

COMMUNIST

REPLY

to

**CONGRESS
WORKING
COMMITTEE'S
CHARGES**

by

P. C. JOSHI

Part Two

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PEOPLE'S PUBLISHING HOUSE
Bombay

Re. 1

PUBLISHER'S NOTE

This book is being published in two parts. Part I includes the charge-sheet against the Communist members of the AICC and the report of the Sub-Committee of the Congress Working Committee on the charges. It also includes the first part of the reply that deals with the events from 1939 till June 1945 when the members of the Working Committee were released.

Part II contains the rest of the reply which deals with events from the release of the members of the Working Committee till today.

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XIII. AFTER YOUR RELEASE

WE HAVE WRITTEN OVER AND OVER AGAIN WHAT great hopes we Communists placed in you. We genuinely had great hopes in you despite the fact that we, of all groups in the Congress, had been the most critical of your leadership in the past and suffered from illusions the least because we had seen through the dual lead you had given the country, our fears coming true and our hopes belied.

We had seen Gandhiji, the best and the tallest among you all, who had differed from us even in the immediate past preceding the fateful 8th August Resolution, come through his own experience and through Truth as he himself saw it, on the same path we were advocating as Congressmen and had held best for our country in the given circumstances.

He had repudiated his own and Congress "responsibility" for "struggle" and by implication at least wrote off what had been done in the name of the Congress during the period.

In his very first important public announcement (the interview to Stuart Gelder) he made it clear that he *had no intention* of starting a Civil Disobedience movement in war-time. He had also declared that the second part of the August Resolution stood inoperative. In other words, after his release, having learnt what had happened during his absence in jail, he deleted the last part of the resolution, just the part that we eleven Communist members of the AICC wanted him to delete on that fateful evening of August 8.

He was also moved as deeply as only a man like him can be—by famine among the people and the menace of Jap aggression from without; and this moved him to offer a practical basis for settlement with Britain. He proved by evolving a new formula for an immediate Provisional National Government that his heart was drumming his brain, against the Jap aggressors, for the

welfare of his own people, for the freedom of his own country and for the cause of the United Nations. In other words, the immediate national aim he placed before the country was what we Communists were saying and not what our opponents were preaching all the while in the name of the Congress -for which he alone was authorised by you all to speak.

He had also called Pakistan "a sin" in 1942, but in 1944 in the search of a way out for India and for agreement with the League which he frankly admitted to be "the most representative Muslim organisation" (*Times of India*, April 29, 1944), he accepted the principle of self-determination and offered a concrete formula to meet the League demand half-way.

But though he accepted self-determination in principle, he spent most of his time trying to convince Mr. Jinnah how wrong he was. The result was that Gandhiji only strengthened Mr. Jinnah's worst fears of Hindu domination and convinced him that he, Gandhiji, was no different from any other Hindu leader.

It was Gandhiji's responsibility as the leader of the bigger and major organisation to work out a scheme by which Muslims would be free and sovereign in their own homelands and to specify what he wanted them to do in order that all together would fight for and together defend a free India. In the joint family, that he rightly visualises the real India to be, it was for the elder brother to give the younger his just right and then call for the loyal fulfilment of common obligations. This was the way to win confidence when there was none, re-unite the family when it stands divided and fight the common battle shoulder to shoulder against the common enslaver; this was the way to guarantee victory, with a sense of justice among ourselves and the urge of freedom to be won, keeping *all* inspired and *all* together *all the while*.

The very worst slanders against us had been repeated to him not by one or two but literally by hundreds of those whom he liked and admired for what he knew them to be in the past. Only a few of us had met him a few times, for a short while, and that too strictly on common business. After having heard all that could be said against us and very little of what we had

to say in our own defence he had still come to the conclusion which he conveyed to P. C. Joshi :

"I know your worth. You have very able young men and women, as selfless as I would claim to be. You are all hard working and possess great energy and you impose great discipline on your workers. All this I prize and admire. I would not easily lose such a force because of any pre-conceived notions of mine."

Correspondence between Mahatma Gandhi and P. C. Joshi, p. 19.

This was good enough for us from Gandhiji. He is a man of true *Dharma*, as he understands it. From the little that he had seen of us and in spite of the worst our enemies spoke against us he had come to the conclusion that we were a party of good *Karmis*. And we left it to him to see for himself that without a good *Dharma* to guide and inspire us we could not go on doing *Karma*.

You Lead Backwards

You have been leading the country for twenty-five years and the people know you in your present role as Gandhiji's lieutenants and you are where you are because millions of Congressmen keep you there. We naturally enough thought that on the points facing the country, you will take up the threads where Gandhiji had left them and go forward and not backwards.

We have followed your words and course of action with the utmost seriousness they deserve and come to what to us was a heart-rending conclusion—that you were going back everything new and just, however partial, that he had said.

Our differences with you today arise not because we are Communists and you are not. Our differences with you today as in the past, differences which have grown still more during the war years, have been over the main question facing our people : Which is the shortest and best path for our country's liberation, for the realisation of the proclaimed goal of the Congress, the very goal that brought us inside the Congress ?

Your report deals with the war years and we have confined our reply to them alone, despite the false and inaccurate description in it of Congress-Communist relations in the earlier period.

In the first phase of the war when it was far away from our own borders and the most hated Englishman throughout the progressive world was at the head of the British Government, and the most soulless and dullest Viceroy was its representative in our own country, we pleaded with you and ourselves went on the path of working for immediate nation-wide mass struggle for Indian freedom.

You considered us hasty, inexperienced fanatics who just dream of revolution and therefore talk only of that. You planned your entire political strategy on the false calculation that the greater the danger to Britain, the more the British Government would be willing to concede power and all that you had to do was to sit upon the existing political influence of the Congress and do nothing. You saw Britain in greater and greater danger and heard the same Lintithgow speaking the same and worse words to you. You only became more embittered, the very word "Britain" stank as bad in your nostrils at that time, as the word "people's war" in the next period.

