

# WORK FOR CONGRESS-LEAGUE AGREEMENT

(Manifesto of the Communist Party of India for Unity Week,  
November 1-7-1942)

The Communist Party of India, in this solemn hour of our country's destiny, reminds all fellow-fighters for freedom of the glorious heritage of 1920-21, of Hindu-Muslim unity, when in the fire of common experience, through common sufferings, in the common cause of freedom we learnt that our united might is invincible.

Who will dare stand in the way of Indian freedom when the masses of our two great communities stand united, when the great organisations of the Congress and the Muslim League join in a united front on a common programme of defending the existence of our ancient nation and winning its freedom?

This simple truth we can ignore only at our peril. The sooner we own it the faster we will realise our national responsibility, and go forward to discharge our patriotic duty.

The Japanese Fascists are pitiless and powerful enemies. In the holy defence of our Motherland, we shall have to mobilise every able-bodied son of our great people, give him a rifle and a stout heart. We need the all-embracing unity of our people and boundless courage in every breast.

Can an alien bureaucracy create such a front of unity? NO! Its very existence depends upon our disunity; its only strength is our division; its way is to keep us divided, play brother against brother.

Can an alien bureaucracy inspire such courage in our people! NO, NEVER! It only knows how to suppress our people. It hates the patriot-heroes as enemies. It encourages the careerists who love themselves and not their people, who would serve it and forsake the people.

Can an alien bureaucracy command the patriotism of the people and lead them into the battle of India? NEVER, NEVER, NEVER! Its relation with our people is

that of master and slave. Under the banner of patriotism, our awakened people have fought it for elementary rights and to be masters in our own country. It cannot talk in the name of patriotism, it only knows how to crush our patriotism. It cannot mobilise our people, it only knows how to drive them about like cattle.

All self-respecting Indians, except the craven and the contemptible few, recognise that India needs here and now a Provisional National Government, manned by the trusted leaders of India, of the National Congress, and the Muslim League and of the other patriotic parties. All see that such, and such a Government alone can set aglow in each of the 400 million hearts of the Indian people, the fire of patriotism, which alone will make a total national resistance to the foreign invader possible.

Hindus and Muslims can never unite! Gandhiji and Jinnah Saheb will not even sit in the same room! Thus, whisper the evil tongues of the alien bureaucrats, the enemies of our people. Thus speak those who arrested Gandhiji and the Congress leaders. They do so because they do not want to see them united. They know that the unity of the Congress and the League will be the end of their privileged rule, of a handful of foreign bureaucrats: lording it over our vast country, of a soulless and thoughtless regime which today has become the millstone round the neck of our people.

We can and must unite. Only liars and defeatists amongst us repeat the phrases of the enemy and say Congress-League unity is impossible. Do not the Muslim masses want Gandhiji and the Congress leaders released? They do! Do not the overwhelming majority of Congressmen and Hindus want to live peacefully with their Muslim brethren, grant their just demands and get their co-operation for the common national demand? Certainly they do!

Instead of national unity we are in the grip of a national crisis. On the one hand the imperialist rulers, refusing to part with power are attacking the national movement embodied in the Congress. On the other, enraged patriots are destroying the means of national defence in the name of national freedom. In this clash and conflict, the country is going to pieces.

The very experience of the national crisis is turning the face of our people towards national unity as the only way out of the crisis and towards victory.

More and more people, both Hindus and Muslims, participants, and non-participants, are beginning to see that the campaign of sabotage and anarchy helps only

the bureaucracy to mow us down, helps only the foreign invader by clearing the path for his advance.

More and more they see that continued Government repression only feeds the fire that is destroying the nation's strength, the people's morale and the actual means of defence, that only the coming invader can profit thereby.

More and more they have begun to see that the only way out of this vicious circle is Congress-League agreement to man an All-Parties' National Government of National Defence and National Salvation.

Such an agreement incorporating the united will of the Indian people to shoulder the responsibility of defending their country, in alliance with the United Nations, through their own Government, is itself the mightiest sanction which the Indian people have ever forged. It will force the imperialist rulers to bend before the united will of the Indian nation and hand over our country to us, to be defended by us as our own.

Such an agreement will immensely strengthen the hands of the progressive sections of the peoples of the United Nations, and above all, inside Britain itself, who want the co-operation of the Indian people in the war against the Fascist aggressors and advocate settlement with Indian patriotic political parties.

