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*Some Questions  
of Party Policy*

*by*  
**Ajoy Ghosh**

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COMMUNIST PARTY PUBLICATION

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*SOME QUESTIONS  
OF PARTY POLICY*

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COMMUNIST PARTY OF INDIA

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## OPENING SPEECH

**At the Extended Meeting of the West Bengal State Committee of the Communist Party of India, November 3, 1955.**

THE FOURTH PARTY CONGRESS will be a major event in the history of the Party. It will have to settle and clinch a number of questions which have arisen and over which there is controversy. It will have to work out the new tactical line of the Party.

The purpose of the pre-Congress discussions is not merely for everybody to state dogmatically his point of view and cling to it. The main effort should be to understand one another, to try to learn from one another and in this way to arrive at unified understanding. The past history of the Party has shown that nobody in the Party can lay claim to a monopoly of wisdom or truth. On many occasions, different comrades expressed different aspects of the truth, partial aspects of the total situation. This lesson from our past history should be borne in mind in our present discussions.

I shall speak today on the Political Resolution of the Central Committee and also on the Amendments to the Party Programme which the CC adopted in its September 1955 meeting. Criticism has been made that the Amend-

ments to the Programme should have been adopted first and in the light of these amendments and the understanding of the Programme, a tactical resolution drawn up. I think that this criticism is correct. But comrades should remember the situation at the time of the June CC meeting, when some pressing current problems had to be attended to, like our attitude towards the Plan-frame. Further, the Programme itself could not be amended unless we discussed certain current developments.

In my speech I shall first take up the amendments to the Party Programme.

### **ROLE OF THE PROGRAMME**

Comrades are familiar with the history of the Party Programme; so I will not go into the details. We all know how it was a product of prolonged inner-Party discussion and what role it played in unifying the Party at a time when very serious differences existed. There is no doubt also that the adoption of the Programme armed our comrades for the last General Elections and contributed in a considerable measure to the success of the Party in those elections.

Differences did arise inside the Party but they were resolved on the basis of the formulations made in the Programme. Many such differences were thus resolved. But in the period after Madurai differences arose on important political questions which could not be settled on the basis of the formulations in the Programme. It became clear that certain changes in the situation had taken place which the formulations in the Programme did not cover. These changes relate to the foreign policy of the government, to the status of India and to a lesser extent to some aspects of the internal situation.

In this background, two tendencies manifested themselves. One was the tendency to judge every current formulation made by the CC in the light of the formulations in the Programme and to condemn it if it ran contrary to those in the Programme. This was specially marked with regard to the foreign policy of the government of India and with regard to Indian independence. The other tendency amounted to a repudiation of the entire Programme in the name of changes.

Both these tendencies had to be combated. The CC felt that certain changes had to be made while at the same time retaining the essence of the Programme. There was general agreement in the Party on this but then it was necessary to define this essence.

### **ESSENCE OF THE PROGRAMME**

The Programme defined the stage and tasks of our revolution. It defined the revolution as an anti-imperialist, anti-feudal revolution with the agrarian revolution as its basis.

It laid down the strategy and class alliance for this stage, i.e., an alliance of all anti-imperialist, anti-feudal classes, including the national bourgeoisie, with the united front of working class and peasantry as its core.

At the same time, the Programme gave a general tactical guidance also. It pointed out that this revolution had to proceed along the line of struggle against the general policies of the government. It contained a trenchant critique of these general policies and characterised them as reactionary and anti-people. The Programme was, therefore, permeated with a revolutionary, uncompromising spirit of struggle. This also was an essential feature of the Programme.

The CC felt that this essence of the Programme had to be preserved intact while making the amendments.

### **CATEGORIES OF AMENDMENTS**

The amendments that have been adopted by the CC fall into three broad categories.

First, there were some verbal amendments modifying certain formulations in the Programme which could create some misunderstanding. Take the very opening sentence of the original Programme. This may convey the impression that the present government was established by the will of the British, that it is some sort of subservient and even satellite government.

Then again there is para 2. The government "that rose to power on the basis of the heroic struggle of masses." This phrase creates the impression that the present government came into being as the result of the struggle of the masses alone.

Both these views are inadequate. The present government came to power as a result of struggle and compromise. Struggle was followed by compromise—because it was struggle under the leadership of the bourgeoisie. The present government was not established by the British imperialists but was the result of a compromise between the bourgeoisie and imperialism. Because the struggle was of a wider scope than previously, more militant and in a different international and national background, the compromise was not the same as previous compromises but resulted in the transfer of power.

Hence these formulations in the Programme have been amended.

Secondly, there were some formulations in the original Programme which were too sweeping and one-

sided. As for example, para 7, which says that all schemes of the government are "foundering except such as feed war purposes." There were also some unprecise formulations, as in para 6, which may convey the impression that industrialists and manufacturers are a section distinct from monopoly financiers. These had to be modified. Further it was not clearly stated in the Programme as to who was the leader of the ruling class combine. Now this has been made clear by the formulation that the present government is a "bourgeois-landlord government, headed by the big bourgeoisie having links with British imperialism."

Thirdly, there were some parts of the Programme which had become obsolete, particularly with regard to the foreign policy and the status of India. It is the changes with regard to these points which are of particular importance and with which I wish to deal in detail. Certain contradictions have grown between the entire bourgeoisie on the one hand and imperialism and feudalism on the other. As a result of this, certain new developments have taken place which necessitated changes in the Programme.

### FOREIGN POLICY

At the outset it has to be clearly understood that at no stage was India in the war camp. The very formulation that she played between the two camps showed that she was not a part of the war bloc. The Party had long given up the wrong notion that the war camp and the countries within the capitalist system were identical. It is clear that at no stage was the Indian bourgeoisie interested in a world war. It had nothing to gain from a world war and everything to lose. But, the government



of India did not at that time help the cause of peace, but in the main facilitated the struggle of the aggressors. And it was a foreign policy which was essentially influenced by the British imperialists.

But since then important national and international developments have taken place which have brought a new orientation in the government's foreign policy. Internationally the most important of these developments were: the victory of the Chinese revolution which radically altered the balance of forces in the world and in Asia, the defeat of American imperialism in Asia, the Pak-American Pact. All these developments not only showed the weakening of imperialism and the growing strength of the peace and democratic camp, but also from where the threat to India's sovereignty came. The government of India not only increasingly realised that the threat came from American imperialism but also that this threat could be warded off only by building Asian unity. From that time the resistance to the war plans, struggle for Asian unity and the building of friendly relations with the countries of the socialist camp—all these become more and more marked. The Chou-Nehru agreement was a landmark in this process and this has been carried forward at Bandung and by the Nehru-Bulgarian declaration.

Today, therefore, it has to be stated that the foreign policy of the government of India is, in the main, a policy of peace, of upholding national freedom, of building Asian unity and friendly relations with socialist and democratic countries.

Some comrades object to the words "in the main." "In the main" is the same as "taken as a whole," "in its essence." This means that the foreign policy of the gov-

ernment of India is essentially a policy of peace, though not in its entirety. There should not be any quibbling over words.

A question is asked: Does the government of India still play between the two camps? Now this play is not to be understood in a moral sense. It has a political meaning, i.e., the utilisation of the contradictions between the socialist and capitalist worlds. A bourgeois government will always follow a policy of utilising this contradiction. What we have to see is the total *effect* of this policy, whether it helps the cause of peace or the cause of war. So the point is not whether there is play and utilisation of contradictions but the *result* of these actions. In this sense, the present foreign policy of the government of India, although it makes concessions to imperialists on several issues, is a policy that, in its totality, hampers the plans of the warmongers and helps the cause of peace.

Another question is: Whether the present foreign policy can be called essentially British or essentially influenced by British imperialism? To this the answer of the CC is that it cannot be so called, that the present foreign policy is essentially an *independent* policy though remaining subject to British influence and still marked by inconsistencies and vacillations. No foreign policy decisively or essentially influenced by British imperialism can be a policy of peace. If this were so, we would have to say that British imperialism itself pursues a policy of peace. But we all know that today Britain is part of the war bloc headed by American imperialism. It is fantastic to say that the Chou-Nehru agreement or India's role at Bandung or the Nehru-Bulgarian declaration are in conformity with British imperial interests. We have to realise that a radical and vital change has taken place in

the foreign policy of the government of India—a change from being under the decisive influence of the British to one that upholds peace and independence.

There is a tendency inside the Party to underestimate the change in the foreign policy and to undervalue its impact on the international situation. One way of this underestimation is to say that this foreign policy is carried out in the interests of the Indian bourgeoisie. This foreign policy is certainly in the interests of the bourgeoisie as a class—but this is not a demerit of the policy. As a matter of fact, the entire policy of the international democratic movement and the socialist countries lays emphasis on co-existence, i.e., co-existence between the socialist and the capitalist countries. This co-existence would not be possible if it was not also in the interests of the bourgeoisie. But the main point is not that. The main point is whether this foreign policy is in the interests of the nation or not. No one can deny that the present foreign policy in the main upholds peace, asserts national independence and is, therefore, in the interests of the nation also.

It is evident that the government's foreign policy has not only upheld India's freedom but has been an important influence in the change that has come about in the entire international situation. It is clear that American imperialism wanted to quarantine China, to isolate it.

It is also clear that without India taking the stand that it did, Indonesia and Burma would not have dared to have had such close relations with China, thus leading to America's isolation. Same is the case with the Middle East where the democratic movement is traditionally weak. There is no doubt that India's foreign policy has helped countries like Egypt to take a stand

against the imperialist war plans and to go so far as to purchase arms from Czechoslovakia. India is today playing a more progressive role in foreign affairs than any other country outside the socialist camp. This role must, on no account, be underestimated.

This does not, of course, mean that India's peace policy is the same as that of the USSR. But it does mean something very big.

Nobody in the Party is going to deny that this foreign policy has inconsistencies and defects—Malaya, the Commonwealth bond, Goa, etc. But, while recognising these and other defects, they should not be emphasised in such a manner as to deny the profoundly progressive significance of the foreign policy as a whole. This is precisely what many of the critics of the CC do not see. After recognising the progressive character of the present foreign policy, a recognition which I would call purely formal, they proceed to emphasise the 'other aspect'—and do it with such vigour and at such length as almost to make out that nothing really has changed.

This dogmatic left-sectarian understanding on the issue of India's foreign policy and on the issue of India's world status is a serious obstacle in the task of forging broad popular unity for strengthening of peace and national freedom. You cannot carry out the task, you cannot overcome the inconsistencies that persist, unless you full-throatedly recognise the change that has already taken place—a change in bringing about which our Party and the organised peace movement have played a big role. It means not merely belittling India's world role; it also means belittling of our own achievement.

We have to see that precisely because India is playing this role that she has incurred the hostility of impe-

rialist powers, especially the USA, and earned the friendship of peace-loving forces. This, in its turn, has created conditions for closer co-operation between India and the socialist states—a factor of profound significance for our economy and for our democratic movement. The extent to which our national economy and national freedom can be strengthened through this alone is undoubtedly *limited*—but this does not mean that it should be *minimised*. To do that, to harp merely on the inconsistencies, means to miss what is *new* in the situation.

What should be the slogans of the Party with regard to foreign policy? We should mobilise the masses of the people, all democrats and peace-lovers in support of three main slogans: The Panch Shila; Friendship and Co-operation between India, China and the Soviet Union, Asian Unity and a Pact of Asian Security—the key slogans in our struggle for peace at the present time.

### INSEPARABILITY OF PEACE AND INDEPENDENCE

There is no doubt today that the struggle for peace is inseparably linked with the struggle to defend our national freedom, to remove all restrictions on our freedom and to place that freedom on a secure foundation. The struggle for peace strengthens our national freedom, it broadens the democratic front and helps the isolation of the most reactionary forces in our country. In their turn, the struggles of the people for their immediate demands, for the reversal of reactionary policies, are the most powerful factors pushing onward the struggle for peace.

But it must be pointed out that, while these struggles are inseparable, they are not identical. If they were iden-

tical, the question of being inseparable would not arise. Today the struggle for independence is basically a struggle for people's democracy. And the struggle for peace, while aiding that struggle cannot be equated with it.

In this connection, a wrong trend has appeared in the Party which says that since the foreign policy of the government is progressive and has radically reorientated itself, we should expect a similar reorientation in the internal policy also, that a progressive shift in internal policy is already beginning to manifest itself with the adoption of the Plan-frame of the Second Plan and some other measures. These comrades say that the contradiction between a progressive foreign policy and a reactionary internal policy cannot last long. This view is based on the assumption that the impact of the progressive foreign policy will necessarily result in a shift in the internal policy also.

This position is theoretically unsound and practically untenable. The foreign policy of a government is determined mainly by the aim of strengthening the position of that country as against other countries. It aims at strengthening the position of a country particularly against countries which are threatening that position. The internal policy of a class, or a government led by that class, is determined mainly by the aim of strengthening the position of that class as against other classes and forces within the country. It does not always happen that the external and internal enemies of the ruling class are identical or that the threat externally and internally have the same magnitude at any given time. Undoubtedly there is a link, a close link, between the external and internal policies but the two are not identical, so that a change in one will inevitably lead to a change in the other. We

can say that the contradiction between a progressive foreign policy and a reactionary internal policy has dangerous implications but we cannot say that this contradiction cannot last, that it must get automatically resolved at an early date in one direction or another. Theoretically this position is untenable.

