

VI. NATIONAL DEMOCRACY AND NON-CAPITALIST PATH

The ruling class in India has placed the country on the road of independent capitalist development and continued its compromise with imperialism and feudalism. It has shown itself incapable of solving the basic problems of national regeneration, of completing the essential tasks of the national-democratic revolution.

Their own painful experience has convinced the vast masses of our country that the capitalist path is the road of poverty, exploitation and slow rates of growth. Living in an epoch when socialism has immensely increased its power of attraction, they feel that a path other than the capitalist path must be found for the solution of the problems of national development and the people's welfare.

At the same time the Indian monopolists, the feudalists and semi-feudalists, backed by imperialism, are seeking to use the inherent contradictions of the capitalist path to subvert the

nation, to stage a counter-revolution and convert India into a neo-colony.

At such a critical moment the Communist Party of India places before the people precisely an alternative form of state-power and qualitatively different pattern of economic growth—the national-democratic state and the non-capitalist path. The CPI holds that the capitalist state and its path have to be removed from the Indian scene by the national-democratic revolutionary movement of all the patriotic, democratic classes of the country. It holds that the right reactionary plans to subvert the nation have to be smashed. This dual task merges in a single revolutionary process. Only then can the tasks of national rebirth be fulfilled and the conditions created for the transition to socialism.

The CPI is convinced that India's future lies with socialism, i.e., an economy where social and cooperative ownership of the means of production replaces all forms of private property and where the state power is in the hands of the workers, toiling peasants and urban petty-bourgeoisie, led by the working class. The problem is not the projection of this goal. Lenin long ago pointed out that the most important problem confronting serious revolutionaries is the one of transition to socialism. What transitional programme, state power and strategic slogans will rally all the possible class forces that can be rallied, achieve the maximum possible isolation of the enemy and achieve the maximum possible unity of the masses—that precisely is the problem.

After deep research, prolonged discussion and exchange of experience with other contingents of the international communist movement, the CPI has come to the conclusion that the most appropriate transitional form in India will be the state of national democracy and the non-capitalist path. Theoretical analysis and practical experience have proved that while the national bourgeoisie cannot fulfil the cardinal tasks of the anti-imperialist, anti-feudal democratic revolution, the non-monopoly sections of the national bourgeoisie have still an important role to play in the accomplishment of these tasks. Its anti-imperialist anti-feudal, democratic potential has not yet been exhausted.

It is because of this fact that the non-monopoly national bourgeoisie in India through its political representatives, especially Pandit Nehru, retained a very large mass following among all sections of the Indian people. This mass following is deeply interested in the completion of the anti-imperialist, anti-feudal, democratic revolution. It has to be united to accomplish the national democratic revolution and brought into the national-democratic front.

At the same time the non-monopoly national bourgeoisie is a class with a dual character. It has an inherent inclination to compromise with imperialism and feudalism. It has not yet broken, either politically or economically, with its monopoly sections. It pursues together with them anti-people policies. Its aim is yet to build an independent, capitalist India and not a national-democratic non-capitalist India. It is opposed to the revolutionisation of the masses.

Hence, the CPI advocates a dual policy towards the non-monopoly national bourgeoisie—of unity as well as struggle. Only by the pursuit of dual policy can it be brought into the national democratic front. Only such a dual policy will impel the masses under its leadership to firmly unite with the masses under the leadership of the CPI and other forces of the democratic opposition. A correct understanding of the dual position as well as the immense mass influence of the non-monopoly national bourgeoisie in India alone will enable the CPI to correctly work out the strategy and tactics of the national democratic revolution in the specific conditions of our country.

To carry out this revolution an essential prerequisite is to build the national-democratic front. The Programme gives clear and concrete guidance on how this is to be done. It is quite evident that it is the working class that will have to take up this task and initiate the process. This is its inescapable historic responsibility. No other class, certainly not the non-monopoly national bourgeoisie, can or will shoulder this responsibility.