In the second phase of the war, when the threat of Fascist, the worst form of Imperialist, enslavement came on India's own borders you threatened to do what you had not done even in the earlier period; start a mass struggle. You again based your entire strategy on the danger not only to the very existence of Britain but also of India and your own estimate of your strength and influence was that that a "short and swift struggle" would certainly succeed in one leap and instal you and India's other true representatives and leaders in power in Delhi even before the Jap threat matured. You thought that this way you would rally India against Jap aggression, help the liberation of other colonial peoples from Jap yoke, and prevent the restoration of the status quo by the Imperialists in the Allied camp.

You were so certain of leading the country to certain victory both for the overthrow of British domination and Jap aggression that when we pleaded with you *against* mass struggle in the given situation you again felt that we had learnt nothing and remained

the same old lot of young inexperienced fanatics who had got cold feet today and who allowed their blind for the Soviet Union to cloud their vision even towards their first duty towards their own country. You thought we were committing political suicide for the sake of Soviet Russia.

You were arrested and released after three years and one month in jail. We ask you seriously to answer :

Who Was Right, Who Was Wrong ?

Whose words proved true in real life, yours : that you were giving a *practical* and real *revolutionary* lead to the country and that there was no turning back for you and the Congress any more ; or of our Party that alone had the courage to warn you that your lead was just " a political gamble " that was bound to fail ?

If you say your lead was all right but Congressmen in your absence could not carry it out and the morale of the people ultimately was broken by British terror, we would request you not to go down to the level of the Congress Socialists and Forward Blocists who blamed others to cover up their own fatal policies. You are politically and personally the Congress leadership that has been at the helm of the Congress for over twenty-five years ; you talk to the British Government in the great name of the Congress, your lead is taken as the lead for freedom by the majority of Indians because Congress is the symbol of freedom in their eyes and you its accredited leaders.

We ask you : If you were right, why then did you after your release put aside, all your former talk of struggle against the Government and go to Simla ?

We will take not mere *words* but your *own action*.

The very first act of Maulana Azad, the Congress President, was to declare that there will be no mass movement in war-time. In other words, in 1945 he came to the same conclusion to which we alone had come in 1942. He obviously spoke for you all. You came to the same conclusion through the *experience* of humiliation and failure. We had come to the same conclusion through *understanding* and warned you *against* humiliation and

defeat and had suggested to you a course of glory, justice and victory.

If the political leadership of a country can go as radically wrong as you did as to evolve an aim which is national and just, but a course of action that leads the opposite way then the national mind is spontaneously led by stages to a dual code. The divorce between words and practice shocked the people no more, principles ceased to matter, power alone began to count as the decisive factor.

Your dual self-contradictory lead did not lead the country to its goal but every living problem not only remained but became worse, and the ready-made answer to every issue became: Nothing can be done as long as the British are here.

This was the conclusion to which political India had already come in 1920, and it was a great revolutionary step in our national awakening. But imagine the state of national morale if after over twenty years of a growing national movement under your political leadership the dominant concept in the national mind is today the same as two decades earlier. In the 1920's it was a revolutionary *new* concept, the expression of an awakening people's disillusionment with its ruling class. In the 1940's it became a cover for hiding political bankruptcy and practical helplessness. In 1920 it roused the people but in 1940 when the people were already there behind the main patriotic organisations and their demand for the ending of British rule, it leads to turning the people against each other, calling each other British agents and to each striving for a settlement with the British rulers against the other.

In 1920 it was a great and new realisation to see who was the main and real enemy and that there was no hope as long as the Imperialist regime lasted. In 1940 the new task facing the people's leaders in India was how to gather together the patriotic forces of the people for the liquidation of British rule in our land and for getting the reins of power in popular hands.

Way To Achieve Power

It was a testing time for every political leadership and the issues for the successful achievement of power were :

(1) Is its disillusionment with the British ruling class complete and is its faith in the people, its own and the world over undying and the basis of its policy ?

(2) Has its own experience led to considering other freedom-loving people's leaders as brothers and comrades-in-arms for the common struggle or are they regarded as political rivals for power or mistrusted as enemy stooges ?

(3) Is its own sense of justice and freedom such that it can evolve a concrete programme that will unite all popular freedom-loving forces by giving them the image of a free India which will mean the freedom of all, justice to all and happiness for all and kill the fear of domination and danger of oppression ?

Your own mind was stirred by the *new* opportunity for the achievement of freedom but could not tackle any of the *new* tasks. That is why the people repeat in the 40's what you taught them as early as the 20's. The national mind as guided by you has not gone forward but backward.

(1) Overthrow the British to be able to resist the Japs ; this spontaneously became by stages : We cannot overthrow the British, let the Japs come.

Thus frustrated patriotism spontaneously degenerated into defeatism and still passed off as patriotism.

(2) Congress is the only national organisation which by itself can achieve national freedom ; this *spontaneously* became after failure : other organisations came in the way and sabotaged the "Congress struggle for power" and the practical conclusion became that the Congress must crush these "anti-national" organisations before the battle for national liberation can be successfully launched.

Sectarian self-glorification of the Congress spontaneously degenerated into sectarian hatred of our Party and the League.

(3) India cannot be defended as long as the British are here ; this spontaneously became during the famine days : food cannot be had till India is free.

Just as the first opened the gates of the national movement to the pro-Fascist, the second left the economic field free to the traders to become hoarders, to the producers to become black-marketeers.

Patriotic words became a cover for not fighting black-marketing. Frustrated patriotism began to destroy even elementary social conscience.

This is where the national mind went *spontaneously* from the national lead you had left behind. Was it deeper patriotism or decaying social conscience and rousing sectarian passions ?

We have lived through this tragedy, you missed its reality because you were inside the jail.

Your self-contradictory lead of 8th August not only failed in practice but led to all the basic ideas of Indian patriotism turning upside down, it disintegrated the national mind.

