

I SITUATION DEMANDS OVERTHROW OF CONGRESS POWER

The destiny of the five hundred million people of this great country of ours hinges in no small measure on the outcome of the fourth general election. India must end her grinding poverty and her backwardness. She must make her freedom invincible, stronger and complete. She must ensure for her long-suffering people a joyous and happy life.

To achieve this, India has to abandon the discredited path of the congress regime and take a different road to bring about all-round material and cultural wellbeing of her people. Will the coming general election herald the opening of this new road?

This is the question that life has posed today before this great nation.

The three previous general elections in free India returned the Congress party to power. Once back in the seats of power, the Congress, however, always broke its faith with the people. The chequered record of the congress regime is studded with violated pledges, with evil deeds that belie its professions. Our people have now reached the limit of their endurance and in the coming general election they are called upon to settle account with those who have so cynically let the nation down. Our people are called upon not to return this Congress to power again.

For the sake of our country's future, the Congress party must be dislodged from power. It must be replaced by a popular democratic government representing the broad alliance of all democratic and progressive forces. Only then can a new leaf be turned in the life of this nation. Only then can this country

be taken out of the morass into which the Congress has landed it.

All objective conditions for the overthrow of the hated congress rule and for carrying forward the national democratic revolution to completion are now maturing as never before. The need of the hour is to forge the unity of all left and democratic forces and provide the unprecedented mass awakening of the day with a purposeful and bold leadership. Vast masses of our people deeply feel that this intolerable congress misrule must be ended here and now. The fourth general election in February 1967 comes to them as a challenge. Will they display the requisite political consciousness and stride forward to vote the Congress out of power?

The fourth general election takes place in a situation which is radically different from what prevailed at the time of the earlier three general elections. The electorate this time will go to the polls in the midst of an extremely critical economic situation and of a fast developing political crisis. The mood of the masses is unmistakably in favour of radical change.

The pre-election year of 1966 has witnessed the largest number of political strikes and bandhs. In defence of their wages, their rights and their living standards, the working people all over the country in their tens of millions have gone into massive political and economic actions. The middleclass employees have been drawn into such mass actions in ever greater numbers and in varied forms. One remarkable feature of the present-day mass upheaval is the country's student upsurge before which the barriers of so-called discipline have collapsed. The heroic student community has faced the fury of the Congress and the bullets of its police during the just struggle for much-needed but long-denied academic amenities so that the young boys and girls can get proper education, secure gainful employment and grow up as worthy citizens of our republic.

In rural India, the vast peasant masses, land-starved and stricken, are in a restless mood and in many places they too have moved into mass actions alongside the working people in the urban areas. What stands out in the life of the masses today is by no means their mute submission to tyranny and

injustices of the soulless congress regime, but their brave defiance and resistance on a scale never known before.

People's rightful protests and movements are, however, met with wanton police firings and orgies of police violence. Even the army is called out to put down legitimate popular protests. Leaders and workers of mass movements are imprisoned in thousands and not even members of Parliament and state assemblies are spared persecution and humiliation at the hands of the police. The country is ruled under an unwarranted emergency and under ordinances and bureaucratic fiat. Fundamental rights in the constitution stand suspended and are trampled underfoot. The draconic Defence of India Rules, Preventive Detention Act and various security acts and repressive laws, still continue to overshadow the ways of democracy and defile India's parliamentary system. The rule of law is undermined and there are increasing departures from the standards of parliamentary democracy.

The record of congress regime since the last general election five years ago has been one of dismal failures almost in every sphere of our national life. Our agriculture, especially food production, is stagnant, notwithstanding heavy financial outlays. Famine and near-famine conditions, largely the creation of man, stalk the land. Even at this moment, starvation deaths are taking place in Bihar and UP and other parts of the country and the government refuses even to declare them as famine areas. It is the greatest indictment that after 19 years of uninterrupted power, the Congress has failed to ensure even the minimum food requirements for the masses, who are either starving or live on the borderline of starvation.

