

Conference of Communist and
Workers' Parties, Moscow, 1969

Workers of All Countries, Unite!

INTERNATIONAL
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SHRIPAD AMRIT DANGE

Chairman, National Council,
Communist Party of India

Part I

It is an event of great historical and revolutionary significance that most of the Communist and Workers' Parties of the world—the leading forces of socialism, of the working class, of national liberation—in short, of the contemporary world-revolutionary process are today meeting in Moscow to compare notes and take stock of our performance in the struggle against imperialism. In reviewing the world-wide fight against imperialism, we have naturally in our minds not only the battlefields of yesterday and today but also of tomorrow. We are here to work out collectively the line for the consolidation of our forces and for further advance. Permit me, comrades, on behalf of the delegation of the Communist Party of India, to greet you all who have assembled in this hall in a world conference of the greatest revolutionary movement of all times.

It was nearly nine years ago in 1960 that 81 Communist and Workers' Parties of the world met in this very hall for the same purpose for which we are meeting today. Not since 1935, the year when the last Congress of the Communist International met, had the world Communist Parties had an occasion to review the world situation in all its aspects, until we met in 1960. The Second World War, the defeat of fascism, the ushering in of the socialist world system, the rapid disintegration of the colonial system and the advance of the working-class and democratic forces throughout the world had changed the correlation of forces in the world arena. Despite the existence of imperialism, now shrunk in size, despite the strength and aggressive character of US imperialism and its allies, human society had advanced a stage further on the road to socialist reconstruction, to complete liquidation of colonialism and strengthening of democracy and freedom. The decisive force in world development was no longer imperialism but the forces of socialism, of the working class and national liberation. Rightly was the present epoch characterised as an epoch of transition from capitalism to socialism.

The conclusions of the 1960 World Conference summed up the experience of a period of mighty revolutionary upheavals in human history and the history of whole nations, continents and class relations. Guided by the revolutionary

essence of Marxism-Leninism, the conclusions of that world assembly gave to the working people and all revolutionary anti-imperialist forces a clearer vision, perspectives and the reliable compass for charting the revolutionary course ahead.

At that conference, comrades, there were many controversies and many sharp and shrill arguments and voices. There was criticism and even anger. There were arguments on questions of principles and practical policies, of ideology and theory, and each other's actions in class struggles. Our enemies and our critics were almost certain that we would never come to any agreed conclusions. But at the end of thirty days, we all came to sign unanimously the well-known 1960 Statement of 81 Parties.

Soon after the conference the national liberation movement began to make greater strides forward. India liquidated the Portuguese rule on the Indian soil in Goa. The liberation movement in Africa and elsewhere began to move to newer offensives.

At this juncture, US imperialism, whose hegemony of this American continent and the prestige of whose might had suffered a serious blow at the hands of the successes of the Cuban revolution, decided to invade Cuba with all its military strength. It was almost to be a test of the principles and platforms proclaimed by the 1960 Statement of 81 Parties. Would the world's revolutionary forces with the Soviet Union in their van go to the help of little socialist Cuba, whose freedom was threatened by the most powerful imperialist military machine in the world? The Soviet Union mobilised its forces for the defence of Cuba even at the risk of a world conflagration. US imperialism retreated and socialist Cuba was saved. The Soviet Union proved that it was ready to defend the freedom and socialism of even the smallest member of the socialist camp from imperialist aggression and counter-revolution, from wherever it may come.

It was at this very moment of the triumph of the socialist world system and the forces of national liberation and freedom, that the Communist Party of China and the Chinese government pressed their claim in several thousand square kilometres of Indian territory and on the pretext of border clashes, which they attributed to the "aggressive" Nehru Government, sent several divisions of the Chinese army into Indian territory and began an undeclared war.

China, which had signed the famous Panch Sheel (Five Principles) Pact with India, whose principles were held as a model for relations between all peace-loving nations, threw the pact to the winds and the biggest and most powerful socialist country of Asia, claiming to be guided by the principles of Marxism-Leninism, revealed its nationalist-chauvinist ambitions of hegemonism. This was only within two years of the solemn signing of the 1960 Statement of the conference of world Communist Parties, to which the Chinese Party had subscribed.

China attacked India but withdrew her armies as soon as US imperialists retreated from Cuba and the threatened world war was averted. But while doing so, it openly attacked the positions taken by the CPSU in relation to Cuba and our Party in relation to the positions taken by us in the India-China conflict. Our Party at this time had to openly state our differences with the

Chinese Party, when they failed to reply to our letters and appeals. We drew the attention of our brother Parties throughout the world to the Chinese attacks on our Party and to the nationalist and hegemonistic path pursued by the Chinese Party. The Chinese leadership had openly called on the "real" Indian Communists in the name of revolution and proletarian internationalism, as the Chinese put it, to split away from our Party. Our Party was denounced as a Party of revisionists, scabs and betrayers.

