

Record of the Discussions of J.V. Stalin with the Representatives of the C.C. of the Communist Party of India Comrades, Rao, Dange, Ghosh and Punnaiah

9th February 1951

Introduction

In this interview Stalin gave his views on the questions raised by the leadership of the CPI. The Soviet leader adverted to the essential differences between China and India in terms of the development of the economy and the railway network which affected the necessity of differing tactical lines in these countries. In the suggestions given by Stalin to the Indian communists he drew extensively on the experiences of the Russian and Chinese revolutions. The latter observations are of particular value as they give his appraisal of the great Chinese revolution shortly after its spectacular victories.¹ Stalin's evaluations of the course of the Chinese revolution, the specifics of the Chinese path which he held up as an exemplar to the CPI leaders differ enormously from the interpretations placed on that path by those who aspire to that route in contemporary India with regards to the role of the working class and the peasantry. Stalin stressed the necessity of the role of both of these classes in the Indian revolution and particularly in the armed revolution. He noted the inclination to individual terrorism in the Indian communist movement. Regarding the Telengana movement Stalin observed that it was necessary to support what were the first sprouts of civil war.

Stalin's understanding of the problems before the CPI exerted a profound effect on the course of the history of the party as it led to the recasting of the party approach to the understanding of the character of the Indian state, the stage of revolution, the path of revolution, and the nature of armed revolution and armed struggle, the role of the working class and the peasantry in the revolutionary process in India. This found its expression in the formulation of the new party documents which were drafted in 1951 shortly after the Moscow meetings between the representatives of the CPI and the CPSU (B).²

The resolution of the questions of the Indian revolution worked out in 1951, however, proved to be short-lived. With the changes in the Soviet Union after 1953 and the 20th Congress of the CPSU three years later there occurred a corresponding change in the programmatic and tactical perspectives of the CPI: the stage of people's democratic revolution was dropped in favour of a national democratic revolution which would have an enhanced role for the national bourgeoisie, and revolutionary strategies were replaced by peaceful and parliamentary ones.³ The CPI has remained within the frame of the theses of the 20th Congress of the CPSU for a half century. The CPI (M), in its opposition to the CPI on its right flank, asserted its support of the people's democratic revolution and defended the revolutionary positions of 1951. It continued, furthermore, at least ostensibly, a defence of the 1951 positions in confrontation with its left flank, namely the CPI (ML), which also upheld the people's democratic revolution but not necessarily support the positions advocated by Stalin in 1951 with regard to the path of the Indian revolution.

But within a decade of the foundation of the CPI (M) it became clear to its General Secretary that the party had left behind the perspectives of 1951. He baldly stated that the CPI (M) did not look at matters from the point of view of a revolutionary party:

‘our practice is based on deep-rooted parliamentary, legalistic illusions and on possibilities of peaceful development of our party and movement for a long period to come. We are unable to shake off the revisionist habits, thinking, the mode of functioning in all mass fronts and in party building’.

P. Sundarayya alluded to the abandonment of the 1951 tactical line of the necessity of combining the workers’ uprisings with the partisan warfare of the peasantry, of the need to establish a powerful working class movement with underground factory and workshop committees which represented the line of the party.

This is how he underlined the retreat from the 1951 Statement of Policy by the party:

‘...We are all agreed that our path is not exactly of Russia or China but will be our independent path, based on the working class peasant alliance, if possible simultaneously synchronising of peasant armed revolts (leading to establishment of guerilla bases and then to liberation bases) and general strikes and armed insurrections in the industrial and administrative centres. To make our *revolution successful*, the necessity of combining these two main forces on All-India scale becomes essential. *But from this we slip unconsciously in the name of preparing for working class and peasant movements on all-India scale to plan all-India mass actions, which taking our party’s present organisational weakness, and the weakness of general democratic movements leads us more or less to constitutional and – parliamentary forms of activity, neglecting other basic tasks of the party.* (Emphases in the original.)

Realising the anomalous position of his heading a party which was engulfed by what he termed ‘revisionist habits’ Sundarayya took the only honourable course open to him by resigning from the General Secretaryship and Politbureau of the CPI (M) during the emergency in 1975.⁴

The revolutionary forces which seceded from the CPI (M) in the late 1960s largely by-passed the understanding of the 1951 programme and path of revolution. The dominant tendencies in the CPI (ML) traced their origins to the criticism of the P.C. Joshi and B.T. Ranadive lines, to the Andhra Letter, to the Telengana movement and favoured perspectives based directly on their understanding of the Chinese revolution. The newly formed party in the name of the adoption of the Chinese path lent its support to the withdrawal of party work from the trade unions, the strategic boycott of parliament, the surrounding of the towns by the countryside and the policy of individual terrorism as its military line –all of which was considered to be consistent with the experience of the Chinese revolution. Stalin’s observations on the need to incorporate the working class in the armed revolution and the need to overcome individual terrorism with regard to the CPI in the 1940s retained its validity in the new circumstances. The exertions to overcome the sectarian limitations of the early party line continued for many years.

The inter-action between J.V. Stalin and the CPI delegation in 1951 and the documents which flowed from it play a reference point in understanding the different programmes and tactical lines which have preoccupied the Indian communist movement.⁵

Notes

1. We do not find these elsewhere in recently released documents which cover the relations between the Soviet and Chinese communist leaderships. See, for example, A.M. Ledovskii, 'SSSR i Stalin v cyd"bakh Kitaia. Dokumenty i cvidetel"stva uchastnika sobytii: 1937-1952', Moscow, 1999 and the translations made of documents dealing with Soviet-Chinese relations by the Cold War International History Project.
2. Notably the *Programme of the Communist Party of India*, the *Tactical Line*, the *Statement of Policy of the Communist Party of India*. See, 'Documents of the History of the Communist Party of India' Volume VIII 1951-1956, edited by Mohit Sen, People's Publishing House, New Delhi, 1977. Parallel to these developments the Institute of Oriental Studies of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR held a wide-ranging discussion on the correlation of class forces in India in March and April, 1951 which led to the correction of the right-opportunist evaluations of contemporary Indian developments in the Soviet Union. See: 'The Correlation of Class Forces in India', 'Revolutionary Democracy', Vol. VI, No. 2, September 2000.
3. The switch in the understanding from people's democratic revolution to national democracy may be traced *inter alia* in the following documents of A. Sobelov: 'Peoples' Democracy as a Form of Political Organisation of Society', *Communist Review*, London, June 1951, 3-21, 'Some Forms of Transition from Capitalism to Socialism', Communist Party Publication, New Delhi, October 1956 (The parliamentary way to socialism is spelt out here).
4. P. Sundarayya, 'My Resignation' India Publishers and Distributors, New Delhi, 1991, pp. 21-33. Sundarayya was particularly dismayed by the policy advocated and practiced by Jyoti Basu, E.M.S. Namboodiripad, B.T. Ranadive, and P. Ramamurti of collaborating with the Hindu communal Jana Sangh during the emergency. (pp. 4-20).
5. The Provisional Central Committee of the CPI (ML), it may be said in this connection, has drawn lessons from the 1951 programme and tactical line without feeling constrained by it.

Comrade Stalin: Your questions have been received. I will reply to them and then express some of my own understanding.

Perhaps it might seem strange that we are having these discussions in the evening. During the day we are busy. We are working. We are free from work at 6 o'clock in the evening.

Possibly it might appear unusual that we go into the discussions at considerable length, but regretfully, otherwise we may not be able to fulfill our mission. Our CC charged us to meet you personally in order to render help to your party by giving advice. We are little acquainted with your party and your people. We are looking at this mission with great seriousness.

As soon as we took upon ourselves to give our advice, we took upon ourselves the moral responsibility for your party, we cannot give you lightly thought out advice. We wish to acquaint ourselves with the materials, together with you, and then give advice.

You may think it to be odd that we have put a few series of questions to you and it almost looks like an interrogation. Our situation is such that we cannot do otherwise. The documents do not give a full picture and so we resort to this method. It is a very unhappy way of doing things but it cannot be helped. Circumstances compel us. Let us proceed to the essence of the matter.

You ask: What is your appraisal of the impending Indian revolution?

We, Russians, look at this revolution as mainly agrarian. It signifies – the liquidation of feudal property, the division of the land amongst the peasantry and it becoming their personal property. It means the liquidation of feudal private property in the name of the affirmation of the private property of the peasantry. As we see this none of this is socialist. We do not consider that India stands before the socialist revolution. This is that Chinese path which is spoken of everywhere, i.e. the agrarian, anti-feudal revolution without any confiscation or nationalisation of the property of the national bourgeoisie. This is the bourgeois-democratic revolution or the first stage of the people's democratic revolution. The people's democratic revolution that began in the eastern countries of Europe, even before it did in China, has two stages. The first stage – agrarian revolution or agrarian reform, as you desire. The countries of people's democracy in Europe went through this stage in the very first year after the war. China stands now at this first stage. India is approaching this stage. The second stage of the people's democratic revolution as shown in Eastern Europe is characterised by the agrarian revolution passing over to the expropriation of the national bourgeoisie. This is already the beginning of the socialist revolution. In all of the people's democratic countries of Europe the plants, factories, banks are nationalised and handed over to the state. China is still far from this second stage. This stage is also far off in India or India is far from this stage.

Here you speak of the editorial of the newspaper of the Cominform concerning the Chinese path of development of the revolution. This editorial was a challenge to the articles and speeches of Ranadive which considered that India stood on the road to socialist revolution. We, Russian communists, considered that this is a very dangerous thesis and decided to come forward against this and point out that India is on the Chinese road, i.e. the first stage of the people's democratic revolution. For you this has the attached importance of building your revolutionary front for a revolt of the entire peasantry and the kulaks against the feudal lords, for an uprising of all of the peasantry so that the feudal lords feel themselves isolated. A revolt of the public is necessary as of all the progressive stratum of the national bourgeoisie against English imperialism, in order to isolate the bloc of the English imperialists with the national bourgeoisie. Amongst you the view is prevalent that all of the imperialists need to be expelled in one blow, all, the English and the Americans. It is impossible to build such a front. The sharp blade of the all-national front is necessarily directed against English imperialism. Let the other imperialists, including the Americans, think that you are not concerned about them. This is necessary so your actions do not unite all of the imperialists against yourselves, and for that you must sow discord among them. Now, if the American imperialists themselves want to get into a fight, the united national front of India will need to plunge into action against them.

Ghosh: I am unclear why only against British imperialism when at present the entire world is in struggle against American imperialism which is considered to be the head of the anti-democratic camp?

Comrade Stalin: It is very simple; the united national front is against England, for the national independence from England, and not from America. It is your national specificity. India was semi-liberated from whom? From England, and not from America, India is in the concord of nations not with America but with England. The officers and the specialists in your army are not Americans but Englishmen. These are historical facts and it is impossible to abstract from them. I wish to say that the party must not load itself with all of the tasks, the tasks of the struggle with imperialism throughout the world. It is necessary to take up one task: to free oneself from English imperialism. It is the national task of India. We must also consider the feudal classes. Of course, the kulaks are enemies. But it would be unwise to struggle against the kulaks as well as with the feudal lords. It would be unreasonable to take on to oneself two burdens – the struggle against the kulaks and the struggle against feudalism. It is necessary to build the front in such a manner that it is the enemy and not you who are isolated. It is, so to say, a tactic to facilitate the struggle of the Communist Party. Not one person, if he is wise, will take on himself all of the burdens. It is necessary to take on oneself one task – the liquidation of feudalism, and the survivals of the empire of England. In order to isolate the feudal lords, to liquidate the feudal lords, and bring down English imperialism, do not brush against the other imperialist powers for the time being. If you proceed on your way like this – it will lighten matters. Now, if the Americans poke their noses in, it will then be necessary to carry out the struggle against them, but the people would know that not you but they had attacked. Certainly, the time to take on the Americans and the kulaks will come. But it will be later, each will have their turn.

Ghosh: I am now clear.

Dange: Would this not hinder the carrying out of propaganda and agitational work against the American imperialists and the struggle against them?

Comrade Stalin: Of course not. They are enemies of the people and it is necessary to struggle against them.

Dange: I put this question so that no one interprets this as opportunism in the task of struggle against American imperialism.

Comrade Stalin: The enemy needs to be isolated in a wise manner. You are raising the revolution not against the Americans but against the English imperialists. If the Americans interfere, then it is another matter.

Rao: Among the kulaks there is a small part which is engaged in feudal exploitation: they let land on lease and they are usurers. They usually stand on the side of the landlords.

Comrade Stalin: This is not significant. In comparison to the major general task of the liquidation of the feudal lords, it is a particular task. In your propaganda you need to speak against the feudal lords but not against the prosperous peasantry. You must not yourselves push the kulak into a union with the feudal lords. It is not necessary to create an ally for the feudal lords. The kulaks have a large influence in the village, the peasantry considers that the kulak makes his way in life thanks to his own ability etc. It is not necessary to give the kulaks the possibility of splitting from the peasants. Do your feudal lords belong to the nobility?

Rao: Yes.

