

TALL CLAIMS BUT GROSS BETRAYALS

The failures of the congress regime are so glaring that even congress leaders could not help confessing them. But such occasional admissions on their part, as well as their assurance to remedy things are only a tactical manoeuvre to hoodwink the masses and retain themselves in power. The congress leadership refuses to see that these failures are the offspring of its policies. Instead, it attributes them to causes beyond its control or to the apathy of the people and the malevolence of the opposition parties.

As the crisis in our economy grows deeper and the capitalist methods to checkmate it fail, as prices keep on rising and scarcity becomes acuter, the leadership of the Congress party and its ministerial mouthpieces go on repeating that they are not responsible for the failures. They put forward their own fake reasons to explain away the acts of omission and commission of congress misrule. What is more, they name and parade three main achievements to seek credit for themselves and for the government under their control. But such manoeuvres today would deceive none.

The congress rulers vainly attempt to justify rising prices, high taxes and shortfall in supplies of food and other essential goods by saying that all these have become inescapable on account of the two wars which India has had to fight against aggressive neighbours. They contend that these two wars have severely strained the finances of the country and upset and unbalanced the normal course of production.

Second, they argue that India has suffered drought for two successive years causing widespread and severe loss of crops and human suffering in vast areas of the country.

Third, the congress leaders bemoan the fact that the expected foreign aid from the west is not coming.

So, in their view the wrath of foreign aggressors, the wrath

of the god and the wrath of the dollar-givers lie at the root of the present crisis but not congress policies. How can one, the congress bosses argue, then hold the congress regime responsible?

These alibis are false to the core and they certainly are not the main factors which have created the present crisis and mass misery.

The two wars which were forced upon our country barely lasted one month each and only certain limited parts of the country became the theatres of war.

These two brief wars doubtless led to the diversion of our national resources. But if one were to compare the financial resources of about Rs. 9,000 crores raised during the last five years from the people and the cost of Rs. 3,400 crores in defence expenditure, the two wars could not be held as the major cause for the crisis in our economy. The economy was already unbalanced and the two war episodes only made it more so. The congress government deliberately exaggerated the consequences of India's conflict with China and Pakistan only to cover up the failure of its policies.

The drought certainly stares the nation in the face today. But it is futile to explain it and its aftermath merely as an act of god. There has been enough food production in the country to provide the minimum ration to the populace and the preceding years also saw better harvests. The government failed to procure and preserve the stocks and, in fact, allowed them to pass into the hands of hoarders and profiteers, who are today backed by the monopoly-controlled banks. This anti-social crime was encouraged in a hundred and one ways by the congress rulers. These merchants of famine and death stand between the hungry people and their food. So it is not the anger of an unkind god but the insatiable greed of the demons of money and their allies, the congress rulers, who have to answer for mass starvation.

The failure to secure the necessary external aid from the west was again neither accidental nor unforeseen. This is the price the nation today is paying for its abject dependence on the so-called US economic 'aid'. The present foreign exchange

crisis and hold-up of even the promised 'aid' from the west are an upshot of the congress policies. The congress government has surrendered our national self-respect and abandoned the path of self-reliance to placate US and other imperialist monopolists and offer new opportunities for unrestrained profit-hunt to the Indian big business. How could then the present crisis in foreign economic aid be regarded as something beyond the control of the congress government?

The Communist Party of India has always warned against imperialist 'aid'. But the Congress party, wedded to capitalism, banked heavily on the US 'aid'. The machinations of the Americans during the Indo-Pak war gave yet another fresh warning about American intentions. There was also some talk of starting a movement for self-reliance in those days but Indian and foreign monopolists joined hands in nipping the self-reliance move in the bud. So, it is not so much the wrath of the dollar as the love for it of the present congress rulers that has landed the congress government and its economic policies in the present bewildering chaos and crisis.

These specious pleas therefore offer no explanation at all to exculpate the present congress regime. On the contrary, these excuses would indeed condemn it further.

