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the
Non-Capitalist Path
of Development
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-by G. Adhikari

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Is the slogan of National Democracy, as the most suitable state form to solve the problems of national regeneration and social progress along the non-capitalist path of development, applicable to India? What are the peculiarities of this stage of the revolution, what is the proletariat's attitude towards sections of the national bourgeoisie? These have been the central issues of the debate going on at present in our Party.

This debate found expression in the drafts of the Party Programme which were presented before our last Party Congress held at Vijayawada in April 1961. The majority draft took its stand firmly on the analysis given in the 1960 Statement, and held that the slogan of National Democracy as the most suitable state form to implement the non-capitalist path of development to achieve national regeneration and social progress and to effect a gradual transition to socialism was fully "applicable to India."

The minority, while expressing full agreement with the analysis and general line of the Meeting, renounced in its draft the idea of national democracy as one which is not applicable to our country. The minority representatives denied the possibility of a broad militant alliance of all progressive forces of the country, the non-monopoly sections of the national bourgeoisie of India included. Proceeding from this the minority in our Party expressed in its draft programme the opinion that a state of people's democracy should be set up under the exclusive leadership of the working class.

The different viewpoints expressed in these two drafts also covered a number of other questions, such as the class character and the role of the present Indian Government, the contradictions in the present economic development and their effects and, lastly, questions of the strategy and tactics of building the National Democratic front in India. These differences were not solved at Vijayawada though unity of the Party was maintained.

The differences came to a head and the situation in our Party deteriorated sharply in connection with the crossing of our borders by the armed forces of the Chinese People's Republic, with the action of the Chinese leaders in trying to effect a solution of the border dispute with our country by force. This event had a disastrous effect on the Indian situation; it strengthened the reactionary forces and sharpened the differences in our Party to the point of a split.

The situation worsened when the Chinese leaders began to make public their own dogmatic and sectarian understanding of the situation in our country and the strategy and tactics that should be followed by the Communists in India. They publicly denounced the leadership of our Party as revisionist, as a tail of the bourgeois government and openly called for a split in our Party. This gross interference by the Chinese leaders played no small part in accelerating the developments which culminated in a split in our Party. The dissenters have set up a rival party and published their rival programme.

The programmatic ideas put forward in the minority programme which we mentioned above have been developed into a full-fledged dogmatic and sectarian line in this new programme of the splitters. In this programme they formally concede that in the context of the new world situation "new big opportunities have arisen for several economically backward and under-developed countries, on achieving independence, for establishing a State of National Democracy." It further states that "the developing working class can, by gradually establishing hegemony in that State, take the country along the path of non-capitalist development and go on to socialism by skipping over the stage of capitalism." But after saying this they draw the very strange conclusion. "Such a door, however, is barred to us in India."

The dissenters explain this by the fact that during the past two decades the national bourgeoisie of India has by utilising state power strengthened its class positions at the expense of the mass of the people and by compromising and bargaining with imperialism and big landlordism. The country, they assert, has taken the path of capitalism. This is what the rival programme has to say on this question:

"During the past two decades there has been an enormous growth of Indian monopoly and strengthening of capitalism in India.

Such being the case, it is unrealistic to talk of a non-capitalist path of development and the establishment of a National Democratic State to achieve this aim in India. Even the basic democratic tasks of uprooting imperialist monopoly capital and smashing the feudal and semi-feudal fetters on our agriculture cannot be completed without dislodging this bourgeois-landlord government, headed by the big bourgeoisie, from power."

The dissenters who proceed from this analysis, deny the possibility of utilising the non-monopoly groups of the national bourgeoisie to accomplish the basic tasks of the anti-imperialist and anti-feudal revolution and care nothing about preparing the political forces of the country; in effect they propose to the Indian people the following "immediate objective":

"... The establishment of People's Democracy based on the coalition of all genuine anti-feudal and anti-imperialist forces headed by the working class. This demands first and foremost the replacement of the present bourgeois-landlord State and Government by a state of the working people and a Government led by the working class on the basis of a firm worker-peasant alliance. This alone can quickly and thoroughly complete the unfinished basic democratic tasks of the Indian revolution and pave the way to putting the country on the road of socialism." (Emphasis added.)