Comrade Stalin: The peasants do not love the nobility. Here it is necessary to grasp this in order that the feudal lords are not given the possibility of having an ally among the peasants.

Punnaiah: Amongst us there exists confusion on the question of the national bourgeoisie. What is to be properly understood under the national bourgeoisie?

Comrade Stalin: Imperialism is the politics of the seizure of another's country. Does your national bourgeoisie really think of capturing other countries? Meanwhile British imperialism seized India. The national bourgeoisie – the middle, large are your national exploiters. It is necessary to say that you are not against their continuance, but against the foreign enemy, against the English imperialists. Among the national bourgeoisie are to be found many elements which find themselves aligned with you. The top national bourgeoisie – it is already in alliance with imperialism, but it is only a part and besides it is not big. The bourgeoisie is basically interested in supporting you in the struggle for the full independence of India. It is interested in feudalism being liquidated. The bourgeoisie needs a market, a good market, if the peasantry acquire land there will be an internal market, there would be people who would have the capacity of making purchases. It is necessary to elucidate all this in the press. It will be advantageous for you so that the national bourgeoisie does not move over to the side of the English. You have to order matters in such a way that the English imperialists do not acquire new allies in India. In China by no means are steps being undertaken to expropriate the bourgeoisie. Only Japanese property was nationalised in China, even the American enterprises are not nationalised, they are functioning. If your revolution is of the Chinese type you must not for the present undertake those steps which will push your bourgeoisie to the side of the English imperialists. Here is your Chinese path. In China the national bourgeoisie did not go over and now they have come forward against the American imperialists and they help the Chinese people's government. This signifies that they may consider the American imperialists are isolated in China. Concerning the division of India that is a piece of fraud organised by the English. If you are drafting a programme of action then you must say in there that you need a military and economic union between Pakistan, India and Ceylon. These three states, which are artificially separated from one another, will come closer. This will culminate in these states uniting themselves. This idea of drawing together must be put forward and the people will support you. The elite in Pakistan and Ceylon would be against it but the people have doubts about them. This artificial division is clear particularly in Bengal. The province of Bengal will fall away from Pakistan at the first opportunity.

Dange: The understanding of the national bourgeoisie is constantly brought up in the following spirit amongst us: the middle bourgeoisie is called the national bourgeoisie. In India the big bourgeoisie has passed over to the side of the English imperialists.

Comrade Stalin: Do you have in India banks which are purely English?

Dange: Yes, in India there are English banks as well as joint ones. In our programme there is a demand for the nationalisation of the big bourgeoisie, that is bureaucratic capital.

Comrade Stalin: It is not bureaucratic capital but industrial trading capital. Bureaucratic capital in China made a fortune by means of the state. It is capital related to the state and very little connected to industry. Through privileged contracts with the Americans the family of Sun and others received money. The concerns of the big industrialists and traders in China: they have remained intact. I do not advise you to expropriate the large capitalists, even if they are in alliance with American and English banking capital. It would be better to say quietly

that whoever goes over to the side of the enemies would lose their property. Indubitably, if your revolution heats up, then a part of such big capitalists will run away. Then declare them to be traitors and expropriate their property, but I will not suggest expropriating the big bourgeoisie just for its alliance with English capital. If there is a demand for the expropriation of the big bourgeoisie in your programme, then it is necessary to cross it out. You will need to draw up a new programme or platform of action. It will pay you to neutralise the big bourgeoisie and to tear off from it nine-tenths of the entire national bourgeoisie. It is not necessary for you to artificially create new enemies for yourself. You already have many of them: the turn of your big bourgeoisie will come and then, certainly, you will have to confront them. The problems of the revolution are decided in stages. The stages need not be mixed up. It is necessary to decide upon the stages and to beat the enemies separately – today one, tomorrow another, and when you grow stronger, you may be able to beat them all, but for the present you are still weak. Your people copy our revolution. But these are different stages. The experience of the other fraternal parties needs to be critically taken into account and this adapted to the specific conditions of India. You will be criticised from the left but you need not worry. Bukharin and Trotsky criticised Lenin from the left, but they became a laughing stock. Ranadive criticised Mao Zedong from the left, but Mao Zedong was correct - he acted in correspondence with the conditions of his own country. Follow your own line and do not pay attention to the ultra-leftist cries.

Now on the second question, about the Chinese path.

I have already spoken on the Chinese road in the political and social spheres. It would be an agrarian revolution. Concerning the armed struggle it needs to be said that the Chinese did not speak of the armed struggle, they spoke of the armed revolution. They regarded it as partisan war with liberated regions and with an army of liberation. This means that it is necessary to speak of the armed revolution and partisan war and not of armed struggle. The expression 'armed struggle' was first mentioned in the Cominform newspapers. The armed struggle signifies more than a partisan war, it means the combination of partisan war of the peasantry and the general strikes and uprisings of the workers. In its scale a partisan war is narrower than an armed struggle. How did the armed revolution in China begin?

In 1926-27 the Chinese comrades broke with the Guomindangists. They distinguished themselves in a separate camp having prepared an army of 40-50 thousand persons against the Guomindang. This army was the basis of the partisan war. They hid themselves in the forests and mountains far from the towns and the railways. Of course, wherever the CC of the Chinese Communist Party was there, together with them, the basic cadres were to be found. The Chinese liberation army could not settle down in the towns and it was easy to encircle it. In order not to be encircled and destroyed they left the towns and railways far behind and founded a series of free partisan regions. They were encircled, then they would break out of it, leave behind old liberated regions and create new ones and endeavoured not to do battle. The further they continued, the more the Chinese communists were alienated from the workers and the towns. Mao Zedong did not wish, of course, to break relations with the workers, but the path of partisan war led him to that, and he lost contact with the towns. It was a grievous necessity. At last they were established in Yan'an where they defended themselves for a long period. They called the peasants to themselves, instructed them how to conduct agrarian revolution, expanded their army and transformed it into a serious force. But all the while they did not evade that minus which characterised partisan warfare.

What is a liberated partisan region? It is entirely an island in the state, there is no rear in this region, it may be encircled, blockaded; it has no rear on which it can lean. That is what happened. Yan'an was encircled and the Chinese left that place with large casualties. This would have continued for a long time if the Chinese communists had not decided to cross over to Manchuria. Moving into Manchuria they rapidly improved their own position, they found a rear in the form of a friendly state. It was not now an island, it was something like a peninsula which rested on the USSR at one end. After this Chiang Kai-shek lost the possibility of encircling the Chinese partisans. And only after this, as the Chinese rested, they had the possibility of going over to the offensive from the north to the south. Such is the history. What follows from this? The partisan war of the peasants is a serious matter and a big acquisition for the revolution. In this area the Chinese made new contributions in revolutionary practice, particularly for the backward countries. And, of course, each Communist in a country where the peasants are 80-90% of the population is obliged to carry this method in the arsenal of their struggles. This is indisputable. But also from this experience of the Chinese comrades it follows that partisan warfare with liberated regions has its own big minuses. These minuses are that the partisan regions are islands which are always open to blockade. It is possible to break out of this ring victoriously only by creating a stable rear, link up with and rest on a friendly neighbouring state and turn this state into one's own stable rear. The Chinese took the sensible step of moving over into Manchuria. If they had not done this I do not know how matters would have ended. In partisan war one has insufficient strength to achieve victory. Partisan war leads without fail to victory if it rests on a friendly neighbouring state. It is highly characteristic that till the Chinese comrades reached Manchuria they did not wish to attack, fearing encirclement, and only after this transition they began to plan to advance and scored successes against the troops of Chiang Kai-shek. We need to take into consideration these minuses of partisan war. It is said in India that partisan war is altogether sufficient to obtain the victory of the revolution. This is incorrect. In China there were more favourable conditions than in India. They had a people's liberation army ready in China. You have no ready army. China does not have such a dense railway network as India which was more comfortable for the partisans. The possibility of successful partisan war is lesser for you than in China. In industrial relations India is more developed than China. This is good from the point of progress, but bad from the point of view of partisan war. However many detachments and liberated regions are created all these will only be islets. You do not have such a neighbouring friendly state on whose back you can depend as had the Chinese partisans with the USSR.

Afghanistan, Iran and Tibet, places the Chinese communists are still unable to reach.... There is no such rear as the USSR. Burma? Pakistan? All of these are land frontiers, which leaves – the sea. Therefore it is necessary to find a way out.

Do you need partisan war? Indubitably you do.

Will you have liberated regions and a national liberation army?

You will have such regions, and possibly you will have such an army. But this is insufficient for victory. You need to combine partisan war with the revolutionary actions of the workers. Without this, partisan war alone might not have success. If the Indian comrades can seriously organise general strikes of the railway workers that will paralyse the life of the country and the government it could prove to be an enormous help for the partisan war. Take the peasant.... if you say to him – this is your partisan war and you have to do it all, then the peasant will ask – why is this burdensome struggle to lie on me alone, what are the workers

going to do? He will not agree to take on himself the whole weight of the revolution, he is intelligent enough, he has the consciousness to know that all evil comes from the towns – taxes etc. He would want an ally in the towns.

If you say to him that he would carry the weight of the struggle together with the workers, he would understand and accept it. Such was the case with us in Russia. You need to carry out work not only amongst the peasantry, not only to create partisan detachments, but also to carry out serious intensive work amongst the working class, strive for their trust and win over their majority, you need to have armed detachments amongst the workers, prepare strikes of the workers, of the railwaymen and to have workers' detachments in the towns.

When these two streams link up – victory may be considered to be secure. You know that in 1905 in Russia the tsar yielded to the people, gave the Duma and a range of other freedoms. The Tsar was forced to retreat.

What evoked such terror in the tsar? The strikes of the railway workers! The capital was cut off from the country, the railway workers only let into Petersburg the workers' delegations and did not permit entry to goods or anything else.

The significance of the railway workers' strikes was very great in the revolution and this helped the partisan detachments.

Then – work amongst the garrisons, amongst the soldiers. In 1917 we had carried out propaganda amongst the soldiers to the extent that all the garrison stood on our side.

What brought over the soldiers? The question of land. It was such a weapon which even the Cossacks, who were the praetorian guards of the tsar, could not withstand. To carry out correct politics, one might sow a revolutionary mood and evoke differences within the reactionary circles.

The Chinese path was good for China. But it is not sufficient for India where it is necessary to combine the proletarian struggle in the cities with the struggles of the peasants. Some think that the Chinese comrades are against such a combination. This is incorrect. Would Mao Zedong have been discontented if the workers of Shanghai had gone on strike when his army left for Nanking, or if the workers had struck work in the armaments factories? Of course not. But this did not take place as Mao Zedong's relations with the towns were severed. Of course, Mao Zedong would have been happy if the railwaymen had struck work and Chiang Kai-shek was deprived of the possibility of receiving projectiles. But there was an absence of relations with the workers – it was a grievous necessity, but it was not an ideal. It would be ideal if you strive for that which could not be done by the Chinese – to unite the peasant war with the struggle of the working class.

Dange: We almost turned the theory of partisan warfare into one which did not require the participation of the working class.

Comrade Stalin: If Mao Zedong knew this he would curse you. (Laughter) Let us go on to the next question. May the government of Nehru be considered a puppet of English imperialism such as the Kuomintang government of Chiang Kai-shek was a puppet of American imperialism and as currently the French government of Plevin is a puppet of the American imperialists?

According to my understanding, Chiang Kai-shek could not be considered a puppet when he was based in China. He became a puppet when he crossed over to Formosa. I cannot consider the government of Nehru as a puppet. All of his roots are in the population. This is not like the government of Bao Dai... Bao Dai is actually a puppet. Hence it follows that in India it is impossible that partisan war can be considered the main form of struggle, maybe it is necessary to say the highest form of struggle? There are different forms of struggle leading to the highest form. For the peasants: boycott of the landowners, agricultural workers' strikes, withdrawal of labour by the tenant-farmers, individual skirmishes with the landlords, seizure of the lands of the landowners and then partisan war as the highest form of struggle. For the working class: local strikes, branch strikes, political strikes, the general political strike as the doorway to an uprising, and then the armed uprising as the highest form of struggle. It is therefore impossible to say that partisan war is the main form of struggle in the country. It is also untrue to assert that civil war in the country is in full swing. In Telangana land was seized but it proves little. This is still the beginning of the opening of the struggle but it is not the main form of the struggle from which India is still distant. The peasant needs to learn to struggle on the small questions – lowering lease rents, lowering the share of the harvest which is paid to the landlord etc. It is necessary to train the cadres on such small questions and not speak at once of armed struggle. If you begin a broad armed struggle, then serious difficulties will arise at your end as your party is weak.

It is necessary that the party becomes strong and orientate the mass struggle in the needed direction and sometimes even restrain the masses. How did we begin in 1917?

We had many sympathisers in the army, in the fleet, we had the Moscow and Leningrad Soviets. However we restrained the insurrectionary movement of the workers. They presented the demand of driving out the Provisional Government. But this did not enter into our plans then for the Leningrad garrison was not in our hands. In July the workers of the main Putilov factory where 40-50,000 people worked, began demonstrations in which the sailors and soldiers joined in. They demanded the overthrow of the Provisional Government and they came with these demands to the CC building. We held them back as we knew that all the preparations had not been made for the serious uprising we planned. The objective factor for the uprising existed – when the masses strove forward, but the subjective factor of the uprising did not – the party was still not ready.