The disaster that has overtaken the country today is the inevitable creation of the capitalist class-policies, inspired and guided, above all, by monopoly interests. Capitalism solves no problem; it makes things worse.

Now about the tall and empty claims of their achievements!

Their first achievement is that they have carried out the 'real beginning of an industrial and a scientific revolution' in a country which had been left backward by a long colonial domination.

Their second claim is that they had given to the people social services and education such as never known before in this country.

Their third self-eulogy is that they have built a democratic secular welfare state, whose roots reach down to the village panchayat and whose beneficial role is felt all over the world through India's policy of peace and nonalignment.

They ask: Why should not the Congress then be returned to power again to continue and carry forward these achievements?

Here the congress leadership is telling only half-truths. In the First Five-Year Plan they had no scheme of heavy industry. Such projects were undertaken only under the Second Five-Year Plan and that, too, when the Soviet Union and other socialist countries offered our country the vital iron and steel plant and machine-building and other units. It is well known that only when the imperialists refused to give India assistance for such heavy industries in the state sector did this congress government turn to seek socialist aid.

Big plants in various industries have no doubt come up mainly with the assistance from the Soviet Union and other socialist countries. But practically none of them have fulfilled their production targets. These plants are left in the inept hands of bureaucrats who sabotage their growth and production. These bureaucrats are under the influence of Indian monopolists who are openly advocating even denationalisation of our public sector industries. They are sometimes also under the influence of imperialist monopolists or their agencies who want to wreck our public sector industries.

Huge factories built at the expense of people's money are in most cases running at a loss and some of them at least, like the Durgapur mining machine plant, are lying idle because the Indian monopolists would not buy the public sector products nor would the government compel them to do so. On the contrary, licences are issued to import from the west what is produced and available in our own state-owned undertakings. No wonder even the comparatively better-run HMT depends on imports.

Most of our defence equipment manufactured in this country is dependent on foreign components. Not one car, truck or electronic product is wholly Indian. Yet the country has good scientists, technicians and skilled labour. The attitude of servile dependence on the part of the ruling bureaucrats on foreign 'expertise' prevents full utilisation and growth of indigenous

talent. Many of our best scientists and technicians are often obliged to leave the country in search of better opportunities in foreign lands. The accursed congress regime, run by British-trained ICS and their IAS successors, will not allow our industry, science and technique to develop in full measure. What could have been an industrial revolution has stultified and wilted under the corrupt and monopoly-ridden congress regime.

Good machines are there and so are skilled workers to operate them. But the machines and scientific and technical talent that we possess are not duly harnessed to production for the benefit of the people. Between the machines and the trained personnel stands the unimaginative, wooden-headed congress regime. That is why industrial revolution in the country today is inconceivable without the removal of this deadweight of congress rule.

Moreover, industrialisation is unthinkable without radical reorganisation of our agriculture. But here the failure of the congress government has been singularly criminal. It has failed to provide land to the tiller of the soil. There exists a terrible concentration of land in the hands of a small number of landlords while the vast masses of peasantry go without land or fixed tenures. This has resulted in a low rate of growth in our agriculture and particularly in food production. The upshot is that India, despite her vast resources in land and manpower, is precariously dependent on US food doles.

Even timely water supply through irrigation projects or energised tubewells has not been assured to the peasants. Hundreds of crores have been spent. But there is no network of channels or pumps. Nor is there the minimum provision for electricity. This puts the peasant at the mercy of the vagaries of nature.

There is much talk of fertilisers to be used in order to give a spurt to agricultural production. US monopolists are being invited to build fertiliser factories on their own terms, with a free hand to settle the question of prices, profits and the like.

The agrarian policy of the Congress has led to food scarcity and brought the country to the brink of famine. This policy has resulted in a shortage of raw materials and created indus-

trial stagnation. The remedy, however, is sought in still larger deliveries of foodstuffs and other agricultural goods mainly under PL-480.

What about social services and education?

