from now, can certainly expect to effect further breaches in the Congress monopoly of power. The process, begun at Kerala, can be carried forward towards the establishment of alternative democratic governments in some other states.”

Why was this formulation wrong and characterized as “reformist”? Because “it held out the prospect of smooth advance towards power. It does not visualize a furious assault on democracy as social contradictions sharpen, as the movement develops and we grow stronger— an assault which may lead to as veritable crisis of parliamentary democracy.” (from Ajoy Ghosh’s *Report to the Congress*, as adopted by the Congress).

The Sixth Congress also denounced the tendency to “equate peaceful path with parliamentarism, a tendency which has resulted in the concept that advance of the toiling masses towards the conquest of power may be achieved through successive elections, in each of which we shall grow gradually stronger..... In essence, this is a reformist and even revisionist concept.”

While all of us should own our respective responsibilities for having been victims of the above tendencies, special credit should go to the authors of the revisionist Programme for consistently pushing that line and for systematically developing it into the full theory of revisionism. It was they who, as has already been noted, interpreted the concept of National Democracy to mean the “alliance of the parties and organisations of the working class and peasantry with the leadership of the ruling Congress Party minus its right-wing section”. Credit should go to them also for extending their class-collaborationist internal political policy to the field of external relations by taking the line of “my country, right or wrong”.

The extent to which they have gone in this respect can be seen only if we examine how the problem of India-China and Indo-Pakistan relations are according to them to be solved. Before proceeding to do this, however, let us note how Lenin ridiculed the arguments advanced by Plekhanov and Kautsky. The

argument was as follows :

“It is the right and duty of everyone to defend his fatherland; true internationalism consists in the recognition of this right for socialists of all nations, including those who are at war with my nation.”

Lenin’s comment: “This matchless reasoning is such a boundlessly vulgar travesty of socialism that the best answer to it would be to coin a medal with the portraits of Wilhelm II and Nicholas II on one side and of Plekhanov and Kautsky on the other. True internationalism, mind you, means that we must justify the shooting of German workers by French workers, and of French by the German in the name of ‘defence of the fatherland!’”.

## XV

### **Bourgeois-Nationalism on the India-China Question**

Nowhere is the class essence of revisionism, its surrender to bourgeois ideology, revealed more nakedly than in its "nationalistic" approach to the problems of India's dispute with her neighbours, particularly with China and Pakistan.

As soon as the relations between India and China deteriorated in 1959, S.A. Dange and his colleagues began to take a shamelessly bourgeois-nationalistic and anti-China line. The public statements made by Dange in the wake of certain border incidents were so much at variance with the Party line that the National Council of the Communist Party unanimously adopted a resolution censuring him for gross violation of Party discipline. Despite this resolution of the National Council, however, Dange and his friends persisted in their line.

The still further deterioration of India-China relations in the subsequent years, particularly in 1962, enabled Dange and Co. to push through the National Council their own anti-China and pro-imperialist line: they got the Council to adopt a resolution with a 2 : 1 majority on November 1, 1962. That resolution completely toed the line of the landlord-bourgeois Government and of such reactionary parties as the Jan Sangh and Swantra. It joined them

(a) in making an all-out (military, economic, ideological and

- political) attack on socialist China, such anti-Chinese position being made the centre of all the political and organisational activities of the working class;
- (b) in rejecting any negotiated settlement with China except on terms dictated by the Government of India—terms which, as was well-known, would be completely rejected by the Chinese; and
  - (c) in accepting the Western imperialist military “aid” (of course, on *commercial* terms) as the only means through which to resist the Chinese “aggression”.

The adoption of this resolution was followed by a hysterical mass campaign, denouncing the leaders of People’s China as the enemies of peace, freedom and socialism. The revisionist-led Central Executive Committee further “improved on” the National Council resolution by characterizing the Chinese military action as “a long-prepared aggression” calculated to grab “the rich oil fields and tea gardens” of Assam (Resolution adopted on December 1, 1962).

The revisionist spokesmen (for example, in Parliament) not only called China the aggressor but praised the landlord-bourgeois Government of India for its striving for peace. Here, for example, is what their leader in the Rajya Sabha, Bhupesh Gupta, stated in Parliament on November 8, 1962:

“This aggression took place at a time when the representatives of the Government of India were getting ready to meet the representatives of the Chinese Government for talks in regard to the border question and for paving the way for its solution through peaceful negotiations.”