In class terms the national-democratic front must have as its pivot worker-peasant unity. The entire peasantry, from the rich peasantry to the agricultural labourers, must be brought into the ambit of this front. The strength and striking power

of the worker-peasant alliance will, to a large measure, determine the extent to which and the period in which the non-monopoly national bourgeoisie also becomes a component part and builder of this front. The urban middle strata and the intelligentsia are another extremely important segment of this front.

The Programme categorically states that the main driving forces of this front will be precisely the worker-peasant alliance and the urban middle strata, including the intelligentsia. It is the alliance of these three classes that will constitute the heart and core of the national-democratic front and it is mainly their united efforts that will bring it into being.

As the struggles, movements, organisation and striking power of these classes gather momentum the process of differentiation in the national bourgeoisie, for which an objective basis exists, will sharpen. The mass base of the non-monopoly national bourgeoisie made up of these very classes will become increasingly radicalised, compelling it to shift its position and break its present alliance with its monopoly counterparts.

As the isolation of the monopoly bourgeoisie, the landlords and the imperialists increases with the gathering sweep and strength of the national-democratic revolutionary movement, as their anti-national, anti-democratic character becomes increasingly revealed, the split in the Indian bourgeoisie will be accomplished. The non-monopoly national bourgeoisie will make a decisive turn to the national-democratic front and help the process of its consolidation and growth.

Various forms of mass struggle for the economic demands of the workers, peasants and urban middle strata will play a vital role in the ideological-political awakening of these classes as well as in the strengthening of their organisations. Sweeping national mass movements for the realisation of the alternative programme of the non-capitalist path are essential for the bringing into being of the national-democratic front. These struggles, these national mass movements, combined with parliamentary forms of struggle, are aimed at defeating and isolating the enemies of the national-democratic revolution—the monopoly bourgeoisie, the imperialists and the landlords. It is aimed at

bringing about radical changes in the policies and set-up of the government.

The culmination of this struggle and mass movement will be a qualitative, revolutionary leap in which the present state power of the exclusive rule of the entire bourgeoisie will be ended. At the crest of the revolutionary struggle a new, national-democratic state power will take its place. This new state power will be a bloc of the working class, the entire peasantry, the urban middle strata and the non-monopoly national bourgeoisie. In this class alliance the exclusive leadership of the working class is not yet established, though the exclusive leadership of the bourgeoisie no longer exists.

This perspective of the sharing of leadership, as well as of power, between the working class and the non-monopoly sections of the national bourgeoisie is a specific aspect of the concept of national democracy as applied to Indian conditions. It demarcates this concept from the older concept of people's democracy, in which the same four-class coalition is led by the working class alone, found suitable for China and the first phase of revolution in Eastern Europe and previously accepted by the CPI as its goal also. Deeper study of the specific conditions in India as well of the new epoch in which the Indian national-democratic revolution proceeds led the Party to make a re-evaluation of the present role and future potential of the non-monopoly national bourgeoisie.

It came to the conclusion that although it is a part of the ruling class and although it continues to compromise with imperialism and feudalism, it is still objectively interested in the accomplishment of the principal tasks of the anti-imperialist, anti-feudal democratic revolution. Moreover, in the new epoch, with the increasing superiority of the forces of world socialism and anti-imperialism, the non-monopoly national bourgeoisie has greater objective possibilities of withstanding reactionary and imperialist pressures and blandishments, has greater objective possibilities of shifting towards the national-democratic front, under the pressure of the revolutionary movement. Finally, as noted earlier, the CPI took into account the fact that the Indian non-monopoly national bourgeoisie has a far

stronger economic, political influence and experience than the patriotic sections of the bourgeoisie of China or the anti-fascist sections of the bourgeoisie in Eastern Europe during the period of the national-democratic revolutions in those countries.

Thus, the CPI came to the two-fold conclusion: under the leadership of the non-monopoly national bourgeoisie the national-democratic revolution cannot be completed. At the same time, even before the exclusive leadership of the working class is established, even while the non-monopoly national bourgeoisie shares leadership, the tasks of this revolution can be fulfilled.

