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Communist
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BY AJOY GHOSH

COMMUNIST PARTY PUBLICATION

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THIRD ELECTIONS— COMMUNIST CHALLENGE

Polling for the Third General Elections will begin on February 19, 1962. But already all major parties have started their election preparations in right earnest. Manifestos have been published, names of a large number of candidates have been finalised, meetings have started being held.

Everyone knows, of course, that neither at the Centre nor in the majority of States, is there any possibility of a change of Government. Nevertheless, people take the elections seriously, for, they know on its outcome will depend to a great extent the course of events in the coming period.

They know that while it may not be possible to dislodge the present Government from power, it is possible to influence to some extent at least, the policies that would be adopted and the methods that would be pursued.

ISSUES BEFORE THE ELECTORATE

There will be many parties and many candidates in the field. But, as in the last two elections, the main party in the field will be the Congress which, for a period of over fifteen years has had overwhelming majority in the Parliament and in almost all the State legislatures.

Enjoying a monopoly of power it has had ample opportunity to translate into practice its declarations. Inevitably, therefore, the issues that will dominate the elections will be those connected with the policies which the Congress has pursued. The electorate will be called upon to do two things:

- *Firstly:* Express their verdict on 15 years of Congress rule.
- *Secondly:* Indicate clearly *in what way* they want the policies of the Congress to be changed — in the way advocated by

parties of the extreme Right or in the way demanded by the parties of forces of the Left.

There are people who take a cynical attitude towards the elections. All this excitement, they say, is due to nothing but power-politics and the careerist ambitions of a handful of politicians. The common man, they argue, has no interest in all this and desires only to be left in peace.

Such an appraisal may seem to be very wise. It does not however, explain certain facts.

Why is it, for instance, that the "common man" who mostly belongs to no political party evinces such keen interest in the elections?

Why was it that, during the last two general elections, while a fairly large number of well-to-do people did not bother to cast their votes, polling was especially heavy precisely in those areas where the toiling people — workers, poor peasants and agricultural labourers, artisans, office employees, etc., predominated?

The fact is — and our masses are coming to realise it more and more — that whether one likes politics or not, one cannot, in a modern society, stay away from it. Politics affects every sphere of our life.

How big will be the increase in national income and how will it be distributed? What goods will be available and at what price? What provision will be there for health, housing and education? What taxes will be imposed and on whom will fall the burden?

These and a hundred other questions certainly concern the "common man."

And, the answer to them depends on what policies are pursued by the Government, what laws are enacted and how they are implemented.

Hence the importance of the elections which, in the present Indian context will essentially be a battle over policies and methods.

In our Political Resolution, our Election Manifesto and various other publications we have given our appraisal of the present situation, our criticism of the policies of the Congress as well as an outline of our alternative policies. It is not neces-

sary to repeat all of them here. However, certain points need to be stressed and elaborated.

RECORD OF THE CONGRESS

First of all—the record of the Congress. This cannot be judged in isolation from the political situation that has prevailed in our country for the last 15 years. And the most striking feature of that situation, as already mentioned, has been the Congress monopoly of power.

As our Election Manifesto stresses, few parties in countries of parliamentary democracy have had such unchallenged sway over the Government for such a long period. Few parties have enjoyed such prestige, such influence, such authority.

What has the Congress done with all this?

Of course, certain achievements have been made, both in the sphere of foreign policy and in internal affairs. We, Communists, advocated many of them and we welcomed them when they came about. We do so even now. But the question is: *Was this all that was possible?*

In order to answer this question, we do not propose to lay down a criterion of our own. Nor do we propose to compare our record with that of countries which have taken to the path of socialism. Nor do we even want to remind Congress leaders of what promises they made in those days when they were leading the battle for freedom.

We propose to do something more modest—examine the situation today in the light of the pledges given only a few years back, i.e., at the time of the Second General Elections, in 1957.

"GOOD PROGRESS"

In the Election Manifesto issued by the Congress in 1957, the claim was made:

"We have made good progress and laid the foundations of the new India of our dreams".

Do facts substantiate this claim even today?

A pertinent issue in this connection is the growth of national income. Over the entire period of the two plans, national income

increased only by 42 per cent or at the rate of 3.05 per cent per annum (compound). This is a rate lower than that of even many underdeveloped countries. Per capita income rose only by 16.7 per cent in this whole period.

At this rate, we shall take many many years—and not 25 years as the First Plan calculated—to double our per capita income.

The Second Plan fixed certain industrial targets. Though modest, many of them have not been reached. Moreover, as the Third Plan Report says, “the shortfalls have occurred in some of those very industries which are of crucial importance and have deprived the economy of the benefits reckoned on for the start of the Third Plan” (p. 454).

For instance, the target for steel was 4.3 million tons. It has reached only 2.2 million. For nitrogenous fertilizers the respective figures are 290 thousand and 110 thousand tons. For cement, 13 million and 8.5 million tons. Production of machineries to produce textile, cement and paper as well as of several other items is far behind the schedule.

Our agricultural production, on which depends the state of our economy as a whole, remains precariously dependent on monsoon despite the expenditure of over 1,500 crore rupees. It barely keeps pace with the growth of population. During the last three years we had to import 12 million tons of foodgrains.

So unsatisfactory is the food situation that the Third Plan Report had to admit that “the relative stability of the foodgrain prices latterly has been due largely to PL 480 imports” (p. 123).

Who can, with these facts before him, assert that “the foundations of the new India of our dreams” have been laid? The claim had little basis in reality in 1957. That position has not changed substantially even today.

LAND REFORMS

The land problem, the Congress always proclaimed, is of paramount importance for our country. Agriculture is the decisive sector of our economy. The relation between land reforms and agricultural production has been stressed many a time—by leading economists, by the kisan sabha and by Congressmen

Thus, the Congress Agrarian Reforms Committee, presided

over by the veteran Gandhiite, J. C. Kumarappa stated “It has been found by experience that unless land is owned by the tiller, his incentive to production does not reach the optimum”.

This was as early as 1949 when the Congress had already been in power for two years. What was promised in this respect in 1957 and what is the result?

“On land”, the 1957 Manifesto said, “all intermediaries must be progressively removed so that land is owned by the cultivator himself. The principle of ceilings has been accepted and should be progressively introduced so as to bring about a better distribution of land”.

Again, in December 1958, a Sub-Committee of the AICC presided over by U. N. Dhebar, after considering “the question of land reforms from the point of view of agricultural production as well as achieving social and economic justice”, demanded land legislation “without any further delay”. The whole thing was to be “completed in all States by the end of 1959”. This was approved by the Congress.