Practically also we can examine many historical examples. Take Churchill, for example. After the attack on the USSR by Hitler, he declared support to the USSR. Afterwards, while delaying the opening of the Second Front and desiring to weaken both the USSR and Germany, he maintained the alliance with the USSR and refused to sign a separate peace treaty with Hitler. Yet as far as India and the colonies were concerned, his policy throughout was to deny the demand for independence and to suppress the popular movement. So, there was this contradiction and it continued for a long time. Another example is that of Chiang Kai-shek during the anti-Japanese war—resisting Japan which was progressive and following an anti-democratic policy internally. And there was Kemalist Turkey. We know the anti-imperialist nature of Turkey's foreign policy and its independent character under Kemal and the way it was hailed in the international Communist press in those days. Yet, his internal policy, after certain reforms, became reactionary—the maintenance of feudal survivals, the suppression of the people. And this contradiction also continued for a number of years. Ultimately, Turkey has once again reverted to the position of a virtual colony.

A progressive foreign policy helps the forces of democracy to grow and has thus an influence on the internal situation. A reactionary internal policy endangers the foreign policy and constitutes a threat to its progressive

aspects. This relation must be seen. But this is not the same thing as to assert that there can be no contradiction between the character of foreign policy and home policy.

The point is that, for a shift in the internal policy the main and determining factor is the balance and shift of the relationship of class forces internally, while, of course, external factors and the foreign policy do have a big influence.

### **CHARACTERISATION OF THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA AND ITS POLICIES**

It is around this question that most of the controversies inside the Party today centre. So I shall deal with this in some detail.

The amended Programme and the CC Resolution state that this is a bourgeois-landlord government, headed by the big bourgeoisie, having links with British imperialism. At the same time, it has been pointed out by the CC that while collaboration between the Indian big bourgeoisie and British capital continues, the contradictions between the requirements of capitalist development in India and British vested interests are growing. This brings the Indian bourgeoisie as a whole, including the big bourgeoisie, into conflict with British imperialism on various issues. Similarly, the contradictions between the requirements of capitalist development and the semi-feudal agrarian relations are also growing.

The CC has pointed out that the sharpening of such conflicts and contradictions enhances the possibilities for the democratic movement to weaken the position of imperialism and feudalism and advance the anti-imperialist, anti-feudal movement. At the same time, due to the big bourgeoisie's policy of compromise with the imperialists



and landlords, it cannot wage a consistent struggle against them and shatter the shackles on our economy. The CC has pointed out that due to a number of developments in more recent years, India has been able to assert increasingly her sovereignty and acquire the status of a politically free country. This freedom, however, rests on insecure foundations due particularly to the backward, semi-colonial nature of our economy.

This is the totality of the CC understanding and it has to be taken as a whole.

Certain questions have arisen in this connection. Some comrades feel that to characterise India as a politically free country constitutes a revision of Marxism, that it denies the basic thesis that politics is the concentrated essence of economics, etc. We do not agree with this view. Marxism-Leninism states that in today's epoch the bourgeoisie cannot complete the bourgeois-democratic revolution, i.e., liquidate imperialism and feudalism. Marxism-Leninism has never stated that political freedom, freedom in relation to other states, cannot be secured if the national movement remains on the whole under bourgeois leadership. But this freedom will remain insecure until the tasks of the democratic revolution are completed. A historical example of this is provided by Kemalist Turkey.

Secondly, these comrades fail to appreciate the new in the world situation, with the decisive alteration of the balance of world forces in favour of the socialist and democratic camp and the weakening of imperialism. In the past, an economically backward and underdeveloped country was completely dependent on imperialism, there was the possibility and actuality of direct military intervention and of all kinds of pressure which weak states found it difficult to resist and even at times impossible.

Hence, in their relation with other countries they had to follow policies *decisively* influenced by the dominant imperialist power. The freedom was of a formal character. But today the possibility has arisen even for a country with a backward, dependent economy, to assert its sovereignty and act as a free country, because of the weakening of imperialism, and the existence of a powerful socialist world and an alternative socialist world market. India is not the only example. We can see what is happening in Egypt, Burma, etc. Such things were inconceivable in the past but they are happening today.

Some other comrades feel that the present government is a government of the big bourgeoisie alone, which makes concessions to imperialism and feudalism. Firstly, if this were so, then the very nature of our revolution would change. It would be a socialist revolution. Stalin has pointed out that the basic question of every revolution is the question of power—from which class power has to be seized and which class or classes have to take power, this determines the stage and nature of the revolution. If it is the big bourgeoisie which alone is in power, then our revolution becomes a socialist revolution which in its course also fulfils certain bourgeois-democratic tasks. If we argue that the big bourgeoisie alone wields power, that the rule of the big bourgeoisie has to be replaced by an alliance of several classes headed by the working class, then we come to the position that our revolution has certain features of a socialist revolution and certain features of a bourgeois-democratic revolution of the new type. A kind of intertwining of two revolutions.

Secondly, these comrades do not grasp fully the relationship between the big bourgeoisie and imperialism and between the big bourgeoisie and feudalism. The big bour-

geoisie is dependent to a great extent on imperialism—economically and militarily—and it makes concessions to imperialism because of that very dependence. But the big bourgeoisie does not have to depend on feudalism; it wants the landlords as their ally against the people. Certainly it curbs feudalism, modifies it to a certain extent, tries to bring the landlords to capitalist landlordism, etc. But this very curbing also means protecting the landlords and strengthening of the alliance with them. The alliance is a very close alliance. We can see quite clearly the position of the landlords in the different state governments, in the administrative, military and diplomatic services. And we have numerous examples of how state power is used against the peasants whenever they go into action against the landlords in any way whatever. Not to realise all this means to minimise gravely the significance of the peasant movement, of the worker-peasant alliance as the core of the united front, of the agrarian revolution as the axis of our revolution at the present stage.

### **ROLE OF BOURGEOISIE IN INDIA**

The question of the role of the bourgeoisie and our attitude towards it is the crux of the controversies inside the Party today. Some comrades feel that the Nehru government is led by the national bourgeoisie and opposed by the reactionary bourgeoisie. Other comrades feel that the government of India is led by the progressive big bourgeoisie, while another section, a reactionary section, is out to sabotage its policies. Yet other comrades say that the present government is led by the collaborationist bourgeoisie. The common point in all these views is that the bourgeoisie in India is already regarded as having split into two distinct sections, or at least the differentia-

tion inside it is considered to have reached a very advanced stage. And it is in this split or differentiation that the cause is seen of the recent developments.

The role of the bourgeoisie is a very important question in our country. It not only occupies an important position in our economy, but it wields enormous political influence and has played the leading role in the national movement. There have been differences inside the Party with regard to the role of the bourgeoisie for some time now and it lies at the heart of many of the present differences.

At the Second Party Congress, we adopted a thesis which stated the bourgeoisie as a whole had ceased to be oppositional and as a class had to be taken as an enemy. As we know, this led to the theory of intertwining of the two stages of revolution and, therefore, a mistake in the entire line of the Party. Later on, this thesis was rejected and in its place the thesis was adopted that only the big bourgeoisie had gone over to imperialism and had to be fought, while the national bourgeoisie had to be won over as an ally. And this national bourgeoisie was equated with the middle and small sections of the bourgeoisie.

The Party Programme rejected both these theses. The Party Programme, as we all know, rejected the view that all *key* industries should be nationalised. It stated that only the enterprises owned by British capital should be taken over. This was done with the definite understanding that in India the national bourgeoisie included the entire bourgeoisie—big, medium and small, monopoly as well as non-monopoly. No section of the bourgeoisie could be said to have *gone over* to imperialism, though individuals might have. The contradiction be-

tween imperialism and the bourgeoisie as a whole remained.

The CC takes its stand firmly on this basic thesis of the Party Programme. It holds that while the big bourgeoisie is maintaining its links with imperialism, conflicts have also arisen, particularly in the recent period—conflicts based on the common aim of the entire bourgeoisie to develop India along capitalist lines. It is the class as a whole that both compromises with imperialism and also has conflicts with it. The CC states that it is the dual role of the bourgeoisie as a whole—corresponding to its dual position as both an oppressed and oppressor class—that alone can satisfactorily explain recent developments as well as past events.

Here comrades will find it useful to look up the Colonial Thesis of the Sixth World Congress of the Comintern, passed in 1928. In my opinion this is the most exhaustive treatment of the question of the national bourgeoisie and its role in the anti-imperialist struggle. I am using these quotations not because I want to buttress my position with quotations but because I think this throws the floodlight of the fundamentals of Marxism-Leninism on the contemporary Indian situation.

After distinguishing the compradore bourgeoisie as "native merchants, engaged in trade with imperialist centres, whose interests are in continuation of imperialist exploitation," the thesis says that the rest of the "native bourgeoisie, especially the portion reflecting the interests of native industry, support the national movement and represent a special vacillating, compromising tendency which may be designated as *national reformism* (or, in the terminology of the theses of the Second Congress of the Communist International, a 'bourgeois-democratic' ten-

dency). . . . In India and Egypt we still observe, for the time being, the typical bourgeois-nationalist movement—an opportunist movement, subject to great vacillations, *balancing between imperialism and revolution.*” (Emphasis in the original.)

It goes on to say: “Independent rule, a future of ‘free’ independent capitalist development, hegemony over an ‘independent’ people—this imperialism will never voluntarily yield to the national bourgeoisie. In this respect the contradiction of interests between the national bourgeoisie of the colonial country and imperialism is objectively of a radical character. In this respect imperialism demands *capitulation* on the part of the national bourgeoisie.

“The native bourgeoisie, as the weaker side, again and again capitulates to imperialism. Its capitulation, however, is not final as long as the danger of *class revolution* on the part of the masses has not become immediate, acute and menacing.” (Emphasis in the original)

From this it becomes clear that apart from the compradore bourgeoisie, in the sense defined above, no other section of the native or national bourgeoisie goes over to imperialism finally until menaced by the forces of internal class revolution. The national bourgeoisie as a whole follows policies of struggle with imperialism, as well as compromise with it, all in the interests of strengthening its own position.

Now I think that no comrade in the Party will say that any section of the Indian bourgeoisie is interested in just maintaining intact imperialist exploitation. The Indian bourgeoisie is certainly no undifferentiated, homogeneous mass. There are the big monopolists who have relatively greater connections with imperialism. There is the smaller bourgeoisie who do not have so many links

with imperialism. But the whole bourgeoisie is *national* in the sense that its interests as a class are not identical with imperialism, but on the contrary come into conflict with it. The class as a whole wants independent capitalist development. Again the class as a whole wants to carry through this capitalist development by (a) strengthening its own position vis-a-vis imperialism, (b) by curbing feudalism, (c) by simultaneously maintaining its alliance and compromise with imperialism and feudalism, and (d) by throwing the burden of this development on the mass of the people. This is the general policy. On this general, basic policy, there is agreement among the bourgeoisie as a whole. And in this sense no section of the Indian bourgeoisie can be called pro-imperialist, as having sold itself to imperialism, as being interested in the *preservation* of colonial order, just as no section can be called revolutionary either. The conflict of policies that takes place are within this basic framework. Compromise and struggle are not two different policies of two different sections of the bourgeoisie but two aspects of the basic policy of the class as a whole.

The thesis that a split has taken place within the Indian bourgeoisie, with one section having gone over to imperialism, is theoretically unsound. Why should any section of a bourgeoisie that fought imperialism over so long a period suddenly go over, and that too without any serious governmental crisis? Going over of any section of the bourgeoisie can take place only under any of the following three conditions: (i) Satisfaction of the aspirations of the bourgeoisie or a section of it by imperialism, (ii) actual imperialist invasion when a section of the bourgeoisie capitulates, thinking that their position is hopeless, e.g., Wang Ching-wei at the time of the Japanese invasion,

and (iii) when a powerful internal challenge matures when the forces of popular revolt threaten to shake their class domination, e.g., the 1927 betrayal of the Chinese revolution. These are very specific conditions and none of these conditions obtain in India at the present time. It is often said that a section of the bourgeoisie fears the people more than imperialism. This is not an adequate statement. The bourgeoisie does not fear the people at all times and in all places. As a matter of fact they also often utilise the people and the popular movement as a means of pressure against imperialism. The bourgeoisie fears *the people in revolt*, when the people are moving in a direction which challenges their class domination or their class leadership. We certainly cannot say that the popular forces in India have yet mounted any such challenge to the bourgeoisie. It is necessary for all of us to study the concrete situation and see whether there is any ground for stating that the objective conditions are such that the bourgeoisie in India has already split into two distinct sections.

A glance at the history of our national movement will also help to clarify the matter. We know that the bourgeoisie throughout the national movement took recourse alternately to struggle and to compromise. The 1919-22 struggle with the Chauri Chaura withdrawal, the 1930 struggle followed by a fresh round of compromise. In 1942 the same sections initiated the struggle who had always been known for their right-wing line—Sardar Patel, Rajendra Prasad, etc. As a matter of fact it cannot be denied that Gandhiji was both the initiator of struggles and the architect of compromises. It would be ridiculous to say that the national bourgeoisie was responsible for the struggle and the collaborationist bourgeoisie sabotaged the struggle and forced a compromise. As a matter of fact



the bourgeoisie as a whole remained remarkably united under the leadership of Gandhiji. In 1942 the same Tatas and Birlas, who minted crores from the war contracts, tried to engineer strikes from top during the August movement.