That this is contrary to truth will be seen if the developments with regard to India-China relations were objectively studied. Let us, therefore, narrate the story in its broad outlines.

The beginning of the deterioration in India-China relations should be traced to the events in Tibet in the early weeks of 1959. Let me, therefore, quote the relevant passages from a resolution adopted by the Central Executive Committee of the Communist Party which met in New Delhi from May 9 to 12, 1959:

“Following the events in Tibet, this (India-China) friendship has to a certain extent been damaged and disturbed. It is necessary, therefore, that the real significance of these events is grasped.

“What happened in the Tibetan region of the Chinese People’s Republic was a rebellion organised by a handful of serf-owners and bigoted lamas in order to block all reforms and thus perpetuate brutal oppression and tyranny. They wanted to deny the Tibetan people the light of modern civilization so that they would remain sunk in the bottomless pit of backwardness, servitude and indescribable misery.

“In their rebellion, these reactionary circles were encouraged and even materially helped by the imperialists. It is at their instigation and with their help that the former local Government in Tibet became a cockpit of intrigue and abused the wide powers of autonomy and prepared for the present rebellion in violation of the 1951 agreement between the central authority of the Chinese People’s Republic and the local Government of its Tibetan region.

“It was no surprise, therefore, that not a moment was lost by the imperialists—the instigators of the U.S-Pak bilateral pact, SEATO and the like—in acclaiming the Tibetan rebellion as a new opportunity for advancing their intrigues and aggressive plans against India-China friendship and Afro-Asian solidarity.

“The Central Executive Committee emphatically states that this rebellion had nothing to do with the interests of the Tibetan people. It was designed to serve only the interests of a handful of reactionary forces at home and imperialism abroad. To describe such a rebellion as ‘national uprising’ is incorrect and highly misleading.”

After explaining how various elements in the political life of India were distorting and exploiting the Tibetan developments to disturb India-China relations, the resolution “drew the attention of the people to the fact that some unfortunate and incorrect steps on the part of the Government of China” helped such distortion and exploitation. The resolution “appealed to all national and patriotic forces to rise to the occasion and defend India-China friendship and our foreign policy in the interests not only of our two countries but of all Afro-Asian peoples and world peace.”

The appeal of the Communist Party, however, went unheeded. Far from trying to correct their initial mistake in helping the Tibetan counter-revolutionaries, the leaders of the ruling party made demonstrative use of the Dalai Lama and his band of lamas to carry on a persistent political campaign against People's China.

Such a diversion was considered necessary at the time when the Congress Government was launching a virulent attack on the Communist Party of India. The situation that emerged after the dismissal of the Kerala Ministry, followed by the mid-term election in that state, called for a concentration of fire on the Communist Party.

It was against this background that new efforts were made to settle the dispute with China. Prime Minister Chou En-lai visited Delhi in April, 1960. It is no more a secret now that Chou En-lai had come with the firm idea of settling the entire border problem on the basis of give-and-take on both sides. No less an authority than the distinguished Indian diplomat K.P.S. Menon has put on record that Chou En-lai was prepared to concede India's claim south of the MacMahon line in return for Indian recognition of Chinese claims to Aksai Chin.

Menon himself and several other knowledgeable persons have put it further on record that Pandit Nehru himself, and some of his colleagues like Krishna Menon, were inclined to accept it, but that they were over-ruled by the Cabinet.

The failure of the Nehru-Chou En-lai talks in Delhi in April 1960 naturally increased the tension on the India-China border. Clashes began to take place on a larger scale. Both sides started occupying the hitherto unoccupied areas, establishing military posts, sending armed patrols, etc. Reports appeared in the Indian Press that the Indian armed forces were "taking the initiative" in this region.

Provocative statements were made by the spokesmen of the Government of India on "throwing the aggressor out". There was, for instance, the provocative call to the military to "push the Chinese out", given by Prime Minister Nehru himself a few days before the massive entry of the Chinese forces into the

region south of the McMahon line.

All these facts are being stated here not to suggest that the Chinese attitude to the Indian border question is beyond dispute.

While there is no question of our “toeing the Chinese line”, as is alleged by the revisionists and their Congress and other “patriotic” friends, *we were not and are not prepared* to allow ourselves to be fooled by chauvinistic slogans which have become the common slogans of the revisionists and the landlord-bourgeois ruling classes.