The question of the uprising was put into place in one month, in September. We decided to organise the uprising, but it was an arch-secret. We did not publish anything about this. When Kamenev and Zinoviev, members of the Politbureau, spoken out in print against the uprising, considering it adventurist, Lenin declared them traitors and said that they had handed over our plans to the enemy. Therefore never shout about the uprising, otherwise the element of the unexpected in the uprising is lost.

Here Comrade Rao says – come before the people and ask them about the armed uprising... This is never done, never cry out about your plans, they will arrest all of you. Let us suppose the peasant says: Yes we need an uprising. But this still does not mean that we should follow the people, and drag oneself along the tail of the people. Leadership signifies that one has to carry one's own people. The people sometimes say that they are ready for an uprising, taking as their point of departure the facts and events of their own region, but not from the point of view of the entire country in conformity with the overall achievability of the uprising. This question must be decided by the CC. If this is clear then we can go over to the next question.

Indian Comrades: Yes, it is clear.

Comrade Stalin: You ask, may the party organisation carry out the death sentence on a member of the party upon whose devotion doubts have arisen. One cannot. Lenin always taught that the highest form of punishment which the CC may carry out – is expulsion from the party, but when the party comes to power and some party member breaks the laws of the revolution, then the government conducts the prosecution as its responsibility. From some of your documents one can see that comrades frequent incline to the side of individual terror in relation to the enemy. If you ask us, the Russian comrades, about this, then we must say to you that amongst us the party is always trained in the spirit of negating individual terror. If our own people struggle against a landlord and he is killed in a skirmish we would not consider that to be individual terror in so far as the masses participated in the skirmish. If the party itself organises terrorist detachments in order to kill a landlord and this is done without the participation of the masses, then we always come out against this as we are against individual terror. Such active operations of individual terror when the masses are in a condition of passivity murders the spirit of the self-activity of the mass, trains the masses in the spirit of passiveness, and, moreover, the people judge matters in the following way – we cannot engage in activity, it is the heroes who will work on our behalf. Thus, there is a hero and on the other side is the crowd which is not participating in the struggle. From the point of view of the training and organisation of the activity of the masses such a view is very dangerous. In Russia there was such a party – the SRs – which had special detachments to terrorise the main ministers. We always came out against this party. This party lost any credit among the masses. We are against the theory of the hero and the crowd.

You ask also, how does one at the present time put the question of the nationalisation of land in India?

At the given stage you do not need to advance this demand, never, on the one side, put forward the demand for the division of the landlords' land and simultaneously say that the land must be given to the state. In the countries of people's democracy the nationalisation of land was nowhere proclaimed, more so in China. How did they deal with this in the people's democratic countries? There they forbid the buying and selling of land. This is the method of approach to nationalisation. Only the state may acquire land. The accumulation of land in the hands of individual persons has to cease. It would be disadvantageous now for you to advance the demand for nationalisation.

Some of your comrades consider that civil war has started in India. It is early yet to speak about this. The conditions for civil war grow but they still have not grown.

What is to be done by you now?

It would be good if you had something like a programme, or let us say, a platform of action. Of course you will have discord. There was also discord amongst us, but we decided that: whatever was resolved by the majority would become law. Even those comrades who did not agree with the majority decision, honestly carried out these decisions so that the party acted with a single will. All of you desire discussion. This may be permissible for you in times of peace but a revolutionary situation is growing at your end and you must not permit yourself this luxury. That is why you have in your party so few people, your unending discussions have disoriented the masses. The Bolsheviks in the period 1903-12 carried out open discussions so far as it was possible under the conditions of tsarism with the objective of

driving out the Mensheviks as we then had the line of splitting with them. But you do not have such a situation where the party contains enemies. After that, as we hurled out the Mensheviks in 1912 and created our party, free of Mensheviks, the party became homogeneous. There were differences—then we would gather in narrow circles, discuss the problem and, as decided by the majority, we all worked. After the Bolsheviks came to power Trotsky thrust discussion on the party which we did not wish to embark upon. Trotsky provocatively stated that the party did not wish to have a discussion as though the party wanted to fight against the truth. We began the discussion and defeated Trotsky. But this was a discussion against which the entire party stood. If the party is more or less homogeneous and has ideological unity, then such a party is not in need of a discussion. The discussion needs to be carried out in narrow circles, and not in print. There, what is decided by the majority, that is the law.

Ghosh: Comrade Stalin is correct. Open discussion is no longer admissible for us.

Comrade Stalin: In our party there are 5,600,000 members of the party and 800,000 candidate members. What is the significance of candidate membership? Earlier instead of admitting members into the party we verified those wishing to join it. Some were kept waiting for four years, five years, we verified, we trained them. Many wished to join the party, but they had to be, first, verified and, second it was necessary to train them. Elementary socialist education is necessary and after that, admission. In our practice the institution of candidacy has justified itself. Around the party we have a large layer of sympathisers. But we must not overcrowd the party with new members, we must not overly enlarge the party. The main thing is that the admitted person has a deep quality, and not the quantity of the party members.

You also ask me – under which conditions might one undertake partisan war. In the advanced capitalist countries partisan war may not have great significance, here the partisans are quickly seized. An especially great significance attaches to partisan war in medium-developed and backward countries. For example, it is very difficult to initiate partisan war in the United States of America or in Germany. Here essentially there are many large towns, a developed railway network, industrial regions, and the partisans in these conditions are at once caught. It is necessary, in order that the mass of the people themselves consider that they are heroes, and the heroes consider themselves as the executors of their own will, that separate acts, directed against the enemy, leads to passivity of the mass but to heightened activity. In every way it is necessary to support what has originated in Telengana. It is the first sprouts of civil war. But one does not need to rely on partisan war alone. It, of course, renders assistance but itself it is in need of help.

It is necessary to have bigger work amongst the people, amongst the workers, in the army, amongst the intelligentsia, the peasantry. If you brought armed detachments into being amongst the workers, they might at the right opportunity in situation of general confusion seize government institutions. In Leningrad we had the workers' guards, we trained them, and the workers proved to be of great service to us at the time of the uprising, they seized the Winter Palace. Our peasantry had big assistance from the side of the working class. In general, out of all the classes of society the peasants have great trust in the working class. It is necessary to unite these two forms of struggle – the struggle of the workers and peasants, the peasant uprising and the march of the workers.

From Documents of the History of the Communist Party of India
Vol VIII 1951-1956
Edited by Mohit Sen
People's Publishing House New Delhi, Oct 1977
Pages 1 to 18.

1951 Program Document of Communist Party of India

This program was adopted by the all-India party conference, Calcutta, 9-15 October 1951 after amending the draft published by the politburo in April 1951. It was published in October 1951 and reprinted in March 1953. The third party congress, Madurai, 27 December 1953 to 4 January 1954, readopted this program with a single amendment in para 29. This was published in March 1954.

1. When the British imperialist rulers of India established the government of the leadership of the National Congress in Delhi in August 1947, and the hated British viceroy and governors departed from the country, the people of India were led to believe that foreign imperialist rule was at an end, that India had achieved independence and freedom and that now the government and the people could work out a happy life for millions of our country men, with our resources of land and labour, our factories and workshops, our immense natural wealth and manpower. We could now set to work to gradually overcome our poverty and guarantee food, housing, clothing and the minimum decencies of life to everyone.

2. Four years of the Nehru government in power has belied the hopes of the masses in every respect. Experience has led them to the conclusion that the government of National Congress that rose to power on the basis of the heroic struggle of the masses is a government pledged to the protection and preservation of parasitic landlords and the wealth of the princes of India, who for centuries had supported the foreign invaders and jointly with them robbed our people and our country. Experience is also leading them to the conclusion that the government of the National Congress was installed in power by the consent of British imperialists because it was a government pledged to the protection and preservation of foreign British capital in India. In every sphere of life of the masses, the government has failed to carry out its promises to the people. Everyday life for the masses has worsened while the landlords and profiteers have enriched themselves more and more at the expense of the people.

3. The five million workers manning our factories, railways, mines, shipyards, plantations, etc. are suffering from fall in real wages, rising prices, capitalist rationalisation and unemployment. Their struggles for better wages and conditions are drowned in blood by shooting and police terror. Their fighting trade union organisations are disrupted, divided and suppressed by the government and its henchmen. Demanding increased production in the name of the people the government only imposes worsened conditions of labour on the working class, enabling the profiteers to increase their profits alone.

4. The millions of our peasants constituting eighty per cent of our people are ground down as before. Those who have land and can cultivate it, through exorbitant rents and interests, and by the manoeuvres their fruits of labour are looted by the landlord and the moneylender of the capitalist market and taxes of the state. But three-fourths of the peasantry have practically no land of their own. "Those who have no land and find no work live in conditions of perpetual pauperism. And those who do find work on the landlords' and sowcars' (moneylenders)

estates, as agricultural labourers or poor tenants, have to work like serfs and slaves, hardly getting even a subsistence wage for the family. As a result production of food and industrial raw materials is falling, leading to the worst food crisis in the country and starvation and death to millions. While the government run by the landlords and profiteers shouts about abolition of landlordism, it only hatches schemes of compensation of millions of rupees to those oppressors of the people, to enable them thus to indirectly realise their rent through the state from the toil of the peasant. The struggles of the peasantry for land for reduction of rent, interest and taxes are also drowned in blood and their organisations suppressed, along with the struggles and organisations of the working class. Whole villages, talukas and districts are handed over to military and police occupation, because the peasants and landless labourers have dared to ask for land, for reduction of rent and interest and for increased wages and the establishment of better conditions.

5. The middle classes in the towns are faring no better. High cost of living, falling salaries and unemployment is their lot too. The middle class wage-earners in government services, private offices, banks, insurance companies, commercial concerns, schools and colleges, etc. are faced with the same problem of life as the working class and the toiling peasantry.

6. Even the industrialists, manufacturers and traders are hit by the policies of this government which is totally in the grip of monopoly financiers, landlords and princes and their foreign British advisers, working behind the screen. Allocation of capital issues, raw material, transport, import and export licences, etc. is carried out by the bureaucrats in the government machinery in such a way as to hit the small industrialists and traders and benefit the big monopolists in league with the banks and syndicates of foreign firms.

7. The schemes of 'reconstruction', of building irrigation, hydroelectric stations, factories, etc., whether directly by the state or in partnership with private capital, are all foundering, except such as feed war purposes. They are turning out to be the means of looting the state budget by foreign firms of experts and suppliers, by high-placed bureaucrats in charge and big speculators on the stock Exchange. The demand for nationalisation of industries, promoted by the looting of the people by black marketeers, is used to swindle the state budget by making it acquire bankrupt or worn out units or participate in bogus schemes which invariably fail and are then sold out to the government henchmen and private capitalists. The result is that industrialisation of the country, which is held at the mercy of the British and the Americans and who certainly are not interested in making India an industrial nation, is making no headway in the hands of this government which is tied to the chariot-wheels of British capital.

8. And whatever industries exist are continually finding themselves in a crisis, because the growing poverty of the masses, specially the peasantry, does not give them an adequate market inside the country. Outside as well as inside the country, they come up against the competition of foreign firms and other imperialist masters of the colonial world and thus find themselves in a deadlock.

9. On the top of all this comes the fact that this tottering government in order to keep itself in saddle, when faced with the rising discontent of the masses, suppresses all civil liberties of the people, outlaws political parties and groups, bans trade unions and other people's organisations, imprisons thousands of workers, peasants, students, men and women in prisons and concentration camps. The supreme ruler becomes the police official and the bureaucrat, helped by the local congress leader and landlord in the whole countryside. No wonder that to

maintain such a police state, the burden of taxes increases and more than fifty per cent of the state budget is spent On military and police, prisons and the bureaucracy and not for food and cloth, homes and education, health and sanitation for the people.

10. The people of India are gradually realising the meaning of this state of affairs and are coming to realise the necessity to change this government of landlords and princes, this government of financial sharks and speculators, this government hanging on to the will of the British commonwealth, the British imperialists. The disillusioned masses are slowly rising in struggle, no longer able to withstand this state of slow starvation and death. They are rising in struggles of the working class in towns and the resistance of peasantry in the countryside.

11. In order to prevent this growing unity of the people, mainly the unity of the working class and its alliance with the peasantry, the unity of all classes that are interested in ending this government of landlords and princes and the reactionary big bourgeoisie, collaborating with the British imperialists, the present government is utilising other means apart from police repression.

12. Knowing the desire of the people to make our country completely independent of British imperialism, the government has proclaimed India a republic. But unwilling really to break its ties with imperialism, it has shamelessly proclaimed the republic to be a part of the empire!