Conflict over policies certainly did take place. Certainly not all sections at once took to the slogan of complete independence passed in 1929. Nor was the Gandhi-Irwin Pact or the Faizpur Resolution unanimously approved. On these and many other issues there was a right-wing and a left-wing inside the Congress. But this conflict was not between two sections but over different estimates of the situation, different policies within the same class. And there was a common link also—the satyagraha form of struggle which could lead either to compromise or to defeat. The conflicts over policy invariably got reconciled within the framework of bourgeois reformist opposition to imperialism. It is this process of a particular kind of struggle ending in a compromise which was carried forward to a new level since 1947. The bourgeoisie did not take over control of the state from the imperialists simply for abstract ideals of freedom or liberty. They took control, entered into a compromise with imperialism, collaborated, not in order to retain the colonial order intact, but in order to realise their own ambitions—capitalist development in their own interests as distinct from the interests of imperialism. The compromise was for the same reason as the struggle—furtherance of the interests of the Indian bourgeoisie. With bourgeois aspirations unfulfilled and in a favourable international situation, today the conflict is sharpening between imperialism and the bourgeoisie as a class.

Now in the background of this sharpening conflict,

to which attention has been drawn by the CC, we have to see whether there are any indications that the Indian bourgeoisie has split. We have to see whether there are any pro-imperialist sections who are coming out to sabotage the policies which are pursued by another anti-imperialist section.

Take the Second Five Year Plan. Much has been said about the Plan-frame and its emphasis on heavy industries. These must be recognised. But we must see that the Note of the Federation of the Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) on the Second Plan, also lays down large figures for investment out of which Rs. 2,000 crores are set apart for industry and of which 65 per cent is intended for heavy and basic industries. So on the basic policy of industrialising the country, of entering upon the path of capitalist development there is no conflict between the two documents.

Even with regard to the Soviet steel plant offer, the opposition that there was to this in some quarters stemmed from the fear that acceptance of this offer might overstrain relations with Britain and America, who would not then offer any aid. They also feared that this would mean close relations with USSR which would strengthen the forces of "Communism." Others argued that on the contrary, acceptance of the Soviet offer would strengthen India economically and would also enable better bargaining to be done with the British and Americans. They were also more confident about their own strength and their influence among the masses. Here was a conflict of policies between a progressive and a reactionary policy—a progressive policy which helps India and which should, therefore, be supported and a reactionary policy which harms India and which should, therefore, be opposed.

But, while recognising this, we must also recognise that these could not be called the policies of two sections of the bourgeoisie.

Then there is a very recent example. Sri Nanda, a staunch Nehruite, goes to the Colombo Plan Conference and makes an abject appeal for private foreign investment to the tune of Rs. 1,000 crores. At the same time, Sri K. D. Malaviya, an equally staunch Nehruite, comes back from the Soviet Union and announces that Soviet help will be taken with regard to oil prospecting. Now it would be utterly absurd to say that Nanda represents the pro-imperialist wing and Malaviya the anti-imperialist wing of the bourgeoisie. As a matter of fact if Nanda had gone to the Soviet Union and Malaviya to Singapore, then Nanda would have made Malaviya's statement and Malaviya Nanda's. This is an example showing that what we have here are not two policies of two wings, but dual aspects of the same policy of the same class.

The Imperial Bank is nationalised but with heavy compensation and heavy monopoly representation on the board of directors. Can we say that nationalisation is due to the anti-imperialist wing and compensation, etc., to the pro-imperialist wing of the bourgeoisie? Can we say that at Bandung, Nehru represented the anti-imperialist national bourgeoisie while over Malaya and Goa his policy represents the collaborationist bourgeoisie? Some comrades argue that Nehru is a bundle of contradictions and hence all these contradictions in policy. But this is putting the cart before the horse. The contradictions, or dual aspect of Nehru's policy, follow from the dual position of the bourgeoisie—opposition to and simultaneously compromise with the British imperialists.

Not to see this but to postulate a conflict between two

sections of the bourgeoisie has dangerous implications. Objectively it will lead to collaboration with the government in the name of united front with the anti-imperialist section of the bourgeoisie. Instead of concentrating fire on the *policy of compromise* pursued by the class we shall derail the Party into a wild-goose chase for *compromisers* and thus actually screen the policy of compromise.

### **REACTIONARY CHARACTER OF THE INTERNAL POLICIES**

The new features that have appeared in the government's policies are due to the growth of two kinds of contradictions. Firstly, the growth of the basic contradiction in present-day Indian society, i.e., between the masses of the Indian people as against imperialism and feudalism. This contradiction manifests itself in the urge for defence and strengthening of national freedom. It manifests itself in the urge for industrialisation of the country. It also manifests itself in discontent against the present government and its policies, in the desire for basic and radical reforms. This growth of mass opposition to the government and mass radicalisation has been the biggest factor in bringing about most of the recent developments. Comrades who talk about the Communist Party having to base itself on that which is growing should note that this basic contradiction has also grown and it is *on this that the Party has to base itself*.

Secondly, contradiction has also grown between the Indian bourgeoisie and imperialism. This has played a role in bringing about the new orientation in the foreign policy. It has also played a part in the recent measures adopted by the government in the internal sphere also, e.g., the Plan-frame. In other words, contradiction has developed

between the bourgeoisie's plans for independent capitalist development and imperialism and semi-feudal agrarian relations.

What is our Party's attitude towards this second contradiction and the concrete measures that follow from it?

Our tactical line cannot be based on the contradiction between imperialism and feudalism on one hand and the bourgeoisie on the other. We cannot argue that it is this which is growing and therefore we have to base ourselves on this. That would be a vulgarisation of the teachings of Marxism-Leninism, because, as pointed out already, the main thing that is growing is the conflict between the people and imperialism-feudalism. It is this contradiction that has to be the basis of our line.

If we do not see this, serious mistakes in policy will follow. If we base our line on the conflict between imperialism-feudalism and the bourgeoisie, then our tendency would be to limit our slogans and our demands to the requirements of *this* conflict and not to go beyond what the liberal bourgeois is ready to go. The concept would grow that not working class-peasant unity but working class-liberal bourgeois unity is the basis of the democratic front.

At the same time, it would be incorrect to *ignore* the contradiction between imperialism and feudalism on one hand and the bourgeoisie on the other. It would be incorrect to argue that it is a conflict in the enemy camp and base our line on this argument.

Such an attitude ignores the fact our main enemies at this stage are imperialism and feudalism. Wrong tactics are bound to follow from such an attitude.

For example, if one were to argue that these are only contradictions in the 'enemy camp,' then it would be right

to join hands with parties of feudalism, parties of communal reaction, to fight the Congress, the 'strongest enemy' during elections. Also, it would be a matter of no importance to us whether a British concern is nationalised, for the state is led by the big bourgeoisie and the big bourgeoisie is as much an enemy as imperialism.

We do not ignore these contradictions. On the contrary, we recognise that they have a certain progressive significance and can be utilised to weaken the position of imperialism and feudalism which are the main enemies of the Indian people. Hence we welcome the growth of the contradictions and strive to sharpen them further.

Our Party has supported and will continue to support every step that curbs imperialism, feudalism and the anti-national vested interests in general, even to a limited extent, every measure that strengthens national economy, every measure that helps the people. We look upon the nationalisation of the Imperial Bank, the amendment to the Constitution, the proposal to impose ceiling on landholdings, the emphasis on heavy industries in the Second Five Year Plan as such steps. Therefore we support them, despite their limitations.

Should this, however, make us declare that the internal policies of the government have become *progressive*? To answer this question, one has not merely to compare these measures and proposals with what was done in the past. One has to examine the background in which they have come. Above all, one has to examine not merely the declared targets and objectives of the Plan but the actual *practices* of the government and whether they help the realisation of the targets and the professed objectives.

The positions of imperialism and feudalism are today even weaker than they were at the time of the transfer

of power. Their moral-political isolation is even greater than it was then. The international and national situation has grown more favourable for the forces of democracy. Radical and socialist sentiments have strengthened in the country and even inside the Congress. The most drastic measures today to break the power of British capital, to liquidate feudalism and to curb monopoly capital will be acclaimed throughout the country.

Further, the need for such measures has become still more evident after the experience of the last few years.

But, what is the government doing in *this background*?

Soon after the adoption of the amendment to the Constitution, exorbitantly heavy compensation was decided upon in favour of the shareholders of the Imperial Bank. And now, after the proposal to fix a ceiling on land-holdings, heavy compensation is being proposed to landlords whose land will be acquired.

The demand for nationalisation of the coal industry which is dominated by the British has been shelved for the present which means continuation of the squandering of a vitally important article of which our country has only a limited quantity.

In the sphere of industrial relations, the policies of the government have been designed to make the INTUC, the sole recognised union even in places where it has practically no support among the workers. Such an attempt to foist a government-backed and employer-approved organisation on workers is a step backward.

Although, through its struggles the working class won some wage increase, yet even now the real wages are no higher than in 1939 while productivity has increased by 38 per cent. In the total income generated in fac-

tories, the share of profits increased from 58 per cent in 1950 to 67 per cent in 1954, while the share of wages and salaries declined from 42 per cent to 33 per cent.

In order to judge whether the internal policies of the government are becoming progressive, we have to ask ourselves the basic questions: Do these policies help to break the fetters on the forces of production? Do they even weaken these fetters appreciably? This and this alone is the Marxist and scientific way of looking at the problem.

Under the subheading "In the Field of Agriculture and the Peasant Problem," the Party Programme draws pointed attention to the basic problem of Indian society—the agrarian problem. It explains lucidly why not a single task facing the Indian people—development of agriculture, development of industry, national uplift and prosperity, liquidation of cultural backwardness, establishment of peace in the country—can be carried out without basic agrarian reforms which would transfer land to the peasant and agricultural workers *gratis*, give the rural masses relief from the burden of rents and debts, help to raise their standard of life. That is why agrarian reforms are of decisive importance for the regeneration of the country.

In the final analysis, therefore, this is the acid test by which the character of the policies of the government has to be judged. Not to see this, I must repeat again, would gradually lead to the acceptance of the reformist thesis that not working class-peasant alliance for basic agrarian reforms but working class-bourgeois alliance for national reconstruction is the core of the democratic front.

We must, therefore, find out whether the Congress agrarian reforms transfer land to the tiller, whether they



even reduce the burden on the mass of peasants to any appreciable extent.

It is true proposals have been made in the Plan-frame for imposing a ceiling on existing landholdings but let it not be forgotten that even now the eviction drive of landlords continues unchecked and that the proposal for ceiling (three times an economic holding) was made by the Congress Agrarian Reforms Committee as early as 1949. Even the First Five Year Plan recommended ceiling on existing holdings. The government not merely ignored these recommendations but went further. The central government prevented the governments of Himachal Pradesh and Delhi from imposing the ceiling which they had proposed.

That now, at long last, some steps are being taken to fix the limit of the land that a landowner may possess is undoubtedly to be welcomed but even now (as in Bihar) in the name of 'efficient farming' the ceiling is being sought to be kept too high—far higher than what was proposed by the Congress Agrarian Reforms Committee. Further, although the strength of the kisan movement has won certain demands for the peasantry as a whole, yet, even now, there is no evidence of any concrete measures to reduce the heavy burdens on the peasantry. On the contrary, these burdens continue to grow, despite the steep fall in the prices of agricultural goods.

Due to this situation in the rural areas, due to the low wages of the workers and the growth of unemployment, the internal market remains narrow, preventing adequate utilisation of even the existing installed capacity of industries.

Thus, despite some increase in production, the heavy

shackles on the productive forces continue. How is one to explain this?

The CC Political Resolution answers: "...although the contradiction between the needs of India's industrial development and the interests of imperialism, feudalism and reactionary monopoly capital has grown in the last few years, yet the government is not prepared to attack them. Even when seeking to curb them, under the growing pressure of masses and due to its own needs, the government proceeds by way of compromise, by way of heavy concessions and compensation which seriously jeopardise the very objective of economic advance." (p. 17)

While welcoming the declared aims of the Plan-frame and a number of the proposals, we consider it wrong to judge the government merely by reference to those aims and those proposals. We have to judge the government by what it does.

It must also be kept in mind that the powers of the police remain as sweeping as ever. How these powers were used in Amritsar, Kanpur, Darjeeling and Bihar are known to all.

Therefore the resolution states: "The tasks of the democratic movement in relation to the present government have to be determined on the basis of the *actual practice* of the government, on the basis of a concrete assessment of its *policies and measures as they affect the life of the mass of the people*. Although the foreign policy of the government of India has undergone a radical change in recent years in a progressive direction and must therefore be supported and although some of the declarations and proposals made in the Plan-frame of the Second Five Year Plan are to be welcomed, the internal

policies of the government, taken as a whole, continue to be reactionary and undemocratic in practice—despite talks about a socialistic pattern of society.