It must be said to the credit of the Chinese Party that they never left the world's Communist Parties in doubt as to what they wanted. They published their own alternative general line of world revolution in June 1963. They challenged each Party on the basis of a so-called "ideological" fight. But their own ideological line consisted essentially of a series of perversions, falsification and abuse of all the most experienced Parties of the world communist movement. The new dissident and disruptive Chinese general line threw overboard all the basic concepts and strategic and tactical propositions of the 1960 Statement. If one followed carefully the behaviour of the Chinese leadership in the subsequent period, it would appear as if to them the main enemy is not imperialism, but those socialist countries and those Communist Parties, who do not follow the Chinese line. In this concept the Soviet Union and the CPSU are worse than US imperialism.

We need not prolong the story further. What first appeared as mere differences and divergences on individual questions has now ripened into a full-scale aggressive messianic philosophy of Maoism. The proceedings of the 9th Congress of the CPC have completed the process of replacing Marxism by Maoism. But we are sure the working class of China will in the end succeed in restoring Marxism-Leninism to the great Party of China.

When such dangerous developments were taking place, was it not time for the Communists of the world to meet and discuss together in order to find a solution and try for unity again? At that time, it was just the beginning of the new Chinese line and things were not yet very clear. Even then years elapsed, before we all, who are now here, could agree even to meet and discuss these happenings and the serious breaches in the unity of the world communist movement.

In fact, in certain parties there was a tendency to put blame on the Soviet Union rather than see the monstrous behaviour of the CPC leadership in its true colours. Many well-intentioned attempts by so-called "neutrals" were made to make the Chinese comrades come to the conference table, desist from open polemics and disruption, and return to positions of unity of world communism. But it all failed.

It must, however, be said that it is not enough to blame the Chinese leadership alone. When they gave us an open warning of their total separation from our commonly agreed line of thinking and behaviour, we ourselves helped by refusing to come together to reforge unity.

Our differences and divergences were used by the imperialists, particularly the US imperialists to step up their acts of aggression and interference in the affairs of smaller countries. They organised massive aggression against Vietnam. They armed and incited the militarists of Pakistan to invade India in

1965, in which the Chinese also openly lent a hand. Then they incited Israel to attack the Arab countries. They attacked those Latin American countries which tried to overthrow the rule of American monopolies and their puppet dictators. The influence of Maoist adventurism led the Indonesian Party into serious miscalculations, which were used by the counter-revolution to behead it.

In spite of this atmosphere of setbacks, a message of optimism and hope was spread throughout the world by the heroic battles of the Vietnamese people. When they inflicted defeats on the US imperialist forces despite the latter's superiority, in weapons and resources, this further inspired the world forces of socialism and national liberation to meet and unite for common action. Then a mighty wave of solidarity with Vietnam arose throughout the world, including the USA. The whole of the working class throughout the capitalist world began to rise in revolt against attacks on their living standards and their trade union and democratic rights. But the most unprecedented and surprising was the upsurge in the youth and student masses. Never in history were the schools, colleges and the placid depths of universities in such turmoil resounding with demands of democratic rights against the outdated rules and reactionary teachings of old chancellors, deans, and doctors.

Most of these revolts arose out of the crisis of the world capitalist system. They were motivated by the protest against exploitation and obscurantism. Though, in some places, the leadership of these struggles fell into the hands of anti-communists and in some cases in the hands of even direct agents of the reactionary ruling classes, who tried to lead them to disruption, the overwhelming mass of youths, students and workers were on the right path of revolution. They were all a signal of the rising revolution against imperialist exploitation, against unemployment and for democracy, freedom and a bigger share in the affluence of the capitalist world. Such a situation called upon all Communists and freedom fighters of the world to meet, unite and lead those forces.

Serious preparations were undertaken to bring about this Meeting and we have at last met.

It is our sincere request that having now met let us once again review the world situation and the state of the revolutionary forces on the basis of Marxism-Leninism and lay down firm and clear tasks in the battle against imperialism.

For this purpose, the Preparatory Committee of the Conference has prepared documents, after long debate and deep thought, after taking into account suggestions from all shades of opinion.

We are glad to state that our Party, which participated actively in its preparations, fully supports the documents placed before the conference. We hope they will be unanimously adopted, even if some Parties may have some reservations on this or that point.

In a document of this kind the views of the individual Parties on all issues cannot obviously be reflected in toto and in all their details. All the same, this draft before us represents the largest measure of agreement among the participating Parties and this is no small achievement. The draft Document truly embodies what unites us as well as our shared strivings for the unity of the international communist movement.

If we adopt the draft Main Document, we shall have given a good blow to

imperialism and fulfilled a great task at the present stage of the struggle against imperialism and for united action.