Such an agreement will completely encircle the handful of imperialist reactionaries, who in their blind greed to hold on to our beloved Motherland as their coveted colony, are actually playing with the fate of our people as well as their own. Such an agreement will seal their doom, end the era of British Raj over India and usher in the period of Indian Swaraj and of brotherly alliance between the Indian and the British people as equal partners in the grand alliance of the freedom-loving United Nations.

How to get Congress-League Agreement? The Congress leaders are in jail, the Congress is under ban and the League leadership is not taking the initiative. The people need national unity as they do bread and water. Our fate and future depends upon it. Without unity, there is no alternative to blind destruction today as there will be none to catastrophe and death when the Fascist invasion begins. This grim realisation must inspire our patriotic will for unity.

Where there is a will, there is a way. The people can and must find it. The leaders can be made to move and they will respond if those who are already fanatically convinced about the immediate need and urgency for unity begin rallying the people in ever larger numbers behind the slogan of Congress-League Unity.

Difficulties can and must be surmounted. They pale into nothingness before the need for unity.

For centuries we have lived together in this common Motherland of ours. We have enriched each other's culture, language and the arts. Now we are faced with a common peril; total destruction of all that we hold dear at the hands of the Fascist aggressor. The bureaucracy won't let us man our own defence and have our own Government which will have the confidence of our entire people. Must we not get together for our very existence?

Defence of the Motherland—is it not our common concern?

National Government of National Salvation—is that not our common need and immediate aim?

Must we not unitedly force back the imperialist bureaucracy and take our destiny in our own hands.

Is it not in our joint interests that our country takes its place alongside world democracy and the Islamic world?

And when we both want to fight for a free India, can we not agree what that free India would be like? All already agree that it won't be freedom if it did not ensure that no nationality or community could oppress another.

The two organisations which together command the confidence of the overwhelming majority of the Hindu and Muslim masses have moved towards each other, very nearly towards a common understanding. The League in its Bombay Working Committee meeting has tried to allay the Congress fear that it is not serious about the national demand by reiterating the goal of complete independence and supporting the demand of really responsible National Government if the Muslim demand is guaranteed. The Congress in its Bombay A.I.C.C. resolution has tried to allay Muslim fears by pledging complete autonomy to the federating units and residuary powers.

The logical culmination of this mutual reorientation, of the League thinking and acting more and more in common national terms, of the Congress becoming in word and practice, more and more considerate to Muslim fears and interests, can only be a Congress-League agreement. There is no other way out for either organisation, in their own and common interests. Speed up the process, this is the call of common patriotism.

The position of the Communist Party is clear and emphatic. We declare that in a free India, all nationalities, Muslims or otherwise, having a contiguous territory as their homeland, common language, culture, common economic life and psychological make-up must have the right

to form sovereign states which will come together in a joint Indian Federation or Union. Each unit must have the right to secede if it so desired.

Our stand has been welcomed by the Muslim Leaguers but the latter hold back because they doubt if the Congress will accept it. Most of the Congressmen are prepared to come up to autonomous provinces with a sovereign status, but they are not prepared to go so far as we do because they do not yet trust the Muslim League.

We are confident, an abiding solution of the communal problem, achievement of Congress-League agreement is possible only on the basis we advocate. Our solution is based on justice, the same undying principle on which the battle of Indian freedom is based—of self-determination. The freedom we claim for our country as a whole must be extended to all the nationalities that inhabit our vast land. The edifice of a free India can only be built on the basis of people's consent and not through coercion of the weak or the backward. We have no doubt that a free India will also be a United India, the Hindu and Muslim masses having fought together the greatest common battle will not fall apart in the hour of victory but get ever closer together to build a common destiny grander than we have ever known before.

Our ardent appeal to the Muslim Leaguers is: your right of self-determination will remain on paper if you do not intervene in the national crisis. Hindus, Muslims and all will pass from under British domination to Jap slavery if you let the situation drift. The harder you work for the release of the Congress leaders, the more unequivocal your support to the national demand, the more ardently you work for Congress-League agreement, the easier it will be to get the Congress to accept willingly and enthusiastically the right of self-determination. The Congress is in jail, you are free. You discharge your patriotic responsibility and none will be able to deny you your just right.

Our appeal to Congressmen is: destruction of national defence and anarchy against the people, is not the path to National Government but national suicide. The shortest cut to National Government is Congress-League agreement. Appeal to the patriotism of the Muslim brethren, concede their just demand for self-determination and such a mighty United National Front of the Indian battle will emerge which will sweep everything before it, the British bossdom of the present will become a nightmare of the past, and our 400 millions will stand arrayed in an unbreakable front for Indian freedom, for world humanity. Let us have faith in our own brother patriots, confidence in

the sound instincts of our own people. Congress-League agreement comes the sooner, the harder you work for it. This time the move for unity cannot fail, it is the existence of all that is at stake. Through disunity common death or through unity common salvation. These alone are the alternatives.