“They are policies of serious compromise with and protection of foreign capital, heavy concessions to landlordism, support to the monopolists in their attacks on the working people, imposition of fresh burdens on the masses, suppression of democratic rights and civil liberties. They are policies that seek to weaken and shackle the very classes that are the most resolute defenders of peace and national freedom while making concessions to reactionary anti-national classes in our economy and political life.” (pp. 24-25. Emphasis added.)

Hence it is that although our main enemies at this stage are imperialism and feudalism, the struggle against these enemies cannot be waged without determinedly fighting the present government and its basic policies—with special emphasis on the policy of compromise with imperialism and feudalism.

What has happened in relation to the proposals on the Second Five Year Plan as made in the Plan-frame also brings out the character of the government's policies. The Plan-frame on the whole indicated an advance which was welcomed by democratic public opinion. But big business raised a howl and the government started retreating—showing clearly whom it represents and whose interests it serves. Reactionary modifications are being made in the Plan-frame under the pressure of monopoly capital.

Comrades who speak of government's policies as being progressive should just remember what the Iranian government under Mossadeq did, what the bourgeois government in small, isolated Guatemala ventured upon and the stand that the Indonesian nationalist government took

against the Dutch. None of these was a people's democracy and none of these countries was more favourably placed than the Indian government. Yet the government has not ventured upon nearly as bold a policy as these governments.

To decide whether particular policies and actions are progressive or not we should not therefore simply compare them with what existed in the past. If that is to be the criterion, then Congress government has pursued progressive policies right from the time it took over power in 1947. We have to judge the policies in relation to: (a) the needs of the situation, (b) the possibilities of the situation, (c) the extent to which they strengthen the forces of democracy, and (d) whether they shatter or at least seriously weaken the antiquated relations of production that are shackling the forces of production. Simply seeing the conflict between the bourgeoisie and imperialism-feudalism is one-sided. We have to focus attention on *how* the bourgeoisie is trying to resolve this conflict. Is it trying to resolve this conflict by making serious inroads into the positions of British capital and landlordism? Or is it trying to solve this conflict by throwing the burdens on the people? The latter method is not merely undemocratic. It also weakens national economy by restricting the internal market. It means strife and disunity, deadlock in production. We cannot therefore blindly support any method of solving the conflict, even if it is at the cost of the people.

On the contrary the task of the Party is to defend the interests of the masses, to lead them to resist the attacks of the bourgeoisie and in this way to make it difficult and even impossible for the bourgeoisie to solve its conflicts with imperialism and feudalism at the cost of the people. In this way also we shall further sharpen the conflicts bet-

ween the bourgeoisie and imperialism-feudalism, and within the bourgeoisie itself.

### **BUILD POPULAR UNITY**

But this struggle for the defence of the immediate interests of the masses can be waged effectively only as an integral part of a nationwide campaign to build the broadest popular unity for policies of national advance. Without this, these struggles will remain on an economic plane and will not get co-ordinated. Without this, we shall not win allies. Without this, even the partial struggles will stand in danger of getting isolated from the broad democratic masses and thus facilitating their suppression at the hands of the government. This is precisely what we have to grasp today, for this is what the CC Resolution seeks to stress. This is precisely also what left-sectarianism refuses to see.

Left-sectarianism dismisses the conflicts that are arising in the government and inside the Congress as of little significance because these conflicts have not yet assumed a basic character. This is utterly wrong because a sharper differentiation than today can take place only through a further growth of the mass movement, and, for the very growth of that movement, it is essential to adopt a correct attitude towards the differences that have *already* arisen and are rising.

This is a matter of great importance. The conflicts that are arising in the bourgeoisie as already stated, are as yet in an initial stage. They are conflicts over policies—still within the framework of the basic bourgeois policy. But that does not mean that they do not have a big significance.

There are proposals and measures, there are policies

which are relatively more progressive—which strengthen our independence, which strengthen national economy. There are others which do not achieve these objects. A striking example of this was the controversy that arose over the question of economic relations with the USSR and the steel plant agreement. Another example is the controversy over the extension of the public sector.

These conflicts are related to the patriotic urge that has grown among our people—the urge to rebuild our economy and develop India as a powerful industrial country. The working class also shares the urge. All want more factories, more workshops, more mines—even if these are owned by the bourgeoisie. This is seen in the demands that are raised by the people that the next steel plant should be erected in their state. The stand that the government wants and develops capitalism, hence its economic measures are of no importance to us—this is an incorrect stand. It not only isolates us from the masses but is even theoretically incorrect. For our main criticism of the government at this stage is not that it is trying to develop capitalism but that it is doing so without attacking British capital and landlordism, which means more burdens on the masses.

It is necessary therefore that we carefully study the new features that are developing, assess their significance soberly and work out slogans and tactics that will enable us to build the broadest popular unity here and now.

For what? For policies that defend peace and strengthen freedom. For policies that help to strengthen national economy. For policies of closer relations with the USSR, China and other states. For policies that strengthen the forces of democracy in our economic, political and social life.

But to do all this, we have to adopt a *positive* attitude towards the new features that have appeared. This positive attitude does not mean some sort of 'responsive cooperation.' Nor does it merely mean supporting what is good and opposing what is bad. It is something more fundamental.

Adoption of a positive attitude towards the new features means their utilisation in such a way as to extend and strengthen the unity of the people against imperialism and feudalism, against compromise with them and for measures that weaken the position of British capital and feudalism, that curb monopoly capital, that raise the standard of life of the people and strengthen the forces of democracy in our economic, political and social life.

The policy that follows from such a positive attitude is this:

We wage determined struggle for higher wages, for agrarian reforms, against tax burdens, for civil liberties and democratic rights and strive to defeat the government's policy of attacking the people in the name of its plans and projects.

We put forward our own positive proposals on the issue of rebuilding of national economy, as we have done in the pamphlet *Communist Party and Problems of National Reconstruction*.

We simultaneously support all progressive steps and proposals and strive to strengthen all those trends which, however hesitatingly, advocate measures that weaken the grip of imperialism, weaken landlordism, curb the monopolists and enable the people to improve their condition.

And for all these, we strive to unite *all* patriotic and popular forces, irrespective of the parties to which they belong and which they follow.

This is how we implement the strategy of building the broadest front against imperialism and feudalism—a strategy which demands concentration of the fire on the main enemy and its allies, combined with determined struggle against compromising forces; trends and policies and support to policies and measures that are relatively progressive.

This strategy demands a correct attitude towards the Plan-frame for the Second Five Year Plan.

### THE PLAN-FRAME

In evaluating the Plan-frame two wrong tendencies have to be avoided. One is the tendency simply to brand it as a plan of the monopolists and have done with it. The other tendency is to base the attitude of the Party towards the government entirely on the Plan-frame and to regard the Plan-frame almost as the basis for national unity.

The Plan-frame is the product of several factors that have developed in our economic life:

(a) It reflects the desire of the people for basic reforms for national reconstruction and for liquidation of colonial backwardness.

(b) It embodies the urge of the big bourgeoisie, as of the bourgeoisie as a whole, to develop some heavy industry, to strengthen its position vis-a-vis imperialism, to curb feudalism, and to develop the country along the capitalist path.

(c) It simultaneously expresses the fact that the big bourgeoisie is allied with landlords and linked with British capital due to which it proceeds along the path of concessions and compromise, along the path of throwing the main burden on the masses.



All these, *taken together*, constitute the essence of the Plan-frame and it would be wrong to isolate any one feature.

It is wrong to say that the Party should just reject the Plan-frame as reactionary, pure and simple. This would mean the Party becoming a passive spectator of events and it would mean that we would hand over to the bourgeoisie the undoubted urge that does exist among the vast masses for national reconstruction. The Party has to intervene politically with regard to the Plan or else it will be left on the rails of economism pure and simple. It is also wrong to say that the Party should simply support the Plan-frame. This would mean disarming the masses when the bourgeoisie is on the offensive against the living standards and democratic rights of the people.

The Plan-frame is itself full of contradictions. It talks about raising the standards of the people and at the same time accepts the retrograde proposals of the Taxation Enquiry Commission and holds out the prospect of large-scale deficit financing. It talks about industrialisation but keeps silent about the positions of British capital and about basic agrarian reforms without which the problem of the internal market can never be solved.

So the Party has on the one hand to adopt a positive attitude to the Plan-frame as representing an advance over any other proposal made by the bourgeoisie hitherto. The Party has to fight against any efforts made to modify it in a reactionary direction. At the same time, the Party has to reject the position of responsive co-operation on the basis of the Plan-frame. The Party takes up certain of the proposals of the Plan-frame and demands implementation of these proposals in a way that streng-

thens national economy and benefits the people. It has suggested alternative means of financing the Plan other than that of putting further burdens on our impoverished people. We have to advance alternative proposals and point out that while we believe that people's democracy is the real way out, we shall do our utmost for national advance even today.

This is one of the most effective ways of concentrating fire on the policy of compromise with imperialism and feudalism pursued by the government. It is one of the most effective ways of broadening democratic unity, of uniting the masses, followers and members of all parties, including the Congress. Practice has already proved this in the debates in the Parliament over our proposals for a ceiling on profits and state monopoly of foreign trade. It has been a very serious failing of the Party that it failed to develop a national-political campaign around the concrete proposals made in the pamphlet, *Communist Party and Problems of National Reconstruction*. Such a campaign would have been the most effective form of positive intervention in the present political situation.

### SITUATION IN THE COUNTRY

In Madurai we made a certain characterisation of the political situation inside India—maturing economic crisis and the initial stages of a political crisis.

There was some exaggeration in this characterisation and events have not turned out in the manner we anticipated. But comrades should remember the situation that obtained at that time. Remember the tramfare movement, the trend of the bye-elections in Bengal, the Lucknow student movement and the municipal elections in UP. Remember the demoralisation inside the Congress,

the comments of big business organs like *Eastern Economist* that the Congress was on the way out, and the statement of S. K. Patil that the Congress would be defeated in the next general elections. There was a spontaneous disintegration of the mass base of the Congress.

Subsequently big changes have taken place—new orientation in foreign policy, solving of the food crisis (due largely to the monsoons), the ideological offensive of the 'socialistic pattern,' the carrying out of certain measures of reforms, etc.

Side by side has gone a consolidation of the reactionary forces under the banner of the Congress. As a result of these developments spontaneous disintegration of the Congress base has been checked and the Congress has achieved a certain measure of stabilisation. Disintegration has taken place of certain opposition forces—the Scheduled Castes' Federation, various parties in Tamilnad, the Workers' and Peasants' Party and also of the PSP. Our Party has achieved an absolute increase of strength taking the country as a whole, but not relatively vis-a-vis the Congress.

At the same time the stabilisation of the Congress is of an extremely partial, limited and unstable character. Mass radicalisation continues to grow. Kanpur, Amritsar, Darjeeling, Patna and the Goa agitation reveal this. And the Congress while striving to utilise the democratic anti-imperialist and radical sentiments of the people follows actual policies and measures which are reactionary and therefore run counter to these very sentiments. This brings the people into conflict with the government again and again. In the coming period struggles are going to grow—struggles of workers for higher wages, etc. They have to be boldly led. Our whole strategy will remain

a paper strategy if defence of the immediate interests of the masses is not looked upon as a task of primary and decisive importance.

But we cannot count on this alone. We have to concentrate our attention on the basic weaknesses of the mass movement. It has to be admitted that despite many significant victories and concessions won, the movement as a whole remains weak and on a low level. I do not wish to go into the problems in detail so I shall only very briefly put down some of the most important problems.

(a) The very weak state and low level of the peasant movement which is of such crucial significance in an agrarian country like India. Without the development of a strong peasant movement, the extent to which struggles based on the towns alone can be waged is limited. We shall have to pay serious attention to the question of reorganising kisan unity. A beginning was made in the document adopted by the April 1954 CC meeting but very much more attention and thought has to be paid to this by the CC and the entire Party.

(b) Another weakness to be overcome is the division among the democratic forces, the manifestation of which is the division between the masses following the Congress and those following the parties of the democratic opposition. We have to advance such slogans and policies as can end this disunity.

The masses can and have been united on the basis of their partial demands. This process must be carried further but to base ourselves solely on this would be economism.

We cannot unite the masses immediately on the slogan of removal of the government from power—for many of them, though dissatisfied with the government, still

retain faith in it and especially in Nehru. That does not mean however that the only unity that is possible today is unity for partial demands.

It is also possible to unite the masses for specific measures and on the basis of specific policies, policies for all-round national advance. Partial struggles themselves will bring up issues of policy but they do not automatically build unity over policies. The Party has to politically intervene and give answers to these questions of policy. We have to advance policy-slogans and tell the members of different political parties, including the Congress, to fight for these policies. An example of this was the slogan of the Party in Bihar, during the recent movement for judicial enquiry, for the reform of the police code. Many more such instances will come up with the development of mass struggles.

What about the slogan of power? At all times the Communist Party fights for power. The slogan of a people's democratic government is itself a slogan for power. But this is different from the slogan of an interim-government—an alternative democratic government. This latter slogan can only be advanced as a general slogan in a situation of crisis or instability and with a certain level of the mass movement and a certain correlation of forces. All these are absent today. Hence, it is an unreal slogan. At the present time to give such a slogan would not even help to unite the masses, especially those under the influence of the Congress.