The quotations given and the emphasis added, expose the dogmatic and Left sectarian character of the positions. It appears that, as far as our dissenters are concerned, nothing has changed either in the world situation or in India; they do not seem to understand that a certain part of the Indian non-monopoly bourgeoisie is objectively interested in accomplishing the basic tasks of the anti-imperialist and anti-feudal revolution, without which it would be impossible to create a really independent national economy and do away with the backwardness; they close their eyes to the emergence of the mighty socialist system headed by the Soviet Union, as a decisive factor influencing world developments and facilitating the growth of progressive trends.

Besides, it appears that some Indian Communists are not quite clear on the meaning of the term, the non-capitalist path, as applied to India.

In this article I shall, therefore, deal with those efforts which our Party is exerting in India towards applying the ideas of the Moscow Statement of 1960—the ideas of a state of national democracy and the non-capitalist path—to the concrete conditions in our coun-

try. Section VIII of the draft programme of the CPI entitled "National Democratic Revolution and the Path Forward" is devoted to these questions.

Is the concept of the non-capitalist path a new concept in Marxism? In what context was it formulated originally and what is new in its application at the present stage? Only when we answer these questions will we be able to see the correct interconnection between the concept of National Democracy and the new application of the concept of the non-capitalist path.

The idea of a non-capitalist path was formulated in connection with the question: How do independent underdeveloped countries—countries which are not industrially developed and where feudal or semi-feudal relations still predominate in agriculture—make their transition to socialism? Should not they first have capitalism to become industrially advanced so as to become mature for socialist revolution?

These questions were first touched upon by Engels as far back as 1882 in the context of the future of the colonies of an imperialist country like England after the victory of the socialist revolution. It is natural that a reply could not be given to that question at the time. And in a letter to Karl Kautsky, Engels noted that one could advance only "idle hypotheses" of what "social and political phases" the colonial countries would have to pass through before they likewise "arrive at socialist organization."

The question of the non-capitalist path of development for economically underdeveloped countries which have rid themselves of colonial oppression and imperialist domination was first raised in the works of Lenin. The thesis on the possibility of the economically underdeveloped countries skipping the capitalist stage was confirmed by the experience of the CPSU and a number of Soviet republics which arrived at socialism via the non-capitalist path, and also by the experience of the Mongolian People's Republic.

Later this question was elaborated in the documents of the Sixth Congress of the Communist International on the revolutionary movement in the colonial and semi-colonial countries. The appraisal of the role of the national bourgeoisie contained in these documents bore, however, the imprint of sectarianism. Although it was conceded that the national bourgeoisie is opposed to imperialism, it was at the same time noted that that opposition is always a reformist, a half-hearted one: being anti-revolutionary, it capitulates again and again to imperialism.

From this it was concluded that the national liberation is to be achieved under the leadership of a united national front at the head of which stands the working class, and that this alone can lead to complete independence; the state that is set up will have the character of the democratic dictatorship of workers and peasants; such a government in close alliance with the country of victorious socialism can complete the anti-imperialist and anti-feudal revolution and build the requisites of socialism, i.e., a developed industry and agriculture, in a non-capitalist way.

Although this view ceased to conform to the radically changed conditions in the world, it continued to be current after the Second World War right up to 1956—up to the Twentieth Congress of the CPSU.

True, China serves as an example confirming the correctness of the old theses. In 1927 as a result of the First Revolutionary War the big national bourgeoisie led by the Kuomintang came to power in China. What happened there in the next ten years was the development of compradore bureaucratic capital, closely linked with imperialism and controlled by it. Therefore, the task was to replace the reactionary government of the big compradore bourgeoisie by a government of "new democracy," by the dictatorship of an alliance of all anti-imperialist and anti-feudal forces under the leadership of the proletariat. Such a government in alliance with the country of victorious socialism would be able to complete the anti-imperialist, anti-feudal revolution and create the prerequisites of socialism on the basis of the non-capitalist path.

As regards China, the analysis of "New Democracy" made by Mao Tse-tung in January 1940 was fully confirmed when the Chinese people's revolution won its historic victory in 1949. However, the same analysis, mechanically generalized for all countries, continued to figure in the documents of the Communist Information Bureau. The newly independent countries which had won their independence under the national bourgeoisie were declared as not really independent and in the grip of the imperialists. Thus the governments of these countries were assigned to the imperialist anti-democratic camp.