*We were not and are not prepared* to join the chorus of the “peace-loving character” of India’s ruling circles—they being stabbed in the back by a treacherous enemy who is intent on grabbing our territory, etc.—the chorus played by our ruling circles and joined by the revisionists.

*We were not and are not prepared* to become blind to the reality that it was the class policy of the landlord-bourgeois ruling classes of our country that made them the allies of the Tibetan counter-revolutionaries, thus initiating the process of deterioration in the India-China relations.

*We were not and are not prepared* to conceal the truth that, even after the support extended by our ruling classes to their brethren in Tibet, our relations with China could have been straightened out if only reasonable proposals for settling the dispute have been accepted.

*We were not and are not prepared* to give up our view that the responsibility for the Chinese offensive of October 1962 should be shared also by the Indian ruling classes who adopted a very provocative attitude in the weeks preceding the Chinese onslaught.

Our revisionists wanted us and the people of India to forget all this.

They wanted us to join the anti-China “national” front which included such reactionary anti-democratic anti-Communist elements as the Jan Sangh and the Swatantra Party.

They wanted us to forget the principles of proletarian internationalism, genuine patriotism, both of which made it imperative that India should continue to remain friendly (and not

hostile) to People's China, that she settle the India-China border problem on the basis of give-and-take.

They wanted us to ignore and disregard the teaching of the international Communist movement that, to quote the 1960 Statement of the 81 Communist Parties, "the U.S. imperialists seek to bring many states under its control by resorting chiefly to the policy of military blocs and economic aid", and to accept the new thesis that Western military 'aid' is helpful for the preservation of national freedom and sovereignty.

Unfortunately for these "patriots" and "internationalists", however, reality is increasingly asserting itself. The anti-China posture of our ruling classes is leading to the isolation of India in the Afro-Asian world whose leaders are getting more and more puzzled at the growing dependence of this biggest non-socialist Asian country (which was once a leading anti-imperialist country) on imperialist "aid".

Internally, too, the growing military budget of the country is heaping bigger burdens on a people who can no longer bear it; the slogan "defence and development" is thus proving bankrupt.

Above all, the damage done to our freedom and sovereignty by the policy of dependence on the United States and other imperialists is being realised by larger and larger sections of the people. Those who had hailed the United States and the United Kingdom in November-December, 1962 as "friends-in-need" have seen how those "friends" used the "needs" of our ruling classes to twist their necks. The proposed military "aid" for defence against China became the starting point of persistent demands for such "adjustments" of India's policy as would serve the interests of the imperialists abroad and reactionary ruling circles at home.

The extent to which this blackmailing on the part of the United States and her allies has gone was clearly seen in the two conflicts with Pakistan—those in Kutch and Kashmir. This has convinced all truthful observers that it was wrong on the part of the ruling party, as well as several opposition parties (including the revisionists) to have relied on Western imperialists to help India in resisting the Chinese. Many of those who had originally welcomed

military "aid" from the Western Powers are today so disillusioned that they have been forced to oppose even such forms of economic "aid" as PL 480, Indo-American Foundation and so on.

All this is having its impact on the revisionists as well. They, too, have now become the champions of peaceful settlement with China, though they would never have India open direct talks with China. They, too, have started talking in terms of the folly of trying to retake by force Aksai Chin and other areas under effective Chinese occupation. They, too, have become convinced that food and other forms of "aid" from the United States imperialists would lead to the loss of India's independence.

All this would have been welcome developments if they had taken place in a party which does not call itself Marxist-Leninist. But coming as it does from those who would resent being called revisionists, one would like to ask them a straight question: Do you admit that it was wrong on your part to have welcomed military "aid" from the Western imperialists to resist the Chinese aggressor, as you did in November, 1962?

Still another question which they should answer: Do you consider the Congress Government's support for the Tibetan reactionaries, its refusal to settle with China during the Chou En-lai visit to Delhi, the provocative statements of the Congress Government spokesmen and armed actions resorted to by the Congress Government during the months following the Chou En-lai visit to Delhi, etc., to have been wrong and detrimental to the genuine national interests of India?