(1) Indian patriotism did not remain synonymous with anti-Fascism. One could be a Fascist or pro-Fascist and yet be acclaimed as a patriot.

(2) Championship of national unity began to be regarded as national betrayal. Congress began to claim the monopoly of patriotism.

(3) The concept of people's service for people's living needs as the method of achieving democratic awakening among the masses, and building people's unity against people's enemies right from the bottom of our social ladder, inside our suffering disease-ridden villages and in our starving and needy towns, began to be sneered at as reformism and of no immediate use in the battle for freedom. Freedom's battle and democratic practice were thus divorced, but lip service to the battle for freedom and the anti-social practice of hoarding could go together arm in arm.

Years Of Missed Opportunities

India is not only the biggest and richest colony of its Imperialist masters. Its people have raised the mightiest national movement in the whole colonial world, symbolised in the National Congress. Yet with a 60-year old national movement behind you, in the six most revolutionary years in world history, you, the established and dominant leadership, failed to win liberation for your own country, failed to play your due role in shaping the course of the new world.

They were years of greatest opportunities and greatest dangers for every country. You missed opportunity after opportunity. And now you use the word freedom against every one from whom you differ. Political bankruptcy and intellectual intolerance go together; but they become not only a national but a world calamity when embodied in the leadership of the major political organisation of a great but enslaved country of the colonial world.

It is not as simple a story as Pandit Nehru puts across in speeches. For example: We fought and lost, we will start again. Next time we will win, hands down.

Is it not true that *the same leadership* has been putting across the same explanation each time, after 1920, after 1930, and after 1942 again? You are playing with the people's faith in you and on their deep freedom urge.

Just because we failed India has not stayed where it was but gone back in the realm of ideas. Political frustration has become the breeding ground for the growth of disruptive and chauvinistic ideas which we sketched out above.

It is no accident that in the war years serious political writing over *new issues*, with *new ideas*, offering practical and constructive proposals for the solution of our major problems, has only been done by the leaders of our Party.

No other political group has studied and followed the liberation movements of Europe and the East and reactionary plans of Imperialist ruling circles, for the benefit of and from the standpoint of our own national movement and published both documentary and interpretive studies.

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No other political group has studied with realism and an open mind the internal national problems, specially the problem of Hindu-Muslim relations, of self-determination and of rising nationalities which go into disruptive channels and adopt chauvinistic ideological forms unless studied seriously with a view to understand the new popular awakening that they represent within the fold of our Indian freedom movement.

It is no accident that no other political group gave its mind to studying the changes brought about in our country's national economy in war-time, especially the link-up between official corruption and Indian hoarders; the war-rich profiteers not only becoming the *new* economic leadership over the country's economic life, but poisoning and corrupting political life by becoming the financial patrons of two main popular organisations, the Congress and the League.

It is no accident that in the war years whatever *new* and serious prose and poetry has been written in our different languages has been written by Communist or pro-Communist writers. The muse of others has been dumb.

We had defended you against Imperialist slanders; we never used the Congress name because we had no right to do so in your absence, we served the country as best as we could; we had done practical work and constructive thinking and knew how tough were all the problems and how hard life for the people had become, not a joy to live but a horror to bear.

We expected you to face and tackle problems with new seriousness. Of all the political leaders in the new world you had the least reason to feel self-confident about yourselves, all your calculations had gone wrong. Your lead had proved a failure.

We hoped you would at least start anew, having missed the bus repeatedly in war-time you would at least struggle to catch it at the fag end of the war and guarantee the post-war future of our country being in the hands of the people instead of the foreign imperialists. But our hopes were belied.

The Simla Tragedy

Maulana Azad cleared the decks for you all to go to the Simla Conference by announcing that the Congress had no idea of starting a mass movement in war-time. Lord Wavell in his broadcast had already pleaded that all should "forgive and forget."

The whole country waited with bated breath. Would you succeed in achieving a settlement and take India's fate in Indian hands or would you fail, and thus let the deadlock continue, with the British bureaucrats as the bosses of our land?

You would have won only if you had lived down your earlier illusions and knew where Indian weakness lay—in our disunity.

We alone had no illusions and gave the clearest possible warning. The whole country guided by your own wishful mood, was confident that "settlement at last" *would* come.

You repeated at the Simla Conference the old strategy that you had tried at the time of the Cripps Mission.

You argued that if the British wanted to settle, they would settle with the Congress, for other organisations did not matter, and anyway it was the job of the British Government to make them agree.

In your own estimate, excepting only yourselves, the rest were pro-British.

You were stiff with Cripps, you became softness itself before Wavell. You thought this was enough to bring about the desired settlement. At the time of Cripps you stood up over the veto; this time you were not insistent even on that. You had unconditionally accepted the Wavell Offer in its main outlines. You had agreed to accept the British Viceroy as the "leader" of the Conference.

Despite all this you failed and just for the reasons we alone had forewarned.

You only succeeded in humiliating yourselves and the Congress as it had never been humiliated before.

More, rather than come to an agreement with the Muslim League, your brother party, the second important organisation after your own, you committed the crime of wanting to use the

representative of British power against the claims of your brother.

Lord Wavell, after having outmanoeuvred you and successfully exposed Indian disunity to the whole world, talked the language of the pious, took all the blame on himself and bade you good bye.

You talked loudly that whenever British power really wants to settle, it must settle with *Indian Power*—which is really embodied in the Congress. Yet in fact your sectarian hatred of the other organisations of our people only led you to hope that imperialism would help you to crush them—not a 'revolutionary' idea, but one that arose out of your own illusions about imperialism.

It seemed to us to be a crazy strategy that the main political organisation of our country, without taking the responsibility of acting the national unifier, wanted to deal with the representative of British power and hoped for success.

It was neither good sense nor good patriotism. It was sectarian pride and power-politics.

We are not defending Mr. Jinnah. We have criticised and condemned his own role at the Conference in our Press and in our speeches, as sharply as we have criticised yours.