Where does the matter stand now? The Third Plan Report replies:

“The impact of tenancy legislation on the welfare of the tenants has been less than was hoped for. One of the principal reasons for this is that in a number of States ejections of tenants have taken place on a considerable scale under the plea of voluntary surrender” (p. 244).

As regards ceilings, in several States they have yet to be imposed. Even where ceilings have been fixed, the Third Plan Report says: “On the whole it would be correct to say that in recent years, transfers of land have tended to defeat the aims of legislation for ceilings and to reduce its impact on rural economy” (p. 229).

And, the U.P. Chief Minister, C. B. Gupta whom even his worst enemies would not call a leftist, said in a public meeting at Aligarh on June 19, 1961 that “ceiling on landholdings has failed to serve its purpose”. He explained “Before the Act could be enforced, the owners had succeeded in distributing their land among their relatives and kinsmen. Very little land is now available for distribution among the tillers”.

This is how the Congress implemented the slogan of land to the tiller.

And yet the Congress Manifesto for the Third General Elections has the audacity to proclaim: "Agrarian reforms are the basis for rural progress. Much has been done in the past years in regard to such reforms".

Evidently, Congress leaders think not merely that people have a short memory but also that they do not read even Government publications.

In view of the sorry results which the Congress brand of agrarian reforms have achieved—both in relation to food production and social justice—we may point out that in the Election Manifesto of 1957 the Communist Party of India had warned that "So many concessions have been made to the landlords that very little land will be left for distribution even if and when ceilings are imposed". We had warned against the danger of "fictitious transfer of land".

Our warning went unheeded. But today the Planning Commission as well as leading Congressmen have to admit that we were right.

As regards the most exploited strata in the rural areas—the agricultural workers—the startling fact is that their condition has actually deteriorated. The Second Agricultural Labour Enquiry revealed that:

"The average daily wage rate of the male worker decreased from 109 nayapaise in 1950-51 to 96 nayapaise in 1956-57 and the average daily wage rate of adult women too fell from 86 n.p. in 1950-51 to 59 n.p. in 1956-57. Child labour received an average of 70 n.p. in 1950-51 and 53 n.p. in 1956-57".

"NO EXPLOITATION AND NO MONOPOLIES"

"In economic relations" said the 1957 Congress Manifesto "there should be no exploitation and no monopolies and disparities in income should be progressively lessened".

What has happened to this promise?

At no time in India's history was there so much concentration of economic power in so few hands as today. At no time was the wealth of the few and the poverty of the many so stagger-

ing. At no time did monopolists own or control such a big sector of our economy as now.

These are not just sweeping statements. They are borne out by facts. They are admitted by all economists.

Pressed to explain why was it that despite the increase in national income, the condition of the masses remains as wretched as ever and even deteriorates, Nehru said in the Lok Sabha in August 1960:

"We have to avoid and prevent too much accumulation of wealth. If, after all this additional income, only five per cent or ten per cent of the population have benefited by it and ninety per cent have not, that is not a good result".

A Committee was appointed by the Government to investigate into the matter, to discover where the increased national income has gone. To this day the findings of the Committee have not been published, nor are they likely to be published till the elections are over—for reasons which are only too obvious. But what little has leaked out to the press is a sufficient condemnation of the Government which claims to be building a "socialistic pattern of society".

However, we do not want to say anything at this stage about the "leaked" information. The facts which are known to all are sufficiently damning.

Out of a total of nearly 28,000 private and public limited companies whose total assets comes to nearly 2,800 crores of rupees, only 7 top houses own or control Rs. 776 crores. Even among these, the two super-giants Tatas and Birlas have between them nearly 600 crores.

In the sphere of banking, the three top banks have nearly 30 per cent of the total deposits of all banks.

And if we take the *entire organised private sector*—plantation, manufacture, banking, insurance and trade—it would be revealed that less than 50 Indian and foreign big business houses, firms and companies many of whom are closely connected to each other, control between themselves no less than 70-80 per cent of this sector.

Harsha Dev Malaviya, a loyal Congressman, had to say:

"It passes one's comprehension as to how in these days of socialist transition in the country... business tycoons in the cor-

porate sector are still allowed to wield power over so large a number of companies as ten or more with all benefits to reap from them and offer little in exchange" (*Socialist Congressman*, July 15, 1961).

But amazingly enough, even after all this, Congress leaders have nothing to say as to what they propose to do. Their present Election Manifesto only proclaims the following pious principle:

"The fundamental problem in India is not only to increase greatly the living standards of the people but also to bring about progressively social and economic equality. Existing inequalities and disparities in the social fabric are ethically wrong and will obstruct progress on all fronts and produce considerable strains."

It can be seen that Congress leaders are inordinately fond of the word "progressively" which occurs again and again in all their proclamations. And no wonder, for it commits them to nothing definite. In the meantime, the power, of big business grows.

The power that big business wields is not confined to the economic sphere alone. They have intimate links with many of the top leaders of the Congress—quite a good number of whose relatives are high-paid employees of these concerns. The monopolists have their friends in many key positions in our administration. Also they control the largest-circulated newspapers which play a big role in moulding public opinion.

And, while the millionaires grow into multi-millionaires, what is the condition of those whose labour has produced the additional national wealth?

Union Labour Minister, Gulzarilal Nanda himself stated in a speech in the Lok Sabha on 11th April 1960:

"Between 1939 and 1947 the standard of living of the worker had declined by 25 per cent. By 1951, they recovered lost ground. By 1955, real wages had risen by 13 per cent. But since 1956 when prices again started rising, their gains have to an extent, been wiped out".

The reports of the Census of Manufacturing Industries reveal that since independence the workers have been producing more

and more values, the bulk of which are appropriated by the owners.

The value added per worker went up from Rs. 1578 in 1946-47 to Rs. 2792 in 1956-57. For each rupee that the worker earned on an average in 1956-57, he returned that rupee plus two rupee and 39 naya paisa, i.e., 3.39 rupees. This is how exploitation has been steadily intensified. This is how the handful of monopolists have enriched themselves.

Not merely factory workers, but others too—office employees, teachers and other people with fixed income—get systematically robbed in order to swell the coffers of the rich.

"PRICES AT REASONABLE LEVEL"

This brings us to another declaration of the Congress Election Manifesto of 1957.

"It is of the highest importance" said that Manifesto, "to keep prices at reasonable level and to prevent inflation. To some extent inflation is almost inevitable in a developing economy (they should have said developing capitalist economy—AG) but this should be kept fully in check and all necessary steps should be taken to that end".