On the other hand, if we try to make this slogan realisable and realistic, it will boil down to a call for a coalition government, which today can be nothing more than a mere extension of the present Congress government, the leader of which would have to be Nehru and

which would be decisively *dominated* by the Congress. The masses can see that Nehru and the other Congress leaders always come out in defence of reactionary policies and as champions of onslaught against the masses. Hence to give such a 'realisable' slogan would confuse the masses and weaken their struggles. Instead of opening up perspectives for the mass movement, it will lead this movement into a blind alley. That is why the CC holds that at the present stage of the mass movement the main emphasis should be laid on further uniting the masses and raising their level by the slogan of reversal of the basically reactionary policies of the government and for the adoption of alternative, concrete progressive policies.

(c) Another very serious weakness is the low level of consciousness of the working class and the organisational weakness of the Communist Party. The April 1954 CC Resolution on Organisation was never implemented and the serious defects in Party organisation that it pointed out still remain to be overcome. The weakness of the Party Centre—the strengthening of which was put forward as the main organisational slogan of the Madurai Congress—still remains as grave as before. The low ideological level inside the Party still constitutes a grave handicap. These problems have to be tackled with the utmost seriousness and urgency if the democratic movement is to be developed further.

Some comrades seem to think that the Party has no central slogan today. This is incorrect. Build broadest popular unity for defence of peace and freedom, for strengthening of national economy and defence of the interest of the masses, for policies of national advance—this itself is a central slogan. Its aim is to strengthen peace and freedom, to defeat the anti-people policies

of the government, to force the adoption of progressive policies and measures, to strengthen the forces of democracy.

It is perfectly correct however to state that we are not relating the fight for correct policies, at this stage, to any specific slogan relating to the composition of the government. We are not advancing the slogan of any particular kind of interim government for reasons already explained. Coalition government can be our slogan only in special circumstances, e.g., grave threat of invasion or of overthrow of the government from the right, extreme instability in the country and conditions of a political crisis, a high level of the mass movement and a certain correlation of forces. None of these factors is present today.

In conclusion I would like to state that in my opinion the main formulations in the June 1955 CC Resolution are correct and do not need to be changed. At the same time the Resolution has its weaknesses. What is needed is its strengthening and amplification. This process has to be carried forward with the help of all comrades through mutual discussions. It is in this spirit that the pre-Congress discussions should take place, as a result of which the unity of the Party may be strengthened.

## **CONCLUDING SPEECH**

### **At the Extended Plenum of the West Bengal State Committee of the Communist Party of India**

**AT THE VERY OUTSET** I would like to make it clear that I am not replying to the debate that has taken place nor answering all the questions that have been sent; I

have still to go through the notes very carefully—yesterday night I tried to do it—but it was not possible for me to digest them all. Therefore I would like to confine myself to answering the main points and also clarifying certain things.

### **PURPOSE OF PRE-CONGRESS DISCUSSION**

First of all, what is the purpose of this discussion? A comrade has taken objection to the statement which I made that we should try to evolve a unified understanding and a unified line. He has said that I should state that we must fight for a correct line. If by this it is meant that we must struggle to arrive at a correct line, then I would have no objection; as a matter of fact, evolving a unified line does not mean some sort of patch-up or unprincipled compromise but struggle in order to understand each other and assimilate all that is correct in the various points of view. But if the whole thing is understood merely as a fight for a correct line, then it can also be taken to mean that a particular position is correct and it must be fought for. I think that this approach is wrong because after all that has happened in our Party it would be a great mistake on the part of any one to claim that his position is correct and that his job is merely to defend it. Let us give up that position. The thing is that while defending the point of view which you think correct, you should also try to see whether there is anything correct in the other point of view or not. It can be that the premises which a comrade starts with are wrong as also his conclusions but many points which he makes are correct. So, while not accepting those premises, while not accepting his conclusions, we must at the same time accept those correct points and thus enrich and even



modify our own understanding. This is precisely how a unified understanding is evolved and a unified line worked out.

I have already stated once and I would repeat again that after all the discussions that have taken place, I feel that the main conclusions and formulations that were made in the CC Resolution are correct. Certainly, as I stated earlier, I do not mean that they do not require amplification and even modification. For example in the CC Resolution it has been stated that the Congress has brought about some consolidation and it has also been stated that we must struggle for correct policies, measures, etc., but how the possibility of that has increased because of the extremely unstable nature of the consolidation has not been pointed out. This has to be clarified. In this manner certain amplifications will be required, certain things may have to be modified but I still hold that the resolution is correct and after hearing the speeches that have been made I am more convinced than before that this is so. Some comrades criticised the resolution on the basis that it gives the other comrades the loophole through which they put in their reformist point of view, therefore, the job now is to overcome the weaknesses, 'plug the loopholes' which really means, according to me, that nothing new has arisen. And even if there is something new, that is of little significance and need not be taken into consideration. This is wrong.

Comrades, I will tell you that our CC is struggling with certain difficulties and trying to understand an extremely complex situation, one of the features of which, as the amendments to the Programme point out, is that while collaboration in several spheres continues, conflicts have also appeared. Now I would say, with all humility,

that the job of those comrades who want to see only the *continued collaboration* and work out a line on that basis is simple. Also the job of those comrades who want to see only the *conflicts* and work out the line on that basis is simple. But in order to work out a line which takes both into account the job is far more difficult and the weaknesses arise precisely from the difficulties of this job. I am not stating therefore that the CC members are superior to other comrades. But the thing is this; that having learnt from our own history we have seen how wrong it is to try and work out a line on the basis of partial truths, on the basis of certain aspects of the situation alone.

Different comrades have understood the resolution in different ways perhaps. Many of us are still struggling to arrive at a correct and integrated understanding and whatever weaknesses there are, are due to the immaturity of our whole Party of which the CC too is a part. It may be that for very mature Marxists it is not so difficult but then I do not know whether in our Party we have as yet been able to produce such Marxists.

Now, comrades, with this I would proceed. We as a party, are probably facing a situation which is more difficult than that facing any other party in any other country; because the complexity is far greater.

As I said, I would deal with only the main points that have been made during the discussions.

### **WHY PROGRAMME NEEDS AMENDMENT**

Some comrades have taken objection to the alteration in the Party Programme. I am telling you that at one time I was also of the opinion that the Party Programme should not be amended and we need only adopt a resolu-

tion on it, but subsequently I changed my views and I think it was perfectly correct on our part to have amended the Programme. Whether those amendments themselves are correct or not, I do not want to go into again. I have already done so. The amendments will be discussed by comrades at the Party Conferences and at the Congress, but I feel that necessity arose for such amendments. It arose because our Programme itself contained some descriptions of the existing situations, existing policies of the government foreign policy as well as the basic strategy and tasks and in certain respects the description has become obsolete. This cannot be denied by anyone.

You may say that this is a historic document and should not be altered. But let us take the practical position. When a person joins the Party for the first time, he reads the Programme, study classes are held on the basis of the Party Programme and if there are these contradictions between our resolutions and the Programme, then anybody would ask what is this due to? How do you explain this thing? There may be *divergencies* and *divergencies* can be explained, but *contradictory* things cannot be easily explained and that creates more and more confusion. If the Programme says, for example, that the foreign policy "facilitates the struggle of the aggressors" and in our current resolution, we say that it helps peace—then that is not a mere divergence but a glaring *contradiction*.

That is why we felt it necessary to change the Programme. Probably such a difficulty would not have arisen in a Party more mature than ours—in the CPSU, for example. The Programme of the CPSU has stood as it was amended in 1917. Subsequently many developments took place. But the Programme has not been amended,

although if you read the Programme, you will note that there are several things in the Programme which are out of date today. For example, in the Programme of the CPSU, one item is there, i.e., the abolition of the standing army and its replacement by the armed people. As you all know, this was considered one of the fundamental principles of Marxism. Subsequently at the 18th Party Congress, Comrade Stalin explained how the state continues to exist in a period of capitalist encirclement, how it withers away when this encirclement is removed. So the standing army could not be abolished, on the contrary it had to be strengthened, but nobody felt it necessary to amend the Programme. The need for a standing army and for its strengthening, in view of the capitalist encirclement and the development of the technique of warfare was accepted by all. Such however is not the situation in our Party.

Therefore, taking into consideration the practical realities inside our Party, we felt it necessary to change the Programme. If we do not do this, then the other tendency would have been strengthened, the tendency that the whole of the descriptive part is obsolete, due to the new features in the situation. And while making the necessary changes in the Party Programme, we also felt it better to remove certain sweeping statements, certain ambiguities and to make certain things clearer. Thus, we have redrafted the first paragraph, we have altered the formulation about all schemes "foundering except such as feed war purposes," we have given a more precise characterisation of the government. We consider all this necessary in order that the Programme may unify the Party, in the new situation on basic issues.

So much about the Programme.

## FOREIGN POLICY AND NATIONAL FREEDOM

I have not much to say on the international situation. I think that it is now universally recognised that the foreign policy has to be looked upon as a policy of peace. Some comrades seem not to like the word "radical change" and they ask what is the meaning of this radical change. From a policy that helped the aggressors to a policy which helps peace, from a policy that was essentially British to a policy that strengthens national freedom—if this is not a radical change, then I do not know what a radical change means. Certainly it is a change within the framework of the bourgeois policy, but there can be a war policy of the bourgeoisie, there can be a policy which while not being a war policy, does not help peace and there can also be a peace policy. The bourgeois peace policy is not identical with the Soviet peace policy. Nevertheless, there can be agreement on vital issues, on the all-important question of co-existence—and, when this happens, then we have to recognise that the change is of a radical nature.

In this connection, the question has come about Nehru's role. The question has been asked whether Nehru's policy is opposed to the policy of the big bourgeoisie. Certainly it is not opposed. Yet, it must also be seen that Nehru is not merely the initiator of the orientation in the foreign policy but also he goes much farther, than any other leader of the bourgeoisie would do. There are certain aspects where Nehru's role has been a factor. The emphasis on Asian unity, etc., is there.

At the same time, I would agree with those comrades who say that it need not have been there in the resolution. Why? Not because Nehru's role is not there, but because

it is not the dominant factor, and today, in our country, the general tendency is not to deny Nehru's role but to exaggerate it.

In this context, the question of India's status comes. I would ask a simple question: Has a freedom content appeared in India's status or not, *even without a change* in the economic pattern of our country? The pattern of our economy remains more or less the same as it was in 1947. Yet a freedom content has appeared and that content has been strengthened to such an extent during the last few years that today for practical and political purposes, we can say that India is a free country. It may be argued that our country is part of the British Commonwealth. That is so. But let us not forget that in more advanced countries than ours, like Britain, France, etc., the army of a foreign power is there and it enjoys in many respects extra-territorial rights inside these countries.

If we deny the fact that *despite* the pattern of our economy, India's status has changed, then the question arises: What is the difference between India, Indonesia and Burma on the one hand and Pakistan and certain other countries on the other? All are formally independent, economy of all is dominated, yet these former countries, as you know, are internationally spoken of as countries which are free and we have to find out a reason. A country like India which is today following a policy which is considered to be closer to the peace camp than that of any other capitalist country in the world is certainly not in the same position as other countries dictated to, dominated or decisively influenced by imperialist powers. It is this that has to be grasped. Not to do that would mean belittling of the significance of the struggle for peace and divorcing it from the struggle for strength-

ening of freedom. In the Programme we have pointed out that restriction of our freedom continues, but despite these restrictions, we have to look upon India as a free country.

Some comrades may say: Why did you not show the distinction between fully independent and not fully independent? We did this consciously. We had certain experiences in the past. During the last Independence Day, we wrote an editorial about Indian independence and from a number of comrades the criticism came that you have not stated that India is only formally independent. We want to put an end to this kind of thing. We say that India is to be considered to be an independent country. Not to see this, not to rejoice in India's great role means to perpetuate the wall between us and the patriotic masses. We must be proud of the fact that India is independent, proud of the part India is playing in international affairs; only then we shall be able to overcome the isolation from the patriotic masses. We should be proud of ourselves because in enabling India to play that role we have also made a contribution.

That is why we have stated India has acquired the status of a free country. Subsequently we state that restrictions are still there and what those restrictions are has also been stated. We have stated our freedom rests on a weak foundation which gives the direction in which we have to work. There are obstacles to be removed in order to strengthen India's independence and make freedom itself real in terms of happiness and prosperity of masses. I do not think this is something which should cause confusion.

Then comes the thesis which has been again presented —progressive foreign policy and progressive home

policy must go together. It has also been stated that if this is not recognised it would be a form of bourgeois nationalism. I do not agree with this criticism at all. A progressive foreign policy strengthens our independence. A progressive foreign policy is of help for the growth of democracy inside the country. It gives the democratic forces inside the country greater possibility to strengthen the unity between India, Soviet Union and China, to put forward the slogan of Asian unity, to build a broad democratic movement inside the country. So it gives a weapon but whether or not it leads to a *change* in the internal policy depends on how this weapon is used. If the progressive foreign policy is made an argument for advancing slogans and tactics that mean virtual lining up behind the government—then the democratic movement would be weakened and the change in internal policy which we all desire will not come about.