The Document does not discuss the theoretical roots of the divergences or at what stage of theoretical development Marxist-Leninist thought stands today. However, comrades, we have to think of the future as well. The relations between brother Parties are not limited to unity in action against the common enemy. There are innumerable political, ideological and theoretical problems on which we need collective thinking and co-operation. Our Party holds that our world conferences should be held periodically. In this very Meeting we can set up a body which can take such initiative when necessary. It can also help to organise other kinds of gatherings of brother Parties, suited to the issue and the occasion, where exchange of views and experience and a collective examination of problems can be done. This should help to resolve differences before they assume an acute form. We are not making any cut and dried suggestion because new conventions will have to be built in the course of actual experience. Nor are we proposing the setting up of a mechanism which will have some sort of authority over the participating Parties. The independence of each Party has to be respected. But the bilateral and multilateral meetings which we have evolved since 1960 are not enough if we are serious about the position taken in the Document, namely, that the national and the international tasks of Communist Parties are indivisible.

Part II

Comrades, the running thread and spirit of our Document is that though the world revolutionary movement is passing through a complicated and critical period; though on certain fronts it has received certain, temporary setbacks; though imperialist aggressiveness, and above all, US imperialism is endangering world peace and national independence in various continents; though West German revanchism is again raising its head; despite all these phenomena, the forces of socialism, democracy, national independence and peace are stronger than the forces of imperialism and reaction, and can inflict a defeat on the enemy by moving into united action.

Imperialism cannot change the balance of forces in its favour, it cannot reverse the historical process of its doom, it has failed to secure its strategic objectives after the Second World War, despite the strength it has achieved on the basis of vast technological growth and the acts of aggression for which they are used.

The glorious victories of the Vietnamese people, led by their Communist Party and the National Liberation Front, have proved, more than anything else in recent years, the greatest truth of our epoch, the truth that where the forces of socialism, democracy and national independence are merged into one, the victory of the people and the defeat of imperialism are inevitable.

One has only to cast a glance at the events between the two wars, and history of the last two decades to see in a moment the meaning of the shift in the world balance of forces. Gone are the days when the Spanish Revolution could be

massacred in cold blood and no aid could reach it, because of the barrier raised by fascist and bourgeois governments against Soviet help. Gone are the days when Abyssinia, Manchuria and Shanghai could be invaded with impunity. The new period is now exemplified by the defence of Vietnam and Cuba, aided by the might of the Soviet Union, by the aid rendered to the Arab peoples, and so on.

This is the change in the world balance of forces which neither Washington, London, Bonn or Tokyo can alter.

This has not come about without fearless struggle of the working class, the peasantry and other revolutionary forces all over the world. But it is historical truth that this change has been brought about dominantly by the sacrifices of the people of the Soviet Union and their Communist Party, who shed their blood in the Second World War and finally defeated Hitler and German imperialism. Thereby they weakened the world imperialist system, gave birth to the world socialist system, strengthened the advance of the revolutionary working class in the capitalist countries, and began the liquidation of the entire system of colonialism. It is this victory, we must not forget, which gave the crowning success to the Chinese revolution and the sacrifices of the Chinese people.

It is necessary to remember all this not because we want to gloat over our past victories and close our eyes to the present problems and our failings, but so that we can retain unwavering faith in our convictions and in one another, while grappling with new complicated problems that confront us.

It is further necessary to understand that not all the new problems have arisen because of our failings. Many in fact are the product of our advance and successes.

It is a fact that the total volume of production and rates of productivity are higher in the capitalist world than in the socialist world. The US imperialists, taking advantage of their geographical immunity from direct ravages of war, re-equipped its industry with new technique, based on electronics, computerisation, automation and new chemistry. The new giant monopolies, embracing whole countries and spreading into various countries, completely controlled the state, enlarged their vast rate of superprofits and made US imperialism the richest exploiter in the world.

But all those gains led to deeper crisis in the economies of the imperialist and capitalist countries. Automation and the technological revolution led to increase in chronic unemployment and the petty rise in the wages of the employed workers secured by them after hard struggles, failed to find internal markets for the rising production. Inter-imperialist competition for markets, currency wars, company mergers and invasion of the West European capitalist countries by the aggressive dollar deepened the crisis. And in search of more profits, of more markets, the imperialist pressure on the newly liberated countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America to convert them into neo-colonial bases increased. In those countries which had taken to the capitalist path of development, the imperialists, led by the US dollar, offered collaboration, big financial credits, supplies of commodities, particularly tools and raw materials, under the mechanism of the P. L. 480. And to facilitate their neo-colonial designs, they have been trying to establish reactionary political regimes in those

countries which would be amenable to their pressures. Showing around their affluence and their technological achievements, they began to influence the intelligentsia of the newly liberated countries into believing in the superiority of the capitalist system over that of the socialist system.