We are here only dealing with *your* policy, *your* role, *your* calculations. You wanted to act the head of a common family without wanting an equal brotherly deal among yourselves. You had forgotten the simple generosity of our common people, their inherent sense of justice, even their simple fables like that of the two quarrelling cats and the monkey.

Your calculations had nothing to do with reality, your strategy was sectarian and disruptive, unworthy of the oldest leaders of our suffering and enslaved people. Your political blindness brought humiliation on you, increased Congress-League conflict, and intensified the sense of frustration that hung like black clouds over our country and which is visible in the depressed mood and scattered brain of our countrymen today.

The only lesson you learnt out of the Simla Conference seems to have been that you must "crush all opposition" before you meet the British representatives next in the constitution-

making body. It became for you the next job on hand because the British Government had announced the elections.

Imperialist Strategy

The British Imperial strategy was clear enough. And if we may put it in their own likely words :

“The Indian parties and leaders are divided and they are never likely to agree among themselves. Let them go to the people, divide their own people more and more, come back feeling more self-confident of themselves and much more bitter against each other. Then there will be still less chances of their listening to each other, but all will be more willing to listen to us for the final deal and we will be able to impose a just settlement which all will accept or acquiesce in as being the ‘best under the circumstances’. All will be more agreeable to our staying on because someone has to see that the settlement works, and *besides* we have our own interests to protect.”

This is the way in which they hope to deal with the prospect of ‘Quit India’.

You act in great hurry, you had to win the elections, to plan it and you do not give any time to get an idea of what happened in your absence. You function in a manner unworthy of your responsible position. You have no time for those Congressmen who did not agree with you, ourselves first. You give your ears to those Congressmen who tell you what you like to hear, a glorified picture of the period in your absence, who express their own loyalty to you, have ready-made plans to “crush opposition” that came in the way of the Congress (i.e. themselves) in your absence.

At Simla India's leaders acted as the feudal chiefs used to do when they were called all together to the Grand Moghul's Durbar. Your post-Simla consultations were the same feudal chiefs holding similar court in their own domains. It reads medieval but our country has remained medieval in several ways.

Our national movement has risen so that our country may become modern but the way you lead it makes it more distant.

Leaders of our country can become successful leaders of our ancient peoples only if they study modern problems in a modern way, seriously and objectively, without any pre-conceived notions, hearing all sides equally, in fact just the way in which you do not function today and of which your report on us and treatment of us is one of the numerous examples. It is easy enough to understand that when love of the people for their leaders leads to the leaders' love for their own wisdom, they become chiefs of factions, who think they are wise but act unwisely.

This way only leads to resisting new ideas and not assimilating them, disrupting and not building the organisations, dividing and not uniting our people, marching our people against each other but not to their common goal.

At The Bombay A. I. C. C.

It was after such consultations that you held the AICC and unfolded your plan. It was no new plan at all, beyond what had already been discussed and adopted in the Congressmen's Assemblies earlier. Thus the top leaders were not leading but themselves echoing the voice and sentiments of a faction that had made itself dominant in their absence.

The A.I.C.C. under your leadership did not give any new nor even any positive lead to the country. All its slogans were negative, i.e. anti-League and anti-Communist. In the earlier Provincial Assemblies the message for Congressmen was that they must do constructive work, this time from the AICC, it was that the elections must be won. For the elections too the main slogan was what it has always been : A vote for the Congress is a vote for Freedom. The job of Congressmen was to guarantee victory to the Congress and rout "anti-Congress" elements, particularly the League and our Party.

Your subsequent speeches have elaborated still more clearly how the League and the Communists have always come in your way, and every one of you has asked the people for a blank

cheque, promising them freedom and sometimes a bit of socialism too.

We have never felt unhappier than in this AICC not only over your thunder against us, which you always did, but because the Congress under your leadership was going back upon its own democratic and progressive past.

It was perhaps the only AICC we have attended, and we have been its members for some years, in which there was no international resolution. We heard Pandit Nehru warming up only against the League and our Party. Obviously the new world was not yet clear enough in his own head, he only saw some of his own countrymen whom he had to fight immediately.

In one of the resolutions, "The Struggle of 1942 and After," there is a paragraph reiterating the "international and national objectives" of the August Resolution. Yet the end of the war is seen as having only left Imperialist rivalries behind. It is for the first time that the USSR has not existed even in such a para of the AICC resolution. The new Europe does not seem to have been born at all. And there is not one word on Japan. All these are no accidents.

The unwritten but widely spoken words of some of you at the top and more so those in the lower ranks are that Pandit Nehru's international policy was all words and it had not worked at all. "Today," they argue, "everything is Imperialist power-politics. Why should India show its hand? Let us get freedom first in any way we can. Without alliance with a foreign power, no country has been free. Let us see what the British will give us. In any case the third World War is coming; let us wait and see which countries are against Britain."

That is why there is no mention of the Soviet Union in the resolution of greetings. "After all," the argument goes, "what is gained by annoying the British through expressing solidarity with the USSR? All it will do is to come in the way of an immediate settlement with them while they may agree to give us some sort of freedom if they can be confident of our lining up with them in the coming war which will be against the U. S. R. which is grabbing Europe and strengthening itself at the cost of Britain."

That is also why there is no mention of Japan, not even of its defeat.

"Perhaps," the argument goes this time, "the old rulers may come back into power. And how can one know today which side Japan will be in the next war? Last time it even had come as far as our borders."

In the last AICC Pandit Nehru and Maulana Azad had concentrated the whole fire against Japan, against the threat of Fascist enslavement and had glorified the vision of India playing a role in resisting them and creating a new democratic order.

This time some openly Fascist speeches were made and loudly acclaimed. Pandit Nehru did not get angry as he normally does when he finds something anti-Congress being said, and even Maulana Azad who was presiding, did not intervene.