The membership of the British Empire is not only a formal matter, as is declared. While playing on the rivalries between England and America, to its own advantage in certain circumstances, the government of India essentially carries out the foreign policy of British imperialism. Though it speaks for peace and against the atomic bomb under pressure from the people, who do not want war and want peace, it has not hesitated to send help, even though nominally medical, to the American troops in Korea; it has allowed British imperialists to recruit gurkhas and sikhs for the suppression of Malaya's fight for independence; it has allowed landing bases in India for the French planes on their way to fight against the People's Republic of Vietnam. The Indian navy operates as part of the British navy and under British command and the keys to the military technique of the defence department of the government are held and moved by British advisers. If the independence of the armed forces of a country is a sign of its sovereignty and independence, then the key part of our independence is still left in the hands of British imperialism.

In addition to this subservience to British imperialists, the policies of the government of India are leading to penetration of American imperialists into our economy and life, into the affairs of state and threaten us with added slavery to American capital.

13. The British imperialists before covering their rule with the mantle of the new congress government drowned the country in hindu-muslim strife and massacres and then divided the country into the two states of India and Pakistan. The imperialists thereby weakened the economy of India in agriculture and the economy of Pakistan in industry. It thus put both the states at loggerheads and undeclared war with each other and dependent on the so-called 'neutral third party', the imperialists.

The division of the country enabled the congress government to drown the just demands of the people in a hysteria of hindu-muslim war. It enabled the government to spend on armaments the money which could have been used to improve the conditions of the people. It

enabled them to buy armaments from the British imperialists who desired nothing better than to sell their second-hand goods and services in exchange for its sterling debts to India and Pakistan, and to deprive our people of supplies of machinery and essential goods.

14. The division of the country and communal religious strife was used to drown the demands of the various nationalities of India for their free development, for the reconstitution of the former mixed British provinces and the princely states into autonomous linguistic provinces in a united India. In the name of a united country, the language of a part of the country, namely, Hindi was declared an obligatory state language for all nationalities and states, to the detriment of their own national language. Vast areas and millions of people of one nationality are compelled to live under the rule of bureaucrats and governments dominated by another nationality. Large tribal areas, with their own economy and culture, are put at the mercy of the landlords and financial sharks of this or that alien group, thus utilising the desire of the masses for a united country to actually sow division and discord among its people.

15. In order, finally, to come forward as a government of the people, after spending millions of the people's money on wrangling in legislative houses, the government produced what it calls a democratic constitution and in terms of that constitution calls upon the people to elect a government of their own choice and realise the fundamental rights given under the constitution. Thus the people are told that they can end the present rule of autocracy if they so desire and work their freedom through this 'democratic' constitution of the free republic of India.

16. While it is a fact that universal adult franchise now exists in the constitution of India and it can and will be used by the people, it is a deception of the people to say that elections alone under this constitution can end the landlord -capitalist rule in the country and the imperialist hold over its life. Adult franchise serves to gauge the maturity of the working class and the people and is formally an element of democracy but it cannot express the true will and the true interests of the exploited masses as long as the land is not the property of peasants but that of the landlords, as long as the power of landlords and capitalists holds the people in subjugation in fields and factories, so long as the power of capital over the press and means of propaganda drugs the people with lies, so long as the power of money utilises religious and caste friction and rivalry to divide and to weaken the people, so long as the bureaucrats and the police ban political parties, suppress civil liberties and imprison without trial even the elected representatives of the legislatures for their political opinions and for their honest work.

17. It is also a deception of the people to say that under the new constitution the masses or the government elected by them can work their way to freedom and happiness. The constitution guarantees no rights to the people which are enforceable in any way or which are not subject to violation by the emergency autocratic decrees of the bureaucracy which is irremovable and inviolate. The right to strike, to living wage, to work and rest for the working class and salaried employees is not guaranteed and made enforceable. The land of the landlords and the properties and incomes of the dethroned or enthroned princes are made inviolable. The landless peasant can have land, it appears, but only if he can buy it or compensate the landlord for it. But to buy land and to pay compensation, capital is needed, and tens of millions of poor peasants who live from hand to mouth have no capital. Therefore the poor peasants have to stay without land and continue their existence in poverty. It is characteristic that by several treaties with Britain and America, the government had made the property of foreign holders in our country sacred and inviolable, having provided them with such

guarantees that even their profits cannot be touched and have to be let out of the country in the way they like. And this at a time when the government refuses to guarantee the citizens from the club-law of the police officers and from the plunder on the part of the moneylenders and profiteers.

Thus while the stranglehold of landlords, princes and imperialists on our economy, land and capital is guaranteed by this constitution not a single item of the life and liberty of our masses is guaranteed, beyond stating them as pious illusory wishes. The constitution is not and cannot be called a truly democratic constitution but is a constitution of a landlord-capitalist state, tied to foreign imperialist interests-mainly British.

18. It is quite natural that in view of the terrible conditions described above, dooming the people to poverty and subjecting them to a lawless regime, the people have lost their faith in the present government, they are becoming deeply distrustful of it and start to consider it their enemy who is protecting the landlords, moneylenders and other exploiters against the people. Moreover the masses of the people openly voice their discontent and revolt in several provinces against the inhuman regime of the present government and are seeking out ways to substitute this government by a new people's government able to express the will and interests of the people, able to protect it against the oppression of landlords, capitalists, profiteers, moneylenders and foreign imperialists.

19. Faced with these facts, the Communist Party of India feels it its duty to outline to the people the practical tasks, the practical program which the Communist Party of India upholds and which should be put into effect by the people of India if they wish to come out of the deadlock into which they have been forced by the present government, if they wish to attain their freedom and happiness.

While adhering to the aim of building a socialist society the Communist Party is not demanding the establishment of socialism in our country in the present stage of our development. In view of the backwardness of the economic development of India and of the weakness of the mass organisations of workers, peasants and toiling intelligentsia, our party does not find it possible at present to carry out socialist transformations in our country. But our party regards as quite mature the task of replacing the present antidemocratic and anti popular government by a new government of people's democracy created on the basis of a coalition of all democratic anti feudal and anti-imperialist forces in the country, capable of effectively guaranteeing the rights of the people, of giving land to the peasants gratis, of protecting our national industries against the competition of foreign goods and of ensuring the industrialisation of the country, of securing a higher standard of living to the working class, of ridding the people of unemployment and thus placing the country on the wide road of progress, cultural advancement and independence.

What are the practical tasks which, in the opinion of the Communist Party of India, should be carried out by the new people's democratic government?

These tasks are as follows:

In The Field of State Structure

20. The sovereignty of the people, i.e. the concentration of all power in the country in the hands of the people. The supreme power in the state must be vested entirely in the people's

representatives who will be elected by the people and be subject to recall at any time upon a demand by the majority of electors and who shall constitute a single popular assembly, a single legislative chamber.

21. The restriction of the rights of the president of the republic, in virtue of which the president and persons authorised by him will be deprived of the right to promulgate laws, which have not been passed by the legislature. The president shall be elected by the legislature.

22. Universal, equal and direct suffrage for all male and female citizens of India who have attained the age of eighteen years in all elections to the legislative assembly and to the various local government bodies; secret ballot, the right of every voter to be elected to any representative institution, payment to people's representatives, proportional representation of political parties in all elections.

23. Local government on a wide scale and with wide powers through people's committees. The abolition of all local and provincial authorities appointed from above (e.g. governors, magistrates, commissioners, etc.).

24. Inviolability of person and domicile; unhampered freedom of conscience, religious belief and worship, speech, press, assembly, strike and combination; freedom of movement and occupation.

25. Equal rights for all citizens irrespective of religion, caste, sex, race or nationality, equal pay for equal work, irrespective of sex. Social disabilities from which women suffer shall be abolished and they shall be given protection to secure and exercise equal rights with men in such matters as inheritance of property, marriage and divorce laws, entrance to professions and service, etc. Social and economic oppression of one caste by another or social and personal bans and prohibitions imposed by the so called upper castes on the lower castes, especially the scheduled castes, in the name of custom, tradition or religion shall be abolished and made punishable by law.

Religious minorities shall be given protection against discrimination.

26. The right of all nationalities to self determination. The republic of India will unite the peoples of the various nationalities of India not by force but by their voluntary consent to the creation of a common state.

27. The present boundaries of the states in the Indian Union shall be recast and states shall be reconstituted according to the principle of common language. Princely states, where existing, shall be dissolved into the appropriate adjoining national states, and the foreign possessions shall be restored to the country and we constituted on the same principle. The tribal areas or areas where the population is specific in composition and is distinguished by specific social conditions or constitutes a national minority will have complete regional autonomy and regional governments, and full assistance for their development.

28. Introduction of progressive income tax in industry, agriculture and trade and maximum relief in taxation for workers, peasants and artisans.

29. Right of people to receive instruction in their mother-tongue in educational institutions; the use of the national language of the particular state in all its public and state institutions; provision for the use of the language of a minority or region, where necessary, in addition to the national language. Use of Hindi as an all-India state language will not be obligatory.* In Hindusthani-speaking areas, safeguard and protection to Urdu and Devnagari scripts and the right of the people to use either of the two scripts.

* The third party congress added the following words here: but will be encouraged as a means of intercourse between governments of different states and between the people of different states.

30. Measures to foster encourage and develop such literature, art and culture as will:

- help each nationality including the tribal people to develop their language and culture in their own way and in unison with the common aspirations of the democratic masses of the country as a whole;
- help the democratic masses in their struggle to improve their living conditions and enrich their life;
- help the toiling people to get rid of caste and communal hatred and prejudices and ideas of fear, subservience and superstition traditionally inculcated in them by the landlord-bourgeois classes;
- help all people grow feelings of brotherhood with the the peace-loving people of all countries and discourage ideas of racial and national hatred;
- discourage imperialist war propaganda and help people to realise peace and freedom for all.

31. The right of all persons to sue any official before a people's court.

32. Separation of the state from all religious institution. The state to be a secular state.

33. Free and compulsory primary education for the children of both sexes up to the age of fourteen.

34. Replacement of the police by militia. Elimination of the mercenary army and other punitive forces and the establishment of a national army, navy and air force for the defence of India, closely linked with the people.

35. The establishment of the people's health service with a wide network of medical centres and hospitals all over the country designed to liquidate the centres of cholera, malaria and other epidemic diseases in the country.

In The Field of Agriculture and the Peasant Problem

The agriculture and the peasant problem are of primary importance to the life of our country.

We cannot develop agriculture to any considerable extent and provide the country with food and raw materials because the impoverished peasantry deprived of land is unable to purchase the most elementary agricultural implements and thus to improve its farming.

We cannot develop our national industries and industrialise our country to any considerable extent because the impoverished peasantry constituting 80 per cent of the population is unable to buy even a minimum quantity of manufactured goods.

We cannot make our state stable to any extent because the peasantry living in conditions of semi-starvation receives no support from the government, hates it and refuses to support it.

We cannot improve the conditions of the working class to any considerable extent because hundreds of thousands of hungry people forced by poverty to leave the countryside for towns swarm the 'labour market', lower 'prices of labour', increase the army of unemployed and thus make the improvement of the living standards of the working people impossible.

We cannot work our way out of cultural backwardness because the peasantry, living in conditions of semi-starvation, constituting the overwhelming majority of the population, is deprived of any material means to give education to its children.

In order to get rid of all these evils and get our country out of cultural backwardness, it is necessary to create human conditions of existence for the peasants, it is necessary to take land from the landlords and hand it over to the peasants.

To achieve this, it is necessary:

36. To hand over landlords' land without payment to the peasants including agricultural labourers and to legalise this reform in the form of a special land law and thus realise abolition of landlordism without compensation.

37. To ensure a long-term and cheap credit for the peasants to enable them to purchase agricultural implements and the necessary seeds. To ensure long-term and cheap credit to small artisans to enable them to purchase raw materials, etc. and carry on their manufacture and trade.

38. To ensure government assistance to the peasants in the improvement of old and the building of new irrigation systems.

39. To cancel debts of peasants and small artisans to moneylenders.

40. To ensure adequate wages and living conditions to agricultural labourers.

In the Field of Industry and the Labour Problem

Our national industry suffers not only from an extremely low purchasing power of the peasants but also from the fact that it is exposed to competition on the part of foreign goods in the country. Manufacturers, who are not protected by the government from ruinous foreign competition, try to make good their losses which arise from this competition by increasing pressure on the working class, by worsening its conditions. But the industries cannot develop if the living conditions of the workers deteriorate, for a hungry and moneyless worker cannot be an adequate factor for the development of modern industry. This circumstance is another reason for the insufficient development of our national industry. To break through this vicious circle, it is necessary to guard our national industry against the competition of foreign

goods, to launch an all-out industrialisation of the country and to improve the conditions of the working class. The Communist Party of India considers to achieve this, it is necessary:

41. To provide for the protection of the national industry against the competition of foreign goods in the country by promulgating appropriate laws.
42. To develop the national industry and to prepare conditions for the industrialisation of the country without sparing any efforts and resources of the state to achieve this end.
43. To regulate and coordinate the various sectors of economy in order to achieve a planned economic development of the country in the interests of the people.
44. To improve radically the living and working conditions of workers by: fixing a living wage, application of the eight-hour day and forty-four-hour week in all industries and trades, introduction of a six-hour day in underground mines and other trades injurious to health, social insurance at the expense of the state and capitalists against every kind of disability and unemployment, establishment of labour exchanges working in association with trade unions, establishment of industrial courts, recognition of trade unions, the right to collective bargaining and the right to strike.
45. To introduce effective control of prices of goods of mass consumption.
46. The problem of the refugee population, mainly of the millions of the uprooted workers, peasants, artisans, middleclass employees, etc. must be resolved by their speedy rehabilitation by the state and specially by providing them with land, instruments of labour, employment and facilities for developing their life in their own national way.