What happened to this declaration?

The Third Plan Report replies:

"The Second Plan has been characterised by a persistent upward trend in prices, though of course part of the rise was a corrective to the earlier decline. Over the five-year period, the rise in the general index of wholesale prices has been about 30 per cent; food articles as a group have gone up by some 27 per cent; industrial raw materials by 45 per cent, manufactures by over 25 per cent" (p. 121).

The index of wholesale prices, as we all know, does not give adequate idea of the increase. Even then, the figures are revealing enough.

The steep rise in price of food hits, above all, the poorest sections. The rise of 30 per cent in the price of cloth and similar rise in case of many other articles of every day consumption, had nothing to do either with wages or anything else. They

were just a looting of the people by big business. The Congress Government did nothing to prevent or even minimise the loot.

But when workers demanded higher dearness allowance to compensate for the increase in prices, they were told that this would give rise to inflation. The way the Government suppressed the strike of its own employees is known to all and needs no narration.

The present Congress Manifesto keeps discreetly silent about what it said on prices in 1957 and what actually happened. But that does not prevent it from making new promises. Their "new" Manifesto tells: "Prices of essential commodities should be stabilised and trading on State account should be undertaken whenever this is found possible".

Naturally, they do not say anything about the fate of their resolution on State-trading in foodgrains.

INCENTIVE FOR RICH, SACRIFICE BY POOR

"The principal burden of finding resources"—said the 1957 Congress Election Manifesto—must inevitably fall on the people of the country. This burden has to be borne. But, it should be spread out in such a way as to fall chiefly on those who are in a better position to shoulder it. The structure of taxation is being reconstructed with this object in view. This process will all also help in reducing disparities in income and wealth" (our emphasis).

What has actually happened?

Between 1950-51 and 1961-62 total tax revenue of the Central Government increased by 411 crores of rupees. Of this, direct taxes whose burden "falls chiefly on those who are in a better position to shoulder it" increased by only Rs. 76 crores. Indirect taxes which hit the common man the most, increased by Rs. 335 crores. The corresponding figures in respect of State Governments are Rs. 110 crores and Rs. 220 crores.

In the name of providing "incentives", the Government gives numerous concessions to the rich.

It refuses to take measures against foreign capital of the type that Egypt, Indonesia and Cuba did, measures which would

extend the public sector and also place vast resources in the hands of the Government.

It refuses to nationalise banking and general insurance in order not to offend the monopolists.

At the same time, it goes on throwing more and more burdens on the people and calls for "sacrifice". The rich need "incentives", the poor have to "sacrifice"—such is the logic. Innumerable struggles have taken place all over the country against this policy. The anti-tax struggle in Bihar which grew into a vast movement is one such example.

It would have been good if Congress leaders had told in their "new" manifesto in what manner they implemented the 1957 declaration. They have not done that. Instead, once again, they say: "Taxation should be so devised as to aim at lessening disparities of income and increasing the resources available for development."

What reason is there to believe that this declaration also will not meet the same fate as the declaration made in 1957?

If one reads the new Congress Election Manifesto, one might think that there is some reason. May be, at long last, Congress leaders are becoming conscious that they owe a duty to the people and are going to change their taxation policies. Those who harbour such illusions should read the Third Plan Report.

The Report admits that *additional* taxation in the Second Plan was of the order of 1,052 crores of rupees as against an estimate of 450 crores. The proposal now is to levy further additional taxes of 1,710 crores during the Third Plan.

On whom will this stupendous burden fall?

"In the field of *income tax*" we are told, "the scope for raising the rates are generally limited." As regards "*wealth tax, the capital gains tax, the expenditure tax and estate duty*", all of which are paid by the rich, "the yield from these taxes are relatively small".*

Why?

* It should be noted that an U.N. publication, *Processes and Problems of Industrialisation* (1955), stated that "indirect taxes tend to have an adverse effect on industrial development" since they "are likely to raise the prices of domestic manufacture" and since they, by their regressive nature "tend to restrict the local market".

No straight reply is given but it is suggested that there should be "as few loopholes as possible for evasion or avoidance of taxes"—which gives the reply eloquently enough.

Then as regards "taxation of corporate incomes", which again is paid by the rich, "a number of tax incentives and concessions are at present being given for investment". These will remain but "kept under continuous review"—which elastic phrase can mean anything, *including further concession*, if past budgets are any indication.

Where then will the big sum of 1,710 crores of rupees come from?

The answer is: "The Third Plan will involve a substantial increase of indirect taxation." Then follows: "Indirect taxation along these lines tends to raise the price paid by a domestic consumer. This is a sacrifice that has to be accepted as part of the Plan" (Third Five Year Plan pp. 102-104).

Nothing could be plainer. And yet they talk, in their present manifesto, "of stabilisation" of prices and of "lessening disparities of income".

Such is the contrast between the pious platitudes of the Election Manifesto and the actual proposals of the Third Plan. Yet both have come from the same party!

"UNEMPLOYMENT IS BAD"

"Unemployment is not only bad for the individual but is a disorder injurious to social health"—opined the Congress Election Manifesto of 1957.

The Second Plan started with a backlog of 5.3 million unemployed. The number now stands at nine million. Not only that. It was estimated by Prof. P. C. Mahalanobis, Statistical Adviser to the Central Cabinet and Member of the Planning Commission that 20 million of our people have hardly one hour's work a day, 27 million have less than two hours a day, 45 million have less than four hours a day and so on. Our vast man power, which in a socialist society could have been a big national asset, is becoming a chronic and ever-intensifying problem.

Undeterred by this grim reality, the new Manifesto proclaims: "The ending of unemployment is of vital importance both from the economic and social point of view".

It is not necessary to give more extracts from the 1957 Election Manifesto of the Congress and contrast them with the present reality. What has been said is enough to prove that the record of the Congress has been an unbroken record of broken pledges.

LACK OF TIME—BOGUS PLEA

Let it be clearly understood that we, Communists, have never asserted that the legacies of nearly two hundred years of British rule can be liquidated in a few years.

No matter which Government is in power, the task of rebuilding the country would be gigantic and would require time for completion.

Nevertheless, as we have stated repeatedly, those political, social and economic measures which alone can create *firm basis* for national regeneration do not require a long period.

It does not require a long time to nationalise the most important British concerns as well as those sectors of economy which should be nationalised in the interest of the country.

It does not require a long time to abolish landlordism and hand over land to the peasants.

It does not require a long time to evolve a just system of taxation.