A progressive foreign policy and a reactionary home policy can go hand in hand; but just as progressive foreign policy has an impact on the internal situation, can help the strengthening of the forces of democracy inside the country, it is the other way also, namely, a reactionary internal policy not helping the growth of democratic forces in our political and social life, keeping reactionary forces in strong position, can also result in a reversal of the foreign policy itself. The possibility is great but also the danger is real. Our tactics must be such as to realise the possibility and defeat the danger. But, in order to do so, we must have clear ideas about the existing internal policy.



## WHAT CAN BE CALLED PROGRESSIVE

This raises the question of the criterion of what is progressive in internal matters. It has been stated that I have talked in terms of fundamentals and that in terms of those fundamentals none but a people's democratic government would be progressive. No, comrades, this is not the position. We have talked in terms relating to a bourgeois government. Today when we speak of progressive or non-progressive, we speak in terms of a bourgeois government. Even when we say that the foreign policy is progressive, we apply the criterion of a bourgeois government. Supposing that Rumania or Czechoslovakia had followed the foreign policy of the government of India—would we have considered it to be progressive? We consider the present foreign policy to be a progressive foreign policy in terms of a bourgeois government—co-existence, defence of freedom, building of Asian unity and building of friendship with Soviet Union, China and the democratic countries. Although India remains a member of the Commonwealth and appeals for economic help from the imperialists, yet we consider its foreign policy, in the main, progressive. All this clearly shows that we are not applying the criterion of a people's democratic government but of a bourgeois government. This is precisely what demarcates the position of the CC from that of its 'left' critics.

And when we call the internal policies basically reactionary, there also we apply the same criterion. I have to repeat once again what I stated the other day, the example of Guatemala and Iran of Mossadeq. They were centres far weaker than India, where the possibilities of intervention were far greater, yet compare the measures which they carried out to the measures that have been carried

out here. It has been argued that in applying the criterion of productive forces and relations of production, we are equating progressive with revolutionary. This is not true, comrades. In terms of productive forces and relations of production, revolutionary means that which *shatters* the main fetters on the forces of production; but in order to be called progressive, it must at least *weaken* the fetters on the forces of production to an appreciable extent. Taking into account the actual correlation of the forces—the forces of imperialism and feudalism and the position of the democratic movement and in that background to what extent it is possible to weaken the fetters on the forces of production—it is on this basis we judge. If we do not apply this criterion, if we do not judge progressive or reactionary in terms of the needs and possibilities of the situation, but only in terms of the difference between what existed before and what is being done now—then, as I said earlier, the Congress government has *always* been more progressive than the British. But that is a liberal-bourgeois way of looking at the issue.

It has also been argued that in 1947 we called the policies of the Congress reactionary because it was in the context of a struggle for power which was growing and the Congress led it to a compromise. This is not enough. We have also to see what was done *afterwards*. After the departure of the British and with immensely favourable factors on our side, what measures were actually carried out? We take that into account. It is said that now the situation is different. We cannot apply that test. I say that, if anything, the situation now is far more *favourable*. Feudalism is far weaker today, imperialism is far weaker today, the socialist world market is far stronger today than before. The reforms to be carried

out now, even in bourgeois terms, have got to be more far-reaching than in 1947, in order to be considered progressive.

As far as Nehru being more progressive than B. C. Roy is concerned, I say that Nehru was more progressive than B. C. Roy at all times. Nehru was more progressive than Patel at all times. At a time when many other leaders of the Congress were striving to utilise the communal passion of the people in order to outdo the Hindu Mahasabhis, and trying to win cheap popularity, Nehru took a firm stand against communalism; but whether Nehru's general policies are progressive or not, we do not judge in that way. Whether the policies of the Nehru government are progressive or not, that has to be judged in terms of certain Marxist criteria. When I say Marxist criteria I do not mean Marxist criteria in terms of a people's democratic country but in terms of a bourgeois democracy.

Some other comrades here are not satisfied with this approach. They attack it from the 'left.' They say that in assessing the policies of the government, we have evaded the basic question whether capitalism in the present epoch can be progressive or not and it has been argued that it cannot be. I think, comrades, this is a very dangerous argument and it leads to a position which cannot be considered to be a Lenin-Stalin position. A class is to be judged always by the economic aims that it pursues, by the economic position that it occupies in society. Now if capitalism is to be considered to be uniformly reactionary everywhere, then the national bourgeoisie, including the most progressive elements of the national bourgeoisie, are reactionary because they all wish to bring about capitalist development and it is in pursuance of this aim that they come into conflict with the imperialists

and feudals. What happens then? The national bourgeoisie becomes reactionary, the rich peasantry becomes reactionary, all become reactionary, except the proletariat, because even the bulk of peasantry desires to become rich peasants and thus dream in terms of capitalism.

I am not posing the question theoretically only. Let us pose it practically also. Let us assume in India today, nationalisation of British capital takes place with a nominal compensation, let us assume that the burden on the peasants is reduced to a considerable extent through certain agrarian reforms, let us also assume that monopolists to a certain extent are curbed and there is extension of public sector. Despite all this, capitalism will remain and the development will be capitalist development. But would we say that all this would be reactionary?

We must also realise that while the extension of the state sector and the nationalisation of certain concerns in today's America may have no progressive significance whatsoever, in India the extension of the public sector in order to develop heavy industries has got a progressive significance. It may be argued that this is Indian exceptionalism—"it is bad in America but good in India." This is not so. It is only recognising the teachings of Lenin and Stalin regarding the difference between an oppressing country and an oppressed country. Failure to make that distinction results in totally wrong conclusions and as a matter of fact, I would consider that here is the ideological root of left-sectarianism.

The question is not whether capitalism is historically progressive or not; nor in our opinion, the question is whether in the present period, it is necessarily reactionary. The question is this: Whatever limited development is

brought about, *how* it is sought to be brought about—by attacking the position of the masses thereby restricting further the internal market, thereby giving rise to strife, deadlock in production, crisis etc.. thus not removing or appreciably weakening the fetters on the forces of production? Or by attacking the position of British capital and landlordism, by curbing monopoly capital and therefore though not shattering the fetters on the forces of production, yet at least weakening them?

The nature of the policies of the government is clearly seen in the methods adopted by it to solve the problem of the internal market.

A year ago, it was evident that the increase in production was coming up against market difficulties. Big business was apprehensive. The Quarterly Bulletin of the *Eastern Economist* wrote in January, 1955: "Despite the known need, there is not enough demand to absorb the increased output. It is no longer a question of goods not being there, it is one of lack of purchasing power."

In other words, the poverty of the people stood in the way of further increase of production.

What was the remedy suggested? Agrarian reforms to lower the burden on the peasantry? Higher wages? Lower prices? No. The proposed remedy was: "... pump more money into the system or make a bolder bid for deficit financing than has been done so far."

Same was the remedy suggested by Sri B. M. Birla in his address at the annual session of the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry: "It is imperative to speed up the expenditure programme of the government."

Today big business is optimistic. The threatened 'setback' has not come. They are talking about a boom.

How has this happened? As the *Report of the Indian Institute of Public Opinion* frankly admitted, this was due to the 'shot in the arm,' through a spurt in money supply—a rise of nearly 250 crores of rupees in 12 months, which is an all-time record in Indian financial history with the single exception of seven months in 1943-44.

Evidently the government had done precisely what the big business wanted.

But this cannot be continued indefinitely, and on a more and more massive scale—as the big business wants—without generating inflationary pressure, inflicting misery on the masses and dislocating the whole economy. Yet, this is precisely what is being proposed.

Who can call this approach progressive?

It goes without saying that *some* increase in production, *some* development of industries, *some* expansion of the market—all this can and will take place, but they will be of a limited and halting nature, creating new problems, new contradictions. Hence we cannot support the *path* along which the government wants to develop the country. We cannot call it progressive.

## ON THE ISSUE OF NATIONAL RECONSTRUCTION

An argument in connection with the question 'progressive or reactionary' is that the Plan-frame must be considered progressive. Hence, the internal policies of which the Plan-frame is supposed to be a concrete expression must be considered to be, in the main, progressive. I think that it represents a sort of compartmental understanding. Planning involves, *first*, the formulation of certain principles and certain targets. *Secondly*, it involves financing. *Thirdly*, it involves the question of popular co-operation with which is linked the whole question of

the extension of democracy in the broadest sense of the word—which includes agrarian reform, living wage, civil liberties, trade union rights, etc. So the three important things in planning are, (i) principles and targets, (ii) financing and (iii) the whole question of democratisation. I would put the issue in this broad general way. Now, comrades, is it possible to *separate* one part and make a generalisation on its basis? I think it is wrong. We cannot do this. We have to take them all in totality, and also in their interrelation. This is essential because the method of financing and the attitude towards democracy are of great importance for realisation of the principles and targets of the Plan.

I have stated, and I would repeat that taken by themselves, many of the proposals of the Plan-frame are an advance over any other document that has come on the subject till now. They reveal new features that have appeared. That is precisely why we welcome them. But we find that the method of financing is reactionary. All comrades agree on that. Also, the whole policy with regard to extension of democracy is reactionary. The attitude to democracy is an integral part of any Plan. If we do not see all this, we shall play straight into the hands of Nehru and strengthen illusions about the possibility of real and major advance without democratisation in our economy and our political life—without agrarian reforms, etc. We shall disarm the masses in face of the government's ideological-political, as well as economic offensive.

Some comrades seem to think that because the CC has supported certain proposals of the Plan-frame, while opposing the others—therefore, it has no line on the issue. They say—support to this part, opposition to that part—this is no line.

These comrades would be right if this was all that the CC had done. But the fact is that the CC has not confined itself to this alone.

## THE STRUGGLE FOR NATIONAL UNITY

In its resolution the CC has taken a definite line on the question which the Plan-frame discusses—the question of national reconstruction. It has enunciated certain principles as can be seen from the following :

“Even in the existing circumstances, a patriotic plan must make decisive inroads into the position of foreign capital in India and also of landlordism. It must weaken the position of monopoly capital in our national economy. It must reduce the burden on the peasant masses. It must raise the standard of life of the people, constantly and continuously, and create an expanding internal market. It must be based on an equitable system of taxation, raising the necessary resources primarily from those who can bear the burden—the foreign capitalists, the landlords and princes, the big bourgeoisie. It must strive to create a stable price structure. It must make possible all-round advance—in the sphere of health, housing, culture, etc. It must mean the adoption of progressive labour laws, the ensuring of popular co-operation and the unleashing of popular initiative through extension of democratic rights and civil liberties.” (Page 18, para 2.)

Further, the CC has not merely enunciated these principles but concretised them in the pamphlet *Communist Party and Problems of National Reconstruction*. We say: we welcome these principles and these proposals but this is the way of attaining and implementing them. Now, you may not agree with some of the proposals we have made, you may think they require to be amended.



We are ready to discuss that question. But it is not correct to say that the CC has contented itself with saying, "We support this, we oppose this."

In this connection, on the issue of national reconstruction, we have also to consider the question of national unity. Before 1947 there was national unity in our country to put an end to direct British rule, around the slogan of Constituent Assembly. Today, national unity is needed in order to defend and strengthen our freedom, in order to remove the obstacles in the path of India's progress and overcome our backwardness. What these obstacles are, we have pointed out several times. This is the basis on which that national unity has got to be built up. Today it is necessary that this age-old heritage of the colonial order is liquidated. For this, these are the steps that have got to be taken and hence all patriotic parties, the masses following the different political parties and their members have got to unite to carry out these tasks but the carrying out of these tasks necessarily involves struggle against certain existing obstacles and certain existing policies.

The Communist Party has to take note of every new feature appearing and utilise it to the maximum possible extent in order to unify the masses that follow them and other democratic parties and the masses under the influence of the bourgeoisie. This we cannot do on the basis of our own platform which may be 100 per cent 'better.' That does not form the basis of unity. When there are certain progressive features, we take them, we highlight them, we say that in order to carry them out, these are the measures that are necessary, these are the democratic changes that have got to be made and this is the way the obstacles standing in the way have to be removed.

This is the only way in which we can wage a concrete struggle to build the democratic front and to achieve proletarian hegemony inside the front.

Not to do this means either to trail behind the bourgeoisie or to abandon the struggle to build national unity. The actual effect of both would be the same.

By supporting certain proposals of the Plan-frame and mobilising masses for their implementation we are not extending support to the *path* along which the government wants to develop the country. There is only *one* path along which real advance, sustained advance is possible—people's democracy that will lead to socialism. And we fight unflinchingly for advance along that path.

Our support to certain major proposals of the Plan-frame, our welcoming of the new features that have developed—these do not mean that even temporarily we have abandoned our basic position. On the contrary this stand of ours is itself an integral part of the struggle for the basic path.

How ? Standing for confiscation and nationalisation of British capital, for complete sweeping away of feudalism, for a democratic state—we take into account the actual correlation of forces in the country today, the urge among the people and the needs of the country and put forward policies and measures that would *weaken* the position of imperialism and feudalism, *curb* monopoly capital and *strengthen* the forces of democracy. This is the specific way in which the struggle for advance on the democratic path has to be waged today.

The struggle to build the democratic front, to build national unity for strengthening of national economy and the struggle for people's democracy—these are not sepa-

rate struggles, one to be waged today, another to be waged tomorrow. On the contrary, the struggle is the same.

