

THE INDIAN COMMUNIST PARTY

*Its policy and work
in the war of liberation*

By P. C. JOSHI

General Secretary of the Communist Party of India

With an Introduction by

HARRY POLLITT

SIXPENCE

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FOREWORD

THIS pamphlet, by the Secretary of the Indian Communist Party, is a brilliant Marxist analysis of the problem of India in the present situation. It contains extracts from a booklet written by P. C. Joshi in February, 1942—while the Communist Party of India was illegal; before the Cripps Mission and the present disastrous developments.

The thing that stands out in the light of later developments is the absolute correctness of the Communist Party of India's line as given here.

Puran Chand Joshi, the General Secretary of the Communist Party of India, is 35 years of age, the son of a schoolmaster, of Almora, United Provinces. In 1929, at the age of 22, he was arrested in the Meerut Conspiracy Case. He was then a Law Student at the Allahabad University, and leader of the United Provinces Student Movement.

In the Meerut Case he was sentenced to five years' imprisonment, along with 28 other leading Trade Unionists and Communists. After spending 3½ years in prison his sentence was reduced by the High Court on appeal and he was released on the 6th August, 1933.

He at once threw himself into the work of building the Communist Party of India. In 1934 the Communist Party of India was declared illegal. For nine years P. C. Joshi has led the Communist Party of India under conditions of illegality.

With the most harsh repression going on, hunted by the police day and night, without a home, living on a few shillings a month, Joshi, along with other leaders of the Communist Party, built up the Communist Party from a small fighting organisation to the great mass political force that it is today, basing it firmly upon the working classes of Bombay, Calcutta and Cawnpore; establishing a firm alliance with the organised Peasant movement; and winning over to their side the youth of the country. The Communist Party of India was responsible for publishing two English publications, "National Front" and "New Age," and a large number of vernacular papers.

The action of the Government in removing the ban on the Communist Party of India and permitting it to republish legally its papers is a sign that one, if so far only one, of the lessons

of Burma and Malaya has been learnt. The call which the Communist Party of India makes to the Indian people to see this as India's war, a war for liberation and a war that only the people can win, is a cry that is already finding a response from all Indian patriots. Based on a sound Marxist understanding of the international situation, the Communist Party of India gives the clear call for Unity of all sections in India and makes plain the positive steps necessary for Victory over hated Fascism and for the freedom of India and all peoples. The recent message received by me from Joshi is a sharp call to us all—

“The new legalised Communist Party of India greets its British comrades. In this grave hour in the life of freedom-loving humanity, our policy is for Indian National Unity, for National resistance to Fascism and for a National Government for India.

Our fellow patriots have been provoked to their present suicidal course by the recalcitrant insolence of the imperialist rulers, who have pursued their present policies despite the experiences of Malaya and Burma.

The task of the British people is to press the British Government to negotiate with Congress on the basis of recognition of Indian Independence and a Provisional National Government now.

We strive to persuade the National Leadership of Congress and the Moslem League to unite in order to reach a settlement with Britain for the struggle against the Fascist invaders.

We welcome your campaign for re-opening negotiations and urge you to intensify it a hundredfold. We ourselves are on the job.

We must turn the tide to unite our two great peoples in the world anti-Fascist freedom front.”

Our job here is to strain every muscle to help this policy to be possible. India can be mobilised along the lines suggested; the National movement can take on a new life of constructive effort to win the war and win India's place as a free country. As the Communist Party of India says, the key to advance is a National Government and democratic liberties. We must and can see to it that the British Government does this—and by doing so win a great strategic victory over the Axis powers and their friends.

HARRY POLLITT

THE INDIAN COMMUNIST PARTY

Its work in the war of liberation

by P. C. Joshi

I

IMPERIALIST WAR INTO PEOPLE'S WAR

“The whole world looks to you as the force capable of destroying the brigand hordes of German invaders. The enslaved people of Europe who fell under the yoke of the German invaders look to you as their liberators. A great liberation mission has fallen to your lot. So be worthy of your mission. The war you wage is a war of liberation, a just war. Let the manly images of our great ancestors inspire you in this war. Let the great victorious banner of Lenin fly over your heads.”

J. STALIN. November 6th, 1942.

THE attack on the U.S.S.R. transforms the character of the imperialist war into a people's war. The attack on the U.S.S.R. is a call for people's mobilisation to win the war. The victory of the U.S.S.R. becomes the guarantee of people's liberation all over the world.

This is the new and decisive change in the whole world situation—the end of the imperialist war, the beginning of the people's war. It is an historic turning point for the whole of humanity, for the peoples of all lands.

Hitler, when he struck against the Soviet Union, hoped by that act to create an all-European—nay, all-world—front against Bolshevism. But his calculations went wrong. He counted without the might of the Soviet Union, which was based on 24 years of socialist construction and on the invincible unity of the Soviet people. He counted without the fact that two years

of war had only sharpened the conflict between the Axis Powers and the Anglo-American bloc.

On June 22nd, 1942, the peoples of the world ceased being the pawns and victims of the imperialist countries in their struggle for world domination. They now step forward as the main actors, shaping their own destiny, achieving their own liberation by advancing to win the people's war in a people's way. On June 22nd Hitler's Fascism rang its own death knell. It was also the death knell of world imperialism as we have known it so far. *The first salvoes fired by the Red Army against the advancing Nazi hordes ushered in the epoch of the struggle for the people's world.*

This is the meaning of the transformation of June 22nd.

* * * * *

The second World War really began in 1932, when Japan attacked Manchuria; it spread with Italy's attack upon Abyssinia; and with re-armed Nazi Germany's aggressions in Europe. These three Powers stepped forth into world politics with the demagogic claim for "living space" for their peoples and as holy crusaders against the menace of Communism. What they really wanted were colonies, markets and spheres of influence.

The British and American imperialists were not blind to this danger, but they deliberately allowed these Powers to grow as a spearhead of counter-revolution in Europe and in the East and against the Soviet Union. As the bosses of the world, they were playing "the big and dangerous" game of nourishing reaction and hurling it against the rising peoples' movements throughout the world. This is how they sought to solve their own conflicts at the expense of the peoples and the Soviet Union.

This policy meant the strengthening of Fascism, the spread of the second World War and war upon the Soviet Union. To defeat this monstrous policy of the Fascists and the pro-Fascist reactionaries, the advanced sections of the peoples' movements sought to create a world-wide anti-Fascist Peace Front. This Peace Front was, however, disrupted before it could consolidate itself. With the outbreak of the second World War the front of the peoples, the Peace Front, was cut up. People were ranged against people.

Only the Soviet Union was able for two years to prevent the spread of the war to her people. Although the world Peace

Front had been disrupted by the outbreak of the war, the Soviet Union remained and grew stronger as its mighty base, vigilant and ever ready to re-unite the peoples of other countries as soon as the situation was ready for it.

The dramatic and disastrous developments of the first 22 months of war sharpened the crisis of the whole capitalist system. The British ruling class, which had staked so much on Hitler's war in the East, had weakened the States of Western Europe in an effort to appease Fascism. They had allowed the ruling classes of these countries to be corroded with Fascism. They had assisted in the battering down of popular movements in many of these countries.