The Communist Party of India appeals to Leaguers, Congressmen and to all to join hands with it for a mass unity campaign to bring together the Hindu and Muslim masses for urgent and common demands.

- STOP REPRESSION
- RELEASE THE CONGRESS LEADERS
- CONGRESS-LEAGUE AGREEMENT NOW
- FOR NATIONAL GOVERNMENT OF NATIONAL DEFENCE

To work for Congress-League unity is to put our patriotism into practice. To hold back and find fault with the Congress or the League is to nurse a grudge against your own brother, indulge in phrase-mongering when the situation is too grave for words, do nothing to rescue the country from the mad hands of the imperialist bureaucrats, and do nothing to resist the Fascist aggressors.

The Communist Party of India is pledged to campaign for Congress-League agreement:

- in every village and tehsil
  - in every town and city
  - inside every college and office
- wherever a Communist lives and works.

FORWARD TO UNITY  
ONWARD TO VICTORY!

## APPENDIX

### Population Figures Of Muslims In Majority Areas ( 1931 Census )

| Contiguous Districts where Muslims are above 50% | Muslim population: percentage of the total | Contiguous Districts where Muslims are above 50% | Muslim population: percentage of the total |
|--|--|--|--|
| <b>I. PUNJAB (Western Districts)</b>             |  | <b>II. BENGAL (Eastern Districts)</b>            |  |
| 1. Lahore ...                                    | 59.9                                       | 1. Nadia ...                                     | 61.6                                       |
| 2. Sialkot ...                                   | 62.1                                       | 2. Murshidabad ...                               | 55.5                                       |
| 3. Gujranawalla ...                              | 70.7                                       | 3. Jessore ...                                   | 62.0                                       |
| 4. Shaikpura ...                                 | 54.8                                       | 4. Rajshahi ...                                  | 75.7                                       |
| 5. Gujrat ...                                    | 63.7                                       | 5. Rangpur ...                                   | 71.0                                       |
| 6. Shahpur ...                                   | 82.3                                       | 6. Bogra ...                                     | 83.5                                       |
| 7. Jhe um ...                                    | 89   | 7. Pabna ...                                     | 76.9                                       |
| 8. Rawalpindi ...                                | 82.3                                       | 8. Malda ...                                     | 54.2                                       |
| 9. Attock ...                                    | 91   | 9. Dacca ...                                     | 69.8                                       |
| 10. Mianwali ...                                 | 87   | 10. Mymensingh ...                               | 76.8                                       |
| 11. Montgomery ...                               | 69.1                                       | 11. Faridpur ...                                 | 65.1                                       |
| 12. Lyallpur ...                                 | 62.5                                       | 12. Bakargunj (Barisal) ...                      | 72.4                                       |
| 13. Jhang ...                                    | 83.1                                       | 13. Tippera ...                                  | 76.0                                       |
| 14. Muzaffarpur ...                              | 86.5                                       | 14. Noakhali ...                                 | 76.5                                       |
| 15. Dera Gazikhan ...                            | 86.1                                       | 15. Chittagong ...                               | 76.7                                       |
| 16. Biloch Transfrontier ...                     | Track 99.9                                 | 16. Sylhet (Assam) ...                           | 59.2                                       |
| 17. Multan ...                                   | 80.2                                       |  |  |
| <b>III. SIND</b>                                 |  | <b>IV. NORTH-WEST FRONTIER</b>                   |  |
| 1. Karachi ...                                   | 71.3                                       | 1. Hazara ...                                    | 95.0                                       |
| 2. Hyderabad ...                                 | 69.5                                       | 2. Peshawar ...                                  | 92.2                                       |
| 3. Nawanshah ...                                 | 76.0                                       | 3. Kohat ...                                     | 92.4                                       |
| 4. Larkhana ...                                  | 83.3                                       | 4. Bannu ...                                     | 87.9                                       |
| 5. Sukkur ...                                    | 70.0                                       | 5. Dera Ismail Khan ...                          | 86.0                                       |
| 6. Thar Parkar ...                               | 52.5                                       |  |  |
| 7. Upper Sind Frontier ...                       | 89.9                                       |  |  |
| <b>V. BALUCHISTAN</b>                            |  |  |  |
| 1. British Baluchistan ...                       | 87.0                                       | 2. Baluchistan States ...                        | 97.5                                       |