After the Second World War, an upsurge of national liberation revolutions in a number of countries of Asia and Africa resulted in their attaining independence. But in actual fact the independent countries which thus emerged were not of the two types visualised in the old understanding i.e., either satellites, semi-colonies of the

imperialists, on the one hand, or People's Democracies, on the other. A new kind of state now emerged, typified by India. These states were led by the national bourgeoisie; they were not in a military alliance with imperialism; they generally pursued the policy of peace, non-alignment and anti-colonialism; though not free from imperialist economic grip, they were struggling to build independent economies and maintaining relations with both the socalist and the imperialist camp.

This reality was shaping itself in these countries, yet our 1951 Programme, drafted under the influence of the old understanding, ignored this. India was declared a satellite state—a semi-colony, whose bourgeois-landlord rulers were incapable of building an independent economy and who, in the field of foreign policy, were facilitating imperialist aggression and pursuing a spurious peace policy.

This error arose not only because there was a lag in understanding the full import and impact of the new epoch and the new stage of the general crisis of capitalism, but also because in the international Communist movement and in our Party there were strong tendencies which underestimated the significance of the liberation movement led by the national bourgeoisie and the fact that the national bourgeoisie had not exhausted its progressive role and the degree of its participation in the national liberation movement varied depending on the specific conditions. This led to sectarian mistakes and to the self-isolation of the Communists and the working class from the national-liberation movement, instead of to their hegemony in the same.

India belongs to the group of non-aligned countries, striving to develop an independent economy on capitalist lines—countries of bourgeois democracy, with a certain measure of bourgeois democratic freedom.

Internationally India stands for peace and peaceful co-existence; it pursues a policy of non-alignment and wages a struggle against colonialism. The socialist camp and the international Communist movement accord support to all anti-imperialist and progressive measures of governments of countries like India, render them economic aid to help them strengthen their economic independence.

What is the attitude of the masses to a government which is building an independent economy, though in a capitalist way, and maintains a certain measure of bourgeois freedom?

The masses see that the capitalist way of building an independent economy heaps economic burdens on them; does not raise but

rather lowers their standard of living. They see that with the growth of capitalism and with the growth of monopoly and concentration of capital, the soil for reactionary forces grows and these forces begin to put pressure on the government to impel it towards pro-imperialism and anti-democratic policies.

The bankruptcy of the capitalist path to secure economic independence for the country and a better standard of living becomes more and more apparent to the masses.

Is it possible for India to reach economic independence, that is, a high level of industrialisation and developed agriculture, in the capitalist way?

This possibility cannot of course be excluded. The capitalist path of development provides the national bourgeoisie as a whole with a number of possibilities to pursue its class aims. Of course, such a development would be a protracted one, heaping burdens and sufferings on the masses and involving dangers to the national interests of the country.

To recognize the possibility soberly is neither to have any illusions about capitalism nor to overestimate the impact of the new epoch.

The Communist Party of India does not set forth the objective of the immediate overthrow of the existing government, but concentrates on the following two objectives:

- 1. Isolate and eliminate the reactionary forces seeking to put the clock back and take the country in a pro-imperialist and antidemocratic direction.
- 2. Develop struggle against the Government to prevent its back-sliding in the above direction, mobilize and unite the masses to build an independent national economy in the non-capitalist way and to achieve such changes in the policy and structure of the Government, which would make it capable of implementing these policies.

The masses, being faced with the burden, suffering and danger inherent in the capitalist way are seeking an alternative path, are asking the question: Must India go the capitalist way? Is there no other way? The capitalist path stands discredited in the eyes of the masses. Experience teaches our people that it will not be able to rid itself of exploitation, poverty and hunger while advancing along the capitalist way as our country is doing at present. This is the reason for the growing interest of our people in the ideas of scialism which are in keeping with their striving towards rapid progress and a better life. This is also the reason why the ruling class of India and

its party, the National Congress, today proclaim the construction of a "socialist state" as their aim.

What are the principles of economic planning of the government which, as it claims, pursues the aim of setting up an independent national economy, raising the living standard of the people and liquidating economic and social inequality? It is creating a heavy industry in the state sector, carrying out an agrarian reform and maintaining democracy. These, according to the statements of the ruling party, are progressive principles.