By the Spring of 1941 the war had become a giant World War. The Anglo-American bloc, having lost the initiative and points of vantage to the enemy in the first round, was preparing to regain its world supremacy by a long war of attrition. Hitler knew the difficulties of facing such a protracted war against such a combination. He was sitting on top of a live volcano, a dozen subjugated nations; he had seized vast industrial plants, but still needed raw material resources badly. He sought the solution of these problems in a dastardly and treacherous attack upon the Soviet Union. He hoped, above all, by this attack to bring about a split in the ruling class of Britain.

What happened was indeed a decisive turn in the war, but it was exactly the opposite of what Hitler expected. He hoped to divide his enemies—but the attack upon the Soviet Union called into existence a mighty United Front of all the peoples. Hitler miscalculated how deep the conflict between the rival blocs had become as a result of his conquests and what bitter lessons the peoples of Europe and America had learned out of the disasters of the last two years.

The powerful unity of the peoples of the world with the Soviet Union grows stronger as the war progresses and in answer to the heroic example and inspiration of the Soviet people. It becomes more determined than ever to see that *not* world domination, but the utter destruction of Hitler Fascism and its allies is attained through the war.

In desperation Hitler has instigated Japan to launch her prepared aggression in the Pacific. That is a blow aimed at the most vulnerable spot of the British and American bloc—their

Colonial Empires. The Japanese Fascists are certainly scoring initial victories against, and at the cost of, the peoples of the Philippines, Malaya and Burma, whom the imperialist colonial rule left practically defenceless, unarmed and enslaved.

The Jap Fascists are utilising the national emancipatory and anti-imperialist sentiments of the people to split the colonial people from the joint front of the peoples of the world against Fascism and for Freedom. *But the peoples of India and of the colonies in the East, who have learned by their experience that freedom cannot come as a gift from imperialists, also know well that it can neither come to them on the point of the blood-stained swords of the Japanese Fascists.*

The colonial peoples are determined to line up in the world front of the peoples under the leadership of the Soviet Union in order to win the war against Hitler and the Japanese Fascists, and to win their own freedom and defend their own homelands.

Thus the new extension of the war to the Pacific and the East brings no relief to the Fascist world-enslavers; it only accentuates their death crisis, the crisis into which they plunged on June 22nd.

II

THE PEOPLE'S CAMP UNITES

As the people's war progresses, the peoples in the democratic countries begin to see the Soviet Union as the indisputable leader of the anti-Fascist forces. They see the glaring contrast between the fighting on the Eastern Front and the disastrous fiascos in the Pacific, which begin to bring home to them daily the plain truth that the war against Fascism can only be won as a people's war of liberation. The movement of the people becomes more and more determined and united around the people's war aims—*Death to Fascism, Freedom to all.*

The strategy of the Hitler-Fascists is world domination; their aim is world-enslavement. Their victory would mean not only the perpetuation of the Fascist slavery of Germany, of the Austrian, Italian and Japanese people, but imperialist enslavement for the peoples of the whole world. In this brutal war they rely not only on their arms, on the strategic points they have captured, but also on their stool-pigeons and allies in the opposing camp. They rely on all that is rotten in each country,

upon the reactionary elements in the ruling class of each country, the *appeasers* and the *isolationists*, the *Quislings* and the *Fifth Column*.

Fascist strategy is the strategy of world imperialism. The crisis of world imperialism has reached such an acute stage that it can only save itself, that is, continue and perpetuate its enslavement of the peoples, as world *Fascism*. *Fascism is not a new system—it is the most brutal and horrid form which decaying imperialism itself assumes in the period of its general and permanent crisis.*

Such is the desperate strategy of a doomed class. It is opposed by the world strategy of the peoples of the world, which is being carried out by the workers and the peoples of the world in this great war of liberation. The people are determined that Fascism must die that people may live and mankind create a new world.

The people's grand strategy is based on the simple hard fact that though the armies of Fascism have scored initial advantages, the mighty front of the people is unconquerable. It has giant resources in men and material if these are mobilised. Nothing on earth can prevent this victory except treachery on the part of some of those who stand in powerful sectors of the front, except refusal to liberate the peoples in the colonies to participate in the battles, or except failure to co-ordinate the various operations in the grand strategy.

The old rulers of the world are today no more making history—they are being yoked to its chariot. The course is new—the people's war. The actors are new—peoples and nations, who are getting into their stride. It is these mighty forces who will shape coming world events.

In the new situation a change takes place not only in the relation between nations, but inside each nation. The Government must carry on the war effort or get out. *War now unites the nation in a just cause, for the nation must perish if the war is lost. The purpose now becomes positive and immediate—Victory; and the activities of all are related to one single issue.* Inside the united National Front of each nation the balance shifts decisively in favour of the popular forces, for the fate of the war depends upon the daily actions of the people. For every sin of omission or commission by the Government the

whole people have to pay the price. Thus every man is forced to be political and grows more and more political as he realises that everything he gains or suffers depends upon the action of the people. The war not only puts people in a stronger position in relation to their own ruling class, but makes the people think more than they ever did before along the lines which their rulers do not and cannot think.

In the period of the people's war, people's action in their own interests, their desire to win the war, brings them up against all the obstacles which their ruling class has set up in its own interests and which hinder the national effort to crush Fascism. It is this new upsurge, welling from the people, that is the basis of the people's movement. The workers, going all out to intensify the war effort, are building their own strength; the nation, demanding a vigorous prosecution of the war, exposes the incompetence of the old ruling class.

Of such a character is the popular movement in the democratic countries, Great Britain and America.

In the countries occupied by Nazism a new class alignment is taking place. The crisis and the split in the ruling class came about in the fateful hour of Hitler's attack. The Fascist section betrayed the people and capitulated before Hitler, but the advanced section of the people, though defeated and conquered, have never laid down their arms. A veritable people's war has flared up in the mountains of Yugoslavia, in Norway, Czechoslovakia and France.

The magnificent Soviet resistance has re-awakened the will to resistance of every enslaved nation. The example of the Soviet guerillas has led to the organisation of armed guerilla bands appearing at the very gates of Belgrade and operating over larger and larger areas. The peoples of Europe are no longer helpless. They have begun to break their chains, they are dynamiting the Nazi prison house that is Europe today. Braving every danger, protected by their own people, they are laying the foundation of a new Europe. What that Europe will be like, none can prophesy in detail; it cannot be anything other than free and democratic, and its final form will be determined by the awakened people themselves, who know the slavery that Fascism is and who are now thinking out what it is they want for the future.

III

THE PEOPLE'S MOVEMENT IN THE COLONIES

In the Colonies the outbreak of the war sharpened to an extreme measure the conflict between the imperialist Government and all sections of the people. In India the united national front remained unbroken, but the middle-class leadership, whilst not surrendering to imperialism, paralysed the movement through inactivity and stalemate, and kept it in a state of suspended animation. The Communist Party, which sought so swing the national front as a whole towards mass struggle, was not strong enough organisationally to achieve this task.