It does not require a long time to ensure that increase in national wealth gets equitably distributed.

The question is not one of time. It is one of *bias in favour of particular classes—the propertied classes*.

We have dealt at some length with certain economic policies of the Government and their results. We have done so because it is in this sphere that the Government makes the loudest claims. But our criticisms of the Congress regime is not confined to this aspect alone. It covers a much wider field.

CORRUPTION AND AUTHORITARIANISM

Take the question of corruption which has become so ram-

pant. Congress leaders either minimise its extent or blame "everybody" for this.

They refuse to recognise that at the root of this widespread corruption lie the twin phenomena of enormous concentration of wealth in a few hands and the concentration of political power in the hands of a single political party—the relationship between whom grows closer every year.

How big business subscribes to the funds of the Congress and how Congress leaders protect their interests are known so widely that they need no elaboration.

Serious charges of corruption have been made in almost every State by responsible people against officials and even against Ministers. These charges are not even investigated.

The result is lowering of morale, encouragement to malpractices, loss of confidence. Apart from corruption of the most blatant type, there is also the practice of a large part of the allocation for social welfare being spent to provide fat salaries for favourites of Ministers and for supporters of particular Congress factions.

Congress leaders are never tired of speaking about democracy. But their actual record is one that can inspire little confidence.

Everyone knows how the votaries of constitutionalism organised, in alliance with dark forces of communalism and casteism, the "popular upsurge" in Kerala, how the Central Government aided and abetted the "struggle" and how a democratically elected Government was dismissed because it represented a party other than the Congress and tried to serve, within the framework of the Constitution, the mass of the people.

A few months before this, a Congress leader, speaking at the AICC meeting held in Hyderabad, had warned that the "contagion" from Kerala might spread to other States.

As regards civil liberties, no less a person than the President of our Republic, Dr. Rajendra Prasad himself, expressed the view in November 1960 at the Governors' Conference that there had been more police firings in India since Independence than during the days of British rule.

The powers of the bureaucracy and the police remain as sweeping as ever and these powers are used in the same way

as the British days. Recently, Mr. Justice A. N. Mulla delivering a judgement of the Lucknow Bench of the Allahabad High Court, remarked:

"I say with all sense of responsibility that there is not a single lawless group in the whole country, whose record of crimes is anywhere near the record of that organised unit which is known as the Indian police force".

Perhaps never in any democratic country did a judge of the High Court utter such scathing condemnation of the police force. It should make the leaders of the Congress sit up.

Officials, with a few honourable exceptions, continue to act and behave as they did in the days of the British. They consider themselves to be not servants of the people but their masters.

Volumes can be written about the repression that the Government lets loose whenever the people, driven by misery, rise in struggle. Eighty persons were killed and over 200 injured during the food agitation in Calcutta. Eight were killed and 12,000 jailed in Punjab in connection with the anti-betterment levy agitation. The list is unending. Only recently 16,000 peasants were arrested in Madras State during the ceiling agitation.

The authoritarian and anti-democratic outlook which Congress leaders have acquired can be seen in many other spheres as well. Years of uninterrupted rule have made them intolerant of criticism even from their own ranks.

They use the power of the Government to discriminate against and sometimes even to suppress local bodies which are not under their control.

Also, funds allotted by the Government to help victims of such natural calamities as floods are often spent in such a way as to strengthen the position of the Congress party or the ruling faction inside it.

DISRUPTION OF NATIONAL UNITY

The Congress enjoys monopoly of power. It runs the Central Government, it runs all the State Governments, it controls a big majority of corporations, municipalities, district boards and even panchayats.

Such a dominant position of a single party in the political

life of the country should normally prevent the growth of fissiparous, disruptive and centrifugal forces.

In reality, just the opposite has happened.

The unity that existed when India won freedom has, to a great extent, been disrupted. Forces of communalism, casteism, regionalism and linguistic chauvinism have grown alarmingly in recent years. So serious has the situation become that Prime Minister Nehru exclaimed once that he would be prepared "to sacrifice even national planning to save national unity".

This growth of disruptive forces and tendencies is due to complex causes some of which are rooted in our history. But they could not have assumed such menacing proportions if the Congress had acted correctly.

We cannot agree with the thesis advanced in the Congress Election Manifesto that "the attraction of political power led to factions and numerous political groupings" and that "the general release of energy often led people in a wrong direction" and so on. We cannot agree with this thesis for it amounts to throwing the whole blame on the people and giving an alibi to the ruling party.

It is evident that after the attainment of freedom, the unity that the national movement had built up could not continue indefinitely on the old basis. New problems faced the nation, the problem of rebuilding our country and of refashioning of our life. These problems could be tackled and national unity could be forged on a new basis only if the ruling party did the following things:

— Place before the people an inspiring national objective and take radical measures to achieve it—nationalisation of foreign concerns, land to the tiller, etc.

— Deprive reactionary classes and elements of their economic power.

— Work out and firmly implement a correct policy on languages, linguistic States and on protection of minorities.

— Take measures to overcome regional disparities as far as possible and uplift backward classes and tribal people.

— Launch a powerful and sustained nationwide campaign against obscurantist forces, against communalism, casteism, etc.

Instead of doing all this, the Congress followed policies of

compromise and concessions and of drift. Inevitably, the mood of frustration and anger replaced the earlier mood of hope and enthusiasm. Reactionary forces took full advantage of this situation.

Sometimes, even the just demands of the people as regards regional development and language got distorted and were given a disruptive turn by interested parties. Sometimes, the Congress itself directly helped the growth of communalism by alliance with avowedly communal parties—as in Kerala and in Punjab. Quite often, appeals in the name of caste were made by Congress candidates to secure votes.

In this way national unity got disrupted. In this way princes, landlords and extreme reactionaries who, at the time when the nation won freedom, stood isolated and discredited could, in a number of States, stage a comeback and win some measure of popular support by playing on people's discontent, by demagoguery and by fanning hatred against minority communities.

FEDERATION OF WARRING GROUPS

Policies that could not unite the nation could not retain the unity of the Congress either. Factionalism of the most acute type has become chronic in the Congress organisation in practically every State—factionalism based on power-politics, on the question as to which group would have how many Ministers, whose candidates will get more tickets, how contracts and jobs will be distributed and so on.

Honest Congressmen, many of whom dedicated their whole life to the service of the country, feel themselves out of place in such an atmosphere and often get pushed out or voluntarily retire.

In one State after another, the Congress is assuming the character of a loose federation of warring groups, held together by common desire to retain power and by the towering personality of Jawaharlal Nehru.