Though the countries of the socialist camp and particularly the Soviet Union had to spend vast resources to overcome the ravages of war on their own soil, the advantages of the socialist system enabled it to accomplish this task quickly. Despite the fact that it had to meet the imperialist threats of hot and cold wars, and at the same time give aid to the new countries of the socialist camp, like China and the East European People's Democracies, the Soviet Union also made great strides in scientific and technological revolution, in automation and cybernetics and in computerisation. And their scientific and technological revolution did not create problems of unemployment or markets. On the contrary it lightened the load of labour and led socialist men to richer life. And when the Soviet men first flew in space, the imperialist claims of the superiority of the capitalist system in science and technique suffered a defeat.

The results of the competition between the two systems, the differences in the approach of the imperialist and socialist camps towards the problems of mankind and particularly the vast millions in the newly liberated countries could best be seen in India, a country of five hundred million people, the second largest mass of humanity, next to that of China. It can also be seen in the history of development of many other newly independent countries of Asia and Africa.

The problems of the newly liberated countries of Asia and Africa arise neither because of the so-called population explosion nor because the people of these countries are incapable of governing themselves. The problems arise primarily from the immense poverty and backwardness which the imperialist exploiters have imposed on them and their continued opposition to allow these countries to develop in peace and to return to them even a fraction of the loot that they carted away before being driven out.

This surely is not to deny the new problems which have come on the scene.

First and foremost, the alignment of class forces which brought about the sweeping unity of the people in the struggle for national freedom from foreign rule, does not and cannot continue after the achievement of independence when the problem of radical structural changes in the economy of the country come to the forefront.

Monopolists, bankers and speculators and similar sections of the bourgeoisie which mushroom after the end of colonial rule, resist the new socio-economic reforms with all their might and strength. They ally with landlords, princes and religious-feudal elements to suppress the new upsurge of the people which wants to move forward from national independence to social liberation. What is worse, they begin to enter into a growing collusion with imperialism, with foreign private capital, against the common people, even at the cost of mortgaging the newly won independence of the country.

In a number of countries, confronted by a growing popular and democratic opposition, and above all, by the militant unity of the working class and the advance of the movement of the peasantry and landless labour, these forces of

foreign and internal reaction whip up mass religious fanaticism, linguistic chauvinism, inter-tribal conflict, and so on, for disrupting the fighting unity of the toiling people which they can no longer suppress by bullets and batons alone.

And then new problems arise among the revolutionary classes also.

The wretched living and working conditions of the working class in the newly independent capitalist countries of course do not change without grim and bloody battles. All the same, the ruling bourgeoisie constantly attempts to tempt and entangle the working class, the more so the large numbers of new entrants who have no traditions of class struggles, into the web of conciliation, arbitration and similar traditional bourgeois techniques of labour control. The rulers favour trade unions bossed over by their political parties against genuine, militant, class trade unions.

An effort is made, in the countryside, with varying degrees of success, to develop a stratum of rich peasants and capitalist landlords by various forms of state aid. This stratum, because of its influential social, economic and political position in the rural areas, takes an offensive against the poor peasantry and rural labour, and strives to disrupt their unity.

A number of Left and democratic parties, mainly petty-bourgeois in composition, ideology and leadership, join hands, by and large, with communist forces in the worker-peasant movement in respect of the struggle for economic demands and protest actions against governmental repressive measures. But they also fall victim to adventurist and opportunist tactics in various spheres of political activity. Essentially Left-nationalist in character, they often take chauvinistic and even anti-Soviet postures on questions of foreign policy.

The upsurge of youth has become a characteristic feature of many newly independent countries also during this decade. Primary and secondary education, and even polytechnical education, has expanded rapidly in comparison with the conditions under foreign rule. Youth coming from the better paid industrial working class now goes in for collegiate education. The number of middle and lower middle class youth who combine part-time service with attendance at academic institutions which conduct their classes in the mornings or evenings, has grown at a phenomenal rate. Not only the economic, but even the social and cultural distinction between them and the educated working-class youth has been substantially erased.

But national economy, which has not grown commensurably with the bare needs of the people, has not even kept pace with the demands for employment of the vastly increasing numbers of the educated youth. Educated unemployment has reached unprecedented heights. Meanwhile the economic and cultural aspirations of youth, fed by growing knowledge of world developments and events resulting from the expansion of the mass media of information, have increased as never before.

It is this vast and yawning gulf between new aspirations and their non-fulfilment, and the resultant massive discontent and bitterness, that has brought about what is literally a new explosion of youth in India and certain other newly independent countries. It is essentially a very healthy discontent, indicative of a new and militant enthusiasm in the younger generation.

Naturally it has created problems, which in reality are a challenge for the Communist and other revolutionary parties in those countries. What is called the adventurism and sectarianism of youth is in the main an expression of impatience, exuberant energy and lack of experience among youth rather than of serious belief in this or that adventurist theory. However, it is absolutely a political problem, and not a law-and-order problem as the bourgeois rulers make it out to be.

The more serious problem is of youth that get drawn into organisations based on religious or linguistic fanaticism. It is more difficult to wean them away from such ideological affinities and draw them into organised, mass militant action than the section that is fascinated by adventurist slogans.