With the turn in the war, the relation of forces between the united national front and the imperialists changes in favour of the former. *The task before the national front is now to unite and mobilise the entire people for the defence of the people and make a bold bid to take the war of liberation into its hands.* The imperialists are trying their best to prevent the effective popular participation of India in the war by continuing their autocratic regime. But the growing unity of the people in the democratic countries is bent upon winning the war against Fascism and is impatient of such policy.

The new situation has opened up for the national movement the straight path forward to national independence; the people's struggle to stop the Fascist invader is itself the fight for their freedom.

Under the Fascist onslaught the imperialist state structure, in the colonies so far attacked, has been collapsing like a pack of cards. The policy of appeasement, which met its nemesis in the West, is now meeting the same fate in the East. The "defence" of the Colonies was not organised against the Fascists, but only against the subject people. Today they are gambling with the fate of the colonial people, with the fate of the whole Far East.

The fall of Singapore is as decisive a turning point as the fall of France. It lays bare the helplessness of the people under autocratic bureaucracy. It exposes the inner rottenness of the entire colonial system. The one single lesson from the battles of Malaya is that imperialism cannot defend the Colonies against Fascist aggression because they cannot and will not mobilise the people. The disastrous consequences of the fall of

Singapore stare the entire anti-Fascist front in the face, make the issue of colonial liberation, and above all the Indian issue, more urgent than ever before. *The issue of India's future can no more be postponed except at the gravest peril to all freedom-loving nations.*

It was the fall of Singapore and concern for the fate of Asia, which brought Marshal Chiang Kai-shek on his urgent mission to India. Who would have thought that when we sent our tiny medical mission to China, the return would be the visit of China's great leader to our land to help our proud people! His farewell message to the people of India will find a golden page in the history of the world:

"The present struggle is one between freedom and slavery, between light and darkness, between good and evil, between resistance and aggression. . . . I venture to say to my brethren, the people of India, that at this critical moment in the history of civilisation our two peoples should exert themselves to the utmost in the cause of freedom for all mankind, for only in a free world could the Chinese and the Indian people obtain their freedom. Furthermore, should freedom be denied to either China or India there could be no real peace in the world. . . . Lastly, I sincerely hope and confidently believe that our great Ally, Great Britain, without waiting for any demands on the part of the people of India, will as speedily as possible give them real political power so that they may be in a position further to develop their spiritual and material strength and thus realise that their participation in the war is not merely an aid to the anti-aggression nations, but also a turning point in their struggle for India's freedom."

The defence of the colonial countries will not and cannot be organised by the imperialist rulers. It is the national movement that has to rise to its full stature and take the fate of the country in its own hands. *The weaker the national movement, the sooner takes place the collapse under Fascist aggression.* This is the lesson of the battle of the Pacific.

The loss of Malaya is a living condemnation of the colonial regime. Cecil Brown, an American journalist, who was on board the sunken "Repulse," made scathing revelations of official apathy which left Singapore and Malaya in "incredible, unbelievable unpreparedness." The Rajah of Sarawak, himself a Britisher, in a Press statement which was suppressed, said that

the present position in Malaya was due to "gross incompetence and criminal negligence."

This is how autocracy crumbled to pieces. It was inherent in the very nature of the colonial system, in the soulless bureaucracy, in the isolated military caste, in the administration being foreign, not national.

The people of Malaya made a desperate effort to defend their beloved country. The Malayan Communist Party took the lead and called upon its entire membership to be "generally mobilised and armed . . . to turn each street, lane, mine, village and rubber estate into a bulwark for the defence of our land. . . . We will fight to the last drop of our blood in defence of Malaya." The Singapore correspondent of *The Times* reported: "It is a curious fact that the Indians who were formerly most bitterly at loggerheads with the Government are now playing the most active role. The same is true of the Chinese. Among the most active Chinese are the members of the formerly proscribed Malayan Communist Party. The walls of Singapore are now plastered with their posters urging unity and resistance against German, Italian and Japanese Fascism."

The love for one's country, the hatred against Fascism of colonial patriots, is a "curious fact" to the imperialist scribe!

It was too late for Malaya, it may be too late for Burma (written February, 1942), but it is not yet too late for India. *If national India can take the war into its own hands, mobilise our millions for national defence, we at once march in step with the Chinese nation and act together as liberators of the East and fulfil the proudest destiny to which any enslaved people can aspire.* Nationalist China is already at the head, nationalist India, in her own urgent interests, is called upon to rise to her tallest height and act.

The old imperialist domination of the East is doomed. The only alternatives for the colonial people will be . . . a Fascist East or a People's East. People's unity within each colony is growing on an unprecedented scale as the common urge for the defence of their country. The unity of all the colonies is being built by the very events and course of the war, which has also made the liberation of all the colonies a burning political issue, on which hangs not only the fate of the colonial peoples but the fate of the democratic peoples as well. *Colonial liberation thus becomes an integral part of the battle for world liberation.*

IV

INDIA AND THE PEOPLE'S WAR

"All honest people must support the army of our country, of Great Britain and the United States as champions of liberation, not only in Europe, but in Asia, in Iran for instance. The subjugated peoples of the world came to us for help. We must do all in our power to help them and then let them live a life of complete liberty in their homeland as they want to do."

J. STALIN. November 6th, 1941.

The Soviet entry into the war isolated Fascism as the main enemy of mankind. It flung the non-Fascist imperialists into the people's camp by creating the basis for the international front against Fascism and for freedom. It transformed the war of the imperialists into a war of the peoples and opened the gate to a world-wide people's unity.

The Japanese entry into the war is only an underlining of this new situation for the whole of Asia and, above all, for India.

We opposed the imperialist war for all we were worth—we must go into the people's war for all we are worth. We had nothing to gain and everything to lose by supporting the imperialist war. We have nothing to lose and everything to gain by going into the people's war. We can no more fight for our freedom by opposing the war. *We have to realise our freedom by winning this war.*

Anti-Fascism has been the international policy of our national movement—today it is to be made the practice of our national policy. Fascism is no more the menace to other freedom-loving nations alone, whose cause we support from a distance, with whom we sympathise. Fascism today threatens our own borders. Fascism is no longer the enemy of India's friends, but of India herself. We suffer enslavement under imperialism and are now threatened with intensified enslavement under Fascism—the worst form of imperialism. The world war against Fascism is India's war for national defence.

This war is India's great opportunity to fight for her national liberation, no more in isolation, no more single-handed, but as part of the battle for world liberation. It is the war of the Soviet peoples, whom we pledged support against an imperialist attack. It is the war of the heroic Chinese people, whose five

years of lone struggle we have admired with veneration. It is the war of the British people, with whom we have preached friendliness and co-operation despite the British imperial domination over us. It is the war of the enslaved peoples of Europe, for whom our hearts bleed. It is an All-People's war against Fascism and for freedom. It is the Indian people's war no less than the war of all the rest of the peoples of the world. It is war for all that we hold dear, for all that we stood and stand.