These are questions of crucial importance in assessing the correctness of the stand taken by the revisionists and by us on the question of India-China relations. They are related to the attitude to be adopted by those who call themselves the vanguard of the working class to the class enemy at home and abroad. The question reduces itself to the permissibility or otherwise of rallying behind the ruling class of one's own country who are falling into the arms of the biggest and most reactionary imperialist power in the world in the name of "defending the freedom of the country". One would like to know whether the revisionists are conscious of the gravity of the crime involved in

their bourgeois-nationalist attack on People's China.

## XVI

### **Chauvinism Towards Pakistan**

Just as in relation to China, so in relation to Pakistan, too, the revisionists have been taking a shamelessly national-chauvinistic approach.

Their chauvinism in relation to Pakistan is, if anything, even more reprehensible than that in relation to China. For, while anti-China chauvinism represents the ideology of the bourgeoisie as a whole, the anti-Pakistan chauvinism represents the ideology of that section of the bourgeoisie which belongs to the majority (Hindu) religious community. The two together have ranged the revisionists, along with the Jan Sangh, on the side of the worst form of national-chauvinism which calls for war against neighbouring peoples.

Chauvinism in relation to Pakistan is as old as the partition of India and the formation of the two States of the Indian Union and Pakistan. Forces of Hindu communalism launched a violent campaign against those who wanted that India should live as a peaceful neighbour of Pakistan. They directed their attacks also against those who tried to unite the Hindus and Muslims and make them friendly to each other.

They did not spare Gandhiji who did his utmost to establish relations of friendly co-operation between the two newly-created states and between two religious communities within India. His tireless campaign for friendship with Pakistan and against communalism internally so enraged the Hindu chauvinists that they murdered him. Even after his death, which naturally created a feeling of revulsion among all decent people in India, the Hindu chauvinists persisted in their hate campaign and even demanded war against Pakistan.

The Communist Party for its part faced the situation with courage. It carried on a tireless campaign against Hindu chauvinists. It exposed the hollowness of the plea made by the Hindu chauvinists that India could develop along the path of progress only

if the partition is annulled—by force, if it became necessary.

It called for the peaceful coexistence of the two neighbouring countries which were created by the British precisely with the hope that they would fight each other and thus create a situation in which they (the British) could easily and effectively intervene in both countries. Anti-Pakistan chauvinism, the Party pointed out, would thus help the British imperialists to continue their domination over both countries.

In the meantime, however, the ruling classes of Pakistan began to show signs of allowing themselves to be used as tools and instruments of imperialism. The beginning of this was the other side of Hindu chauvinism—anti-India and anti-Hindu chauvinism of the rulers of Pakistan.

It was this that made them attack Kashmir, seize a part of that state and threaten to take the whole of it. They, however, failed to take the whole state by force, or to make India submit to diplomatic pressure through the United Nations and its Commission on Kashmir. This made the rulers of Pakistan accept the invitation of the imperialist Powers to join their military alliances. The Pakistan-U.S. Military Aid Pact was signed and Pakistan joined CENTO and SEATO.

The imperialist allies of Pakistan made the pretence that these alliances were directed against the growth of "Communism in Asia". The Pakistani rulers, however, made their reservations public, stating that all the "aid" that they would be getting under these agreements would be used against India.

These developments gave rise to resentment among the Indian people. They were concerned at the threat that was growing to Asia in general and to the Indian subcontinent in particular. Pakistan, which was being heavily armed by the imperialist Powers and providing bases of operation for the armed forces of imperialism, would be a constant threat to India and most of her neighbours. The Indian people, therefore, could not but vigorously protest against imperialist intrigues in Pakistan and against the policy of the Pakistani rulers which helped these intrigues.

This was the soil on which the seeds of anti-imperialism of

a new type were sown. India came out as the big Asian Power which fights for non-alignment, raising her powerful voice against imperialist military blocs. She championed the cause of the freedom-loving peoples of the entire colonial world. She began to forge relations of friendship and cooperation with the socialist Powers. It looked as if Lenin's prediction of "India, China and Russia joining together and fighting battles of freedom against imperialism" has come true.

This naturally dealt a heavy blow to the advocates of war against Pakistan. For, the essence of the new anti-imperialist approach to world problems was the principle of peaceful coexistence of states having different social systems. Mutual relations between India and Pakistan should, according to this principle, be settled through peaceful negotiations. Resort to war against neighbours is strictly banned.