Comrades, our Party in India is facing and grappling with all the problems stated above, problems of the struggle for strengthening and carrying forward the country's national independence in the direction of thoroughgoing changes in the political, economic and social life of the people which would enable them to take to the non-capitalist path of development on the road to socialism.

Part III

On the attainment of independence in 1947, the Indian National Congress, which was the leading force of the anti-imperialist movement, formed the government of the country. It has ruled the country for the last twenty-two years. On attainment of power, the Congress Party became the ruling party of the national bourgeoisie, which gave to the feudal princes and landlords a share in the governmental power. As political power was concentrated in the hands of the bourgeoisie and other exploiting classes, the path of economic development pursued by the Congress has been and remains clearly a capitalist path.

Suffering from colonial backwardness in which the British imperialists left the country, lacking in capital and heavy industry for swiftly overcoming its backwardness and to meet the needs of the people, the Congress Party tried its best to attract the American monopolists and the British industrialists, who had large investments in the country, to invest in heavy industry, iron and steel, engineering, chemical and oil. But the imperialists had no desire to allow this vast country to become economically independent.

So, as of necessity, the Indian bourgeoisie turned to the socialist camp, mainly to the Soviet Union, for economic assistance to build the basic heavy industries. The Soviet Union and the countries of the socialist camp agreed and rendered immense aid.

Seeing the socialist policy and the attraction that the socialist camp developed in the minds of the people of the country, and the sharp protests with which the masses opposed the policy of the imperialist powers to keep India backward, imperialist monopolies were compelled to render partial aid in exchange for which, however, they pumped out enormous profits from the country.

The situation has come to such a pass that the government now has to borrow from the foreign capital market more money even to meet the interest due on previous loans, which go on piling up faster than before.

For its own economic and political aims, the government adopted a policy of non-alignment, of peace and friendship with countries of both camps. Though essentially non-aligned, and following a policy of peace, the government of India, as the representative of the national bourgeoisie, did not give unequivocal support to the national liberation movements in other countries, until mass pressure demanded it. They did not recognise the emigré revolutionary government of Algeria. As chairman of the International Control Commission for Vietnam the Indian representative tended to side more with the US version of events rather than with the Vietnamese. It did not condemn the bombing of North Vietnam though it demanded a halt to bombing, at the same time expressing an understanding of the position of the US imperialists. While willing to trade with the German Democratic Republic, it is still reluctant to recognise the GDR as an independent state, though it has long acknowledged the existence of two German states. The Indian bourgeoisie values more the credits given by West German monopolists than the trade with the GDR. Not only West German credits but even West German ideology finds favour with certain reactionary sections of the Congress leadership.

It has, however, to be mentioned that the Indian government has unequivocally supported the Arab countries despite the pulls and pressures of the Israeli and US supporters in the country.

In its relations with its neighbours, like Pakistan, Nepal, Ceylon, Burma and even China, the Indian Government has expressed itself in favour of peaceful and friendly relations and settling disputes by negotiation. But, unfortunately, India's peaceful and independent development has always been hampered by the Anglo-US imperialist conspiracy to sow national enmity and to provoke conflicts, including armed clashes between India and the neighbouring state of Pakistan. In recent years the situation was further aggravated by the Chinese leadership's incendiary policy of provoking the Pakistani ruling circles against India. The 22 days' war between the armed forces of Pakistan and India in 1965 might have had incalculably disastrous consequences for both countries, had not the peace-loving statesmanship of the Soviet Union and its timely intervention brought the end of hostilities through the Tashkent agreement between the two warring sides, foiled the sinister game of the imperialists, reactionaries and adventurists, and opened the way for a lasting Indo-Pakistani settlement.

Our Party, relying first and foremost on the growing democratic forces of India and Pakistan and on the common interests of the peoples of both countries, strives and will continue to strive with all its strength to convert this area of imperialist-provoked tensions into an area of peace and friendship among the neighbouring states of India, Pakistan and Afghanistan. For the achievement of this aim, the great influence and prestige of the peace-loving and anti-imperialist Soviet foreign policy can be a decisive force.

Our Party also stands for and campaigns for the recognition of the German Democratic Republic, and we are happy to say that public opinion in the country is positively in favour of such recognition. We also support the initiative to open negotiations with the Chinese People's Republic for settling the outstanding differences and building friendly and peaceful relations.

The path of capitalist development pursued by the Congress was bound to lead to a severe political and economic crisis. Based on heavy indirect taxation, deficit financing, inflation, growing reliance on foreign private capital, and loans borrowed from imperialist countries; based on the motive of private profit as the incentive for capital formation; based also on various compromises with landlord and feudal elements, our national economy landed itself in a profound economic crisis about the middle of our third Five-Year Plan, in 1964-1965.

The overall grip monopoly capital has acquired over the economy is most strikingly illustrated by the fact that within the last five years the assets of the giant monopoly houses have almost doubled.