THE ALL-PEOPLE'S WAR IS INDIA'S WAR.

THE INTERNATIONAL FRONT AGAINST FASCISM IS INDIA'S FRONT FOR FREEDOM.

THE WAR OF WORLD LIBERATION IS INDIA'S WAR FOR NATIONAL LIBERATION.

We can no more fight for our freedom by opposing this war. We will be cutting our own throats by doing so. We will not be hitting at British imperialism at all but doing the job of the Japanese Fascists for them. We can neither stand outside this war because we are slaves of British imperialism. To take the attitude of neutrality to this war is to remain where we are—under British imperialism and helplessly waiting for a worse fate under Japanese Fascism. The policy of neutrality to this war leads not to India's freedom but to the kingdom of the Japanese jackals.

To acquiesce in the present because there can be no worse hell for us but only a worse hell for the British imperialists, is utter ignorance, plain cowardice and shameless defeatism. If we let the war remain in imperialist hands we are not fighting enslavement but awaiting our doom. India's freedom will not come out of the blood-stained dagger of the Japanese militarists.

The struggle for our freedom today is a struggle to make the war our own war. The mass mobilisation of national India behind the world war of liberation is the march of the Indian people to India's own liberation. This and no other is the people's path for India. This and no other can be the national policy in the new world situation.

We are not helpless slaves. We have a fifty-year old national movement which is second only to China's, which our martyrs

have nursed with their blood, which thousands of our ardent patriots have built with their bones, which is the living embodiment of our national unity. Every advance that our nation has registered has been the assertion of our national unity against imperialist domination. Once again our nation is called upon to demonstrate its strength, its will to exist, its desire to conquer.

Our people have magnificently rallied behind the nation whenever they have been called upon to act. As yet they have known only suffering under the war. The slogan, "Victory in the War," will see such a people's mobilisation behind our national unity that the Indian national movement will be able to take the war out of the hands of our rulers and realise India's historic destiny.

It is up to Indian patriots to begin the most glorious chapter of our national history—to defend our beloved country, win our freedom and fight for the freedom of the world at the same time. Such is India's place in the people's war.

Today British imperialist policy stands bankrupt and isolated; even the Indian Liberals are disillusioned. In the situation as it is today, on the one hand, the Government has grown more isolated than ever before; on the other, the basis of national unity has grown broader than ever before. From the non-Party leaders to the Communists, all national elements, all serious patriots, are finding a common tongue and are coming more and more to speak the same language along the following lines:

- (1) India must be free to decide her own destiny.
- (2) The war must be won against Fascism, for India's freedom, and India must be free to participate in it.
- (3) The country must be defended against foreign attack.
- (4) The war economy must be such that the national resources are developed and the people's interests protected.

This is what British imperialism is desperately resisting. This is how the common interest of our people, the united demand of the nation expresses itself. India is finding a common voice, but has not yet found a common path. United action in the common cause is what the immediate interests of us all demand.

THE PEOPLE'S STRATEGY

It is the gravest hour in India's history. It is the most glorious opportunity before our national movement. It is the greatest common task that faces our political parties and all patriots—how to take the fate of our nation out of imperialist hands, how to meet the grave emergency, how to defend our proud nation.

In the opinion of the Communist Party the people's way forward can be summed up in three slogans: *Smash the stalemate—Assert national unity—Mobilise the masses.*

The policy of British imperialism is one of promoting stalemate, of repression and causing disruption. This policy exposes the extreme weakness of the whole imperialist position. They are faced with alternatives which they had not bargained for—either to defend the colonies by freeing the colonial peoples or to stick to their autocratic colonial regime and lose them to the Japs. The Die-hard in Britain sticks to the policy of NO CHANGE, relying upon repression against any popular upsurge. They would rather lose a few possessions to the Japs, if it comes to that, than release their hold over them right now. They aim at a half-way settlement with the Fascists at some stage.

The more liberal section of the British ruling class is coming to realise that India cannot be defended in the old way without the co-operation of the major political parties; the war effort cannot be intensified without the wholehearted support of the people.

In the meantime the old policies of imperialism cease to be practical. It becomes more and more patent that the country can no more be run through nation-wide repression and periodical switching on the "riot-racket." To intensify repression means fanning the flames of discontent when, with the Japs knocking at the door, the need of any government is greater co-operation with the people. To encourage national disruption through the "riot-racket" is like using a boomerang which will come hurling back, when the greatest need of the hour is civil peace.

This stalemate cannot last. It is the last desperate stand of reaction. The only problem is: Are we to leave it to the Japanese to break the stalemate, or will the Indian people, in alliance with the British people, break it? This stalemate is no

way out for either people. It is simply waiting for the Japs.

To break the stalemate in India is to take our fate in our hands. Today the path of advance for the Indian peoples is to go forward from stalemate to settlement. This settlement cannot come by looking to the imperialist Government but by mobilising the entire strength of the nation.

India's defence will not and cannot be organised by the bureaucracy. We have to act and take our destiny in our hands. Our ancient nation has one undying source of strength—our national unity. It is the collective strength of our people, it has been built out of numerous struggles, it has found expression in our national movement, at which the people of the world look with respect.

The Communist Party works for the broadest possible mobilisation in a united front of the Congress, the Moslem League, the Trade Union Congress, the All-India Kisan Sabha and the All-India Students' Federation. The National Congress is the premier political organisation of our people, representing the greatest national unity of the Indian people achieved so far. The Moslem League is the political organisation of the second largest community in our country. The Trade Unions, Kisan Sabhas, Student Federations were born as fighting organisations and have functioned all through as the fighting forces of the nation. The immediate unity of all these popular organisations within one Joint Front will be the widest mobilisation of India's unity.

The past is dead beyond recall. The future is being fought for here and now. The peoples of the whole world are working to create the world of Freedom, Peace and Prosperity through the struggle of today, the "all-people's" war. For any Party to stick to the old slogans of the past is to deny this living present and can only mean blasting one's own future. We can end our national slavery only on the strength of our national unity, we can win only through the actions of our people. The entire national movement has to make the decisive turn to forge all-in national unity, to call for all-in mass mobilisation.

Our Party has taken the initiative to put forward a Platform for national unity, on the basis of which we work for a Joint Front of all popular organisations, so that united India may take the war into its own hands, organise the nation's defence, realise the nation's liberation.

- (1) Recognition of India's right to complete independence.
- (2) Formation of a National Government at the Centre, responsible to the Legislature, commanding the confidence of the people, and having full power over all spheres of government and administration and of the conduct of the war.
- (3) Release all political prisoners.
- (4) Promote a policy of rapid industrialisation in order to supply the needs of defence and the needs of the people.
- (5) Grant the workers' immediate demands, ensuring that their living conditions are improved and their Trade Union rights not curtailed.
- (6) Grant the demands of the Peasants—the amelioration of the burden of indebtedness, rents and taxes. Exercise price control in their interest and give generous terms of rent-remission to them in flood and famine-stricken areas.
- (7) No coercion in any type of war effort.
- (8) Equitable distribution of war burdens.