It is no accident that in this AICC we were being asked to quit but Syt. Sarat Bose, who was still an expelled member of the Congress, was openly welcomed on the rostrum itself and without a word of explanation.

The world picture as it emerged from the AICC proceedings was that now it was country versus country, some small struggling to be free and each having a big power behind, while others were big powers who were grabbing other countries.

The other world picture came to our mind of the AICC meetings before 1942 when it used to be a picture of the people versus world Imperialism, the Indian people together with the peoples in every part of the world, all as parts of one camp with the USSR in it and also China.

We saw the past declarations of the Congress being buried, present unclear to some and very wrong in the minds of others. We saw those that were experts at the game of power-politics within the Congress triumphant in the Congress and eager to play the same role on the world front for the "sake of Indian freedom."

Progressive democrats within the Congress were silent. Progressives openly vociferous.

Your Anti-League Policy

The AICC resolution neither accepts nor rejects self-determination. This "neither nor policy" is all through, neither Imperialist war nor people's war, responsibility for struggle neither accepted nor rejected. It expresses lack of any consistent policy and leads to the practice of unprincipled power-politics.

Gandhiji had come up to the stage of accepting the principle of self-determination. Sections of Congressmen were prepared to go that far. In the AICC you retreated even from this position because to stick to that position would have meant facing Hindu Mahasabha opposition in the elections. Unable to evolve the just principles that will unite the Congress with its Muslim brothers, you have to yield to the unjust pressure of reaction from the Hindu side. Gandhiji stands by the principle even now. Maulana Azad pleaded for its reiteration and for evolving concrete proposals on its basis but they were both elbowed out.

This tactic of fighting the League leads to very unprincipled things. The thunder against the League is that it is communal and reactionary but the Congress does not contest the elections in Muslim seats under its own banner and under your leadership. The elements mobilised to fight the League are worse.

The Khaksars and Ahrars have dubious anti-British politics and preach their ideas in purely theocratic terms. Even the Jamiat with the cleanest anti-imperialist past is doing purely "Islamic" propaganda. In its most vociferous organ, the *Ansari*, edited by Maulana Zuberi, member of its Working Committee, it opposes Pakistan on the ground that it will be a secular, and what is worse, a democratic state. In opposition it proclaims Kingdom of God which will be led by the Ulema who alone can represent the Muslims.

The main attack of those who are called "Nationalist Muslims" in the Congress Press is that the League is secular and political instead of truly Islamic. The League in turn starts its own Jamiat. So to fight Muslim backwardness, Muslim backwardness has to be intensified. Such propaganda can divide Muslim from Muslim, how does it bring them both nearer the

Hindu? Certainly it cannot open the path to fraternal solidarity.

The game of brother fighting brother once started does not even stay within anti-British limits. It leads to utilising even pro-British opposition to the League, e.g. the alliance with the Unionists to crush the League in the Punjab is an open secret. Similar elements are being used in all provinces. It is a fight for principles only in name, it is the practice of unprincipled factional alliances, the reality of reviving religious fanaticism.

You have brought the Congress through such a policy to a stage that when this real picture is put before an ordinary Congressman he spontaneously answers: We can't help it, the Muslims use religion, we have to use religion to wean them away from the League. If number one political organisation of our people does not see in our number two organisation a brother organisation but a rival or an enemy, then by stages its own followers begin to slander a whole section of the common people and to regard them as inferiors to themselves.

It does not stop here. The prospect of civil war is openly spoken of even by some of you as inevitable. If the Muslims cannot be weaned away from the League then they must be fought. In name it will be the war for freedom, in reality it will be a war between brother peoples.

The tactic of fighting the League has to come up against the reality of having to fight the majority of the Muslims. This should be patent to all except the blindest, blinded by their own ideas.

It is not only that it is doomed to fail, that it will lead to suicidal results, but that it is already producing calamitous results. Each leadership has had to yield to its own reaction to strengthen its side and avoid a conflict within its own fold.

The League is calling in the toadies and religious reactionaries in its defence and it does it in the name of uniting the Muslims more.

The Congress has to yield to the Hindu Mahasabha and this is defended on the ground that its hand must be free to fight the League.

If one starts on the wrong road one only goes more and more wrong.

When a political leadership cannot evolve just principles that will unite the people for the common aim, then it is forced to go back into the arms of reactionaries within its own ranks. It has to go back even upon the progressive ideas to which it has itself come and it is logically led to pursue tactics that will never lead to the common aim but either result in civil war or reliance upon the common enemy.

Existing Hindu-Muslim disunity has reached a stage that in common talk among Congressmen, we hear both sentiments at the same time : On the one hand they will say : what is wrong in allying with the Unionists, what was wrong in relying upon Wavell against Jinnah ?

On the other hand, if after the elections the Muslim League wins a majority, they will argue : we will fight for freedom without the Muslims, all by ourselves ; if after we have won freedom, they still resist the Congress, we will have to fight them too.

The prospect of civil war, instead of being taken as itself the most damning evidence of wrong ideas and wrong tactics is vaingloriously passed off as inevitable.

When we ask them how they expected Wavell to agree and oblige them, we get a blank face in answer or we are told that Wavell was insincere and therefore did not agree.

Thus the fate of India's future is made to depend on the sincerity or insincerity of the British Viceroy !

We ask : "Since when have the Unionists become nationalists so that you think of alliance with them ?" ; and we get the answer : "We are only using them ; in the Punjab, we cannot defeat the League in any other way."

We ask : "Has Governor Glancy become a Congress friend so that he is letting the Unionists ally with you ?" ; and we get the answer : "You Communists cannot be beaten in an argument. But since the High Command has sanctioned the alliance, they must be having some real plan that will lead to freedom after allying with Governor Glancy's men now."

Repudiating Your Past

In 1920 the main Congress slogan was Hindu-Muslim unity, the bedrock of battle for Swaraj. But because of the way in which you have tackled the Muslim demands, more and more Muslims have gone away from the Congress and a stage has come that the League has become what it is and the Congress dare not contest the elections under its own banner for fear of losing its "prestige". The fact is that the Muslim League has emerged as the major political organisation of Muslims expressing their freedom urge and also formulating their own specific demands.