National Independence for India

In spite of the much-advertised statement that the British have left our country, it is a fact that a large number of factories and workshops, mines and plantations, shipping and banking of India are owned by the British capitalists who annually draw hundreds of millions of profit from them. With this power over our economic life and their ties and partnership with the big capitalists in our country who are collaborating with them, the British imperialists from behind the scene and their collaborators hamper the development of our industries and thus perpetuate our poverty.

We cannot be a strong and prosperous country until we are industrialised on a wide scale; but industrialised to such an extent we shall never be as long as British capital exists in India, for the profits of British enterprises are taken out of the country and we are unable to use them to expand our industries, as long as the big national capitalists, their collaborators, keep us tied to the empire.

Moreover one has to take into account the numerous British advisers with whom our navy, our army, police and other punitive organs team.

To become a truly independent state, India has to break with the empire, to put an end to the domination of the British capital in the country's economy and to get rid of the British advisers.

Therefore the Communist Party of India considers necessary:

47. The withdrawal of India from the British commonwealth of nations and the British empire.

48. The confiscation and nationalisation of all factories banks, plantations, shipping and mining owned by the British in India, whether in their own name or under the signboard of Indian companies.

49. Removal of the British advisers in India from the posts held by them.

Foundation of the Foreign Policy of India

India needs peace and peaceful development. It is interested in peace and economic cooperation with all states. In this respect Britain is not an exception if it only proves capable of carrying on economic cooperation with India on the basis full equality. The spurious play between peace and war, between partisans of peace and advocates of aggressive war, carried on by the present Indian government is not in India's interests.

The chief enemy of peace and advocate of an aggressive war is now the United States of America which has rallied round itself all aggressive countries. This camp of war is facing the camp of peace which includes such states as the Soviet Union, the Chinese People's Republic and other countries of people's democracy. Instead of joining hands with the partisans of peace against the aggressors and branding the United States of America as chief aggressor, the Indian government is carrying on a suspicious play between these two camps, and is flirting with the USA thus facilitating the struggle of aggressors against peace-loving countries. What India needs is not play between peace and war, but a united front with peace-loving countries and friendship with them.

Still less in India's interests is the wrangling in which the Indian 'Union and Pakistan are engaged and which is not counteracted on the part of the present Indian government.

The unbalancing of the integral economy of India caused by the division of the country, the strife between Pakistan and India, which enables the reactionary ruling circles to divide the people and provides the American and British imperialists with opportunities for intervention, as in Kashmir, and for increasing their domination over both, will be overcome by a firm alliance of friendship and mutual assistance between India and the state of Pakistan. India must also enter into friendly alliance with the states of Ceylon and Nepal.

The economy of Ceylon is dependent on and complementary to that of India. Quite a large section of its people are formed from Indian plantation and other workers who have migrated to Ceylon. The Ceylonese and Indian landlords and traders incite the Indian and Ceylonese workers against each other to gain their selfish ends. The absence of alliance is utilised by the imperialists and their henchmen to sow discord among all these states and to sow hatred among their peoples, leading to the eviction of millions of people from their homeland. Only a firm, alliance and friendship can defeat this game of -imperialists and the reactionary ruling circles of these countries.

Therefore the Communist Party of India considers it necessary to guarantee the following:

From Documents of the History of the Communist Party of India
Vol. VIII 1951-1956
Edited by Mohit Sen
People's Publishing House New Delhi, Oct 1977
Pages 19-41

Tactical Line

This document was drafted in consultation with the leaders of the CPSU, and adopted by the CC in April 1951 and circulated illegally. A legal version was adopted by the Calcutta conference and published (see next item [i.e. Statement of Policy of the Communist Party of India – editor, Revolutionary Democracy]). The main heading has been supplied by the editor.

Not Peaceful But Revolutionary Path

1. The immediate main objectives set forth in the draft program of the Communist Party of India are the complete liquidation of feudalism, the distribution of all land held by feudal owners among the peasants and agricultural workers, and achievement of full national independence and freedom. These objectives cannot be realised in a peaceful, parliamentary way. These objectives can be realised only through a revolution, through the overthrow of the present Indian state and its replacement by a people's democratic state. For this the Communist Party shall strive to rouse the entire peasantry and the working class against the feudal exploiters, strengthen the alliance between the working class and the peasantry and build, under the leadership of the working class, a broad nationwide united front of all anti-imperialist classes (including the national bourgeoisie), sections, groups, parties and elements willing to fight for democracy and for the freedom and independence of India.

2. While resorting to all forms of struggle, including the most elementary forms, and while utilising all legal possibilities for mobilising the masses and taking them forward in the struggle for freedom and democracy, the Communist Party has always held that in the present colonial set-up in India and in view of the absence of genuine democratic liberties, legal and parliamentary possibilities are severely restricted and that therefore the replacement of the present state upholding the imperialist-feudal order by a people's democratic state is possible only through an armed revolution of the people. The concrete experience of the last three years in India, after the so called transfer of power, has only confirmed this thesis.

Combination of Partisan War in the Countryside and Workers' Rising in Cities

3. Nevertheless, wrong and distorted ideas have prevailed in our party ranks about the exact character of this armed struggle and the exact form it will have to take in order to ensure victory. For a period after the second party congress, the dominant tendency inside the party leadership was to forget the colonial nature of India's economy, to refuse to draw lessons from the experience of the revolutionary movement in China and other colonial countries, to minimise the immense importance of peasant struggles and to put forward the thesis that the political general strike in the cities and in industrial areas is the main weapon of our revolution, that such a strike will itself unleash countrywide insurrection and lead to the overthrow of the present state.

Afterwards, on the basis of a wrong understanding of the experience of the Chinese revolution, the thesis was put forward that the Indian revolution would develop exactly in the same way as the revolution in China and that partisan war would be the main or almost the only weapon to ensure its victory.

While the former thesis minimised the importance of the peasant masses and their struggles, the latter thesis minimised the importance of the working class and its actions. Both tactical lines were the result of ignoring the specific situation in India and of the tendency to draw mechanical parallels with other countries.

In theory as well as in practice both tactical lines amounted to repudiation of the key task of building the alliance of the working class and the peasantry, repudiation, therefore, of the task of building the united national front of which this alliance alone could be the firm basis, repudiation of the leadership of the working class in the antifeudal and anti-imperialist revolution.

4. In order to evolve a correct tactical line, it is necessary to discard both the erroneous theses given above and to take into account all the factors of the Indian situation. India is a vast country, with a backward and basically colonial economy and with 80 per cent of its people dependent on agriculture. In such a country, partisan warfare, as the experience of China has shown, is one of the most powerful weapons in the armoury of the revolutionary movement and this weapon will have to be wielded by the Communist Party in the fight for national liberation. At the same time it must be realised that there are other specific factors of the Indian situation which are such that this weapon alone cannot lead to victory. In China, the split in the united national front in 1927 simultaneously split the armed forces also and the Communist Party had an army of 30,000 to start with. Moreover, because of the sparse development of railways and other means of transport, the enemy found it difficult to rapidly concentrate his forces against the areas held by the communists. Despite these advantages enjoyed by the revolutionary forces, they were repeatedly encircled by the enemy. Time and again they had to break away from this encirclement and threat of annihilation and migrate to new areas to rebuild again. It was only when they made their way into Manchuria and found the firm rear of the Soviet Union that the threat of encirclement came to an end and they were able to launch that great offensive which finally led to the liberation of China. It was thus the support given by the existence of a mighty and firm Soviet rear that was of decisive importance in ensuring victory to the tactic of peasant partisan Warfare in the countryside in China.

5. In these respects the situation in India is different. We have no army to start with, it has to be created. The transport system in India is far more developed than in China, enabling the government to swiftly concentrate big forces against partisan areas. And above all, the geographical position of India is such that we cannot expect to have a friendly neighbouring state which can serve as a firm and powerful rear. All these do not mean that partisan warfare has no place in India. On the contrary, because of the factors given earlier, partisan war must be one of the major weapons in our armoury as in the case of all colonial countries. But this weapon alone cannot ensure victory. It has to be combined with the other major weapons—that of strikes of the working class, general strike and uprisings in cities led by armed detachments of the working class. Therefore, in order to achieve victory of the popular democratic revolution, it is absolutely essential to combine two basic factors of the revolution—the partisan war of the peasants and workers' risings in the cities.

6. Partisan areas will inevitably arise in various part of the country as the crisis deepens and as the mass peasant movement- rises to the level of revolutionary seizure of land and food grains, paralysing and wiping out of the local forces of the enemy. These areas and the revolutionary forces operating in them, however, will continuously face the danger of encirclement and annihilation at the hands of the enemy. Even the coming into existence 0 liberated territories with their own armed forces in several parts of the country will not eliminate this danger because these areas will themselves be surrounded by hostile forces from all sides. Therefore partisan war alone, no matter how widely extended, cannot insure victory over the enemy in the concrete situation prevailing in India. When the maturing crisis gives rise to partisan struggles on a wide scale when the partisan forces in several areas are battling against the enemy, the workers in the cities, in vital industries and especially in the transport system, will have to play a decisive role. The onslaught of the enemy against the partisan forces, against liberated areas, will have to be hampered and paralysed by mass strike actions of the working class. With hundreds of streams of partisan struggles merging with the general strike and uprising of workers in the cities; the enemy will find it impossible to concentrate, his forces anywhere and defeat the revolutionary forces but will himself face defeat and annihilation. Even inside the armed forces of the government the crisis win grow and big sections will join the forces of revolution:

7. Such a perspective demands the closest alliance between the working class and the peasantry and the realisation of working class leadership in this alliance. This alliance will be built in action, by the bold championship by the working class of the demands of the peasantry, by the direct support given by the working class in the form of demonstrations and strikes to the struggles waged by the peasantry. Leadership of the working class will be realised not merely through the leadership of the Communist Party but above all through the direct mass actions of the working class itself in support of the demands and struggles of the peasantry. Of all classes the working class is looked upon by the peasants as their closest friend and ally. Many workers come from the rural areas and are connected with the peasant by a thousand and one tie. Actions by the working class help not merely the existing peasant struggles but also, as the history of our national movement shows, inspire the peasants in the neighbouring areas, radicalise them and help in developing new peasant struggles. In the present situation in India when all classes, all sections, except the exploiting few, are facing starvation and when hatred against the present government is growing, 'strike actions by the working class on such an issue as food ration cuts can be a most powerful weapon to inspire the entire people, to give concrete form to their discontent, to build their unity in action and to raise the popular movement to a higher level. By fighting not merely for its own 'demands but for the demands of all discontented classes and sections, especially the peasantry, by acting as the foremost champion of the interests of the general democratic movement the working class will come forward as the leader of the revolutionary people and build their revolutionary unity.

8. It is of the utmost importance therefore that the party creates a political consciousness in the working class, makes it conscious of its role of hegemony, overcomes the present disunity of the working class, wins over the majority of workers in the vital industries and builds a powerful working class movement with underground factory and workshop committees as its nucleus. The best and most advanced elements must be recruited into the party. All this demands intensive political agitation in the working class, patient day-to-day work, leadership of immediate struggles for the winning of the concrete demands and the building up of a strong trade union movement. Only a united working class and a working class conscious of its role of hegemony can build national unity.

Partisan War of Peasants

9. In the rural areas the party has to rouse all sections of the peasants, including the rich peasants, against feudal exploitation and build their unity basing itself firmly on the agricultural workers and poor peasants who together form the overwhelming majority of the population. While the liquidation of feudalism and distribution of land to the peasants must remain the key slogans of agrarian revolution for the entire period, it is necessary to formulate immediate specific demands for each province and each area like reduction of rent, fair price for agricultural produce, abolition of feudal levies and forced labour, living wage for agricultural workers, etc. and lead actions for the realisation of these demands. The agrarian crisis is maturing rapidly and the peasant masses are seething with discontent against the present government which rose to power on the basis of their support and afterwards betrayed them. Despite however this widespread discontent and despite the numerous peasant actions that have taken place in many parts of the country, the peasant movement in the country as a whole remains weak and large sections of peasants have not yet been drawn into active struggle, because of the absence of organisation and firm leadership. It is our task to overcome this weakness by intensive popularisation of our agrarian program, by formulation of such concrete and easily understood demands as can become the basis for the broadest mass action, by patient day-to-day work and correct leadership of struggles to realise these demands, and by building up in the course of these struggles a network of peasant and agricultural workers' organisations with underground units in the villages as their leading and guiding centres. Volunteer squads of the most militant and conscious sections of the peasants have to be formed to defend the peasant movement against the attacks of the enemy-squads that will form the nuclei of partisan squads as the movement develops and reach the stage of seizure of land and partisan warfare.