These are the demands common to all sections of our people. This platform expresses and protects the interests of the people as a whole. These demands are common to every political party and organisation which stands for the freedom of India, and upon this platform every patriotic organisation can unite without prejudice to its own fundamental aims.

VI

WAR AIMS AND WAR EFFORT

The contented slave waits for the master to remove the load from his back before he can look around and move his legs. He remains blindly dependent upon his master's will and a slave all his life. Must this humiliation be India's helpless cry? This is what the war policy of those who shout: "People's war for others, but not for us" boils down to. There are elements in our national movement who think it is not a people's war for us because India is not free. Instead of relating the war to India's freedom, they wait for India's freedom to fall from imperialist hands—and wait in vain. Instead of calling upon India to unite with the peoples of the world and strike together, they keep the Indian people away from the peoples of the world.

We must declare ourselves on the new war situation independently of the will and policies of the British Government. Our nation must declare its war aims.

In the opinion of the Communist Party the war aims of the Indian national movement cannot be any other than:—

“The Indian people recognise that the war waged jointly by the U.S.S.R., Great Britain, the U.S.A., and China against the Fascist Powers is a people’s war. The Indian people must strive to win it in common with the other progressive peoples in order to secure the victory of the U.S.S.R. and of all other peoples, the annihilation of Fascism, and to win a peace and new order which ensure the independence and democratic liberties of all the peoples and involve no annexations.”

Our support to the war has to be unqualified, wholehearted and full-throated. The moment we sit down to translate our support into action we come across conditions—political and economic—which British imperialism has imposed upon us. The present war efforts are inevitably inadequate and ineffective. They are based upon the coercion of our people. They cannot be intensified without the positive intervention and the active participation of the people. India’s war effort, to be really effective, must be a free and voluntary effort of the whole people, which implies the existence of democratic rights and liberties.

The Communist Party advocates that the Congress immediately resumes the Ministries (written February, 1942) and that it should take the initiative to form joint ministries with the Moslem League, on the express understanding that these Ministries pledge themselves to carry out the programme of the Unity Platform as far as lies in their power; and to support the mass movement of the people.

The formation of Congress-League Ministries would mean that the communal reactionaries who disturb communal harmony would be defeated. Above all, these joint Ministries would symbolise the national unity of the masses, Moslem and Hindu.

We want the people’s leaders to become the people’s Ministers, *even under the Constitution as it is*, so that they may meet the demands of the people as best they can, as the bureaucracy is not able to do; so that they may organise civil defence where none exists; so that they may help the development of the mass movement, which is at present ruthlessly suppressed, by extend-

ing civil liberties and democratic rights and releasing patriots for freedom’s war.

We differ from those who say we must be free first before we fight freedom’s war. Similarly, we differ from those who say, “National Government first, and then the Ministries.” *The people’s strategy which our Party suggests comes from faith in the people, faith in the people’s organisations, faith in the people’s leaders.* We advocate immediate resumption of Ministries to develop the popular pressure against the bureaucracy from within the constitution itself. And the great job that needs taking in hand immediately is the organisation of the nation’s war effort.

We Communists opposed the slogan of the National Government in the imperialist stage of the war. Today, during the people’s war, we advocate it as the only way out. Then it would have been a Government to carry out the imperialist aims in an imperialist war; today it will be a Government to carry out the people’s aims in a people’s war. It will be a lever to mobilise our nation for the war effort. It will develop our rich resources to help the defence and the liberation of the people of the world. It will enable the Indian people to tell the people of the world: *“We have brought India into your war because it is our war too. Your cause is ours, make ours yours.”*

Stupendous tasks await a National Government, and their fulfilment would be paving the way for the India of our dreams. It will have to organise the nation’s defence after 200 years of defencelessness under the British Raj. It will have to raise an army of millions more for the defence of India and for defeating Fascism on a world scale. It will put an end to the policy of disarming the people and make them armed soldiers to fight to liberate the world. India’s millions could act as world liberators.

The National Government, aided by all our patriotic organisations, will have to inspire India’s 400 millions to rise to the highest heroism in defence of the country. This means taking the torch of national consciousness to every hearth and home. This mighty effort will see such a flowering of our national culture that India’s poets, painters, educationalists, journalists, actors and all, will come into their own. They will have to educate and inspire our whole people to fight victoriously to win a war that is our own.

India is one of the richest countries in the world in resources.

Under a National Government she will take giant steps forward towards such a development of all her economic resources, the like of which we have never known. Millions of Indian soldiers to be equipped and armed, everything done to clear out the Fascists from the Near and Far East, all aid to China, all aid to the Soviet Union, all aid to every struggling people. This means an unprecedented economic development in our national economy, every productive element doing its best to defend the country and aid the liberation of the whole East, of the whole world.

In the very process of defending ourselves we shall be building our economy, imparting national consciousness to 400 millions of our countrymen, recruiting millions as soldiers and laying the foundations of a People's India.

This people's strategy is the only way out of stalemate. It is a *practical* policy because it is realisable with the existing strength of our nation and it embodies the immediate aims of all our patriotic organisations. It is a truly *national* policy because it is in the interest of the entire nation and its defence. And it is the most revolutionary policy for our national movement because it enables us to take the war of liberation out of the shaking hands of imperialism and place it in the hands of the leaders of our nation.

There is no other policy that does not amount to waiting upon imperialism now and helplessly awaiting the Japs hereafter.

The strategy which our Party advocates is based on what we share in common with all fellow-patriots—ardent love for our country, a flaming faith in the destiny of our nation, undying confidence in our own people. The choice before every Party in India is nothing else—Unite the nation or sulk in slavery.

VII

THE FIGHT TO UNSHACKLE THE WAR EFFORT

What are the slogans of action that enable the people to take the war effort into their own hands? Democratic rights and liberties for the people and a National Government over the country.

Does this mean that we say we will not touch the existing war efforts till democratic liberties and a National Government have been established? *No!* This is an attitude of negation and inaction. Neutrality in the existing war effort is the policy of bargaining, not of struggle. It is the path of those who,

instead of mobilising the people, look to imperialism to change the shape of things for them. This attitude only results in leaving people to the tender mercies of imperialism, in acquiescence in the inadequacy of the present war effort.

Then do we say that our support to the war means supporting the war efforts as they are? *No!* The character of the war has changed but not the character of the war efforts in our country nor of the Government that guides and controls them. The existing Government is foreign and does not enjoy the confidence of any section of the nation. It is guided by the interests of capitalists who do not want the industrialisation of India. It cannot and will not make the war effort national in magnitude and scope. The existing war effort cannot be intensified within their bureaucratic and coercive framework, and is entirely inadequate.

We take a positive attitude towards war efforts because it is our war, and declare that we want to build a real people's war effort. To tolerate the present position is a stab in the back to the peoples of the world, to lose our own country and to await the onslaught of Fascism. *Therefore, we intervene in the existing war efforts and seek to transform them into popular efforts.* We struggle for a positive intervention by the people so as to develop the people's movement and their struggle for democratic rights and liberties.