The ugly incidents that occur in practically every State Congress Committee, the squabbles based on nothing but lust for power, the never-ending intrigues that have become a marked feature of internal Congress life, the scramble for tickets that

grows as elections approach—all these bring out vividly the degeneration which has set in and which defy all “solutions”.

The state of affairs inside the Congress was described by Lakshmi Menon, the Deputy Minister for External Affairs, in a recent speech which she made at a meeting of Congressmen in Nagpur:

Describing Prime Minister Nehru as the only Congressman who followed Gandhian principles faithfully, she said, most Congressmen, while swearing by the Gandhian way of life, merely represented the reactionary urges in India. She said she was chagrined to find that in the nation's Parliament, Congressmen were foremost in their opposition to progressive legislation concerning overdue social reforms.

“Mrs. Menon said most Congressmen, unlike the Prime Minister, were insincere in their behaviour. Many of them donned Khadi but secretly owed allegiance to or harboured sympathies with communal organisations like the Jana Sangh or Hindu Maha Sabha or the RSS. It would be far more honest if such persons left the Congress and openly worked with those whom they agreed with (*Times of India*, November 18, 1961).

Mrs. Menon did not explain why such persons are kept in the organisation and not *expelled*.

Further

“Mrs. Menon deplored the ‘increasingly noticeable tendency among Congressmen and Congress Committees to go after money.’ It was very distressing, she said, to find that several deserving persons who had made sacrifices in the fight for freedom were ignored by the Congress Committees and discarded in favour of those who gave money to the organisation. . . .” (*Ibid*).

Lakshmi Menon said plenty of more things in the same strain. Her criticism was so “scathing and trenchant” that the President of the Nagpur Congress Committee who presided, “appealed to Mrs. Menon to convey her sentiments to the great leaders of the organisation with whom she was in close touch, rather than ‘harrying and confusing’ Congressmen at lower levels” (*ibid*).

WEAKEN MONOPOLY OF CONGRESS POWER

No comment is necessary. Unfortunately, however, Lakshmi

Menon did not probe deep enough. She did not try to lay bare the *causes* which have led to such lowering of morale.

In view of such things, is it at all surprising that when leaders of Congress preach the need for sacrifice, for honesty, for high standard of public morals, when they condemn casteism, communalism and obscurantism, people merely shrug their shoulders and smile cynically?

For all these reasons, the Communist Party considers that in the forthcoming elections, it is of utmost importance that the anti-people policies of the Congress are exposed, the damage done by them are explained and people rallied to weaken and—where possible—break the Congress monopoly of power.

That would be good for the country and the people. That would be good for the Congress itself, for it would help honest Congressmen to fight the evils that have crept in, with greater chances of success.

DEFEAT FORCES OF RIGHT REACTION

That does not mean, however, that we merely want the defeat of the Congress—no matter at whose hands. Our attitude towards the Congress and its policies has nothing in common with the attitude of parties, groups and elements of the extreme right.

They say they, too, want to defeat the Congress. That is true. But the fact is that they denounce and oppose precisely those policies of the Congress which are of a relatively progressive character. The policies they want to impose on the country are policies of rank reaction. They want to turn back the wheels of history.

FOREIGN POLICY

For instance, it is well-known that India's foreign policy, the policy of peace, non-alignment and anti-colonialism, has raised our prestige throughout the world. India has built friendly relations with socialist countries which has helped her to strengthen her national economy and build a number of heavy industries in the public sector.

We, Communists, have voiced some criticism of India's foreign policy. We have pointed out that it is not consistent enough.

We regret the failure of our Government to sharply condemn American imperialists who organised the invasion of Cuba.

We regret the non-recognition of the Algerian people's revolutionary Government.

We deplore the fact that due to the half-hearted attitude taken by us in recent periods, in relation to colonialists and neo-colonialists, our prestige, especially in the African countries, has received a setback.

We strongly urge the recognition of the German Democratic Republic, whose existence cannot be ignored and which pursues a policy of peace and opposition to colonialism. We also demand action to liberate Goa.

Our attitude towards the Government of India's foreign policy is, therefore, one of general support, together with the demand that it should become firmer and more consistent.

INDIA-CHINA DISPUTE

Some people think that the line that we take in the sphere of foreign policy is self-contradictory because, whereas we demand action to liberate Goa, we, while firmly upholding India's territorial integrity, have urged that our dispute with China should be settled through negotiations. In reality, however, there is no such contradiction.

Portugal is an imperialist country with no common frontiers with India. Not even Dr. Salazar claims that there is any *border dispute* between Portugal and India. People who are indisputably Indian are subjected to repression and humiliation in Goa. They are denied elementary human rights and the right to unite with India.

Goa, therefore, belongs to a specific category. Our national freedom itself will not be complete till the Goan people are liberated.

Such is not the nature of the dispute which India has with China. We want that India's territorial integrity be defended by all means at our disposal, no matter who encroaches on it. But we also urge that every effort should be made to solve the border dispute between our country and China by peaceful methods.

Our critics may say that this attitude we adopt only because China is a country where Communists wield power. Let them remember that even in relation to Pakistan whose forces occupied a part of Indian territory by military action, whose regime we sharply criticise, where the Communist Party is illegal, where scores of Communists are in prison and several have been killed, we have always advocated negotiations.*

In this matter our position has been the same as the position of the Government of India.

Further it must be admitted that the Government of India does not act in a straight-forward manner in this matter. From time to time they announce that India's air space is being violated by planes coming from China, that Chinese patrols entered Indian territory, that new checkposts are being established by the Chinese within Indian territory.

When Pandit Nehru told the Lok Sabha on November 20 about the latest developments in Ladakh, I issued the following statement to the press:

"I have read with surprise and regret the information given by the Government of India about the recent patrolling by Chinese soldiers in Indian territory. It is also reported that new checkposts have been established by the Chinese even beyond the territory shown in their own map of 1956.

"Such acts, especially in the context of the dispute already existing, cannot but heighten tension, create deep resentment among the Indian people and further embitter the relations between the two countries.

"We demand that the Government of the People's Republic of China must immediately put an end to such acts. We demand

* It should be noted that in our last Election Manifesto (1957) it was stated: "The Communist Party will do all in its power to assist the liberation movement inside Goa and strive to secure effective intervention by the Government so that this last vestige of colonial rule on our fair soil is wiped out.

"It will strive for the establishment of relations of friendship between India and Pakistan, for increase in trade, mutual and other contacts between the two countries as well as for greater facilities for communication between their peoples".