The capitalist path of development has given rise to an enormous concentration of wealth and economic power in the hands of the seventy-five monopoly houses which sit at the apex of our economic life. Particularly disturbing is the fact that these and other big business houses have entered into numerous collaboration agreements with the US, British and West German monopolists for the joint plunder of our national resources. These so-called collaboration agreements constitute an important feature of the neocolonialist drive by the US and other imperialists against our country.

These developments are inevitably reflected in the growing attempts by reaction to gag the voice of the working class and to suppress the people's democratic rights.

In the recent period the mass movements and our Party have had to face mounting attacks on democratic rights and civil liberties. The Chinese aggression on our borders provided the Congress rulers with an opportunity to proclaim throughout the country a state of emergency which continued for five years. Fundamental rights guaranteed in the Constitution were suspended and the bureaucracy and police were invested with arbitrary powers. During this period tens of thousands of political workers, trade unionists and others connected with mass movements were imprisoned without trial and otherwise persecuted.

Although the emergency has been lifted, the Congress regime is still enacting repressive legislations to suppress the struggles of the working people. Certain reactionary circles are openly demanding the banning of the Communist Parties. The central government, too, is considering new legislative measures which would invest it with powers to ban political organisations.

Faced with the disintegration of the Congress Party and prodded by monopolists and other vested interests, the Congress regime is increasingly turning against even the limited bourgeois parliamentary democracy and is undermining it. Defence of the political gains of the people has become an urgent task today and our Party is in the forefront of the struggle for defending and strengthening democracy.

The imperialists took full advantage of the difficulties of our national economy to force the Indian bourgeoisie and the Indian government into surrender to neo-colonialist pressures. They imposed the shameful step of devaluation of the rupee in 1966 as well as de-facto abandonment of the policy of economic planning itself. Under such pressures several positive features of the economic development have been whittled down or given up.

These steps resulted in a further steep rise in prices, widespread closure of factories and mass unemployment, increased misery of all sections of the working masses including the white-collar workers. The rate of economic growth has fallen behind the minimum targets which were planned for. The masses reacted to this through the biggest and most massive strike struggles ever seen in the history of post-independent India. On many occasions, these struggles simultaneously enveloped not only the entire working population of cities, but life throughout an entire state was paralysed by this movement. This is what we in India call the Bandh.

Our Party played a leading role in initiating and leading this Bandh movement which enveloped whole states throughout the length and breadth of India during the year 1966. The main slogan we gave—of forging an all-in united front of the Left and democratic forces to replace Congress rule—began to acquire real flesh and blood during the experiences of the Bandh movement.

It was the strength of this mass movement that was mainly responsible for the severe defeat sustained by the Congress Party in the Fourth General Elections in 1967. For the first time after independence, the ruling party of the Indian bourgeoisie, the Congress Party, lost its monopoly power in nine out of the 17 states in India and its firm majority in the Indian parliament was reduced to an unstable one of barely 40.

Left and democratic ministries, based on fronts in which Communists played the leading role, were formed in two states. In addition, our Party entered into non-Congress Coalition ministries in three more states.

But the Congress government at the centre and the forces of reaction could not tolerate such a situation. By flagrant violation of constitutional propriety and the norms of parliamentary democracy, by using the weapon of political blackmail and economic pressure, four of the five state ministries in which Communists were participant were illegally and arbitrarily dismissed with the help of Presidential powers and the state legislatures were dissolved. This happened in the second half of 1968.

Mid-term elections had therefore to be ordered in four states in February 1969. The results of these mid-term elections have led to the intensification of the political crisis in the country and within the ruling party itself as well as the general sharpening and polarisation of struggle between the forces of reaction on the one hand and the Left and democratic forces on the other.

The results of these mid-term elections have fully confirmed the validity of the central slogan our Party has issued — the unity of Left and democratic forces on the basis of a common democratic programme to serve as a viable alternative to Congress rule. In the State of West Bengal, where such a front came into existence, the United Front secured a resounding victory over Congress and a United Front ministry in which Communists play the leading part has come into existence. Besides the fact that West Bengal is a state of a big concentration of heavy industry and a strong base of foreign monopoly capital in India, the significance of a firm Left and democratic United Front victory in West Bengal with Communists playing a leading role for future political development in India cannot be overestimated.

In the other three states, though such a result could not be achieved due

to the fact that the other Left and democratic forces did not respond to our appeal for such a firm front, the Congress Party has been badly weakened and battered. The experience of the election has also created new ways for building up unity of the Left and democratic forces and follow the example of West Bengal.

But, above all, the results of the mid-term elections have intensified the political crisis inside the Congress Party at the centre. Everybody now realises that the last days of Congress monopoly of power at the centre have arrived. In this situation, the alternatives at the centre stand clearly posed: either a Left and democratic front is forged in time to take over power at the centre, or a reactionary combination of Right-wing parties and groups will take over power at the centre. These are the alternatives facing the country and the people. All political parties in India are discussing this situation and preparing for one or another of these alternatives.