10. As the crisis matures, as the unity, consciousness and organisation of the masses grow, as the strength and influence of the party develops and as the enemy resorts to more and more ruthless measures to crush the agrarian movement, the question of when, where and how to resort to arms will be more and more forced on the agenda. As the question is one of immense practical importance, it is absolutely necessary that the party is able to give a clear and unambiguous answer to it.

It must be realised that because of the vast area of India, because of the uneven level of mass consciousness and mass movement in different parts of the country, uneven acuteness of the agrarian crisis and uneven strength and influence of the party itself, the peasant movement cannot develop at the same tempo everywhere. Premature uprisings and adventurist actions of every type must be undoubtedly eschewed. At the same time, it would be wrong to lay down that armed action in the form of partisan warfare should be resorted to in every specific area only when the movement in all parts of the country rises to the level of uprisings. On the contrary, in the course of the development, of the movement, the situation will arise in several areas which would demand armed struggle in the form of partisan warfare. For example" in a big and topographically suitable area where the peasant movement has risen to the level of seizure of land, the question as to how to effect that seizure and how to defend the land so seized will become a burning live question. The party is of the opinion that partisan warfare in such a situation, undertaken on the basis of a genuine mass peasant movement and the firm 'unity under the leadership of the party of the peasant masses, especially the most oppressed and exploited strata,- combined with other – forms of struggle 'such as social boycott of landlords, mass no-rent struggle, agricultural workers' strike, can,

if correctly conducted and led, have a rousing and galvanising effect on the peasant masses in all areas and raise their own struggles to a higher level.

Wherever such partisan struggles develop they must also be combined with mass actions of the working class, especially in the neighbouring areas, in the form – of strikes and demonstrations. Undertaken on the basis of the most careful preparation and assessment of all factors, the partisan struggles must be conducted with the utmost boldness and tenacity, defending the gains of the movement by every means at our disposal.

At the same time the party has to act with the utmost flexibility when overwhelming forces of the enemy are concentrated against the partisan areas and the partisan forces run into the danger of defeat and total annihilation.

Partisan Struggle and Individual Terrorism

11. In spite of the offensive nature of the partisan struggle, it is necessary to emphasise in our agitation and propaganda in the initial period the defensive nature of partisan struggle, saying that the objective of the partisan struggle is above all to defend the peasants from the attacks of the government and its punitive organs. In doing so special attention should be paid! to the demands for which the peasants are fighting and to the atrocities of the government which force the peasants to take to arms. It is necessary, at the same time, to point out that it is the government that is responsible for violence and bloodshed.

Partisan struggle is frequently confused with individual terrorism, it is asserted that individual-terrorists are a part of partisan struggle and not only a part, but even a basis of the partisan struggle. This is absolutely wrong. What is more, individual terrorism contradicts the spirit and objectives of partisan struggle. And it is absolutely incompatible with partisan struggle. In the first place, the objective of individual terrorism is to destroy particular individuals while not pursuing the aim of destroying the regime of feudal exploitation and subjugation of the people, whereas the objective of partisan struggle is not to destroy particular individuals, but to destroy the hated regime in a prolonged struggle of the popular masses. In the second place, individual terrorism is carried out by individuals-terrorists--or by small squads of terrorists acting apart from the masses, and without any link with the struggle of the masses, whereas the partisan struggle is carried on by the popular masses and not by individuals, it is carried on in close contact with the struggle of 'the masses against the existing regime.

Since individual terrorism is directed against particular individuals and not against the regime it creates in the minds of the masses a harmful illusion as if it would be possible to destroy the regime by destroying individual representatives of the regime, that what matters is not the destruction of the regime but the destruction of the individual representatives of the regime, that the main evil is not the existence of the regime but the existence of particular worst representatives of the regime whom it is precisely necessary to destroy. It is clear that such a feeling created by individual terrorism can only weaken the onslaught of the masses against the regime and thus facilitate the struggle of the government against the people. Therein lies the first main harm done by individual terrorism to the people's partisan movement.

Since individual terrorism is carried out not by the masses but by individual terrorists acting apart from the masses, individual terrorism leads to an undue minimisation of the role of the mass movement and to equally undue exaggeration of the role of the terrorists, who are alleged to be capable of securing the liberation of the people by their own forces, independent

of the growth of the mass partisan movement. It is clear that such a feeling created by individual terrorism can only cultivate passivity among the popular masses and thereby undermine the development of partisan struggle. Therein lies the second main harm done by individual terrorism to the revolutionary movement.

To sum up: Individual terrorism undermines the possibility of unleashing the partisan struggle of the masses and it should be rejected as harmful and dangerous.

It Is Necessary to Strengthen the Party

12. Despite the tremendous radicalisation that has taken place among the masses during the last three years and despite the many mass actions that have taken place and are taking place, it would be gross exaggeration to assert that India is already on the verge of an armed insurrection or a revolution, that a civil war is already raging in the country, that the government, its leaders and agents are already completely isolated and so on and so forth. Such an exaggeration inevitably leads to the ignoring of the concrete tasks facing the party, the organising and advocacy of adventurist [sic.] actions, and the issuing of futile calls for action and pompous slogans which bear no relation either to the existing level of mass consciousness or to the actual maturity of the situation. In practice it results in the self isolation of the party, making it easy for the enemy to destroy it. It results in handing over of the masses to the socialists and other disruptors. Equally wrong are they who through their reformism see only the weakness and disunity of the popular movement, the offensive of the enemy and advocate a policy of retreat and 'lying low', a policy of regrouping of force, eschewing all militant action in the cities and in the countryside for the present. Tactics based on such an understanding of the situation would result in the worst typo of reformism and make the party trail behind the masses instead of leading them.

13. The reality of the situation is that the crisis is maturing fast, under its impact the masses are getting fast radicalised and a period of big battles lies ahead. The government's failure to carry out a single pledge that it gave to the people, its failure to tackle a single problem -- especially the problem of agrarian reform and food for the people--all these are fast shattering the illusions and already the majority of our people look upon the present government as a government of the exploiting classes, is a government of landlords and capitalists. Most of them still believe that this government can be changed and a real popular government take its place without resort to armed revolution and by means of the general elections, nevertheless in the struggle for their day-to-day demands -adequate wages, fair price for agricultural products, restoration of ration cuts, etc.-hundreds of thousands are coming out in action in all parts of the country. The growth of the popular movement still lags behind the growth of popular discontent, only a small fraction of the people have as yet been drawn into the actual struggle against the government. This lag is due not merely to the repressive measures adopted by the government but primarily and above all to the weakness of the party and the existing disunity of the progressive forces. It is therefore one of the key tasks of the party to forge the unity of the working class, to unite the popular forces on the basis of a concrete program, and to grow into a mass party so as to be able to supply the leadership which alone can unify and extend the mass movement and raise it to a higher level.

The party has to give the slogan that the present government must go and be replaced by a popular government, representing the unity of the democratic forces, i:l government that will break with the British empire and carry out the program of agrarian reform and democracy. It has to utilise the coming general elections for the most extensive popularisation of its

program, for mobilising and unifying the democratic forces, for exposing the policies and methods of the government. It has to lead the masses in their day-to-day struggles and take them forward step by step so that the people, through their own experience, come to realise the necessity and inevitability of armed revolution.

The party must not preach the inevitability of fascism but utilise the enormous volume of democratic opinion in the country to unite the people and halt the growing drive towards fascism on the part of the present government. Through patient and systematic day-to-day work, through bold championship of the demands of the people, through correct leadership of the concrete struggles of all sections of the people, the party will grow and be able to fulfil its role as organiser and leader of the people's democratic movement.

14. It is necessary therefore to put an end to the interminable discussion that has been going on in our party for one year on the question of the Chinese path, on the question as to how armed struggle is to be conducted. Such discussions disorganise the party, dissipate its strength and leave the masses leaderless precisely when they need the leadership of the party most urgently. Discussion of such matters, carried on almost openly as they have been till now, reveals all our plans to the enemy and makes it difficult to carry them out in practice.

The fact is that if the crisis bursts forth in the near future the party in its present disorganised and weak state will not be able to fully utilise it to lead the people to revolution. It is not yet prepared to shoulder the gigantic responsibilities that such a situation will place on it. It is necessary therefore that the present weaknesses are overcome with the utmost rapidity, the basis of the party and strengthen it. While recruiting the best elements from the working class and other fighting classes into the party and developing it into a mass party, it is necessary at the same time to exercise the utmost vigilance against the swamping of the party by elements that cannot yet be considered fully tested and trustworthy. The system of candidate membership must be introduced for this purpose. It is also necessary that while utilising all legal possibilities, the existing illegal apparatus of the party is strengthened enormously.

The Struggle for the Preservation of Peace

15. One of the most important tasks facing the party in our country is the task of mobilising the Indian people in the struggle for the defence of peace. Being one of the largest and most populous countries of the world and occupying a key position in Southeast Asia, India has a tremendous role to play in the battle against the Anglo-American warmongers and for the preservation of peace. It is the job of the Communist Party to ensure that India plays that role.

The forces of peace in our country are potentially very strong and are growing. Love and admiration for the Soviet Union are widespread among all sections, including the middleclass intelligentsia. The liberation of China and its emergence as a great power, the manner in which the people's government of China is successfully tackling the problems of food, famine, floods and diseases have profoundly influenced our people. So powerful is the sentiment against American aggression in Korea, so widespread the sympathy for the Korean people that even the most reactionary newspapers have had to criticise the Americans. This powerful mass sentiment as well as other factors have compelled even the Nehru government to take a stand against the most blatant acts of the American imperialists (the threat to use atom bomb, the branding of People's China as aggressors, etc.).

16. The party, however, has as yet not succeeded in transforming the widespread peace sentiment into a powerful peace movement because, as on other issues, our approach to the issue of peace also was an extremely sectarian one. The peace movement, in the main, remained a movement confined to the existing mass following of the party and the TUs and peasant organisations under our influence. The peace platform was utilised for abstract denunciation of the government on all conceivable issues and to popularise struggles that only the party waged. Inevitably the result was a restriction of the sweep of the peace movement and, failure to win over as peace partisans all the genuine lovers of peace. It is only recently that these harmful methods are being abandoned.

Another manifestation of sectarianism was the failure to link the issue of peace with the live issues facing the people, the failure to show the connection between the drive towards war and, the mounting war budget of the Nehru government with the rise in the prices of necessities of life, reduction of government' expenditure on education, neglect of housing accommodation, growing attack on civil liberties, etc.

It is of the utmost importance to abandon all sectarianism in order to develop a real broad based peace movement. The growing and strengthening of the national liberation movement helps the cause of peace. The strengthening of the peace movement also facilitates the growth of the national-liberation movement. These two movements therefore must develop in close relation with each other, each strengthening the other. Nevertheless they are not identical. The platform of peace is a broader platform. It can and must include all supporters of peace, all elements who for various reasons are opposed to war and are prepared to take their stand against all measures calculated to extend and unleash war.

17. It is necessary for peace movement to correctly appraise the foreign policy of the Nehru government in relation to peace and to adopt a correct attitude towards all specific manifestations of that policy.

While the peace movement must support all these specific acts of the government which hamper the plans of the warmongers, e.g. Nehru's declaration against the atom bomb and the vote against American proposal to denounce People's China in the UNO, it must also simultaneously point out the half-hearted and vacillating nature of the government's policy and wage a determined battle to mobilise mass opinion in favour of consistent peace policy.

As a matter of fact the Nehru government's policy cannot be called a policy of peace. It is essentially a policy of manoeuvring between the main enemy of peace, the United States of America and its junior partner Britain on the one hand and peace loving countries on the other. Nehru fears the consequences of a world war and therefore advocates a policy of 'moderation' of not going 'too far'. At the same time the Indian government continues to be an active member of the British commonwealth which is a partner of American imperialism in aggressive wars. The Indian government has not condemned the American war of aggression in Korea, nor repudiate its support to the illegal resolution of the UNO sanctioning that aggression. It has not condemned the British imperialists who are waging war in Malay but on the contrary permitted them to recruit gurkha soldiers against the Malayan people. It has not denounced French aggression in Vietnam and continues to give facilities to the French imperialists for the transport of troops and war materials.

Therefore, in addition to mobilising the people against the threat of atom bomb, for support to the Stockholm and Warsaw appeals, one of the specific tasks of the peace movement in India

is to rally the people against those policies of the present government which abet and aid the colonial wars waged by the American, British and French imperialists against the peoples of Southeast Asia. The peace movement is not a pacifist movement, not a movement merely for recording abstract support to peace. It is a fighting movement for concrete action in defence of peace and against the imperialist warmongers, including those waging colonial wars.

18. The peace movement must fight against all attempts to sow hostility against the Chinese People's Republic. It must explain to our people how the liberation of Tibet is not a threat to peace but a decisive blow against the instigators of war. It must uphold the heroic action of the Chinese volunteers who by smashing the plans of the American warmongers to enslave the Korean and Chinese peoples strengthened the cause of world peace.