The consistency of our stand is self evident.

also that effective measures must be taken by them to ensure that such things do not occur again”.

The Chinese Government has several times denied these allegations. But let us assume these reports are correct. The question then arises: what prevents our armed forces from taking necessary action; why are not these planes shot down? Why are the patrols permitted to enter our territory? Why are such checkpoints allowed to be established?

We, Communists, certainly desire negotiations. *But have we ever asked the Government of India to sit passively and allow such things to happen? Never. Nor shall we ever do so.*

In spite of our position on the issue having been made clear repeatedly, reports are circulated from time to time about Communists carrying on a “pro-China campaign” in border areas. Not one of these reports has been substantiated.

The issue, however, is not one which concerns the Government and us alone. What we cannot ignore is that the Government is utilising the India-China dispute to attack the forces of Indian democracy and popular struggles.

Our Party, of course, has been the main target. But the attack is not directed against us alone. Several times this issue has been raised to justify repression on popular struggles.

In July 1960 took place the Central Government employees’ strike—a strike not for any political ends but with the main demand of linking dearness allowance to the cost of living.

So eminently just demand was the that all Government employees’ organisations joined hand in deciding upon the strike. All trade union organisations, except the INTUC, supported the strike. Among the leaders of the strike as well as among the workers there were Praja Socialists, Congressmen as well as Communists.

On the eve of the strike Prime Minister Nehru, returning from a tour in Ladakh made a broadcast in which he spoke of “unfriendly posts on the other side” and the “fine body of young men”—the Indian soldiers—who were guarding our frontiers. Contrasting these soldiers with the Government employees, Nehru denounced the impending strike as “an attempt deliberate or unwilling which could only lead to the weakening of our defences....”

This was an unworthy and demagogic attempt to push the real issues to the background and to confuse the people.

We stand resolutely for the defence of the territorial integrity of our country.

India and China are two great countries of Asia. Cooperation and friendship between them is essential for the defence of peace and the solidarity of the Asian peoples. We, therefore want the settlement of the dispute in a peaceful way and through negotiations.

RIGHTIST PLANS

But what is the foreign policy which the parties of right reaction, making use of the dispute between India and China, want to impose on our country?

They oppose the very basis of our foreign policy.

In its Draft Election Manifesto (the final version is not out yet) the Swatantra Party says that “abstract concepts of co-existence and non-alignment have lost all meaning” and that “our foreign policy needs to be revised and brought into closer relation with the realities of the international situation”.

The Jana Sangh, while daring not to go so far openly, proclaims that the “foreign policy of our Congress rulers has been a total failure” and that our “attitude towards a number of international questions gives the impression of its leanings towards a particular bloc”.

In other words, they too, like the Swatantra, want India to abandon the policy of peace and non-alignment. Ram Singh, the Hindu Sabha leader characterised India’s support to Egypt during the Suez crisis as “height of folly”.

It is also worth remembering that not so long ago, these very rightist parties were pleading for a “defence alliance” with Pakistan. Of course, they dare not speak of it today in view of Ayub Khan’s sabre-rattling against India. But basically their line on India’s foreign policy is the same as that advocated by imperialists — who, too, fulminate against “neutralism”.

In internal matters also, the “opposition” of these parties to the Congress is a right reactionary opposition. Their words,

their deeds, the classes and sections whose support they secure — all prove this beyond the semblance of doubt.

One of the main achievements of the Second Five Year Plan has been the building of certain basic and heavy industries and the extension of the public sector. This has strengthened our economy and our national independence. Imperialists have never made a secret of their hostility to this policy.

What are the slogans of the parties of right reaction on economic matters? Significantly enough, they are the same as those of the imperialists.

In its Election Manifesto of 1957, the Jana Sangh assailed the Second Plan not for its *inadequacy* but for its being "*overambitious*", for its emphasis on heavy industries. It stated that State ownership of industries was "killing democracy".

Today its key slogan in relation to the public sector is "consolidation rather than extension" — the very slogan which was given by the U.S.-controlled World Bank Mission.

The Jana Sangh wants "abolition of the doctrinaire distinction between the public sector and the private sector". It wants the public sector to be confined to "defence industries" and "railways, mineral oils, hydro-electrical and atomic power". In all other spheres it would give a free hand to private businessmen.

The economic policies enumerated by the Swatantra are of the same type. It "rejects the lopsided priority given to heavy industry".

It wants to abolish even the present limited land reforms and "reverse all expropriatory measures which, among other things, deprive the present population of sound rural leadership" — in other words, the leadership of jagirdars and landlords.

The Swatantra would do away with the State Trading Corporation and even hand back life insurance companies to the private sector.

Of course, these and similar other parties know that on the basis of such slogans alone it is not possible to secure a mass base. Hence, they demagogically exploit all the failures of the Congress Government.

They thunder against corruption, condemn the rise in taxes and in prices, promise a "clean administration" and so on.

But all that cannot conceal the real character of these parties.

It is not fortuitious that the main strength of the Swatantra Party lies in the States where feudal relics are strong — Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, etc. Nor that the Janata Party of Bihar, a party of landlords, and the Ganathantra Parishad of Orissa, a party of former princes have "merged" with the Swatantra.

As for the Jana Sangh, it, too, gets substantial support from landlords, apart from what it is able to secure by whipping up communal passion.

COMMUNAL FORCES

"Communalism", Pandit Nehru said once, "bears a striking resemblance to various forms of fascism that we have seen in other countries. It is, in fact, the Indian version of fascism".

We wish he had remembered this during the "upsurge" in Kerala and the subsequent mid-term elections. Much evil would have been prevented thereby.

The Muslim League, which has been revived in several States thanks to what the Congress and PSP did in Kerala, has not merely contributed to the further intensification of communalism, it is doing incalculable damage to the Muslims themselves by giving a pretext to Hindu communalists.

The Akalis of Punjab are another disruptive force. Distorting the democratic content of the linguistic State demand, using gurdwaras for political purposes, raising the false issue of discrimination against Sikhs, they have disrupted the popular forces in Punjab and also given impetus to Hindu communalism.

Our Party resolutely opposes communalism of all brands and all shades — whether Hindu or Muslim or Sikh. Those who divide the masses on a religious basis, weaken the democratic movement and serve the interest of reaction. But this is not all.

No patriotic Indian, no democrat can view with unconcern the regrettable fact that in a number of States, especially where the Communist Party and the democratic movement are weak, there have been, in recent periods, a number of riots directed against the Muslim minority.

In practically all the places, the main force behind the communal carnage were leaders and members of the Jana Sangh.