However, the manner in which these principles are being implemented in actual planning, leads to an increase in the burdens and sufferings of the people and endangers the independent development of our country.

The alternative programme we put before our people is a programme of completing the anti-feudal and democratic revolution. We deem it necessary above all to curb the growth of monopoly capitalism in India; put an end to foreign capitalist control over our economy; extend and consolidate the public sector independent of foreign monopolies, placed on a democratic footing and constituting a powerful lever of building an independent national industry and economy; effectively curb the growth of Indian monopoly groups by breaking their economic might; end landlord domination and feudal survivals; carry through far-reaching agrarian reforms in the interests of the peasants, and abolish the rule of usurious, commercial and bank capital in our agriculture.

This programme is, in substance, the non-capitalist path which as a result of deep-going changes will release the productive forces in industry and agriculture, raise the standard of living and create the possibilities for active participation by the people in production.

This alternative path, it must be clearly understood, is neither an anti-captalist programme in the sense of uprooting all capitalist relations nor a programme of the immediate building of socialism. It is an alternative programme of building an independent national economy—without, at the same time, allowing capitalist development in the familiar way, and enabling India to implement the task of economic construction with much smaller sacrifices and more rapidly.

The fight for this path puts forward a solution for the twofold crisis engendered by the Plan of the Congress government. Firstly, the planning under the present government is leading to a growth of monopoly, its influence over the state machine and public sector,

huge profits for these monopolists and more corruption; these are leading to a crisis of resources and of foreign currency and hinder the economic development of the country. This creates the soil for the growth of reaction and for its attempt to subvert national policies—those of independent development and non-alignment. Secondly, the present Congress planning is resulting in heavier burdens and suffering for the masses, and a very slow rate of growth in living standards.

Our alternative offers a solution of the problem of resources, makes it possible to mobilize resources within the country by nationalising the banks, oil export-import trade and key industries which involve both foreign and Indian monopolists.

The alternative path, by releasing additional resources through nationalisation and through expansion of the public sector and by fighting for complete agrarian reforms and for strengthening the economy of the masses of middle and poor peasants and agricultural labourers through developing co-operatives and giving them technical and material aid, creates conditions for raising the standard of living.

Thus, while formulating and fighting for this alternative path, the non-capitalist path, we develop a basic criticism of the present planning, which, though based on the three progressive principles noted above, is so implemented that in practice it leads to all the evils and contradictions of capitalism.

At the same time, we always stress that the only way to build an independent national economy, to avoid the crisis mentioned above and the danger of reactionary anti-national subversion, is the alternative we offer. On this basis we believe it will be possible to unite all progressive sections of the people, including the bulk of the nonmonopoly national bourgeoisie.

This, we think, is possible in our day at the third stage of the general crisis of capitalism not only because capitalism is discredited but also because the socialist system headed by the Soviet Union is becoming a decisive force, capable of crushing imperialist aggression and of giving the necessary economic aid to the underdeveloped countries enabling them to build their independent national economies and avoiding the dangers of capitalist development.

How can our people switch over to this better path? We see the reply as follows: by replacing the present bourgeois-democratic government by a government of national democracy. National democracy is not bourgeois democracy in which the leadership of the national bourgeoisie is decisive; nor is it people's democracy in which the leadership of the working class is decisive, that leadership having won the support of the overwhelming majority of the people. It is qualitatively different from bourgeois democracy because it is consistently anti-imperialist and anti-feudal; it rejects dictatorial and despotic methods of government, ensures broadest democracy and active participation by the people and their organizations in effecting social changes and shaping government policy. In such a state, as distinct from bourgeois democracy, the balance of forces is shifted in favour of the proletariat, in the sense that the proletariat shares power with the national bourgeoisie. That is why such a state becomes an instrument for promoting development along the non-capitalist path.

In 1958 at our Amritsar Congress we took one more important step forward in giving a scientific foundation to the path of struggle we were evolving. Taking our cue from the 1957 Declaration of the Communist and Workers' parties, which defined how today in a number of countries opportunities have arisen for the working class and its party to create the necessary conditions for the peaceful realization of the socialist revolution, we wrote in the preamble to our Party Constitution the following.