No other Party except ours adopts this positive attitude. The leadership of the Congress and the Moslem League adopt the attitude of neutrality. To them it is not a people's war, it is Britain's war. They will not support the war till their demands are conceded first—and non-co-operation in war efforts is their method of winning their demands. They rely upon the quandary of imperialism and not upon the strength of the people. This leaves the initiative to imperialism; it does not bring the realisation of India's demands any nearer, but only the danger of Fascist enslavement.

The Communist Party translates its understanding of the character of the war into practice by mobilising our people, who alone matter, who alone can change the shape of things, who alone can win the national demands. This enables us to become, through out people's war policy, the front rank fighters for the two immediate demands of our people—democratic rights and a National Government.

Air Raid Precautions

The danger of air bombardment is growing, but A.R.P. remains run by the rules of red tape and manned by government toadies. The Congress adopts a "sit-on-the-fence" attitude. No non-official organisation can organise A.R.P. independently of the Government. The problem is to see that all non-official effort is integrated with the official A.R.P., and that the existing services are made adequate.

The existing service is a farce, but the sooner we realise that this farce is at the expense of our people the better. To talk of "independent" A.R.P. is nonsense.

We advocate a policy of full co-operation with the official A.R.P. We will go all out to expose its inadequacy and its bureaucratic character. We demand democratic organisation of A.R.P. workers and the need to welcome the democratic initiative and co-operation of the people and their organisations. We will send our members, supporters and sympathisers, to get A.R.P. training. We will take the initiative in forming people's A.R.P. committees in blocks of houses who will co-operate with the Government and carry out their instructions. All our trained A.R.P. comrades will offer their voluntary services to popular organisations in order to get volunteer squads for fire-watching, extinguishing incendiaries, and rendering first aid. We will take the initiative in demanding from the Government proper shelters in each locality.

Home Guards

The Civic Guards are a scandal. They are mere auxiliaries of the police and are used to spy against the people. They have no arms; all they have been taught is to spy and to copy the insolent swagger of the police. In our agitation we take the opportunity to bring home to the people the imminent danger of a Japanese invasion. We say, "Arm the people! We will fight the Fascists." We demand popular Home Guards, a Citizens' Army, organised for the defence of cities and district towns. We demand arms for the Home Guard and military training for citizens.

The Government can neither defend us nor lets us defend ourselves. We need a National Government to defend the nation, to protect our home and hearth.

Recruitment

As for recruitment to the Army, we will go to the recruiting areas and inspire the people with the people's war spirit. We want to increase recruitment to the fighting forces a thousand-fold. We expose the reality that the people are willing to defend the country and fight for freedom, but that the present Government is a hindrance to the creation of a real army because it cannot enthuse the people, because the nation has no confidence in it.

We do not tell the people not to join the army until it is a National Indian Army. That would be refusal to regard the war as our own.

Young men infected with the people's war spirit will go all out to defend their country. We will glorify them as fighters for our freedom. We pledge our word of honour to them to work our hardest and best to see that our national movement realises the gravity of the situation and crowns its efforts by establishing a National Government in our country.

War Fund

Money is necessary in order to finance the war effort, but existing fund collections are made primarily by fleecing the poor. We will strengthen our fight against the system of getting enforced contributions from workers and peasants. Money must be raised by taxing the rich and not by coercing the poor.

We expose the whole imperialist swindle that war can be conducted by voluntary contributions. The Indian people are poor, but not India, whose resources are vast. Develop India's resources. Industrialise the country. But the Indian Government pursues an opposite policy in the interests of the bankers of London. An industrialised India could not only equip and arm her own armies, but save the Near and Far East, sink the Japanese Fascists in the Pacific and bury the German and Italian ones in the Libyan sands.

The existing Government, by thwarting India's industrialisation, even today is staking the fate of the war on the selfish interests of a group of capitalists.

In the sphere of production the Government has succeeded in crippling the Trade Union movement by arresting every Trade Union leader and organiser they could lay hands on. Indian capitalists have so far welcomed this policy as enabling

them to harvest war profits without let or hindrance. But in the present grave hour of national emergency, nothing matters except defence of the country, the fight for freedom and the speeding up of production to win the war. This demands the closest national unity.

We warn all those who have in the past placed profit before the interests of the nation that they cannot, for long, make the working class bow to their will by taking advantage of the Government's anti-working-class legislation and the arrest of Trade Union leaders. To do so is to destroy the nation and national unity.

In this hour, when the enemy of the people is knocking at the door and the threat of invasion hangs over our country, we pledge the willing co-operation of the workers on the basis of the following just demands:

- (1) Recognition of Unions and Mill Committees elected by the workers to solve disputes and production problems by means of collective bargaining and co-operation.
- (2) Right of strike must not be curtailed by any Government decree, but the workers themselves are determined to use that right with special care in this emergency.
- (3) Mills and factories must not be allowed to lie idle. Profit considerations of individual owners must not be allowed to stand in the way of the nation's interest.
- (4) A 25 per cent. increase in the basic wage. Cancellation of all wage-cuts. The "dearness allowance" to correctly correspond to the rise in cost of living. No increase of length of shift, but an increased number of shifts wherever possible. No change in methods of work without consultation with the workers.

* * * * *

Our fight is to unshackle the war effort. Our effort is to take the grave issues raised by the people's war to our people and to mobilise them through our practical activity behind the political demands of the nation—democratic rights and a National Government.

Our attitude is determined by one sole consideration—it is our war. Imperialist autocracy will not create the conditions necessary for winning it. The people have to be moved into action to change existing conditions. We do not wait for imperialism to change; that would be to wait at our own peril,

to see the Japs coming nearer, awaiting the collapse of autocracy over our own heads.

Our practical activity enables us to serve our people best, protect them as best we can, mobilise them to defend the country, raise the people's movement so that the nation's war effort comes into the hands of the nation's leaders.

VIII PARTIES AND POLITICS

Today Britain's war is our war.

In such a historic situation, no new policy has come from our national movement, but blind drift. One section of the national leadership presents the humiliating spectacle of plaintive pleading to the British Government to release us *if* it is Freedom's war; another proclaims the creed of helplessness—it is a people's war for all other people, but not for India because we are not free. *The initiative remains with imperialism and our nation is paralysed.*

But it *is* our war because the partisans are no longer just rival imperialists, but the peoples of the world, headed by the Soviet Union versus world imperialism; it *is* our war because the aim of the people is our own aim—liberation. We have to go into this war to end our own enslavement. This is the path of the Indian revolution.

Our Party sees who is the main enemy, who are the main Allies, what is the direction of the movement. It is natural enough that the Party of the proletariat is the FIRST to take the initiative to place before the people a people's policy. This is what the Chinese Communists did when the Japanese invaded their great country. The Spanish Communists won deathless glory this way. We Indian Communists are working for one aim: to see the people's policy become the policy of the entire national movement, to unite the nation behind it, to get the nation to take the war into its own hands.