The growth in the influence of the Jana Sangh in certain areas, especially Hindi-speaking areas, is an ominous phenomenon.

In its Election Manifesto of 1957, the Jana Sangh had openly proclaimed its objective as "nationalising all non-Hindus by inculcating in them the ideals of Bharatiya culture". This meant refusing to recognise as Indians all those who are not Hindus.

It was a virtual declaration of war on Muslims — a war whose pattern has been revealed in the ghastly events that took place in Bhopal, Jubbulpore, Saugor, Aligarh and other places.

The revulsion that this caused in the minds of all decent people has made the Jana Sangh leaders somewhat cautious — but in words only. In their present Manifesto, they have discreetly dropped the slogan of "nationalising all non-Hindus". On the contrary they talk of "our ideals of a secular State", they regret the "dragging of religion into politics". They have enrolled some Muslims in their party.

But the basic idea of "Bharatiya culture" of their own special brand is stressed in the new Manifesto as well. Moreover, their whole *practice* shows that they remain a party of aggressive communalism, a party of obscurantism and of opposition to all social reforms, a party hostile to democracy.

The Jana Sangh has declared that it considers our Party to be its "main enemy". Their General Secretary, Upadhyaya said that "the Jana Sangh might even support the Congress to ensure the defeat of the Communists". Also they would support PSP candidates against us for the same purpose.

We do not regret this declaration. On the contrary, we welcome it. We consider it a matter of honour that we are looked upon as enemy number one by this party and by other parties of blatant reaction.

BIG BUSINESS AND PARTIES OF RIGHT

The attitude that big business has adopted towards parties of right reaction is interesting indeed.

The *India Press Agency* of September 11 reported: "J. R. D. Tata, Chairman of the Tata Iron and Steel Company had written to the Prime Minister intimating him that although the Tatas would continue to donate to the election campaign fund

of the Congress they felt the need for the growth of a democratic opposition and hence would be donating to the Swatantra Party since, in their view, the Congress was not effectively fighting the Communist menace".

The politics behind this "double allegiance" was laid bare by several months ago. We said at the Vijayawada session of the Congress of our Party:

"It is known that some of the biggest patrons of the Congress also back the Swatantra. They support the Congress for what the Congress has done and is doing for them. Simultaneously, they try to build up the Swatantra as a weapon to pressurise the Congress and move it further to the right".

Similar is the line pursued by some of the most reactionary monopolists in relation to the Jana Sangh.

They want parties of reaction to grow. They want still closer link between the reactionaries inside and outside the Congress. They want the Communist Party to be dislodged from its position as the main party of opposition in the Parliament. Through all this they want reactionary pressure on the Government to mount.

PRAJA SOCIALIST SHIFT TO RIGHT

The Praja Socialists cannot be placed in the same category as these parties. The support that they enjoy in certain areas has been acquired mainly on the basis of left slogans.

Nevertheless, it has been noted by everyone that, blinded by their anti-Communism, the PSP has been shifting more and more to the right. It often joins hand with parties and forces of rank reaction.

Moreover, in relation to numerous popular struggles in almost every State, their role has been one of betrayal and disruption. On many matters, the policies that they pursue are more reactionary than those of the Congress.

Whatever socialist pretensions they had once, they have abandoned. In the sphere of foreign policy, they say they want a "genuine policy of non-involvement in power groups", "keeping out of military alliances". At the same time, they demand "political and defence collaboration among countries" of "South

and South East Asia" — which evidently includes such reactionary regimes as Thailand, Malaya and even Pakistan.

They keep silent over India's non-recognition of the German Democratic Republic and also of the revolutionary Government of Algeria.

They had not a word to say against the U.S.-sponsored invasion of Cuba. Their whole Manifesto never even mentions American imperialism. At the same time, they criticise the Government of India for "condoning international injustice" — evidently in relation to Tibet, which has always been an integral part of China.

Echoing the voice of the imperialists, the PSP had once frontally opposed the building of heavy and basic industries. (see *Democratic Socialism*, by Ashok Mehta). They cannot do so now openly. But that does not deter them from demanding in their Election Manifesto that "in the public sector, giant corporations should be split up". They are against what they call "modernist development".

They criticise the concessions given by the Government to "top business firms" but keep mum over the dangerous extent to which collaboration between Indian and foreign big business has grown. In fact, foreign monopoly capital is never even referred to by PSP leaders and spokesmen.

But what matters most is not what is written in the PSP Election Manifesto. Far more important is the stand that they take on various concrete issues.

Everyone knows the despicable role that the PSP played in Kerala — being the first party to enter into alliance with the Muslim League. This was justified on the plea that the League in Kerala was not "really communal".

One could understand it if even that stand was adhered to. One could even appreciate that stand being abandoned out of conviction. But as soon as the Congress decided to break its alliance with the Muslim League, and demanded that the PPS should do the same, the PSP forgot all about the "special character" of the Kerala Muslim League and lined up obediently behind the Congress.

Again, when Pattom Thanu Pillai ran into trouble with his Congress Ministerial colleagues, he at first declared that he

would not yield to their tactics of pressure. He said he was the Chief Minister and was determined to *act* as the Chief Minister. Ashok Mehta who visited Kerala also backed him in his high and mighty attitude.

But then, the Congress cracked the whip again. Many expected that the PSP Chief Minister would stand by his earlier declaration. Instead of that — "After a Cabinet meeting today, Pillai told press reporters, 'I have agreed to everything that the Congress Ministers wanted, for I want this Government to continue'.

"He added that another reason for his agreeing to share power was that the Congress-PSP alliance would have to fight the coming election to the Parliament together" (*Times of India News Service*, Trivandrum, November 21, 1961).

Comment would be superfluous. But one is tempted to ask: Could lack of self-respect, could utter servility and hankering after office and seats go any further?

Such is the example set by those who are never tired of sermonising to the Congress about the need for setting a "proper standard of public behaviour".

Inside the Parliament, on innumerable occasions, the PSP has taken a stand which has nothing to do with socialism or democracy.

Everyone remembers that when all democratic-minded people, including many Congressmen, reacted sharply to the shocking budget presented by Morarji Desai in March 1961, a budget which, while giving relief to the rich, heaped new burdens on the poor, Ashok Mehta indulged in glorification of the Finance Minister and "applauded him for his sound tactics".

Everyone also remembers that when General Thimayya, the Chief of the Army Staff, had the audacity to challenge the supremacy of the Parliament (August 1959) and tried to blackmail the Government by his threat of resignation, the PSP leaders, unmindful of all that they had said about democracy, "congratulated" Thimayya for his action and fully backed him.