## **OUR ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE BOURGEOISIE**

The task of building national unity raises the question of the bourgeoisie and our attitude towards it. Some comrades have stated that I did not mention about any differences inside the bourgeoisie, that I have treated the whole bourgeoisie as a homogeneous mass. This is not true. We have stated that there are collaborators and non-collaborators, that there are big and small; generally the big are more closely connected with imperialism than the small, but in many cases, the small are more closely connected with feudalism. Generally in relation to imperialism the small takes a more progressive stand because it does not benefit from collaboration and in many cases the goods that it produces are subject to competition from the imperialists even in the home market. There we support the small as against the big. These are not denied. The resolution itself speaks of elements and sections in the bourgeoisie. Sections, as you know, can mean economic sections and political sections. There may be light industries, heavy industries, there may be some elements who group themselves together for a particular purpose and form a section for the time being. Kasturbhai Lal-bhai and some others came out against the Soviet steel agreement. They too could be called section for the purpose. Section is a general term which can connote various things and no one in his senses will deny the existence of sections.

But the question arises whether the collaborator as well as the non-collaborator, the small as well as the big, are part of the *national* bourgeoisie. This is the issue

and let us not try to confuse this issue. Let us try to understand the difference that has arisen. I say that these are also part of the national bourgeoisie. They are part of the national bourgeoisie by this criterion that they are not interested in the maintenance of imperialist control and want to develop an independent capitalist economy which brings them into conflict with imperialism despite collaboration. The independent capitalist development that has taken place in England, France, etc., is not possible in a colonial country, but a certain amount of development will take place. I maintain that if by capitalist path is meant "bourgeois development both in industry and in agriculture at the cost of the masses and for the benefit of monopolies," then this is the common policy of the *whole* big bourgeois class. In this sense, they are all in agreement. I gave the example of the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry plan. This plan is a full-fledged capitalist plan. This plan has allotted 2,000 crores of rupees for industries, out of which 65 per cent is to go to develop heavy and basic industries.

Differences are there amongst the various sections of the bourgeoisie but still they are to be considered as national bourgeoisie, for they have conflicts with imperialism and these conflicts can sharpen. As a matter of fact this is the reason why we changed the formulation of earlier years about nationalisation of key industries to nationalisation of British industries only in the Programme. This concept forms the basis of our Programme itself. The basic concept of the Programme in relation to the bourgeoisie is that the class as a whole is *national*, and also that it is *not revolutionary* but reformist. A fundamental idea accepted inside the Party is that the bourgeoisie cannot complete the democratic revolution,

Equally it is fundamental that the national bourgeoisie of a colonial country does not finally go over to imperialism except in a period when there is the danger of class revolution. That is why till the eve of the revolution, till the period of acute differentiation and the going over of some to imperialism, we do not give the slogan of confiscation of capital of even the monopoly bourgeoisie.

Some comrades seem to maintain that if conflicts over policies arise they must be due to conflicts amongst sections of the bourgeois class. This view is unsound. I have given the example of Churchill and Chamberlain. Let us give an example from India's own history in 1942, when there was a threat of Japanese invasion of India. Subhas Bose had gone to Japan and was working for Japanese invasion of India. Gandhiji took a defeatist position in the beginning. Later his line became one of driving a hard bargain with the British. It is well known that Nehru and Azad were hesitant. Now would you say that there were three sections amongst the bourgeoisie, one pro-Japanese, another pro-Allies and the other wanting to fight the British? It is not that the class gets split up and then the representatives go to argue as lawyers. Generally it happens the other way. The political leaders first put forward the policies and then members of the class begin to take positions around certain policies. Conflicts on policies do not necessarily represent the conflicts between the different sections of the class. In this specific case, the class had not split into sections and yet different policies were advocated—each leader thinking that the policies he advocated were in the best interests of the country.

Sometimes differences in policies also relate directly to differences in the interests of particular sections. Some-

times, differences on policies arise not out of any such thing but from the fact that the political representatives of the class look to the long-term political-economic interests of the class and which come into conflict with the immediate interests of sections of the class. Rajagopalachari wanted excise duty on mill cloth to help the handloom industry—a proposal that ran counter to the interests of the textile magnates and led to differences inside the government. But could we say that one section of Congress leaders represent the textile industry and another section the weavers? That would be absurd. Then the only answer is that the political representative of the class undertook a measure to placate and win over large masses of people in distress which ran counter to the immediate interests of big sections of the class.

I have been asked: If the whole class is to be considered national, then why not have united front with the whole class, including the big bourgeoisie and the government? A very pertinent question. But, as I pointed out in my opening speech, our struggle against imperialism and feudalism cannot be isolated from our struggle against the big bourgeoisie which is the leading force in the present government—the very government that protects British capital and feudalism. The fact that the whole class has its conflict with imperialism and feudalism—this fact alone does not create the basis for a general united front with it. We have to see *how* it seeks to strengthen its own position in that conflict—by attacking the people or by attacking imperialism and feudalism? If, in the main, its policy is one of attacking the people, then that policy does not strengthen the forces of democracy, does not expand the home market to any great extent and does not appreciably weaken the fetters on the forces of production. It

does not fight the crisis in our economy and help us to liquidate the colonial order.

This for us is the decisive question : Not the *existence* and growth of conflict merely but the *manner* in which the conflict is sought to be resolved ? At whose cost ? At the cost of the people or by attacking imperialism and feudalism ?

Hence, it is that the question of general united front with the government does not arise with its present policies.

At the same time, there are issues on which united front between the democratic forces and the government is both possible and has actually taken place. On the question of peace and defence of national freedom, on the issue of Kashmir, on the issue of French and Portuguese territories in India. On specific issues, on certain occasions, because of the very character of our country, of the nature of our struggle, this kind of united front takes place and will take place; but as yet its possibilities are limited.

The conflict over policies that is arising in the bourgeois camp is neither a basic conflict, nor can it be identified with specific sections of the bourgeoisie at this stage. Some critics of the CC say that they also do not assert that the bourgeoisie has got split into two sections or that the differentiation has proceeded very far. They say that they feel that such a differentiation is possible because the germs are already there. If that is the view, I fully agree with it. I would go even further and state that not merely is there a possibility but that we must work in such a way that the possibility becomes a *reality*.

But this itself demands that possibility is not confused with actuality. The contention that the government re-

presents the national bourgeoisie as against the collaborationist bourgeoisie, or the progressive big bourgeoisie as against the pro-imperialist reactionary big bourgeoisie—this contention presumes not merely the existence of *germs* of difference, but a split in the class or at least differentiation that has already proceeded very far. This is what we deny—not merely because it is theoretically untenable and factually incorrect but because it has very serious *practical implications*. If such a differentiation has already taken place, if the pro-imperialists are out to sabotage the Second Five Year Plan and maintain the colonial order—then it would be perfectly correct on our part to join hands with the government and to fight against the pro-imperialists.

It is precisely because the theory of split-in-the-class has such implications—implications which we consider disastrous for the whole movement, implications which would reduce the Party to an appendage of the bourgeoisie and disarm the masses in face of its attacks—it is because of this that we consider it so necessary to combat this theory. It is by no means an academic issue. It has vital bearing on the day-to-day struggles of the masses.

I have dealt with this at great length because we feel that this thesis will have dangerous results. I know well that this is not what the comrades who propose the thesis desire but we know well from our own history that a wrong thesis leads to wrong practice.

### **IMPORTANCE OF THE STRUGGLE FOR POLICIES**

It is not enough however to recognise that the whole class is national and that fundamentally the policies that it is pursuing are in conformity with the interest of the



class. Nor is it enough to understand the dual role of the class. These supply the basis of our *strategy*, our general approach. For determining the specific *tactics* to be adopted in a specific situation, we must also seriously take into account the conflicts that are arising inside the class. We do not make these conflicts the *basis* of our tactics—that would lead to reformism. But nor do we ignore them, on the ground that they have not yet developed fully, for that would mean refusal to build a broad democratic front.

How have these conflicts arisen? They have arisen because of the sharpening of the basic contradiction in Indian society—between the people on the one hand and imperialism-feudalism on the other. Also because of the sharpening of the specific contradiction between the bourgeoisie and imperialist-feudal vested interests.

How do they express themselves? They express themselves over the issue of economic relations with the Soviet Union and the socialist world. They express themselves over the questions of agrarian reforms. They express themselves on the question of state sector and private sector, on the question of nationalisation of certain concerns, etc.

Are these conflicts of no importance to the democratic movement? To take that stand or even to belittle their significance would mean repudiation of the task of building the democratic front. It would mean entertaining the hope that through partial struggles for economic demands alone the mass movement would gather enough strength to attain victory. Such ideas, as we know, no matter in what radical phraseology they are cloaked, lead to sheer economism combined with abstract denunciation of the government and high-sounding slogans unrelated

to life. They prevent the Party from acting as a political force, from *intervening* in the developing situation. Not merely that. An attitude of indifference towards these conflicts—on the plea that they are not yet of a basic nature—means failure to make serious efforts to win allies and therefore weakens even the day-to-day struggles of the masses.

Some comrades, for example, on the plea that our main emphasis should be on the basic masses, ignore the question of the rich peasantry and minimise its significance. They advance the argument that only in the measure that we strengthen our position among the poor peasants and agricultural workers, in that measure will we be able to win over the rich peasants.

It is perfectly correct to state that the kisan movement must draw its main strength from the agricultural workers and toiling peasants and be firmly based on them. This has been and continues to be the chief weakness from which the movement in most areas suffers. The remedying of this weakness, the drawing of the vast number of agricultural workers and poor peasants into action, resolute defence of their demands—these are tasks of supreme and decisive importance without carrying out of which the kisan movement as a whole cannot acquire the necessary sweep, depth and militancy and bring about radical agrarian reforms.

But while paying utmost attention to these tasks the Party has simultaneously to take steps to build broad unity on issues on which all sections of the peasantry can be united. This too is an extremely important task.

The argument that *through* the strengthening of our base among the poor peasants and agricultural workers,

we shall strengthen our position among rich peasants is fallacious.

It often becomes difficult even to develop struggles of poor peasants and agricultural workers, to defend them against government offensive, if the whole of the rich peasantry is hostile. To have allies in the rich peasantry, at least in sections of it, is therefore of great importance for the development and success of peasant struggles—even struggles of agricultural workers and poor peasants.

This is true about the general question of united front also.

It is not true that all policies emanating from the bourgeoisie are equally reactionary. The agreement with the USSR cannot be placed in the same category as agreement with imperialists. The extension of the public sector, the emphasis on heavy industries, etc., are features in the Plan-frame which we do and must welcome. The basic issue at this stage is not whether these too help capitalism. The basic issue is whether they strengthen our independence vis-a-vis imperialism.

Our attitude towards the conflicts that are arising in the bourgeois camp is one of utilising them to weaken the position of imperialism and feudalism, to isolate compromising trends and policies, to strengthen democracy and to build the broadest united front of the Indian people. This is how we approach the question.

In this connection, one comrade has stated that there are two aspects, collaboration as well as conflict, but we have to find out what is dominant at the moment. I say that this is not easy, this finding out of what is dominant. This will lead to endless controversy. We have to see what is growing and we have to utilise that which is growing in *such a way* that it weakens the position of

imperialism and feudalism and strengthens the position of democracy in our economic, political and social life. The question is how do you intend to utilise these conflicts in order to weaken the position of imperialism and feudalism and strengthen the position of democracy.

It is a natural tendency of the bourgeoisie whenever a difference arises, when a conflict arises between the bourgeoisie on the one hand and imperialism and feudalism on the other, to try to solve this conflict at the cost of the people, which means not attacking the existing position of British capital in the country but developing more industries here so as to strengthen the position of Indian capital and make the masses bear the burden. What should be our strategy? Our strategy does not allow them to do that. We have to resist and fight back any steps that attack the masses, such as new taxes, etc., but at the same time support those targets and proposals which are progressive, ourselves put forward concrete proposals and demand their implementation at the cost of imperialism, feudalism and by curbing monopoly capitalism. By this we encourage progressive elements to take up the policy of attacking the position of British capital, feudalism and curbing monopoly capitalism. On the basis of this, the broadest unity can be brought about. This in its totality will be the method of sharpening the conflicts between bourgeoisie and feudalism and imperialism and defending the interests of the people, facilitating differentiation inside the bourgeoisie and building of national unity. Therefore, it is a three-fold process. On the other hand, if we take up the position of say, supporting certain targets and principles and demanding their implementation, but not putting forward our own alternative proposals regarding method of attaining them, then

it becomes tailism; and, of course, if we do not defend the interests of the masses in the interests of national reconstruction, then it becomes total surrender. But it is the *integration* of these three together which really speaking forms the basis of the line that we have to work out. Defend the interests of the masses, support certain measures, put forward our own proposals, demand their implementation and fight against any reactionary modification. For all this, forge broadest unity, national unity.

As a matter of fact, the campaign in support of certain proposals in the Plan-frame and our own concrete proposals has not been carried out by the Party perhaps due to fear that this will breed reformist illusions. So when the reactionary modification has come, the government was able to carry it out and we were not able to expose it. This is not the way to fight the reactionary policies of the government.

A correct line on our part will facilitate differentiation inside the bourgeois class, will broaden the mass movement, create the basis for broadening the democratic front. This is how we have to look at the whole perspective.