The anti-Pakistani Hindu chauvinists, therefore, bided their time. They were, however, satisfied that the Government and people of India considered the rulers of Pakistan to be threatening the peace of India and other neighbouring countries. They hoped, and tried their utmost, to transform this opposition to the policies of the ruling classes of Pakistan into opposition to the Government and people of Pakistan itself.

This being the situation, the Communist Party had to be extremely vigilant, not to allow the principled position of opposition to the military pacts (entered into by the rulers of Pakistan) to be turned into anti-Pakistani hate campaign run by the Hindu chauvinists.

Such vigilance required that the Communist Party should have very clear ideas of the character of the state in the two neighbouring countries of India and Pakistan; the specific circumstances in which the ruling classes of India happened to take an anti-imperialist position, while their counterparts in Pakistan took a pro-imperialist position; the limits beyond which the anti-imperialism of the Indian, and pro-imperialism of the Pakistani, rulers cannot go; and so on.

Lack of clarity on these and other related issues would land the Communist Party into a situation in which it would be turned

into a blind camp-follower of the Indian ruling classes, making it join the chorus of anti-Pakistani chauvinism. This was unfortunately what happened.

The new phase of anti-imperialism in the political attitude of India's ruling classes gave rise to a trend in the Communist Party which failed to take note of the class interests which the new anti-imperialist policy of India's ruling classes were calculated to serve.

Making the typically non-class approach to the policies of the Indian and Pakistani rulers, a section of the Party leadership began to counterpose the "progressive" ruling classes of India to the "reactionary" rulers of Pakistan. Support to the former as against the latter came to be looked upon as the way to further strengthen the anti-imperialist, and to defeat the pro-imperialist, forces on the sub-continent.

In a few years, however, the situation took a different turn. The anti imperialism of the Indian ruling classes began to get eroded.

As the Programme of our Party points out:

"Beginning from the year 1958, the foreign policy of the Government of India has been passing through a new phase. Its role in the Congo, its refusal to recognise the Algerian Provisional Government, its refusal to take a forthright and firm stand on several anti-colonial issues, its equivocal role as Chairman of the Internatinoal Commission in Vietnam and Laos, its stand at the Belgrade conference of non-aligned Powers in 1961 which put India in opposition to most of the Afro-Asian countries, its role in the recent Cairo conference of non-aligned states and its approving recognition of imperialist-inspired Malaysia were all evidence of this new phase....

"The new phase in the Government of India's foreign policy arises from the very class character of the present Government. The increasing reliance on imperialist aid has enabled the Anglo-American imperialists to increasingly interfere in the dispute with Pakistan on the issue of Kashmir. The border dispute with China leading to a border war between the two biggest states in Asia and the state of cold war existing since then have further

accentuated this shift in the Government of India's foreign policy."

A shift took place in the policy of the Pakistani rulers as well—a shift in the other direction. The failure to get Kashmir, either by force or through diplomacy, made the rulers of Pakistan have some rethinking on the efficacy of the "aid" which they were getting from their imperialist "allies".

On the other hand, the various benefits—economic, diplomatic and otherwise—secured by India through her friendship with socialist Powers made the rulers of Pakistan see the wisdom and necessity of a new look towards the socialist Powers.

The result of such a reappraisal of the foreign relations of their state led them to have closer relations with socialist Powers and to relatively greater independence from the imperialists.

These shifts in the foreign policies of the Indian and Pakistani rulers coincided with the development of strained relations within the socialist camp. This took place at a time when the two biggest and most powerful socialist states—the USSR and People's China—were no more friendly with each other but showed signs of mutual conflict.

The natural consequence was that, while India's relations with China became more and more strained new relations of friendship grew between Pakistan and China. The continued friendship between India and the Soviet Union further exasperated the Chinese leaders who publicly accused the Soviet leaders of helping "the reactionary Indian ruling circles" against socialist China.

They for their part began to make public their sympathy and support to the rulers of Pakistan who still continued to receive not only economic but military "aid" from the imperialists.

It was against this background that a new wave of chauvinism swept the country. It started first as a "hate China" campaign but gradually embraced Pakistan as well. China and Pakistan were denounced as two greedy neighbours who were unscrupulous enough to resort to any device to deprive India of her national territory. Any suggestion that India should live as the peaceful neighbour of China and Pakistan was considered

“treachery”. Demagogic slogans of forcible “recapture of all territories seized by China and Pakistan” were advanced. Slogans of “liberating Tibet” and the “annulment of the partition” (which created the two states of India, Pakistan) were raised.