If the lakhs of people sleeping on the pavements and living in slums in the big industrial cities are an index of 'social services', then the congress government can surely claim credit for the slums and for the police attacks including shootings to silence the slum-dwellers. If these slums are a disgrace to our great country, it is not because of any shortage of housing materials and resources. Slums exist because the congress regime is not the least concerned about the inhuman conditions and cruelty of slum life. Slums exist because there is the landlord grip over homestead urban land and the congress government permits building materials recklessly to be used for construction of huge buildings of the government and millionaires and the moneyed few.

If the appalling shortage of hospitals, with their overburdened, ill-paid staff, and high prices of medicines, want of drinking water in lakhs of villages are an index of achievement and success, then the congress government can certainly claim credit for the sickness and epidemics that drive millions to disease and death.

If sickness insurance for workers or life insurance for the public is talked about as an achievement, then the Congress needs to be reminded that these insurances provide more funds to the government for its investments as well as to the profit-hunters than security of life and living to the needy millions.

If the congress government claims credit for the fact that the number of students has risen from 24 million in 1950 to 68 million in 1966, it has to answer to the charge that the performance has fallen far short of what the directive principles of the constitution have enjoined about elimination of illiteracy.

Where education of some sort is imparted, it is done so primarily with the object of herding our youth into offices and factories for the profit of the capitalist class and for running this capitalist state machine. The congress regime has done nothing to equip our young generation with any positive, creative ideology. Nor has it placed before them any mission

or any inspiring perspective or vision. On the contrary, the congress regime is causing spiritual and ideological degradation to the youth of this country.

Nepotism and corruption in the management of our schools and other academic institutions have become rampant. There is a wide gulf between the well-equipped schools and colleges to which only the children of the rich have access and the ill-equipped 'education shops' which are meant for the sons and daughters of the poor. Boys and girls coming from the poorer sections of the community and backward classes find it extremely difficult to reach the higher stages of learning, especially in science and technology. The cost is prohibitive and the scope limited. The fate of our teachers is hardly any better. Their emoluments are in most cases abysmally low and the conditions in which they live and work are equally uncongenial.

The result is that in sheer frustration students vent their anger on school buildings or the rotten bus service or an unpopular head of the university.

Who are responsible for this, if not the congress regime and its policies of building capitalism?

The third big claim of the Congress party is that it has given India a democratic constitution, a stable and democratic administration, a secular state and a progressive foreign policy. Free India has no doubt a constitution in which certain fundamental rights are enshrined. But every such right stands today grossly violated. While millions are denied the right to work and living which the constitution, at least in theory, promises, a small minority of capitalists and landlords concentrate in their hands the means of production, distribution and exchange. On account of their entrenched positions in our economy, the monopolists, speculators, big traders, landlords and the like are in a position to hold the entire society to ransom. They dictate prices as they like, create artificial shortages and spell out starvation and unemployment for the millions.

One of the most blatant violations of the principles and mandates of our constitution will be seen in respect of article 39. Instead of checking the concentration of wealth the congress regime has allowed concentration of both wealth and economic power to grow enormously in the recent period. The report of

the official monopolies commission has highlighted the fact that 75 top business houses, with the Tatas and Birlas at the apex, control the bulk of the nation's wealth. Yet the congress government, ever faithful to the capitalist class, refuses to nationalise banks and other monopoly concerns and break up the anti-social monopoly houses.

While those who thrive on hoarding and profiteering enjoy all personal freedom and amenities, those who oppose or expose these exploiters are, however, often imprisoned and detained without trial. While those who express political dissent from the ruling party and its policies are persecuted and clapped behind prison-bars, those who preach communal hatred, suppress the minorities, organise fascist gangs are shielded.

Even the supreme court of the country has pleaded helplessness and inability to protect the citizen's personal liberty and fundamental rights against the onslaughts of the congress regime. Not content with the DIR and Preventive Detention Act, the congress rulers are now using the provisions of the Criminal Procedure Code and the IPC to obstruct and suppress people's lawful agitation. Recently the congress government has pushed through a legislation in Parliament in order to deprive policemen of their constitutional right to form trade unions. Government Servants' Conduct Rules are used for witch-hunt against employees for suppressing normal trade union activities. Democracy under this congress regime means—for the ruling class to rule and exploit; for the toiling people to serve and to be exploited, ruled and starved. That is the double-faced democracy of the capitalist order which the Congress party has foisted upon the people of our country.