### **SUPPORT THE "PROGRESSIVE SECTION" — A WRONG SLOGAN**

Some comrades argue: If you recognise that there is a conflict of policies, then you have also to recognise that progressive policies are being put forward by specific individuals in the government and opposed by specific individuals. Why don't you in the interests of building broad unity, declare support to these specific leaders and opposition to the other leaders?

We do not do that because as yet that kind of differentiation has not taken place when progressive policies as a whole get identified with specific individuals in the government or the ruling class.

In respect of foreign affairs, the progressive orientation has got identified to a great extent with Nehru. Therefore we support the general stand taken by him. In respect of such matters as friendly relation with Pakistan, opposition to communalism also Nehru takes a generally correct stand. To that extent we support him. But this cannot be said about general internal policies which as a whole are reactionary—agrarian reform, labour policy, attitude towards British capital and landlordism, taxation measures, civil liberties, etc. I would repeat again that the attempt to solve the contradiction between imperialism and feudalism on the one hand and the bourgeoisie on the other at the cost of the people is basically a *reactionary* policy, because it has serious implications in terms of democracy, in terms of the condition of the masses and also in terms of national economy, as I tried to show. Therefore both in the interests of national economy and in the interests of the masses, we say that the internal policy is reactionary, despite the growth of contradiction that has taken place. Therefore we can neither extend general support to the class nor to particular sections inside the class. That is the position of the Party.

It is recognised by all that Nehru compromises with the reactionaries. But why does he do it? Can we say that B. C. Roy or T. T. Krishnamachari is so powerful in the country that Nehru has to compromise? If Nehru were to rely on the democratic forces, then nobody can dare to stand in his way. So Nehru compromises because of his own basic policy. As I stated earlier, the govern-

ment is trying to develop capitalism, while maintaining the links with imperialism, allying with landlordism and throwing the burden on the masses. The compromise arises from this policy of Nehru himself.

Has Nehru got any prejudice against the Communist Party? Nehru's prejudice or hatred against the Communist Party arises from his policy of attacking the people, whose champion, he knows, the Communist Party is. Let it not be forgotten that whenever the masses move in action, it is Nehru above all who comes out with violent denunciation—not only of the Communist Party but of the masses. The speech against the bank employees' proposed strike, the speech at Patna a few weeks ago are instances. It is giving an alibi to him, to screen him, if we argue that all this is due to the pressure of reactionaries or to Nehru's prejudices against the Communist Party.

If we do not see this, then we shall weaken the struggle against the reactionary policies of the government and create the illusion that the whole trouble is due to the presence of certain 'bad people' in the government, due to their 'evil influence.' The movement will get diverted from its path.

Today the blow has to be directed against *compromise* and not against specific *compromisers*, because it is only at a much higher stage of the movement that such a differentiation can take place which will identify specific policies with specific sections of the class, and its leaders.

This is also the reason why it is incorrect to give the slogan of removal of pro-imperialists and reactionaries from the government as a general slogan. There are Congress leaders who are anti-imperialists, who desire

to defend Indian freedom but are simultaneously anti-working class and against civil liberties. It has been argued that B. C. Roy is pro-imperialist. He may be. But the very comrades who say this also say that the Bengal government's agrarian reform proposals are, in many respects, more advanced than in other provinces. How do you explain this? It only shows that differentiation has yet to take place.

Certainly, as the movement grows, as the struggles develop, the differentiation will proceed and in places where particular ministers or officials get identified with anti-people policies in a sharp and clear-cut manner, their removal will have to be demanded—as an essential part of the struggle for progressive policies. That goes without saying. But to make reorganisation of the government with removal of reactionaries as the major slogan today would mean diverting attention from the main issue. It would mean giving an alibi to Nehru and make him appear as a prisoner of reactionaries—precisely what some Congress leaders want to be done. Such a course on our part will mean ideologically disarming the masses in face of Nehru's attacks which will grow in intensity as the Congress policy of putting more and more burdens on the masses gathers momentum.

Equally incorrect is the slogan of a national coalition government. This slogan in today's situation without a crisis and with the present correlation of forces in the country can only mean an extended Congress government headed by Nehru. The argument that we are demanding the removal of reactionaries from the government as a pre-condition to the formation of such a government is a spurious argument which can deceive no one. The assumption that reactionary policies at this stage can



be associated with particular reactionary groups or individuals is wrong. Also the assumption that the progressives in the Congress are so strong as to eliminate the reactionaries is baseless. No matter in what way the slogan is presented and how it is clothed, it is a slogan of surrender. The theoretical basis of this slogan is also the same as that of reorganisation of government, viz., a split in the big bourgeois class—one section allegedly wanting to pursue progressive policies but being prevented from doing so due to the pressure of reactionaries.

All these slogans have one and same root and the same effect. They ignore the fact that government's policies in internal matters are still basically reactionary. They attempt to present these same policies as progressive by applying criteria which are liberal bourgeois criteria. They make not actual practice but declarations and professed objectives the basis of judging the government. They ascribe the anti-people features of government's policies to the pressure of pro-imperialists who allegedly are out to sabotage the real aims of the government. They thus, despite the best intentions of their authors, result in adoption of tactics and slogans which can only weaken the mass movement.

### **OUR LINE OF UNITY AND STRUGGLE**

The period ahead is a period of big struggles. Mass actions will have to be fought for wage increase, for opposition to new tax burdens, for agrarian reforms. All these will suffer if wrong ideas are allowed to strike root in our Party about the character of the government and its policies.

Why then, it may be asked, are we not giving the

slogan of removal of the present government from power? Why are we withdrawing the slogan of government of democratic unity as a general slogan?

Some comrades have argued that it is wrong on principle to give this slogan today because the government is defending peace, defending freedom and has put forward an industrial programme with special emphasis on heavy industries.

We do not agree with this view. Despite all this, we would have tried to remove the government from power if there had been a crisis in the country, if the correlation of forces had been changing fast in favour of democracy, if there had been a big swing among the masses against the government and towards the left parties. A government formed out of such a situation, a democratic government in which the Communist Party plays a big role, would certainly follow a more consistent policy of peace than the present government.

We are not giving the slogan of a government of democratic unity as a general slogan not because we consider it wrong on principle but because we do not consider the situation mature.

Such a slogan also does not help us to unite the masses—under the influence of left parties as well as Congress—for progressive policies and measures which we consider to be the job of decisive importance at the present moment.

Such a slogan therefore does not help the growth of the mass movement. If you give the slogan, as a general slogan, you have also to present it in such a way that it appears as a practical slogan. And today, to make it practical, you have to present it as a slogan of coalition with Congress.

We gave the slogan of government of democratic unity during the elections and afterwards on the basis of a certain estimation of the national political situation. There was exaggeration in that estimation. At the same time, it cannot be denied that those were years which marked rapid swing of the masses away from the Congress. Not merely were there struggles on a big scale but they had a powerful *political impact*. This was seen in the tramway workers' struggle and the subsequent bye-election in Calcutta. This was seen in other states too.

Such is not the situation today. Hence the continuation of the slogan of a government of democratic unity as a general slogan would be wrong.

Does this mean that we have no slogan of power ? No. It only means that the slogan of power in the specific form of an *interim government* can be given in a specific situation and that situation does not exist today.

As regards the slogan of power—we have to popularise it as explained in our Programme—the concept of people's power. We have to show that this is the only way to socialism.

I would again take up the question of national unity. As far as the concept is concerned, the CC completely agrees with it. Today we want to unite the broadest sections of the masses for certain specific policies and proposals related to the issue of national reconstruction and democracy. Struggles for immediate demands are essential for this but they are not enough. There was a time when we achieved national unity in the struggle against the British. Today national unity should be to struggle for the removal of the obstacles which stand in the path of India's advance.

We put forward certain proposals. We say to the PSP: Come, fight together with us and also inside your organisation for these! We also say to the Congressmen that they should fight for these proposals together with us and inside the Congress organisation. So we strive not merely to defend the interests of the masses in their immediate struggle, but we take steps so that a fight for these progressive policies, for national advance can be carried out inside the Congress and other parties on a nationwide scale.

Our task today is to build national unity for defence of freedom, for defence of peace, for defence of mass interests, for policies of national advance. We are ready to co-operate with all for this truly national task.

This demands a change in our agitational methods too. Even when speaking to the masses who are under our influence, we have to keep in mind the vast numbers who are still members and followers of the Congress. Our appeal, our slogans, our approach have to be such, that their doubts, their loyalties, their aspirations are taken into consideration and the building of united front is facilitated.

During the period of inner-Party discussion, we have to keep all these factors in mind and evolve an integrated line which will arm our cadres and masses with a powerful weapon to advance the democratic movement in all spheres.

## EXTRACTS FROM THE CONCLUDING SPEECH

Delivered at the Uttar Pradesh Plenum, October 16-19.

Nobody here has actually argued that the bourgeoisie has already *split* into two sections of which one section is fighting the other. But it has been said that *differentiation* between progressives and reactionaries inside the government has reached an advanced stage or is taking place rapidly and that the CC refuses to see that.

In this connection what I have to say is this :

*First*, no such *differentiation* as described by these comrades has taken place although differences are arising over certain policies, e.g., economic relations with the USSR, public sector vs private sector. On the basic policy of development of capitalism, of strengthening the position of Indian monopoly capital vis-a-vis imperialism and feudalism while compromising with them and protecting them, of throwing the main burden on the masses and denying them democratic rights—on this basic policy (which we have called reactionary) there is broad general agreement inside the ruling big bourgeoisie *as a whole*. Hence it is that the conflicts that arose over certain issues did not lead to a *crisis* but were resolved within the framework of the basic policy.

While conflicts are arising and must be taken note of, must be utilised, as I have already stated, to weaken the position of imperialism-feudalism and of extreme reactionaries, what pre-dominates at this stage is not these conflicts but the unity of basic policy. If we do not see this, if we postulate *differentiation* having already reached an advanced stage, then the actual tactics that will follow

will be the same as those following from the assumption that a split has already taken place: They will be tactics of collaboration with the government.

*Secondly*, even when the conflicts in the bourgeois camp reach a much higher stage leading to actual—and not imaginary—differentiation in the class, even then these conflicts can never become the basis of the tactics of the Communist Party. The basis of the tactics of the Party has always to be the conflict between imperialism-feudalism on the hand and the people on the other. The conflicts in the bourgeois camp have to be utilised in such a way as to advance the popular movement for liquidation of feudalism, for shattering the strength of British capital—and not for lining up behind one section.

It is held that right reformism results from underestimation of the strength of the masses, of their movement and from overestimation of the strength of the ruling classes. This is generally so. But not always.

It can also happen—and has actually happened many a time—that right reformist tactics follow from or are justified on the basis of an *overestimation* of the strength of the masses and *underestimation* of the strength of the enemy. We all know how wrong was the thesis advanced by us during the People's War that Churchill was a 'prisoner of the people' and how several mistakes followed from it, including the perspective of peaceful attainment of freedom.

The belief that the mass movement has already reached a high level, that the Congress is already in the grip of a crisis due to the growth of sharp conflicts, that a rapid differentiation is proceeding in the bourgeois camp as the result of these developments—this estimation may appear extremely revolutionary as compared to the esti-

mation made by the CC. And on the basis of this 'revolutionary' estimation the CC may also be denounced as 'reformist.' But all this can also pave the way to gross class-collaboration—covered by radical phrases. That is precisely what is being attempted.

It has also been argued by some comrades that the CC's position is not logical. It makes some formulations but does not face their implications. It 'comes up to the door but does not enter the room.'

What is the basis of this criticism ?

The CC has pointed out that a progressive foreign policy strengthens national freedom. 'Logically,' therefore the CC must take 'one step forward' and concede that if the foreign policy grows more and more progressive, our freedom also will be continually strengthened—leading to the removal of all restrictions on it and all threats to it !

The CC has agreed that economic relation with the socialist world can reduce our economic dependence on imperialists. 'Logically,' therefore, the CC must take 'one step forward' and concede that if these relations grow very close, India will attain economic independence !

The CC has noted that differences over policies are arising in the bourgeois camp. 'Logically,' therefore, the CC must take 'one step forward' and concede that already a sharp differentiation has taken place or is taking place inside the government !

Similarly in relation to tactics.

The CC has agreed that the Plan-frame constitutes an advance over what was proposed by the government till now and shows new features. 'Logically,' therefore, the CC must take 'one step forward,' declare that the

internal policies of the government are becoming progressive and make national reconstruction, as outlined in the Plan-frame, the basis of its activities!

And so on.

At first sight, the differences might appear narrow—differences that can be resolved by mutual discussion. In reality, however, the differences are basic. They relate not merely to tactics. They relate to the fundamental question of the path of advance.

If we take all these and other points on which some comrades want the CC to take 'one step forward' and act 'logically'—we would see that what they are proposing, while speaking about struggles, is a line which abandons the fundamentals of the Party Programme itself.

In the name of new features of the national situation, in the name of the strength of the socialist camp and the socialist world market, in the name of 'consistency'—they are working out what amounts to a 'peaceful' path to people's democracy.

Hence we cannot agree with these comrades. We say the 'one step forward' that you propose is a step that will mean repudiation of Marxism itself and the betrayal of the mass movement. It will reduce the Communist Party to an appendage of the bourgeoisie.

Our Party is and must continue to be a party of revolutionary struggle. That is our position.



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