Our national movement is passing through the throes of crisis, every political party is being forced to take stock of the new world situation and to re-orientate its policy. Breathless events are making mince-meat of the forecasts of so-called experts, of all the old-world ideas. It is becoming more and more patent that to stick to the slogans of the past is to deny the present and to blast the future.

Gandhism

Gandhism is the path of negation. This creed which has dominated the national leadership in the past, fails now to answer their needs. It has become the ideology of blank negation which satisfies the ethical needs of Gandhi and his immediate followers, but fails to offer an explanation of changing reality or to suggest a satisfactory way out for the nation. All wars are unjust, it says, so we will keep out of this.

In the early imperialist phase of the war Gandhi was prepared to take sides and to give his blessing to the British Government if it would make up with the Congress. With the Soviet entry into the war, Gandhi becomes more adamant; he wants to stick to "non-violence" unalloyed; he tars the Soviet with the same brush as he does German Fascism. Now he will not deviate from the "Inner Truth" even if the Japs are knocking at the door.

But the national movement as a whole never subscribed to Gandhism as an ideology. Under his leadership the policy of passive resistance only produced a national stalemate. When, after fifteen months of epoch-making changes, the Working Committee of the Congress met (December, 1941), Gandhi pleaded that whatever else might have changed, the Congress should not under any circumstances change its policy, but should stick to symbolic passive resistance. *The whole world has changed—but the political line that emanates from Gandhi is: No Change.*

The outlook of negation, the policy of passivity and the practice of subservience—this is Gandhism today. A titanic revolutionary struggle is on and our own fate hangs by it as much as the fate of the rest of humanity, and Gandhi takes the attitude of neutrality towards it.

Congress Leadership

After the Working Committee meeting in December, the more democratic section of the leadership represented by Nehru and Azad emerged politically dominant. They see the anti-Fascist war as the war of India's own defence which can be assured only by a National Government. But the Congress has still only taken a half-way house position. It has adopted a programme of marking time. *Despite the heroic phrases of Nehru,*

it amounts to sitting on the fence. There has been a shift, no doubt, but a shift within the vicious circle of stalemate. On the one hand, the national leadership still waits for imperialism to make the first move; on the other, it refuses even to think of mobilising the people.

Internationally the Congress leadership has changed its policy from symbolic opposition to imperialist rule in India to symbolic sympathy for the peoples of the world. The war remains the same old war with only its geographical extension into a world conflict. It was the war of others before, it remains the war of others now. Thus the Congress attitude becomes one of dependence upon imperialism. But the independence of India demands that we take an *independent* stand as a nation towards an international event such as this war; is it a just war, an imperialist war, or a people's war? Having decided that question, we must see how national aims are affected.

But the national leadership of the Congress adopts a policy of "Wait and Watch." "The key for unlocking the door rests with the British Government" (Gandhi). . . . "Unless there is a change of attitude of the British Government, there can be no change in the attitude of Congress" (Nehru). They see the changing world but offer no changed policy for the nation. They leave the movement where it was—in the position of stalemate, instead of leading it forward. They proclaim India's helplessness, when the need is for India's action. They wait upon events when we can change events.

Across our borders the Fascist invader threatens, but the leadership sits helplessly with its back to the people after offering a gesture of symbolic sympathy to the peoples of the world.

Moslem League

It would be wrong and unrealistic to dismiss the Moslem League as a "reactionary, communal organisation." It exercises influence over a large section of the Moslem population. Nor is the Moslem League alone responsible for the lack of communal unity. The policy of the Congress leadership also has some responsibility. *Agreement between the Congress and the Moslem League has in the past been looked upon as a "share-out" of the loaves and fishes; it has not been looked upon as a joint front for a common mass struggle.* The people yearn for this unity, the leadership of both organisations have suc-

ceeded in preventing it in different ways and have adopted the path of competitive bargaining with imperialists.

The progressive elements in both Congress and Moslem League have begun turning their backs upon the past and thinking of the future. Just as Congressmen are getting fed up with the Gandhist negation and are seeing that non-violence is just another name for do-nothing, so have the Moslem Leaguers begun to see that Mr. Jinnah's dreamland of Pakistan (separate Moslem states) leads nowhere except to stalemate and sitting tight.

How great is the new urge towards unity is seen from the daily press, which contains feelers from both sides towards a new path of negotiations. In the localities Congress-Moslem League unity is already growing for the limited purpose of the protection of the people. *We struggle now to see it transformed into a nation-wide political unity for the victory of the people.* We suggest that the Congress should boldly concede the sectional demands of the Moslem League, such as representation at the Centre, Joint Ministries, etc. Such a gesture of unity, when made by the Congress, would not be a surrender to the separationists, but brother conciliating brother in the effort to come together to defend and liberate our motherland. Times are no more what they were. This is common knowledge. The future is dark and uncertain. This is what all fear. The future will be what we make it through our joint efforts in the present. The situation is ripe, rushing events cry for unity. To drift is to sink, to let the worst elements come to the top. To remain divided is to fall under the Jap heel and to remain enslaved.

A Congress-Moslem League will mark a turning point in our history. Our country will witness such an upsurge of national unity as will make the memorable days of 1919-1922 look pale by contrast. *The joint struggle in the people's war will open the path for lasting unity based on equality and self-determination of all the people who inhabit our great land.*

The People's Fighting Forces

The organisations of the workers and peasants and the students have always adopted and worked out policies in advance of the Congress. These organisations have suffered worse under the repressive legislation of the Government, but it is now they

who are swinging into line behind the new national policy for the people's war.

The All-India Students' Federation, amidst scenes of tempestuous enthusiasm, passed the resolution on the People's War by 534 votes to 9 at its Patna sessions (December, 1941).

The Executive of the All-Indian Kisan Sabha at its Nagpur Session (February, 1942) has also adopted the policy of the People's War, and it is reported that the imprisoned leaders of the movement wholeheartedly agree with this resolution. The resolution reads:

"The entry of the Soviet Union into the war has substantially changed the significance of the war for all peoples of the world. . . . War, like peace, is indivisible and no artificial distinction can be drawn between the wars of Russia, China and the Allies who fight together on a world front. The Council, therefore, has no hesitation in calling upon the Peasants to align themselves on the side of the Allies in waging a relentless war for the final extermination of Fascism."

The Executive of the T.U.C. has not yet re-orientated itself to the new situation, but many unions have adopted the People's War policy; and in Bombay, despite the savage repression against their Communist leadership, the workers astounded the city when they rallied 20,000 strong to the Soviet Penny Fund demonstrations.

In the present war a decisive role will be played by the workers, peasants and students. The Indian worker, who has as yet only known how to produce for the profiteer, will rise to his full height, realising that he is producing goods for the war of his people. The calm countryside of our land will burst with creative energy when the peasant elder and his household realises that on his toil depends the feeding of our whole people. The students, from being frustrated and unemployed, will eagerly face the stupendous task of educating and inspiring the nation and emulating the example of their Chinese brothers.