Under congress rule the plunder of India's wealth by imperialist exploiters continues. Foreign private investments in our economy, which are a source of this loot, today amount to nearly Rs. 900 crores and every year tens of crores of rupees are siphoned off from this country by British and American monopolies. Add to this heavy foreign debts which the congress government has incurred. India is the biggest debtor among the newly-free countries; its external debts, mostly to the USA, stand around Rs. 5,000 crores, involving annual repayment liabilities in principal and interest of over Rs. 100 crores.

One reason for this staggering foreign debt is heavy food imports chiefly from the United States under PL-480 for which India has already had to spend well over Rs. 2,500 crores. Devaluation which has raised by a simple stroke of the pen our current and future foreign liabilities by 57.5 per cent has brought the country almost to the point of bankruptcy and made its economy extremely vulnerable to American blackmail and neo-colonial depredation.

The congress regime is unable to keep the industry running. Transport is in chaos and fatal accidents on the railways go on increasing.

The rate of growth in our national income has fallen and the rate of increase in per capita income has declined still further. The rupee has drastically lost its value due to runaway, sky-rocketing prices. People are groaning under crushing tax burdens. Rising prices, as well as taxes on the common man, are of course the inevitable result of congress government policies to fatten the millionaires and feed the greedy bureaucratic state machine. Plunder of the toiling people goes side by side with colossal but unchecked administrative waste.

The congress regime is now a hotbed of corruption. The source of this rampant corruption and graft is the unholy link-up between the congress ministers and congress leaders with the Birlas and other big business families as well as the corrupt top bureaucracy that thrives on bribery. Even the recent official disclosures in the cases of Punjab's Kairon, Orissa's Biju Patnaik and Biren Mitra, Kerala's Sankar, and Jammu and Kashmir's Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad, all of whom once held the office of the state chief ministers, as also about Jayanti Shipping, Aminchand Pyarelal, Ram Ratan Gupta family, etc., stand out as an unanswerable indictment of the corrupt congress regime.

The ruling Congress party is ridden with factions and power groups, each jockeying for position for self-aggrandisement. Their aim is to utilise the huge funds that flow under the five-year plans to build themselves up, as well as their bourgeois-landlord circles, into thriving capricious millionaires. Every ministry is disorganised and disrupted by internal rivalries, by graft and corruption. The leadership of the Congress party and the government has lost its prestige and it has no moral stature

at all. The awe and terror in which the state machine seeks to hold the people is gradually ceasing to frighten them. All these years the congress rulers have been pampering the reactionary monopolies. They are now making prodigious concessions to American imperialists. This line of appeasement and surrender has been lately climaxed by the blackest national betrayal since independence—DEVALUATION.

Devaluation has not solved a single problem. On the contrary, it has aggravated the crisis and has brought the country to a terrible pass. The ignominious surrender of the congress rulers to US imperialists over this dictated devaluation has only whetted their appetite further and emboldened them. So these imperialist exploiters have now intensified their drive to fasten the yoke of neo-colonialism upon our country.

American imperialists are today out to exploit the hunger of our people in order to cripple and sabotage our economy in crucial sectors. They are out to destroy our independence and humiliate our country. American interference in our internal affairs has already assumed most disturbing proportions. Our independence is clearly threatened.

For the present critical and dangerous situation, the responsibility must rest squarely on none else but the ruling Congress party. It is obvious that the crisis cannot be overcome and a better future ensured without defeating the Congress at the coming polls. Only the defeat of this party and its ouster from the governments, both at the centre and in the states, and their replacement by coalition governments of all democratic and left parties, determined to use state power against the Indian monopolists and landlords and imperialists, and for improving the living conditions of the masses can take the country out of the present encircling gloom and set it on the road to unhindered rapid progress. Only such a democratic government imbued with the spirit of service to the nation and to the masses, can truly safeguard and strengthen the independence of the country, enhance its political prestige and reinforce its military strength. Only with such a government in charge of national affairs can India play her part in full measure in championing the cause of world peace, democracy, freedom

and anti-colonialism. Only then can a true national resurgence find its sweep.