This was the situation in which anybody, who claims to be a Marxist-Leninist (and not a bourgeois national-chauvinist), would uphold the banner of peace between India and China on the one hand and between India and Pakistan on the other. This was expected of the Party leadership by the majority of Party members.

However, a section of the leadership (who happened to have a majority in the top leadership) refused to take this Marxist-Leninist position. They, on the other hand, allowed themselves to be carried away by and themselves strengthened, the further development of the chauvinist (anti-China and anti-Pakistani) wave.

We have already seen how S. A. Dange and his colleagues were so blinded by their anti-China chauvinism that they shamelessly welcomed imperialist military “aid” to resist the “national enemy”, People’s China. In relation to Pakistan, too, they persisted in the earlier stand that the Pakistan rulers were “reactionary” and “pro-imperialist” while the Indian rulers were “anti-imperialist” and “progressive”.

The extent to which the anti-China and anti-Pakistani chauvinism has led the revisionists was seen at the time of the Indo-Pakistani armed conflict which took place last year—first in the Rann of Cutch and then in Kashmir. The stand taken by them at that time was scarcely distinguishable from that of the Jan Sangh.

Concealing the fact that it was the arms and other “aid” supplied by the imperialists (American Patton tanks) that helped Pakistan in the Indo-Pak war, they joined the chorus that it was China and her moral and diplomatic support which encouraged Pakistan to attack India. They thus helped the Jan Sangh and other chauvinistic elements to tell the people that it is not the imperialists, but China and Pakistan, that are engaged in hostilities with India.

Utterly blind to realities, they took the stand of no negotiated

settlement—either with Pakistan or with China—except on terms dictated by India. They denounced the Communist Party for its policy of setting with both neighbouring countries on the basis of mutual give-and-take. Such an approach, according to them, was nothing but treachery.

Even when it became clear that the rulers of India would have to talk with the rulers of Pakistan, they failed to take a constructive attitude to the proposals made by India's friends (including the Soviet Union) for a summit meeting between the leaders of the two countries. Only after the Government of India accepted the Soviet Government's invitation for the Tashkent meeting did they give their support to the idea of the summit meeting.

At the root of this approach lies the revisionist rejection of the idea that the foreign policy of every state is made by the dominant class in the country. It rejects the fact that the foreign policy of India is made by the bourgeois-landlord classes of India at whose head stands the rapidly-growing stratum of the monopoly bourgeoisie, while the foreign policy of Pakistan is made by the landlord-bourgeois classes of Pakistan.

The extent to which the ruling classes of this or that country act in conjunction with, or fight against, imperialist Powers depends on the assessment made by leaders of these ruling classes on how and through what measures their class interests can be preserved and advanced.

Nehru's anti-imperialism of the mid-fifties, his subsequent anti-China posture, the trend being shown by his successors to go further along the path of collaboration with imperialism— all these are the results of the estimate of the current situation made at different times by the leaders of the ruling classes.

So are the shifts in the foreign policy of the rulers of Pakistan—their membership of imperialist military bloc, the relative independence from the imperialist Powers shown by them subsequently, President Ayub Khan's public appeal to the President of the United States to help Pakistan even while he was getting moral support from People's China and so on.

## XVII

### **The Revisionists on the National Question**

The essence of national chauvinism being the obliteration of the class unity of the working people of all countries, or the “unity” of the working people of a particular country with “their own” ruling classes against the people of another country, its role does not remain confined to the external relations of the country concerned. It also embraces the relations between different nationalities in a multi-national state. That was why Lenin had to fight in irreconcilable struggle against the Great Russian and other forms of chauvinism on the national question in Russia.

India is admittedly a multi-national state. This fact is reflected in the twin slogans of “linguistic states” and “federal constitution” which had been accepted by the anti-imperialist democratic movement in the pre-independence years. It is further reflected in the conflicts which raged in the post-independence years around the question of official language and on the implementation of the pre-independence promise of forming linguistic states.