"The Communist Party of India strives to achieve full democracy and socialism by peaceful means. It considers that by developing a powerful mass movement, by winning a majority in Parliament and by backing it with mass actions, the working class and its allies can overcome the resistance of the forces of reaction and ensure that Parliament becomes an instrument of the people's will for effective fundamental changes in the economic, social and state structure."

The peaceful way defined here is not to be identified with the "parliamentary way" of the reformist conception. In this bourgeois reformist concept of the parliamentary way the masses are to be passive and democracy formal, so what becomes decisive is not the will of the people but the power of the purse and its force. The peaceful way as defined in our Constitution is the most persevering effort by the majority of our people to utilize the democratic rights, freedom of speech, press and organization, parliamentary democracy won by our national-liberation struggle, to enforce the will of the people in achieving the urgent national and social objectives of today.

Marxism-Leninism teaches us that the proletariat and its Party should utilize all the democratic rights the people have won through struggle to awaken the broad masses, to unite, them, to build dosciplined class and mass organizations, to imbue them with self-confidence

and revolutionary will to fight for the urgent national and social aims. Leninism teaches and experience confirms that the ruling classes never relinquish power voluntarily, and one has to be prepared to use force whenever necessary. Everything will depend on whether the force of peaceful mass struggle, isolating the ruling classes, compels them to surrender or whether they hit back with their armed might at one stage or another. The proletariat and its party must never lose sight of the possibility, and it should be prepared for it. Given such a basic preparation, a switch-over to non-peaceful methods when required should not be difficult. Without such a basic preparation an attempt to switch over to non-peaceful methods would either remain mere talk or lead to adventurism.

The main content of the proletariat's fight for the peaceful path is persevering effort for the use of the democratic rights won for the defense of democracy and its extension. This brings out its revolutionary essence and demarcates it from its reformist concept. Lenin wrote in his **Two Tactics** and other works that the proletariat and its party in their struggle to achieve hegemony in the bourgeois-democratic revolution must be in the forefront of all in the struggle for democracy. In the present situation in India we have, on the one hand, a bourgeois government pursuing in general a policy of non-alignment, of economic independence and of ensuring some democracy, but at the same time using anti-democratic methods, developing capitalism and facilitating the growth of reaction; and on the other hand, we have the rise of an extreme reactionary trend which is seeking to subvert the national policies and the democracy that exists.

In this situation the path of struggle and unity, the path of building the broadest front of patriotic forces to defeat reaction and to force a Leftward turn in the policies of the ruling class is, essentially, a fight for all-round democracy and for consistent democratic development.

The democratic content of our path of struggle and unity has two aspects, the national aspect and the class aspect. The national aspect consists in the struggle to consolidate national sovereignty, to secure economic independence, all-round national regeneration, and to abolish all forms of feudal inequality and backwardness. The class aspect consists in the exposure of capitalism and the capitalist way of development, showing how the class aspirations of the national bourgeoisie conflict with the national aspirations in the struggle for the non-capitalist path of development. It consists also in the strug-

gle for curbing and eliminating foreign and Indian monopoly in our economy, and asserting the role of the masses, of the working class, of the worker-peasant alliance.

Both aspects are closely interlinked. It is a path of building a broad national democratic front, representing a militant alliance of all patriotic and democratic elements in the country with the working class playing a growing role. On the whole it is the path of widening and deepening the conquests of democracy—the struggle—the path of peaceful mass struggle, combined with the use of parliamentary democracy, for all-round national regeneration and for socialism.

The slogan of power which corresponds to this path of struggle and to the broad front of all patriitic forces is the sligan if replacing the bourgeois-demoratic government, which represents the interest of the entire bourgeoisie, including its Right-wing, and pursues a policy of hesitation and compromise with reaction, with a government of national democracy—or, as our Vijayawada resolution calls it, the government of the national democratic front.

It can be said that the state of national democracy will also differ from the state of people's democracy, the Indian conception of which was outlined in our programme of 1951. It seems to us that in India no great difference was envisaged as concerns the composition of the classes participating in running the country under national democracy and at the initial stages of people's (socialist) democracy. The basic difference is that, in the state of people's democracy, as outlined in our past documents, only the working class heads the alliance of partiotic and class forces whereas under national democracy the leadership of this alliance can belong not only to the working class.