In this, as on many other issues, their position was the same as that of the Swatantra and the Jana Sangh.

It can surprise no one, therefore, that in the Lok Sabha election from the North Bombay Constituency, the PSP, the Jana

Sangh and the Swatantra have joined hand to fight Krishna Menon. This shameful act is the culmination of the entire line pursued by the PSP a long period.

In relation to several mass struggles of crucial importance—the great food movement in W. Bengal, the anti-tax struggle in Uttar Pradesh, etc., the policy pursued by the PSP was one of betrayal and disruption.

They broke with the Leftist alliance in W. Bengal.

They broke with the Samyukta Maharashtra Samiti in Maharashtra.

By all this they aided the Congress. By hobnobbing with groups and factions in the Congress, by relying on this and on agreement with opportunists of various shades—the PSP expects that this time it would be able to do better than in the previous two elections.

Such is the fate that has overcome a party which once had the ambition of replacing the Congress in power.

Where abandonment of all principles and blind anti-Communism lead, can be seen from the present state of the PSP and the chronic crisis that plagues it — a crisis caused by no differences over policies but by the rivalry between various factions grouped round personalities.

POLICY OF COMMUNIST PARTY

In contrast to the parties of the right, we, Communists, combat the policies of the Government with a view to bring about a move to the left — towards democracy, social advance and consistent anti-imperialism.

No party in our country has opposed the anti-popular policies of the Government as we have done — both inside the legislatures and by mass action. At the same time, our opposition to the Government is not a blind, unprincipled opposition.

Whenever and wherever the Government has taken a position in conformity with the interest of the people, we have given it our unstinted support.

This applies not only to such broad issues as foreign policy, the public sector, need for heavy industries, etc., but also to specific matters.

When, for example, in face of General Thimayya's threat of resignation and his attempt to blackmail the Government, Nehru stood firm, asserting the supremacy of the Parliament, ours was the one party to back the Prime Minister fully.

Also, we were the first to stress the need for united action by all secular parties to check the forces of national disruption—a suggestion which found partial fulfilment in the National Integration Conference held in September.

The language formula adopted at that Conference is broadly on the same lines as advocated by us for a long time. Several other instances can be given.

Nevertheless, we maintain that fourteen years of experience have proved that the path of development chosen by the Congress cannot eliminate poverty and backwardness. It cannot ensure all-sided national advance. The question is not one of minor corrections here and there. It is a question of a *different path*.

ALTERNATIVE PATH

The alternative policies which we want the country to adopt have been elaborated in our Election Manifesto.

We advocate the ending of all exploitation of India's resources by foreign monopolists, the immediate transfer of land to the tiller, curb on monopoly, expansion of the public sector, a firm price policy, an equitable system of taxation and a living wage for workers.

We advocate protection of minority rights, promotion of national integration, extension of democracy and a more positive role by our country in the struggle for peace and against colonialism.

What can be done here and now in respect of all these matters, we have indicated in our Manifesto.

Socialism which has triumphed in one-third of the world has demonstrated its indisputed superiority over capitalism. Inevitably, in every country more and more people are gravitating towards socialism. India is no exception. Here, too, the ideas of socialism exercise powerful pull on the masses.

But socialism can be established only when the mass move-

ment reaches a high stage and power passes into the hands of a Government representing the toiling people. Such is not yet the situation in India. Hence, the immediate proposals which we have put forward are not socialist. But when implemented, they will strengthen the position of the masses, weaken the vested interests and create conditions for advance towards socialism. As such, we expect all those who are sincere about socialism, to support them.

The programme we place before the people is not just a catalogue of things which we shall do if people put us in power. It is a programme of unity and action. It is a programme on whose basis all patriotic and democratic forces in our country can unite.

OUR APPEAL

We appeal to the people to vote for us not only because of the policies which we preach but also and, above all, on the basis of what we have done to serve them and their cause. Our people, we know, appreciate our work, despite our many shortcomings. In two successive elections, they returned us as the main party of opposition in the Parliament. Our votes increased from 60 lakhs to 120 lakhs.

Moreover in 1957, in one State of India, Kerala, they gave us a majority of seats in the Assembly and enabled us to form the Government. What that Government did against heavy odds and within a short period of 28 months was a convincing demonstration that between the words and deeds of the Communists there is no divergence.

The formation of the Communist-led Government of Kerala helped the process of radicalisation in every part of the country. It helped progressive elements inside the Congress as well. The Nagpur Congress resolution on agrarian reforms—though later sabotaged—was, to a considerable extent, due to the example set by Kerala.

It cannot be considered an accident that whereas the Congress made a PSP leader, Thanu Pillai, the Chief Minister of Kerala, the entire might of the Congress was used to bring about the fall of the Communist-led Government.

Nor can it be considered an accident that, although all other forces joined hand against us, we polled 35 lakhs of votes in the mid-term elections as against 23 lakhs in 1957, thereby blowing up the story that people who had supported us earlier, had moved away from us. The very increase in our influence, especially among the most exploited strata of the people, showed that we did what we preached.

In no other State did we get a majority of seats. But we championed the cause of the people fearlessly in the State assemblies as well as in the Parliament. We have ever been in the forefront of every popular struggle. Simultaneously, we have striven to minimise strifes that weaken national unity. We have done everything in our power to protect minorities—whether religious or linguistic.

Dark forces of reaction are active both inside the Congress and outside to take our country backward. This can be countered not by marking time but by going forward. If the general elections result in strengthening the position of the Communist Party and of democratic forces in the legislatures—as we have every reason to believe will happen—the process of going forward will be facilitated greatly.

KEY SLOGANS

We enter the third general elections with three main slogans:

- Weaken the Congress monopoly of power;
- Rout the parties of right reaction;
- Strengthen the position of the Communist Party and of genuine democratic forces.

We seek the support of workers, peasants, toiling intelligentsia, artisans and other oppressed and exploited masses whose interest we have tried to serve to the best of our ability.

We seek the support of small and medium industrialists, traders, who, too, suffer from numerous disabilities under the present Government.

We seek the support of all patriotic-minded Indians.

We also seek the cooperation and support of Congressmen

and Congress masses who are loyal to the ideas which the Congress once proclaimed.

We go into the electoral battle with confidence in our people and in their judgement. We have no doubt that as the result of the Third General Elections, democracy in our country will be consolidated and further strengthened. We have no doubt that the increased strength of Indian democracy will enable India to play a still greater role in the world struggle for freedom and peace.