The extent to which these national conflicts can go and has gone was seen when the Dravida Kazhaghham (DK) and the Dravida Munnetra Kazhaghham (DMK) of Tamilnad brought to the forefront the demand for a separate Dravidastan. It is seen today in the fierceness of the conflict between the Central Government and such tribal peoples as the Nagas, Mizos and so on. The other hill peoples of Assam too are now on the point of launching a struggle for their own state—whether within the Indian Union or outside is not yet clear. Although not going to this extent, it is well-known, there are several other regions, mainly inhabited by the tribal people who are also advancing slogans of basically the same character.

India, however, is not only multi-national, but a land of many castes and religious communities. Conflicts among these various castes and religious communities are mixed up with national conflicts. The forces striving for the unification of national (or

linguistic-cultural) group are sometimes combined with, and at other times obstructed by, the forces of caste and communal separatism. This makes the internal situation in our country much more complicated than anywhere else in the world.

There are two approaches to this phenomenon—the approach of the bourgeoisie and the approach of the proletariat. The former would consider the “unity of India” as “good” and the “fissiparous forces” (such as the caste, the religious community, the tribe, the language and the religion) as “evil”. It would, therefore, give a stirring call to the people to oppose and defeat the fissiparous forces and strengthen the forces of unity.

The proletarian standpoint has nothing to do with such abstract slogans of “good” and “evil”. It goes into the essence of this conflict and uncovers the reality of conflicts among different sections of the ruling classes.

Capitalist development in our country, as anywhere else in the world, means the rapid growth of the bourgeois class. While those who are already in the field become stronger and more powerful, new sections enter into the fold. While the former try to maintain and further strengthen their stranglehold on the people, the latter try to get an increasing share of the loot. This inevitably leads to conflicts between the two major sections of the bourgeoisie.

Such conflicts between the newly-emerging and already developed sections of the bourgeoisie are breaking out in India under circumstances in which society as a whole is divided into various castes, religious communities, linguistic-cultural groups and so on. New strata of the bourgeoisie arise out of those castes, religious communities, tribes and linguistic-cultural groups which have so far been lagging behind.

Even from the ranks of the most socially-oppressed and lowest castes, the most backward tribes and the most undeveloped linguistic-cultural groups and regions, new strata of the intelligentsia, the professionals, small businessmen, etc., are emerging and are trying to secure a place for themselves. At the same time, the already rich and powerful sections from the higher castes and advanced regions are doing their utmost to preserve

and further strengthen their own grip on the country's economy and public life.

This is the origin of the caste, communal, tribal, linguistic and regional conflicts, since the bourgeoisie thrown up from every national and social group is able to appeal to the peasants, middle classes and workers belonging to their national or social group as against their rivals. This is a fact noted by a non-Marxist economist like D. R. Gadgil who points out that the existence and development of monopoly in business-field leads to concentration of power in terms of regional, communal, and social groups.

“This”, he goes on, “is an extremely important sociological phenomenon which cannot be ignored in Indian conditions. It cannot be ignored because the total picture that emerges is that of concentration and control over and patronage resulting from all modern finance, trade and industry in the hands of a comparatively small number of persons concentrated in particular social groups. The diffusion of the benefits of the rise of modern industries and commerce is thus clearly restricted within the community and the joint operation of socio-economic and political power makes certain groups so entrenched that social justice is denied and social peace cannot be guaranteed with the continuance of this state of affairs”.

Out of this conflict between various sections of the ruling classes arise various ideological-political outlooks of a separatist character—casteism, communalism, tribal separatism, linguistic chauvinism, regional separatism and so on. As against these ideological-political outlooks of a separatist character is the outlook of a “strong unitary centre” firmly keeping under check all fissiparous trends.

The ruling classes belonging to each social and national group try to unite “their own” people against other nationalities and social groups. In thus uniting its own national or social group against the rest, it helps the dominant ruling group at the centre by disrupting the unity of the working people of the whole country against the bourgeois-landlord regime.

At the same time, the dominant ruling group at the centre tries

to establish a fake 'unity of the nation' by denying the right of every nationality and social group to have equality of opportunity and status in a democratic set-up. In doing this, it fosters and strengthens those very fissiparous forces against which it claims to be fighting.

This makes it necessary for all Marxist-Leninists to make it clear to the people that the so-called "struggle between nationalism and the fissiparous forces"—the struggle in the name of which the leaders of the ruling party are trying to beat oppositionist forces into submission—is a fake "struggle". It is the means through which the dominant section of the bourgeoisie is trying to maintain its domination not only over the working people but over sections of their own class. The slogan of "national unity" is thus the weapon with which the dominant monopoly group tries to bring their competitors into submission.