Polarisation has also started taking place within the Congress Party itself around these issues. The Indian monopolists and their foreign allies are trying to set up a new Right-wing reactionary coalition party to take over the state power on their behalf. In such a situation, our Party attaches the greatest importance to the urgent task of forging a Left and democratic united front on the basis of a minimum programme to serve as a viable alternative to Congress rule at the centre. We are opening up a dialogue with the other parties of the Left on this question.

Side by side, our Party is putting forward the policy of utilising the two state governments in which Communists play a leading role in the United Front Government—Kerala and West Bengal—of utilising the limited state power embodied in these governments as levers and instruments of securing relief for the working mass, however limited the possibilities for them may be under the present Indian Constitution, and thus of building up the strength and striking power of the Left and democratic front and of the mass organisations and mass struggles; to effect a breakthrough in other parts of the country as well as for capturing power at the centre. In these tactics, our Party is fully taking into consideration the concrete conditions of state power in India and the manner in which the fight for the power at the centre has to be conducted. Our slogan for the Left and democratic government at the centre is gaining popular support every day.

Part IV

A new round of mass struggles of working-class actions has developed in our country in the recent period, centering around the question of wages, trade union rights, unemployment and land. The Communist Party is heading this new wave of mass struggles and strengthening the forces of Left and democratic unity through these struggles.

The all-India one-day strike action of central government employees of September 1968 which had to confront severe repression and mass shooting; the great "March to Parliament" led on May Day this year by the united

front of all Indian trade union centres and independent federations around the issues of wages, job security and trade union rights (barring only the trade union centre controlled by the ruling Party, the National Congress); the marches and demonstrations of youth and students against unemployment organised in the month of March to May, 1969; the mass movement for occupation of fallow and waste lands by agricultural workers and poor peasants in different states of India last year and this year: these are among the symptoms of the sharpening of the class struggle in the days ahead.

We want to tell you, comrades, that in this situation, when the task of building unity of the Left and democratic forces to hurl back the challenge of reaction has become so urgent, our Party has come out with new initiatives to forge unity in action of the communist movement in our country.

The division in the Indian communist movement that came in 1964 was mainly due to the splitting activities launched by the Chinese Party leadership against the international Communist and workers' movement, following the letter of June 14, 1963, where they launched their disruptive alternative line and platform. These splitting activities have done the greatest damage to the revolutionary movement in our country. Our Party from that time on has been constantly fighting to build up unity in action between our Party and the parallel Party which calls itself the Communist Party (Marxist).

Both at the Bombay Congress of our Party held in 1964 and at the Patna Congress of our Party held in 1968, our Party made such appeal for united action.

The Communist Party (Marxist) has constantly been rejecting our appeals and denouncing us as "revisionists" who, according to them, should be fought to a finish.

At the Fourth General Election held in February 1967, the Communist Party (Marxist) concentrated their main attack against our Party. They refused to form a single united front with us in West Bengal and other states with the result that the Congress and reactionaries benefited from this division and disunity.

Similarly, in all other states also, with the exception of Kerala, the CP(M) concentrated on defeating our Party—even by allying themselves with reactionary forces.

The results of the 1967 General Election proved the correctness of our Party's policies and slogans and dealt a severe blow to the calculations of the CP(M). Our Party emerged stronger than the CP(M) both inside Parliament and in most of the state assemblies.

It is this chastening experience that led to the beginnings of some serious rethinking within that Party. The formation of a single united front in W. Bengal and its resounding victory in 1969 was a signal triumph for the political policies and unifying role of our Party.

Experience therefore has led to a situation when our Party's appeal for united action is now beginning to secure some response from the CP(M). Recently our Party at the session of its National Council held in April 1969 decided to appeal to the CP(M) that the leaders of our Party and of their Party should meet and discuss the question of closer co-operation and understanding

between the two Parties and closer unity in action, in order to forge unity of the Left and democratic forces on an all-India plane, to meet the challenge of reaction and offer a viable alternative to Congress rule at the centre. We put forward three concrete proposals: the formation of an all-India co-ordination body between the two Parties; the formation of a joint bloc of the two Parties in Parliament and in the state assemblies where no united fronts yet exist; unity in action on the mass fronts and in the mass organisations.

Although the CP(M) leadership did not accept the specific points put forward by us for joint discussion, the meeting between representatives of the two Parties was held in Calcutta on May 24, 25 and 26 and led to the signing of a joint Communique.

Our Party regards the meeting and the Communique as a good beginning and will do everything possible to carry forward this development.

Having split the Indian communist movement once in 1964, the Mao leadership has continued the good work since then. Under Maoist inspiration, a sizable section has now split away from the CP(Marxist) and formed the Communist Party (Marxist-Leninist) which publicly proclaims its allegiance to Mao's thoughts. This Party includes several misguided young men and militant elements. The Mao leadership has now come out denouncing the leadership of the CP(Marxist) as "revisionists" and "agents of the Indian bourgeoisie", the very epithets which the CP(M) leaders hurled at us when they split away.