At the same time, the Programme outlines the perspective of the development of the national-democratic stage of the revolution. It points out that this is a transitional stage i.e., creating the conditions for the transition to socialism. In the course of implementing the national-democratic non-capitalist programme, the balance of forces within the national-democratic state will continuously shift in favour of the working class and the worker-peasant alliance, paving the way for the exclusive leadership of the working class in this state. As it is based on the worker-peasant alliance and as the working class is the conscious initiator and builder of the national-democratic front, it will increasingly come to occupy the leading position in the alliance.

Such is the complete, realistic and revolutionary strategic perspective that the CPI Programme places before our people. It is necessary, however, to concretise the class relationships sketched out in terms of their present-day political articulation. In other words, it is not enough merely to state the classes who will unite to form the national-democratic front. The Programme has to—and does—go further to state its position with regard to the existing political parties and their possible attitude to this front.

The Party of the working class, the CPI, will have to initiate and play the most conscious role in building this front. Its strategic, revolutionary duty is precisely the fulfilment of this task, which it has to bear in mind through all the ups and downs in the multifarious activities that it has to undertake. The progressive and socialist elements and forces in the different parties of the left democratic opposition represent the

petty bourgeoisie, the peasantry and even the non-monopoly national bourgeoisie. Sections of the leadership of these parties are anti-communist and often opportunistically ally with right reaction. They have to be combated and the prejudices and opportunism they spread have to be patiently overcome. At the same time, the CPI can spare no effort to draw these elements, groups and parties into the front.

The monopolists, imperialists and landlords also have their political parties who unabashedly and consciously fight to stage a counter-revolution in India. These are the parties of right reaction, both of an all-India as well as local character. They are the Swatantra, Jana Sangh, Akali, Muslim League, DMK, RSS and Jamait Islami. These are the parties and organisations who are the most vicious anti-communist and anti-national enemies of India's national-democratic revolution.

They have to be mercilessly fought and the masses under their influence have to be weaned away. Their demagogy and their playing upon the prejudices of the masses have to be relentlessly exposed. Those anxious to build the national-democratic front can have no truck with these parties and organisations.

The Congress is a party with a dual character. In its leadership at different levels the right reactionary forces of monopolists and landlords are strongly entrenched. At the same time the non-monopoly national bourgeoisie as well as petty bourgeoisie are also prominently present at all levels. Moreover, as the party that led the struggle for freedom as well as took measures to consolidate independence, under Pandit Nehru's leadership, it has an extensive mass base of all social classes—a far bigger mass base than any other political party in India.

Unless the division between the masses following the Congress and those following the parties of the left democratic opposition—the biggest division in the democratic forces—is overcome no national-democratic front can be built in India. This division cannot be overcome if the CPI, the initiator and builder of the national-democratic front, does not adopt a proper policy towards the different sections in the Congress. The national-democratic front cannot be formed through a merger

with the Congress or entering into a formal alliance with it. This would be to overlook the fact that the right reactionary enemies of this front are strongly entrenched in the Congress and that the non-monopoly national bourgeoisie is itself a class with a dual approach to this front.

The building of this front has to proceed through struggle against the right in the Congress with equal determination as against the right outside it. The building of this front has also to proceed by taking note of the process of formation of progressive trends in the Congress and by making ceaseless efforts to forge unity with all representatives of these trends. Such unity has to be built through a direct approach, common mass movements and convergent struggles. It has to be built through struggles to smash right reaction, bring about a shift to the left in government policies as well as for the alternative national-democratic programme.

The building of this front has, further, to proceed by isolating the right in the Congress by a policy of sharpening the objective differences between the representatives of the monopoly and non-monopoly sections of the national bourgeoisie, i.e., by not only struggling against but also uniting with the latter. Its compromises with the right and its anti-people policies have to be fought. Its stand against imperialism, its opposition to the right attempt to subvert nationally-accepted progressive policies have to be supported.

Such is the complex, dialectical process by which the national-democratic front will be built and the national-democratic revolution brought to success. Onesided stressing of any particular aspect will only damage this strategic perspective.