19. We must also fight against all warmongering propaganda against Pakistan, pointing out how the growing tension between Pakistan and India is the result of imperialist manoeuvres and how it helps the enemies of the peoples of both states. We must demand a drastic reduction in the military budget and a policy of friendship and dose alliance between India, Pakistan and Ceylon.

20. The peace movement must wage a determined battle against slanderers of the Soviet Union, against all those who strive to depict the consistent peace policy of the Soviet Union as a policy of war and aggression. Basing ourselves on the lucid and clear-cut statement of Comrade Stalin in reply to the Pravda correspondent, we must concretely expose the real instigators of war and uphold the shining example of the Soviet Union which is devoting its energies and resources to further improve the condition of the people and leading the entire progressive humanity in the struggle for the preservation of peace. Firm friendship between the peace loving peoples of all countries must save the world from the menace of war and the people of India have to play a big role in establishing this friendship-this fact must be made part of the consciousness of the entire people.

On Partisan War

Question-Answer

Question: Is it correct to resort to partisan war in one particular area where the conditions are ripe for it, even though other rural areas are not ripe for it and the workers are not ready to support it with mass actions?

Answer: Yes, you can and should resort to it. To start or not does not depend on us. It depends on the organisational state of the masses and their mood. If the masses are ready, you must start it.

Question: Have we to take up partisan struggle only when the peasant struggle for partial demands reaches the stage of land distribution and establishing of village peasant committees? Or, can we take it up when the movement is still in the stage of struggle for partial demands, for example rent reduction?

Answer: The partisan struggle also has stages. It starts with smaller demands-let us say, reduction of rent. It is not yet a partisan struggle. If the enemy refuses to grant the demands

and the peasant is eager to win it by force, then partisan struggles can start. True, it is not the struggle for seizure of land but only for reduction of rent; still it will be a partisan struggle.

The partisan struggle is a struggle for enforcing demands by force. It starts whenever peasants start open struggle for their demands. This is the first stage of the struggle. Whenever it takes up the main demand, that means the higher stage. Whenever it takes to arms to crush the law this is the highest stage. Just like the workers' struggles.

Hence it does not depend on us. If the masses are ready and eager, we should assist them.

Question: Can partisan warfare even of the most elementary type be developed in areas where communications are well developed?

Answer: Yes, when encirclement occurs, transfer the best forces to another area. Lead out the armed forces so as to join it with the armed forces in another area, so as to create a liberation army of your own.

Question: Aim of the partisan struggle that must be the liquidation of the enemy's armed forces with the active assistance of the masses of peasants. To kill individual oppressors with a view to terrorise all the other oppressors and make them renounce their oppression is terrorism. But I cannot understand the complete banning of any individual action against any oppressor-landlord, notorious official or a spy-as a matter principle, under the name 'terrorism. In my opinion, at times, it becomes necessary' in the earlier phase of the partisan struggle, to organise individual actions against some notorious oppressors, not in order to terrorise other oppressors into renouncing their oppression but to guard the safety of the partisan squads. I am unable to understand how such actions make the people passive. As I understand international literature, such individual actions were conducted by partisans against German and Japanese fascists in the occupied countries during the antifascist war, and they are being done even now in Asian countries where partisan warfare going on-Malaya, Burma, Indochina etc. If I remember rightly, such actions were not only not banned by Lenin in his article on partisan warfare but, on the other hand, he severely criticised the Mensheviks [sic] who condemned them as anarchism. I seek clarification on this point.

Answer: Comrade says he cannot understand why individual terrorism should slow down the action of the masses. Individual terrorism is called so not merely because it is directed against individual oppressors but also because it is carried out by individuals or groups irrespective of the masses. Individual terrorism creates the illusion that the main evil is not the regime but individuals, that only if a few more are destroyed, the regime will be finished off. What conclusions will the masses draw? That with the help of terrorism of this type, it is possible to destroy the regime after a long struggle. And if such conclusions are drawn by the peasants, they will say "No use developing the struggle against the regime. Our glorious terrorists will do the job." Such sentiments weaken the onslaught of the masses against the regime, it is harmful and dangerous. Individual terrorism creates the belief that the main force lies in the heroic terrorists and not in the masses. The role of the masses becomes to watch and applaud. That means to cultivate passivity. Marx and Engels taught that the liberation of the masses has to be won by the masses themselves. This is what you ought to tell them. Different results follow from individual terrorism. Masses look upon the terrorists as heroes and liberators. Comrade's reference to Lenin is without foundation. We can give him articles by Lenin directed against individual terrorism. You must know how hard he hit mensheviks [sic.] when the revolution was at an ebb and they took to terror.

The theory of individual terrorism comes to the front when the revolution recedes. It is a reflection of the weakness of the movement. Whenever the revolutionary movement is rising and the masses themselves rise their theory of individual terrorism disappears from the horizon. Comrade must bear that in mind.

On landlords and capitalist landlords: In general landlord means feudal landlord. In the case of capitalist landlords as described by comrade, there should be a limit to the total land to be allowed to them.

This program lays down the broad outline. You will have to prepare a special agrarian program of your own. You have cultured provinces, backward provinces. In some capitalist farming has made big strides. Every area has its own specific feature. All this has to be taken into account.

Clarification

Questions and Answers

Deleted from the program the abolition of all indirect taxations. Our experience shows it is not possible at this stage. Only later, when revolution gains, it will be possible to reduce prices, reduce and then annul indirect taxes. Russian Marxists at first put this in their minimum program but it proved wrong.

Also we are opposed to the abolition of regular army. Experience shows that the revolution cannot be defended without a standing army, with well-qualified and trained men, tankmen, airmen, pilots, etc. Modern army cannot exist without well-trained cadres. If India bases itself only on rifles and machine-guns, Pakistan can easily subjugate it. Must have army of its own. Present army of Nehru however is a mercenary army. Popular national armies not mercenaries. It is linked with the people. Perhaps they will not digest general principle of conscription in India. Effect of British tradition which considers conscription a misfortune. Will say that Nehru not enforcing conscription but Bolsheviks [sic] want it. Better not to say anything.

On competition of foreign goods in India: Theoretically, we know that America in a crisis dumps its goods. This happened in China under Chiang. Flooded China with American goods and ruined national industries. That's why the Chinese bourgeoisie accused Chiang of not defending the national industries and opposed him. Do not know if America is doing the same in India.

Question: Can we say that the Indian big bourgeoisie has finally gone over to imperialism? If so, what is the objective basis of winning over or mobilising any section in the struggle against imperialism?

Answer: A certain part of the big national bourgeoisie has finally joined hands with imperialism but not the whole of it. Many among the bourgeoisie stand for industrialisation and would be opposed to foreign capital in the inner market.

Question: Can in India the big bourgeoisie or any section of it still be called oppositional in its relation to imperialism?

Answer: Yes. It can unquestionably. If only because the government plunders the peasants and restricts the home market. It may not shout from the house-tops about it, but it is opposed to this all the same.

Question: Is it the entire big bourgeoisie or only sections that are collaborating with imperialism? If sections, then which sections?

Answer: First part of the question already answered. As regards the second part, it is wrong to put such a question. You want to weigh them in a balance? Cannot do that. National bourgeoisie should be taken as a whole, its majority. Growth of movement will show who stands where. There are scoundrels among the national bourgeoisie but they are not typical of the class as a whole. The same is true of the working class. Not all sections and all elements are revolutionary. So, if you look at the problem in a Marxist way, the national bourgeoisie is oppositional. Partly undoubtedly reactionary but not the whole. Not only small but many of the bourgeoisie feel that the inner market is too narrow and will not prevent land being handed over to the peasants.

Question: What is the class character of the present Nehru government? We think this big bourgeois-landlord government collaborating with imperialism.

Answer: Not quite. Nehru bases himself not only on these classes but also on the kulaks. When the government cry 'buy land', it addresses itself to the kulaks and the kulaks appreciate. So the basis is not as narrow as you think. Therefore it is not a puppet government. In order to overthrow it, one has to work hard. Don't think if you blew, it v\-ill fall.

Weakness of the Nehru government is that it does not base itself on the majority of the peasantry, workers and toiling intelligentsia. It is from this direction that you should launch your attacks.

Question: If this is so, why would kulak join us? How, can we win him over?

Answer: We have to ally with him in the antifeudal struggle. The kulak sympathises with the Nehru government. But if the peasantry rises against the feudals, the kulak thinks that the part of the feudal land will fall to him, but will either support the peasants or proclaim neutrality.

Question: Are we right when we say that the united front we have to build is a united front of all classes including the national bourgeoisie?

Answer: Yes, you are right.

Question: Can we characterise the foreign policy of the Nehru government as a manoeuvre between British and American imperialism? Does this apply to the foreign policy in so far as it relates to the specific policy of peace?

Answer: Yes, subject to one correction. Nehru also plays between the peace loving countries and the war bloc.

Question: What should be our attitude to such specific manifestation of the government's foreign policy, as for instance the stand on the use of the atom bomb or on the American

From Documents of the History of the Communist Party of India
Vol. VIII 1951-1956
Edited by Mohit Sen
People's Publishing House New Delhi, Oct 1977
Pages 42-54.

Statement of Policy of the Communist Party of India

This was adopted by the Calcutta conference and first published in November 1951.

Our Objective

The experience of the last four years has taught the people of our country that the present government and the present system cannot solve their main problems of life. It cannot give them land and bread, work and wages, peace and freedom. They are coming to realise the necessity of changing the present government, which mainly serves the interests of feudal landlords and big monopoly financiers and the hidden power behind them all, the vested interests of British imperialism.

The Communist Party, therefore, has adopted a program in which it says, that it "regards as quite mature the task of replacing the present antidemocratic and anti-popular government by a new government of people's democracy".

Who should form such a government? The program says that it will be created "on the basis of a coalition of all democratic, antifeudal and anti-imperialist forces in the country".

And this government and the forces who form it must be "capable of effectively guaranteeing the rights of the people, of giving land to the peasants gratis, of protecting our national industries against competition of foreign goods and of ensuring the industrialisation of the country, of securing a higher standard of living to the working class, of ridding the people from unemployment and thus placing the country on the wide road of progress, cultural advancement and independence". Thus the program outlines the practical tasks which have to be carried out by the people's democratic government.

The immediate main objective being defined, the question then asked is: how is it to be achieved, with what methods, what forces?

Our Past Policies

There are a large number of people who think that this government can be replaced by a people's democratic government by utilising the parliament ushered in by the new constitution. Such feelings are encouraged and fed not only by this government and the vested interests but even by the rightwing socialists, who preach that the very fact of a strong opposition party on the parliamentary floor will shake the government and make it topple down.

But hardly had the people started to believe in the efficacy of the new constitution, which they thought was the outcome of their anti-imperialist struggles of the past, than even the fiction of the fundamental rights and guarantees is thrown out of that very constitution and

the freedom of person, the press, speech and assembly, which the masses wanted to use to shake up this antidemocratic government, are subjected to the rule of the police baton and the bureaucrat. Even a liberal would now feel ashamed to maintain, let alone the Communist Party and other democrats and revolutionaries, that this government and the classes that keep it in power will ever allow us to carry out a fundamental democratic transformation in the country by parliamentary methods alone. Hence the road that will lead us to freedom and peace, land and bread, as outlined in the program of the party, has to be found elsewhere.

History, enlightened for us by Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin, places before us its vast experience, arising out of struggles which have led nearly half of humanity to socialism, freedom and real democracy, at the head of which stands the Soviet Union and in which the great Chinese and people's democracies join hands.

Thus our main road is already charted out for us. Even then each country has to seek its own path also. What is the path for us?

The communists in India have been working with the people for the last thirty years first as communist groups and later a party. During these years they built a mighty movement of the working class, fought their struggles and won their demands. They built a kisan movement and in vast areas, as for example in Telangana, led them out of landlessness to land and from forced labour to freedom. They have fought for the rights of the people, and in these struggles hundreds and thousands have been killed, hanged, imprisoned, tortured and ruined. Naturally, while leading the working masses, many a time, at crucial points in our history, we were confronted with the question: which path to follow, what tactic would best secure the interests of the country and the people?

We do not refer here to the path that we traversed all these years, except in recent times, so that we can be clear as to what the path would be henceforth to lead us to achieve the program.

After the second party congress, differences and controversies arose inside the party about the path that the Indian revolutionary movement must adopt. For a time it was advocated that the main weapon in our struggle would be the weapon of general strike of industrial workers followed by countrywide insurrection as in Russia. Later, on the basis of a wrong understanding of the lessons of the Chinese revolution, the thesis was put forward that since ours is a semi-colonial country like China, our revolution would develop in the same way as in China, with partisan war of the peasantry as its main weapon.

Among comrades who at different periods accepted the correctness of the one or the other of these views, there were differences on the estimate of the situation in the country, on the degree of isolation of the present government from the people, and on many other vital issues. It was clear that these differences had to be resolved in order that the party could lead the people to victory.