And yet after two decades, by failing to build and broaden Hindu-Muslim unity you have brought the Congress to such a position that instead of the main slogan of 1920—Hindu-Muslim unity—only two disruptive and anti-national ideas appear real to a Congressman :

(1) *The Muslims are not necessary for freedom's battle* ; this is arrant nonsense besides being a slander against one's own people because it is based on the belief that they are not patriotic.

(2) *There is no harm in using the British against the League* ; this, besides disrupting our own peoples, is playing into the common enemy's hand in the name of using him and ultimately failing to realise the common aim itself. This is as much of a fancy idea as was the idea of using the Japs to fight the British and is as much the product of a bankrupt mind.

Such ideas are as much the product of the slave mind as was the earlier pro-Jap sentiment and for the same reasons.

Pro-Jap feeling arises out of a lack of faith in ourselves and out of expecting the Japs to finish off British rule for our benefit.

Anti-League feeling arises out of a lack of faith in the Muslims and out of expecting the British masters to break their resistance.

Both are totally anti-Indian sentiments, the first would have opened our gates to an Imperialist invader, the second plays into the hands of the existing Imperialist ruler and enables him to consolidate his rule over us. Both are based on a denial of the

basic freedom principle : Indian freedom has to be won by Indian hands.

This business of "using others" arises only from a total lack of principles. It ruins Indian political life more and more instead of clearing it up more and more.

Just as "threat of struggle" did not lead to freedom in war-time, similarly the tactic of "fighting the League" will not lead to a free India in the post-war period. At both times the British as an obstructive factor was forgotten, when evolving the correct tactic for freedom struggle. At both times the common interests of our common peoples are not taken as the starting-point for evolving the correct tactic for the period.

The more the Congress and the League fight each other before the elections the better for the British in the constitution-making body because it guarantees that the British will not be faced with the prospect of an agreed scheme for the constitution of a free India which they have only to endorse and quit or face all-in countrywide revolt. Instead, both Congress and League will look to the British representatives for support against the other and the initiative will ultimately remain with the British who will most generously give their award. If in the meanwhile the Congress fights the Communists and the League elbows out its own rising progressives to accommodate influential but reactionary loadies, the elements in both organisations that will be pulling towards Congress-League unity will not be there or will have become too insignificant to matter.

Danger Of Coupland Plan

The Congress and League have no plan except to fight each other but the British have a ready-made plan how to face them both when they have come to such a stage that they are not even on talking terms with each other.

The broad principles are in the Cripps proposals, reiterated in the Wavell broadcast and once again reiterated by the Labour Government as British policy.

The Simla Conference was only the dress rehearsal. The

blue-print of British Imperialist policy for the future is in Prof. Coupland's book *The Constitutional Problem in India*.

This Professor who had come to India as Cripps' Secretary is supposed to be the biggest British Imperial expert on colonial constitutions. He was the father of the Palestine Constitution which has kept the Arabs and the Jews at each other's throats all along and guaranteed British domination there. The Coupland Plan provides for two dominions, one Pakistan and one Hindustan, with some sort of a common Agency Centre. The British come to the Centre through the States which remain British military and economic preserves. In fact leading Indian civilians are already retiring into both the major and minor States as Diwans!

The bait to the Muslim League will be that it does get a separate Dominion, despite Congress opposition.

The bait to the Congress will be that it does get some sort of a Centre, despite League opposition.

The League progressives will be quietened down because the Qaid-e-Azam has been able to get Pakistan at last and rid the Muslims at least of the fear of Hindu domination. The League leadership will plead for constructive work and a chance to build up their backward areas and thus appease their militants. The British will offer capital and expert advice and it will be a good military investment too, for the Pakistan zones will be the Eastern and Western frontiers of India and the Muslims are expected to be with Britain in a future world war in gratitude for their help in realising the dream of Pakistan which the Hindus have done their worst to bury.

The Congress Lefts may be allowed to register formal opposition and carry on propaganda for a mass struggle but since the Constitution is neither of an independent India nor of a united India, the Congress cannot be openly asked to support it. But there is complete responsible government and the people need the Congress to help them out of the post-war economic crisis: "The Congress has to make the best of the present without lowering the flag."

This will also be in line with what you have by now made almost the *tradition* of "neither-nor" in Congress policy slogans.

The Congress would neither accept nor reject the Constitution but acquiesce in it with a dignified protest. The Birla-Singhanias will do the planning. The Right Wing will do the governing and run the Ministries etc.; in contrast the Left will do the thundering about the next struggle—which will be considered good pressure on the British representatives to behave now; but practical politics only when the next world war breaks out.

Thus by the tactic of fighting the League, the League itself does not get finished nor its ideal less popular among the Muslims but India becomes at best another Egypt and Palestine, neither free nor united. Thus Indian freedom will not emerge even in the post-war period but the British plan for post-war India will materialise.

Self-Determination - Only Way

It came as no wonder to us when you could go so far as to misrepresent our people's war policy as support to the British Government. You take our support for the just aim of the League and our standing for Congress-League unity as total support for the League, everything it asks for and everything it does. It really boils down to this that we are not serious about Indian freedom in either case but always back some anti-national element which is disrupting the freedom-struggle. During war it was the British, now it is the League.

Unwillingness to consider what we say comes from your own notions and going by mere hearsay, for if you had at all read for yourselves our policy documents you would have seen how grossly unjust you are to us. In your report you say that we give our "unqualified support to the Muslim League's claim for Pakistan."

We support the aim of the League as defined in its Lahore Resolution which is nothing more than the right of sovereign freedom for the Muslims in their own homelands. We supported it for the same reasons and on the same principles as we supported the Congress aim of Purna Swaraj against the British. Just as we are against British domination over our country, we are against any Hindu domination over Muslim homelands,

because of Hindu majority in India as a whole or because of the greater strength of the Hindus in every way—economic, educational and so on.