True to the revolutionary role which they have always played in our national life, these forces of progress are today discharging the function of the vanguard of the national forces by placing before the nation the policy of the People's War. *It is, however, still the Congress which remains the main army of the national movement. The Congress is orientating itself,*

but very slowly, to the new situation. The Congress is the organised embodiment of India's will to freedom; the day it goes all-out to forge the new might of our national unity, that day a new chapter will open in India's history—the period of all-in national unity and of all-out people's mobilisation.

Parties of the "Left"

During the first two years of the war, when the task was to organise the people for struggle, the various parties of the "Left" collapsed as political forces. The only consistent thread of their policies has been their struggle against the Communists, who have been in the thick of every mass struggle that has taken place.

Roy began by mobilising all the anti-nationalist elements into the "National Democratic Union," with the object of forming Coalition Ministries to support the Governors. He failed miserably everywhere and only succeeded in winning the contempt of all nationalists. Today, when progressives throughout the country want the Congress to take over the administration, the followers of Roy instinctively feel that their days are numbered. *They run a frantic campaign of appeal to the British Government not to let the Congress come back into office. The burden of their argument is that Congress must be punished for its past sins.*

Roy shouts about the people's war, about the Soviet Union and anti-Fascism, but only as a cover to his policy of disruption on the national and labour fronts. Like all renegades, Roy is an adept at using revolutionary phrases in order to confuse and divide the people.

The Congress Socialist Party supports the negative pacifism of Gandhi. To them the war is still an imperialist war. They claim that the Communists have surrendered to imperialism. Just at the moment when wide sections of the Congress see the futility of passive resistance, the Congress Socialist Party want it continued. Their idea of a struggle for independence lies in support for symbolic "civil disobedience." The fact that the only Socialist power in the world, the U.S.S.R., is a partizan in the war changes nothing in the character of the war to these so-called "Socialists."

Of the Forward Bloc policy it is very difficult to make any sense. It has no consistent policy at all; whatever policy

it has goes to mark it out as a pro-Fascist faction inside our national movement. Their leader was Subhas Bose, who at different times of his career has shown his undisguised Fascist sympathies.

Short-cut to glory was Subhas Bose's political creed. With unprincipled opportunism he has marched from fiasco to fiasco. In the name of democracy he split the Congress; in the name of "national struggle" he split the Left and sabotaged the mass struggle of the people. He failed in all his moves; the Right wing will not have him; the Left wing turned him down; British imperialism did not listen to him. Fascism is the last door left for him to tap upon.

Anti-Fascist propaganda is missing from the Forward Bloc's policies, even when Fascism is at our door. Instead of rousing the people to the menace, their legal press carries on defeatist propaganda, analysing the Allied defeats in the Pacific in such a way as to suggest that the Japanese invasion of India is inevitable and inviting the people to "prepare for the worst." This only spreads panic and undermines morale; indirectly it paves the way for the Fascist invader. What kind of patriotism is this, that does not call upon the people to resist invasion? Or is it that these people nurse the illusion that Fascism is coming as a liberator of our people?

There would be no wonder if the inner ring of the Forward Bloc, ex-terrorists, held the view that the only way to win independence is by an alliance with Fascism. They have never drawn strength from the organised masses; they do not rely upon the people's movement to win liberation; conspiracy is their traditional short-cut to freedom. The world in which they live is not a world of people's struggle versus world imperialism. They see the Fascist camp as a camp of Britain's enemies and therefore their allies.

IX

THE SUPREME ISSUE

The people's war opens a straight and simple path for the Indian revolution! Our destiny, along with that of the rest of the human race, is being decided in this war. Through it we fight to defend all we hold dear and to win all that we desire.

But this war is not in our hands; it is in the hands of our imperialist masters. This is how our national subjection

expresses itself today. The struggle to take the war in our hands is today the path of the struggle for our own liberation. One single step—the winning of a National Government and democratic liberties—would end the era of our enslavement and open the path for the free and independent development of our country.

This is the issue before every Indian patriot and the task of the moment before our national movement.

Must our people undergo the agony of Fascist enslavement after the miseries of 180 years of British rule? Or can the patriotic sons and daughters of India rise equal to the occasion and transform the war which is being lost by imperialism into a war being victoriously conducted by the Indian people? The answer has to be given today; on that depends our future.

The National Congress speaks for national India. It has proclaimed its opposition to Fascism and its sympathy with the peoples of the world. These are welcome moves, but they by no means constitute an adequate lead to the nation, for the policy of the Congress is still based upon the assumption that this is a war of others, and not our war. They reduce our patriots to the role of onlookers rather than call upon them to become fighters for world freedom. This is awaiting our fate, not forging our future.

It is a grave hour in the life of our nation. Today differences of the past do not matter; Party labels do not matter. What matters is how to unite and take the war into our own hands.

We appeal to all parties and to all patriots who stand for the freedom of India—

UNITE TO TAKE THE PEOPLE'S WAR INTO THE PEOPLE'S HANDS.

UNITE TO FIGHT FOR THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT AND DEMOCRATIC LIBERTIES.

UNITE TO PROTECT THE PEOPLE.

UNITE TO DEFEND OUR BELOVED COUNTRY.

UNITE TO WIN THE PEOPLE'S WAR AND INDIA'S FREEDOM.

Marching events have brought the war to our doors. Ever larger numbers of our people are realising that there are only two alternatives: Death and destruction under Fascism, or Defence of our country and Victory for our cause. The decision does not rest with imperialism. We alone can turn the scale

and save our country. The people's war is the just war of our national liberation.

The Indian people are unconquerable. The national movement can mobilise India's 400 millions to halt the Fascist invaders. Imperialism has kept us defenceless and unarmed for centuries and our material resources undeveloped. This is the tale of the past. The future rests with our youth, who will see to it that the Fascists are blown off our ancient land.

The Indian people are not alone. In this war the peoples of the world stand as one, knit together in one single front. The strength of one is the strength of all. The people's camp is blessed with an incomparable leader in the great U.S.S.R., its mighty Red Army, its wise Soviet Government, and its leader, Stalin. Never before in human history has any struggling people, any enslaved nation, had such powerful support guaranteed to it.

Not Fascism, but the people will emerge victorious out of this war. This is the guarantee of India's liberation. *India's patriots have the supreme honour not only to mobilise our people for the war of liberation for themselves, but for a war of world liberation; not only to shape our own destiny, but to shape the destiny of the whole world.*

Coming generations will envy the glory that is ours today as fighters for world freedom.

But the immediate situation is threatening. The events of the war have posed two sharp alternatives: Will India go down in the Malayan way before the rushing tide of Fascism? Or will India rally the people to fight Fascism to death in the Chinese way? This is the great responsibility that rests on every political organisation today.

With undying faith in the historic mission of our ancient nation, with full confidence in the patriotic instincts of our great people, our Party dedicates all its efforts to work for the unity of the nation, for the mobilisation of the masses, for the victory of the people.

Today we Communists are moved by one single desire—to prevent the tragedy of Malaya befalling our country, to enact the glory of China in our own land.

LET US UNITE! THAT IS OUR CALL TO OUR COUNTRYMEN.

WE WILL WIN! THAT IS OUR FIRM CONVICTION.