After long discussions, running for several months, the party has now arrived at a new understanding of the correct path for attaining the freedom of the country and the happiness of the people, a path which we do not and cannot name as either Russian or Chinese. It should be, and is, one that conforms to the teachings of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin, and that utilises the lessons given by all the struggles of history, especially the Russian and Chinese, the Russian because it was the first socialist revolution in the world carried out by

the working class under the leadership of the Communist Party of Lenin and Stalin in a capitalist and imperialist country; and the Chinese because, it was the first people's democratic revolution in a semi-colonial, dependent country, Under the leadership of the Communist Party, in which even the national bourgeoisie took part. At the same time one has to remember that every country has its own peculiarities, natural and social, which cannot fail to govern its path to liberation.

In what way then shall our path be different from the Chinese path?

China and India: Similarity and Difference: OUR PERSPECTIVE

First, let us see where we are the same as the Chinese. It is in the character of our revolution. The thing of primary importance for the life of our country, same as the Chinese, is agriculture and the peasant problem. We are essentially a colonial country, with a vast majority of our people living on agriculture. Most of our workers also are directly connected with the peasantry and interested in the problem of land.

Our real freedom today means taking the land from the feudal landlords and handing it over without payment to the peasant. This antifeudal task, when fulfilled, alone will mean the real liberation for our country because the main props of imperialist interests in our country, as they were in China are the feudal. So, like the Chinese, we have to fight feudalism and imperialism. Our revolution is antifeudal, anti-imperialist.

That makes the struggles of the peasantry of prime importance. Drawing upon the fact that in China the liberation war was fought mainly on the basis of the partisan struggles of the peasantry, during which the peasants took land from the feudal landlords, and in the process created the liberation army, it was asserted that in India too the path will be the same, the path of partisan struggles of the peasantry would almost alone lead us to liberation.

The CC finds that drawing upon the Chinese experience in this way and to come to such a conclusion would mean neglecting to look into other factors of the Chinese revolution and also neglecting to look into our own specific conditions. For example:

We cannot fail to take note of the fact that when the Chinese party began to lead the peasantry in the liberation struggle, it had already an army which it inherited from the split in the revolution of 1925.

We cannot fail to note the fact that China had no unified and good communications system, which prevented the enemy from carrying out concentrated and swift attacks on the liberation forces. India is different in this respect from China in that it has a comparatively more unified, well organised and far-flung system of communications.

India has a far bigger working class than China had during its march to freedom.

Further we cannot fail to note the fact that the Chinese red army was surrounded and threatened with annihilation again and again until it reached Manchuria. There, with the industrial base in hand, and the great friendly Soviet Union in the rear, the Chinese liberation army, free from the possibility of any attack in the rear, rebuilt itself and launched the final offensive which led it to victory. The geographical situation in India in this respect is altogether different.

This does not mean that there is nothing in common between us and China except the stage of our revolution and its main tasks. On the contrary, like China, India is of vast expanses. Like China, India has a vast peasant population. Our revolution, therefore, will have many features in common with the Chinese revolution. But peasant struggles along the Chinese path alone cannot lead to victory in India.

Moreover we must bear in mind that the Chinese party stuck to the peasant partisan war alone, not out of a principle, but out of sheer necessity. In their long-drawn struggles, the party and peasant bases got more and more separated from the towns and the working class therein, which prevented the party and the liberation army from calling into action the working class in factories, shipping and transport to help it against the enemy. Because it happened so with the Chinese, why make their necessity into a binding principle for us and fail to bring the working class into practical leadership and action in our liberation struggle?

Such an outlook ignores the fact that we have a big working class and that it has a role to play, which can be decisive in our struggle for freedom. The grand alliance of the working class and the peasantry, acting in unison, the combination of workers' and peasants' struggles, under the leadership of the Communist Party, and utilising all lessons of history for the conduct of the struggles, is to be the path for us.

It can thus be seen that while the previous line of reliance on the general strike in the cities neglected the role the peasantry, the subsequent one of partisan struggle minimised the role of the working class, which in practice meant depriving the peasantry of its greatest friend and leader. The working class remained leader only 'in theory', only through the party, because the party is defined as the party of the working class.

Both the lines in practice meant ignoring the task of building the alliance of the working class and the peasantry, as the basis of the united national front, ignoring the task of building the united national front, ignoring the task of putting the working class at the head of this front in the liberation struggle.

This, it has to be realised, was a wrong approach. The leadership of the working class is not realised only through the party and its leadership of the peasant struggle but actually, in deeds, through the working class boldly championing the demands of the peasantry and coming to the assistance of the peasant struggles through its own action. The alliance must function in deed and fact, and not only in theory. The working class is the friend in action, that must help the fighting peasants and must ensure victory over the common enemy.

The working class, relying on agricultural workers and poor peasants, in firm alliance with the peasantry, together with the whole people, leads the battles in towns and rural areas to liberation, to land and bread, to work and peace.

The CC wishes to convey to comrades this great lesson of history, a lesson which is neither only the Russian path nor the Chinese path, but a path of Leninism applied to Indian conditions.

Such an understanding of our perspective gives us a new outlook on how to build our mass movement, our trade unions, kisan sabhas and also a new way to build the party.

The understanding will also show to comrades that the main question is not, whether there is to be armed struggle or not, the main question is not whether to be nonviolent or violent. It is the reactionary ruling classes who resort to force and violence against the people and who pose for us the question whether our creed is violence or nonviolence. Such a poser is a poser of Gandhian ideology, which in practice misleads the masses and is a poser of which we must steer clear. Marxism and history have once for all decided the question for the party and the people of every country in the world long ago. All action of the masses in defence of their interests to achieve their liberation is sacrosanct. History sanctions all that the people decide to do to clear the lumber-load of decadence and reaction in their path to progress and freedom.

This should also tell us that all our previous understandings have to be discarded as being one-sided and defective.

Combat Individual Terrorism

But one action history does not sanction and that is individual terrorism.

Individual terrorism is directed against individuals of a class or system and is carried out by individuals or groups and squads. The individuals who act may be heroic and selfless and applauded or even invited by the people to act and the individuals against whom they act the most hated. Still such actions are not permissible in Marxism. And why? For the simple reason that therein the masses are not in action. Therein the belief is fostered that the heroes will do the job for the people. Therein it fosters the belief that many more such actions will mean in sum-total the annihilation of the classes or the system. Ultimately it leads to passivity and inertia of the masses, stops their own action and development towards revolution and in the end results in defeat. Hence Marxism warns against individual terrorism and bans it.

Immediate Situation and Tasks

The question that now remains, and an important one, is – we have got the path and the perspective, but what now? The question of the immediate, while certainly influenced by the perspective, is not solely determined by it. It is also governed by the assessment of the present situation. How far is the government isolated, how far are the people disillusioned, how far are they ready to struggle, are some of the questions that determine the immediate tasks and slogans for them.

Some say that the government is thoroughly discredited and isolated; the people are ready to rise in revolt and in places are clashing with the government, which with the blatant rule of police firing has already created conditions of civil war in the country. Hence all our work must be guided by such an understanding of the situation. We do not think it necessary to argue the question in detail.

No doubt the crisis of the government is deep, but it is not yet thoroughly isolated. As the program of the party puts it: “the masses have lost faith in the present government, they are becoming deeply distrustful of it and start to consider it their enemy, who is protecting the landlords, moneylenders and other exploiters against the people.” Hence “the masses are slowly rising in struggle, no longer able to withstand this state of slow starvation and death.” But it would be gross exaggeration to say that the country is already on the eve of armed insurrection or revolution, or that civil war is already raging in the country. If we were to read

the situation so wrongly, it would lead us into adventurism and giving slogans to the masses out of keeping with the degree of their understanding and consciousness and their preparedness, and the government's isolation. Such slogans would isolate us from the people and hand over the masses to reformist disruptors.

Equally wrong are they who see only the disunity of the popular forces, only the offensive of reaction and advocate a policy of retreat in the name of regrouping of forces, of eschewing all militant actions on the plea that this will invite repression. Tactics based on such an understanding of the situation will lead to betrayal of the masses and surrender before the enemy.

We have to lead the struggles of the people in the context of a sober evaluation of the situation. While it should not lead us into adventurism, we must also not forget that the crisis is not being solved but is growing. Hence we cannot take a leisurely attitude and behave as if no deep crisis is moving the people and furious struggles are not looming ahead. Because insurrection and civil war do not exist, some would like to move and work as if they are living in a democracy with rights and liberties and nothing need be done to protect the party and the leadership of mass organisations from onslaughts of the law run mad. With such an outlook, we shall get smashed and will be able to build nothing.

But because the crisis is growing, and even a simple food procession like the one in Cooch-Bihar leads to firing and brings thousands on the streets, some would like to do away with the daily humdrum task of running mass organisations. Taking fascism to be inevitable or already in power, they would scoff at parliamentary elections or fighting for civil liberties, for which broad sections of the people can and should be mobilised.

We have to realise that although the masses are getting fast radicalised and moving into action in many parts of the country, the growth of the mass movement has not kept pace with the growth of discontent against the present government and its policies and methods. To ascribe this to repression alone would be wrong. This weakness of the mass movement is due, above all, to the weakness of our party and the division in the camp of progressive forces. The party therefore must strive to overcome this division and must stress the supreme need for unity of all progressive forces, build this unity in action and itself grow into a mass party by drawing into its fold the best elements from the fighting masses.

We must fight the parliamentary elections and elections in every sphere where the broad strata of the people can be mobilised and their interests defended. We must be wherever the masses are and would like us to be.

Role of Working Class Unity and the Party

The party has to build the unity of the working class and make it conscious of its tasks in relation to our entire people. The existing split in the working class movement which hampers the development of working class struggles must be overcome at all costs in the shortest possible time and united mass organisations of the working class built. The class has also to be made politically conscious. Only a united and politically conscious working class can fulfil the role of the leadership of the people.

We have to rouse all sections of the peasantry, including rich peasants, for the struggle for agrarian reform and in the course of this struggle rebuild the mass peasant organisations,

basing ourselves firmly on the agricultural workers and poor peasants who together constitute the majority of our agrarian population.

It must be understood that because of the vast expanse of our country, because of the uneven development of the agrarian crisis and of the working class and peasant movement, and the uneven state of organisation and consciousness of the peasant masses and the influence of the party, peasant movement will not develop at the same tempo everywhere and different forms of organisation and struggle will have to be adopted depending on the maturity of the crisis, the degree of unification of the peasant masses and their mood, the strength and influence of the party, and other factors.

All these tasks call for the most intense, patient and daily work among the masses, continuous agitation on our basic program and immediate simple demands of the people, a concrete working out of such demands for every section of the people according to general and local conditions, practical leadership of mass struggles, a combination of various forms of struggles, and a systematic building up of a network of mass organisations.

Above all, it is necessary to build up through patient struggle a communist party, equipped with the theory of Marxism-Leninism, a party mastering strategy and tactics, a party practising self-criticism and a strict discipline and which is closely linked with the masses.

The mass organisations and the party that are built up must also be able to withstand the fire of repression to which the government continually subjects them and the people's movement.

Struggle for Peace

One of the key tasks that faces us in defence of the people is the building of the peace movement. The struggle for peace must become an integral part of our work in all mass organisations, on all platforms. We have to bring it to the active consciousness of masses that the ruling classes, in order to preserve their power, will ever be ready to embroil us, the people, in a war so that we may give up our war against them. We must bring to the consciousness of the people the immense danger of the outbreak of a third world war and the possibilities of averting that danger, if the people will it. We must bring into the consciousness of the people that while we support any move of any class or group including this government for preserving peace, yet we must not forget that this government under the influence of imperialist warmongers, landlords and profiteers follows not a consistent and honest policy of peace but plays between America and England to gain from their rivalries and also plays between the peace-loving countries and warmongers. Such inconsistency must be overcome by the action of the masses. We must fight for a pact of peace between Pakistan, India and Ceylon, for banning of the atom bomb and reduction of armaments and military budget. We must above all fight for the conclusion of a pact of peace between the five great powers. The peace movement must be made real to the masses in terms of their own problems of land and bread, work and wages, and prosperity for all.

The peace movement must mobilise widest opposition to the colonial wars waged by British, French, Dutch and American imperialists in Southeast Asia and prevent all direct and indirect support to these imperialists given by the present Indian government.

The program that the Communist Party has placed before the people is a program which conforms to the interests of all progressive forces and classes in the country, of all sections who desire India to be free, happy and strong. We shall therefore strive to unite our entire people for the realisation of this program and build their unity in action on on all issues facing them. We shall strive to develop the struggles of all sections of our people and merge them into the common movement for freedom, democracy and peace.

While carrying out these tasks, we must learn skilfully to combine the struggles of workers, peasants and other classes and sections in each province and district, and in the country as a whole. From all these struggles, the her [sic] fighters that will come forth must be transformed into the makers and builders of the party, which then alone will become a real mass party and yet a well-knit party of tested and tried revolutionaries. With the perspective and path clear, and immediate tasks outlined, we shall surely succeed in our liberation struggle against our feudal and imperialist enslavers and replace this antidemocratic government by a government of people's democracy.