Formally, of course, the congress government is elected on the basis of adult franchise. And it will be not denied that the voter is free to vote, at least in theory. But the ruling party and the capitalist and landlord classes have at their command all the effective means such as money, press, platform, radio, etc., to carry on their propaganda and deceive the masses. The ruling Congress party has the state power and state apparatus at its disposal to threaten and intimidate the voter and create impediments for the opposition. Big money is used for all manner of corrupt electoral practices. This is how by coercion

and bribery they make a mockery of free and fair elections and gather votes for themselves. Only in the midst of highest political upsurge and mass activity do these evil practices fail to achieve their objectives of rigging elections.

In spite of its control of state power, the Congress party has never secured the majority of votes in any national general election. Thanks to the absence of proportional representation, the Congress, however, succeeded in securing for itself overwhelming majority of the seats in the Lok Sabha and state assemblies. This basically undemocratic arrangement has enabled the Congress to rule the country all these years even though the majority of the voters have every time recorded their verdict against it.

The working of the state machine does not even reflect the opinion fully expressed in Parliament. The administration is run by virtually irremovable bureaucrats alien to the ways of democracy or ethics of good public life. These top bureaucrats have become power-centres and they are in a position even to bypass and deceive our legislatures. Hundreds of key positions in government services and in all departments are filled by proteges, sympathisers and even agents of foreign imperialists, particularly US Central Intelligence Agency and American monopolists.

In spite of India's friendly relations and economic cooperation with the Soviet Union and other socialist countries, which are undoubtedly very beneficial to our nation, the congress rulers restrict the scope of this cooperation under pressure of Indian and foreign monopolists and rely heavily on imperialist 'aid' even at the cost of national self-respect and paramount national interests.

The inconsistencies and vacillations that arise from this dependence are seen in the want of firm opposition to the American war of aggression in Vietnam and firm support to the fight for liberation of the Vietnamese people. It is seen in the refusal to extend full diplomatic recognition to the German Democratic Republic for fear of West German and US displeasure. It is seen in the hesitation to make our defence system completely independent of imperialist armaments and advisers. It is seen in the readiness to take American aid with

its highly dictatorial and dangerous strings and to open the whole country to massive US penetration. It is seen in the hesitation to explore all avenues of peaceful settlement of the India-China border dispute, notwithstanding the continued hostile attitude of China.

Such in brief is the picture of the abysmal failures of the Congress party to nurture this great nation of ours into a prosperous, fearless, freedom-loving democracy of five hundred million people free from the debasement and atrocities of monopoly capital and semi-feudal remnants and unpatriotic, anti-people bureaucrats.

In spite of its failure, the congress leadership refuses to give up its capitalist path. In arrogant and yet pitiful manner, it appeals to the people 'to work hard and eat less', 'to save and be austere' and finally, to be prepared to go through 'hell and fire', to quote from prime minister's broadcast on June 15, 1966 after the devaluation sell-out.

Happily the people are not prepared to go through it. On the contrary, they want this evil Congress to go to hell!

III

UNITED FRONT OF LEFT AND DEMOCRATIC FORCES: OUR ALTERNATIVE

The Communist Party of India does not rest content with merely offering criticism of the congress regime. It is leading the toiling masses into militant actions to defend their day-to-day interests as also the larger interests of the nation. Our party would, however, like to point out that the capitalist solution to the crisis which the ruling party proposes can only further hit the masses and worsen the economic situation. The real solution has to be found in resolute anti-imperialist, anti-monopolist and popular, democratic measures.

Our party has been in the forefront of the struggles of the working people, the middle classes, the students, the working peasantry for their economic and political demands. Our party has taken the lead in mobilising the democratic masses against the devaluation treachery; it has bent all its energies to build