Equally is it necessary for Marxist-Leninists to see that the claims made by those sections of the ruling classes which are not monopolistic and dominant at the centre—those who claim to champion the cause of their respective national and social groups — are equally false. It is not the interests of the people belonging to these national and social groups (as is alleged), but of a narrow stratum of the ruling classes belonging to these groups, that they with their separatist slogans and demands try to serve.

While thus exposing the false claims of the dominant and other sections of the ruling classes, Marxist-Leninists should see what is anti-federal and democratic in the struggles waged by the various national and social groups against the dominant section of the ruling classes.

The demand of the scheduled and backward castes for equality and social justice; of the religious communities against suppression by the majority community; of the tribal people against attacks by the ruling classes from the plains; of the linguistic-cultural (or national) groups and regions against over-centralisation—all these are perfectly legitimate, *democratic* demands. They are part of the platform on the basis of which the democratic revolution is to be completed and the soil prepared for the socialist revolution.

This, however, does not mean that the unity of India as such is an anti-democratic or false slogan. The working people belonging to all national and social groups are, on the other hand, interested in preserving and further strengthening the unity of India. For, it would enable them to join their forces, to give strength to their struggle against the class enemy—the bourgeois-landlord regime at home and imperialism abroad.

This real unity, however, is different from, is in conflict with, the “unity” of the type which is sought to be imposed on the people by the dominant monopoly section of the Indian ruling classes. For, it is not a unity calculated to preserve the existing regime but to replace it by a new regime of People’s Democracy. It will not suppress the various nationalities, tribes and other social groups who are fighting for their legitimate, democratic demands. It would, on the other hand, help them in these struggles.

Such a Marxist-Leninist approach to national unity and democracy is absent in the ideological stand of the revisionists. Blindly echoing the agitational and propagandist slogans of the monopoly bourgeoisie, they violently attack the so-called “fissiparous forces” of casteism, communalism and so on. They praise the dominant sections of the ruling party for its “national” outlook. Both the Programme and the various resolutions on current questions adopted at their Seventh Congress show that their approach to the problem of national unity and democracy is nothing but tailism to the bourgeoisie.

Their characterization of the DMK, for instance, is that it is a party “reflecting separatist tendencies allying itself with the Swatantra Party and the Muslim League on key political questions, but indulging in left demagogy, a party that aims to divert and disrupt the democratic movement in the South”. There is not a word here, it will be noted, about the role which the DMK has played in giving expression to the national aspirations of the Tamil people.

Let us recall in this connection that the Communist Party (when the revisionists and we were both in the same party) never took such a negative attitude to the DMK. The party did always

make a strict distinction between the 'essentially democratic content of the national aspirations of the Tamil people (which were sought to be given expression to by the DMK) and the separatist, distorted from given to it by the DMK leaders. While opposing the DMK for its separatist distortion, the Party was at one with the DMK in championing the Tamil people's national cause. That was why the National Council of the (then united) Communist Party laid down in 1961 that the Communist Party should come to an electoral united front with the DMK if it agrees to keep its slogan of separation from the North out of the election manifesto. Even if the DMK refused to do this, it was laid down, the Party should have adjustment of seats with it.

These clear and explicit directives of the Communist Party were disregarded by the revisionists who adopted the line of fighting the DMK as a reactionary pro-imperialist party. They joined hands with the Congress, not indirectly but directly, in order to defeat the DMK in the parliamentary, legislative and local elections. This went to the extent of a statewide election campaign of several parties, including the Congress on the one hand and the revisionists on the other (municipal and panchayat elections in Madras.)

If this was the attitude adopted by the revisionists to the DMK (which is not communal in the sense of fighting for a particular caste or community), it is natural for them to adopt the very same or still more hostile attitude to those who organise themselves in the name of and fight for a particular community.

The resolution on Kerala elections adopted by the Seventh Congress of the revisionists declared that they "will have no truck with reactionary communal groups such as the Muslim League and the Kerala Congress". It accused the Muslim League of acting in such a way as to "accelerate revival of Hindu communalism".

The bankruptcy of this stand has now become clear for all to see. The revisionists themselves have now admitted that the Muslim League without ceasing to be a party representing particular community can be welcomed into the ranks of the democratic movement.