Under what circumstances will the national bourgeoisie, i.e., its truly patriotic sections, be compelled to enter into alliance with the working class and the democratic forces? This will not take place easily. Under the stress of economic development—growth of capitalism and growth of monopoly—a reactionary trend is emerging in the country in the shape of the Swatantra Party and some other communal parties which embody the reactionary trend outside the national bourgeois government. This trend is demanding the reversal of the national policy of non-alignment, growth of the public sector, radical agrarian reform and democracy. This trend, though growing is not strong. However, inside the Congress—the ruling party—there is a Right wing which is sabotaging national policy from within, while the Left wing, which is emerging, wants a vigorous "go ahead" implementation of national policy. A process of differentiation is

taking place in the national bourgeoisie and inside the ruling party. It is not very advanced and is proceeding slowly. The Left in the National Congress is as yet neither assertive nor strong.

We took note of this differentiation in framing our policy at Vijayawada. This differentiation, it should be said, has continued since Vijayawada, though the situation has been complicated by the consequences of the Chinese invasion and the intensification of the border conflict. At the same time U.S. imperialist and neocolonialist pressure on India is being stepped up. This is a further factor promoting the differentiation.

At such a time the disunity of the democratic forces and the disunity in Communist Party itself are factors favouring the Rightward swing. But if the disunity can be overcome and a powerful national democratic movement gets going, then real possibilities will arise both for differentiation in the national bourgeoisie and in the ruling party and for a shift in the correlation of forces in favour of the working class and all democrats. These, then, are the preconditions for the realization of the national democratic front and subsequently of the slogan of national democracy.

Such is the revolutionary concept of a national-democratic government. Such a government arises in the course of a bitter nationwide democratic struggle leading to the isolation and defeat of the reactionary monopoly sections of the bourgeoisie and the feudal elements.

Unity with the patriotic national bourgeoisie is forged in the fire of the same struggle which is national in form and whose driving force are the worker peasant and democratic masses. The government which arises on the crest of such a mass movement will, no doubt, have contradictions within it—those between the national bourgeoisie and the common people—but under the constant pressure of the mass movement it will be forced to act unitedly and implement the programme of national development in the non-capitalist way, i.e., eliminating foreign monopoly, curbing Indian monopoly, carrying through radical agrarian reforms, extending democracy, ensuring active participation by the masses in the economic and political life of the country.

In this process the balance continuously shifts in favour of the working class and of the worker-peasant alliance. This paves the way for strengthening the leadership of the working class in the state and thus creates the conditions for the transition to socialism.

It is a fact that as social contradictions sharpen the national bourgeoisie tends more and mor to compromise. At the same time the patriotic national bourgeoisie can and must be included in the national-democratic front to complete the national-democratic tasks. In those conditions, as Leninists we have to address ourselves to the task of finding a way, in the concrete situation, to stabilize the national bourgeoisie in the front, to neutralize its compromising inclinations.

This can only be done by utilizing the differentiation in the ranks of the national bourgeoisie. In order to defeat the reactionary monopoly groups and other reactionaries, and to isolate the extreme Right wing in the Congress and in the ruling circles, we must launch a powerful nation-wide democratic movement the driving force of which are the working class and the peasant masses, a movement for consistent implementation of national policies. Such a movement can create conditions for uniting all the democratic forces, including the patriotic sections of the national bourgeoisie, in the national-democratic front.

The situation that has developed in our country in the recent months following the passing away of our late Prime Minister Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, is characterized in the economic field by crisis of price-rise, especially of food grains and other necessities, cruelly hitting the masses and lowering their standard of living. In the political field, it is characterized by the rising pressure of Right reactionary forces and of the poweful monopoly groups seeking to edge the government to the Right, to subvert national policy and to turn the clock back.

The powerful rallying of the democratic forces and their unity of action, which was reflected in the mass struggles of the recent months—struggles to defend living standards, to rebuff the pressure of the reactionaries and to force the government to adopt urgent progressive measures, such as state trading in food grains and nationalization of the banks—fully confirm the following statements in our draft programme. "Objective conditions are most favourable for building up a national mass movement ... for forging a national democratic front in the course of this struggle.... The slogan of seting up a National Democratic Front and later a government of the NDF—the state of national democracy—has today the greatest mobilizing force. That is why we make it the central slogan of the day."

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