Any one who has read any of our Party documents or reads our Press or has heard our speakers knows that we demarcate ourselves from the basic line of agitation of the League, of Muslims being a nation. We oppose that and expose the claim of the League leadership for 6 provinces as lust for other people's homelands and indulging in the game of bargaining. We have always emphasised the common interests of India as a whole both as regards the defence and common freedom and economic planning for the prosperity of our common peoples.

We consider it is the Congress' duty as the premier national organisation to take the initiative for building up joint front for Indian freedom by accepting the principle of self-determination and guaranteeing the Muslims sovereign freedom in their own homelands and then by calling upon them to give guarantees for fighting for common freedom and for defending common freedom.

The Congress can justifiably resist the unjust claims of the League only if it puts its own case on a just pedestal. This is the only way an immediate plan for Indian freedom is possible ; this is the only way to build unity against the British-imposed plan which can never bring freedom either to Muslim or Hindu homelands and which as shown above, will be based on an actual division of India in the British Imperialists' interest.

Only when the Congress guarantees the just demand of the Muslims for their own freedom can it earn the moral right and carry confidence when it pleads common interests of India against all aggressors, which will ensure unity of effort in economic planning.

We think we are carrying forward the best Congress traditions and also applying the principle of self-determination to our internal problems. Self-determination is not only an argument against the British but is the very basis of building the structure of a free India as well.

Just because we were and are consistent anti-Fascists and

saw the danger of your dual policy, we were and are maligned as being pro-British.

Similarly since we are the consistent advocates of the principle of self-determination, (to which the Congress also must come when it sees no hope of unilateral settlement with the British,) we are today misrepresented and maligned as being League agents and anti-Congress.

We support the League against the Congress as little as we supported the British against the Congress or the Congress against the League.

But when you believe that he who is not with you is against you, then in your mind, all those who differ from you become enemies of the people, you alone become their all-knowing all-wise leadership, and anything can be said by you against the enemy.

XIV. ANTI-COMMUNISM AS CONGRESS BANNER

WE ASSURE YOU THAT WE ARE FULLY ALIVE TO THE reality of the anti-Imperialist and anti-Fascist Indian National Congress becoming the anti-Communist Congress under your leadership, after your release. Pandit Nehru is only deceiving himself when he says that the Congress is not against Communism as such and that he himself has been preaching Communistic ideas in the past (*speech at Bewar on October 25, reported in the Bombay Sentinel of October 26*). Sardar Patel and more of his colleagues in the Working Committee will tell him that all these are just words, that Communism is poison and the policy and practice of our party has always been anti-national and that the Congress must not allow the poison to spread but must destroy our Party root and branch and the sooner this is done the better for the country.

But the reality is, as any man knows, that Communism in any country comes, spreads and grows through its Communist Party; the policy of the Party is the Communist idea for the day, the practical work of the Party is the Communist practice of the day so far as the freedom movement and the interests of the people are concerned in actual, real life. This is so in every country; it is so in India.

We appeal to you to recall which elements the world over have been and are anti-Communist ever since Communism was born as a philosophy, ever since Communist Parties were born in their own countries. They were ideologues of reaction for the period concerned, they were the dominant political leaders of reaction at the moment in time concerned.

We appeal to you to recall the very years of our national movement reflected and interpreted in Pandit Nehru's *Autobiography* which made the Congress loved and respected by freedom-loving elements the world over and also the latest war years that we all spent in jail and outside; we would ask you today to cast a look into every single country of the world and see for

yourself who was proved wrong and who right in the estimate of their own best thinkers, who among the leaders of every country are gone by the board and who are coming up as future leaders of their own country.

Must these names, loved and respected in the world of art, science and culture mean nothing to you ?

Among scientists, Haldane, most versatile of all the great scientists of today ; the veteran Langevin of France, one of the world's most respected physicists ; Joliot-Curie, hearer of a great name, famous in his own right for his work in the field of radio-activity ; these are all Communists. Kapitza of the Soviet Union, brilliant physicist, is known to be a Communist sympathiser ; these are only four of the leading world scientists who have today identified themselves with the Communist Parties of their land.

In the field of art and music, the greatest of all Europe's painter, Pablo Picasso ; the talented British actress, Beatrix Lehmann, are members ; the world-renowned American Negro singer, Paul Robeson is also well-known for his sympathy for Communists—and these too are the names of only a few who have proclaimed their love and admiration for the Communist movement.

And in literature, Sean O'Casey, embodiment of Irish revolt ; Louis Aragon, France's foremost poet ; Martin Anderson Nexø, Denmark's greatest man of letters ; Ting Ling, China's most famous woman writer ; Theodore Dreiser, the doyen of American novelists ; Ilya Ehrenburg, the most powerful writer of World War II—some of the greatest and best in today's literary world—are inside the Communist Parties of their land.

Europe's Communists Lead Their Peoples

Must the fact that the Communist Parties in every European country are no more small revolutionary sects but have risen to become acknowledged and respected forces in the political lives of their own countries mean nothing to you ?

In France the Communists are today the first party of the land ; five years ago they were outlawed, by the Daladiers and Reynauds who lick the dust today ; they called the Communists

traitors then, just as you call us traitors today. But after bitter struggle, they have emerged as the leaders of a new and mighty democratic movement; today de Gaulle and his friends who hanker after the old Empire, accuse them, as you accuse us, of being Moscow's agents, but despite his accusations, even he cannot keep them out of the Government, key portfolios of national reconstruction are in their hands.

In Yugoslavia, under Communist leadership, the greatest of all Europe's resistance movements was built with an army of over three lakhs. The name of Tito is known the world over—for it symbolises the heroism of the common people, expressed in the strong and sturdy figure of this Croat metal-worker who though persecuted, hunted and tortured, battled on for fifteen years underground; today he is a world figure, leader of a new Yugoslavia, a Yugoslavia whose many nations will jointly and freely build for the future, a Yugoslavia eighty per cent of whose people stand four-square behind Tito—leader of Yugoslavia's Communists!