The task of unifying the communist movement in India has thus been rendered still more complicated.

The leadership of the CP(M) has now come out in open criticism of the leadership of the CPC and of the ideology of the thought of Mao Tse-tung being a negation of Marxism-Leninism. But it must be remembered that they still regard what they call "Soviet revisionism" as one of the main impediments to political ideological unity of the world communist movement. In this they once again stand on the side of Maoism.

Even while criticising some decisions of the 9th Congress of the CPC the CP(M) leadership reiterates its broad agreement with the so-called general line of the Chinese leadership contained in the Chinese June 14, 1963 Letter.

Our Party, despite all this, will continue steadfastly with its policy of working step by step for re-unification of the Indian communist movement. We regard the task of building closer unity in action between our Party and the CP(M) as the first urgent step in this direction. The limited success we have achieved so far we regard as a success for our political and tactical line as corresponding to the realities of the developing Indian situation. We venture to say that more and more people are rallying to this line of our Party.

If there are friends here who think they can help in this direction, we and our Party shall welcome such help. We shall not regard such help as "interference" in the internal affairs of our Party.

There are friends here who have appealed that in the interest of unity there should be no criticism of the Chinese leadership at this conference. We are sorry we are not in a position to respond to this appeal. The damage done to the Indian revolutionary movement by the splitting and disruptive policy

of the Mao Tse-tung leadership has been too serious, costly and extensive for us to keep silent about it. And that damage is continuing even today. It is impossible to report on our movement in India without referring to the harm done and the problems created by the Peking leaders. Even at this very moment over the Peking radio and otherwise they are instigating provocations and attacks against the united front governments in Bengal and Kerala, and in this respect the positions of the Maoist leaders coincide with those of reactionaries within our country.

Part V

Comrades, the draft appropriately refers to the question of socialist democracy. It is valid as ever that victorious socialism exerts its influence on the world revolutionary developments chiefly by its economic achievements. But with such breath-taking achievements in the construction of socialism and communism, the question of constantly strengthening and deepening socialist democracy naturally comes more and more to the forefront. In fact, it is on the basis of enrichment and elaboration of socialist democracy that the creative energies of the working people in the socialist countries can be unleashed in full measure. For the working people in the capitalist countries, especially the younger generation, the flowering of socialist democracy also becomes a force of great attraction. This would seem particularly so when the broadest strata of the people are being attracted towards socialism and the revolutionary working class. Any incident or happening in the contrary direction causes concern and confusion, and tends to alienate the masses in the capitalist countries from the lofty ideas of Marxism-Leninism. This matter deserves closer attention of the Communist and Worker's Parties.

Before I close, I would like to emphasise that our Document draws pointed attention to our task of a constant struggle against Right and Left opportunism. I would like to say that recent experience highlights the phenomenon that both Right and Left opportunism lead to narrow nationalism and even to national hegemonism. It is this danger against which each one of us has to exercise the maximum vigilance, against which we must pit all our strength so that proletarian internationalism, which has always been the breath of our nostrils, is reinforced and strengthened with every passing day.

We are patriotic parties, the most consistently patriotic parties, in spite of all the bourgeois slanders directed against us ever since the Communist Manifesto saw the light of day 120 years ago. There is no higher patriotism than Marxism-Leninism.

But while we are patriotic parties, national parties, we are not nationalistic parties. We are national contingents of the international brotherhood of workers, irrespective of creed, colour and nationality. The moment this burning consciousness begins to become dim in our minds and activity, that moment we begin to depart from the highest principle of Marxism, from proletarian internationalism.

The acid test of our international solidarity lies in this that the socialist

countries go all out to give all assistance, economic, political, diplomatic and even military, to all the peoples of the world fighting imperialism and reaction. But proletarian internationalism is not a one-way traffic. We from the capitalist countries have also to face our task. Our proletarian internationalism lies certainly in mutual assistance, but equally, and even more, in giving all possible support to the socialist countries when their achievements or security are threatened by imperialism and its vile conspiracies.

Such in our opinion, is the key message of the Document we are going to adopt. Let us be loyal to it, loyal to the teachings of Marx and Lenin, loyal to the cause of unity of all revolutionary and democratic forces in their common struggle against imperialism, and victory is certain. The future belongs to us, to the toiling people of all countries. The days of imperialism are numbered.

Comrades, I cannot end without expressing the deeply felt thanks of my Party and its members to the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party for the invaluable initiative taken by it in bringing about this Conference. Our heartfelt thanks also go to the CPSU and its leadership, without whose role our conference could not have yielded the results achieved by it. We express our thanks to all those Parties who are present here and some who are absent for their efforts to contribute to the cohesion of the world communist movement against imperialism.