In Bulgaria, underground for a decade, bearing the brunt of Fascist repression, the Communists sank deep down among their people, are today the foremost party both in the towns and the countryside. Key posts in the Government and army have been entrusted to their hands.

Rumania, Austria, Hungary—in all these the small illegal hunted groups have grown in the very teeth of the Nazi-Fascist reign of terror and come out of the fire one of the major parties of their people, holding key posts inside their Governments, in their trade unions, in every aspect of their people's life.

Poland—only eight years ago, the Communist Party was dissolved, today it is a major party in the Government; in Finland, a persecuted and hunted group, slandered as Russian spies, it has now become one of the three major Government parties.

In Italy 20 years of Fascist terror failed to smash the Communists, they occupy major posts in the Government, the most conservative of foreign correspondents have been forced to pay tribute to their capacity for organisation, heroism and sacrifice.

In Belgium they are one of the three major parties in the Government, their representative is Minister for Food and has gone a long way to cleaning up the black-market.

In Holland, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland—in every country in Europe, they have grown from small sects to play important parts in making the history of their peoples. In small Albania, it is Communist leader General Enver Hoxha, still in his early thirties, who is the undisputed leader of his people and taking them forward from backward colonial feudalism to a modern free democracy.

And lastly in Greece—the Communists led the E.A.M. (National Liberation Front) in the great battle for Greek freedom last December, it is they today who are leading the battle against British attempts to impose royal Fascism; they are acknowledged to be the core and heart of Greece's democratic movement.

In S. E. Asia Too - In The Forefront

Must not the fact mean anything to you that in every single South Asiatic country outside our own, the Communist Parties concerned were the recognised leadership of the revolutionary section of the anti-Imperialist national movement? After Jap aggression and occupation they became the main or the only organisers of national anti-Jap resistance movements and in whatever actual national resistance has been put up against re-occupation by the old imperialist rulers they have played and are playing a leading part. Wherever re-occupation has succeeded, they are the foremost and consistent champions and organisers for a new national upsurge, based on the unity of all patriotic parties and for the immediate acceptance of the sovereign right of self-determination by the Imperialist power concerned.

In Burma, our next door neighbour, the first real anti-Imperialist national movement was the Dobama which the Congress under your leadership accepted and recognised as the fraternal national organisation of the Burmese people. Most of its top leaders were Communists. At Ramgarh Aung San, Thun Tun, Ba Hein, and others were its leaders then and Than Tun

and Ba Hein are today members of the Communist Party of Burma.

There the Dobama and even the young Party leadership itself was split, some thought it was yet an Imperialist war, others saw it was now a people's war. Both sections of the Party leadership took their logical path, one into the arms of Japan and the other underground. Everything that happened in our own country even without the Japs coming in happened in Burma and worse because the Japs had actually over-run it. Our brother-party reorganised itself and was responsible for all the anti-Jap resistance that took place during the whole period of Jap occupation and finally for the national uprising that took place and coincided with the final Allied military offensive.

During the period of Japanese occupation the Party not only got going itself but took the initiative to form the Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League. Our brothers in Burma had not many illusions about what policy the British Government was going to pursue. As the true answer of Burma and as the undying expression of the Burmese peoples' will to be immediately free they expanded the Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League still more so that today it includes *all* patriotic organisations and *all* the national leaders of Burma, even the old Liberals. Its immediate political slogans are new elections for a Constituent Assembly on adult franchise and recognition of national independence by Britain and the United Nations. Its General Secretary, Than Tun is a known and respected Communist leader. Its President is Major-General Aung San.

Aung San was a Communist leader but he went off to Japan, treading the path that Sjt. Subhas Bose trod in our own country. He accompanied the Jap Armies as the head of a small Burmese Force who, believing that freedom could be won through alliance with Japan, had gone away to the Japs and been trajned by them.

Aung San helped to drive out the British but after the British had gone, his Burmese National Army was reduced by the Japs from 75,000 to 10,000. The Japs would not let him recruit and train more. He soon saw through the Japs and when his own old comrade, Soe, undergorund Party Secretary and leader, after sensing his disillusionment with the Japs made contact

with him again, he was welcomed by Aung San with open arms and soon afterwards Aung San wanted to come back into the Party.

Our Burmese comrades told Aung San :

We called you a traitor when you left to go to work with the Japs. But from today you are a brother to us. You must stay where you are, do your duty to your people and the country by making your entire Army implement the call of the Party for mass insurrection against Jap rule. Carry out the instructions of the Party as and where you are and as and when you agree with them. We will give you no mandates as we do to other Party members but only keep you informed of what we think and propose to do from day to day. Think yourself and do only what you think is the right call of duty towards Burma. Prove your loyalty to the Party in your own practice and you have the Party's full confidence.

Aung San is the national hero of Burma today. But such is our brother-party that it did not easily readmit him back into its ranks. Today all Burmans say : may be he is not a Party Member but he is as good as any Communist and where is the difference ?

Our Party has kept contact with our brother Burmese Party all through the war not with British aid but despite British obstruction. Because of whatever political and organisational advice and help we have been able to give them they call our Party their "elder brother."

China - Inspirer Of All

Among you, Pandit Jawaharlal himself can tell you of the heroism and sacrifice of the Indonesian Communists ; he learnt about them at the conferences of the League Against Imperialism which he attended as a delegate of the Congress, as your representative. Today where the Communists of Indonesia stand is not known directly to us, the war cut all contact between us and them but according to the *Statesman*, Amir Sharifoeddin, Minister of Interior and one of the key figures in the present Indonesian

Cabinet is a Communist and we are sure that when the story of the Indonesian national movement is told, Indonesia's Communists will have a proud and worthy place.

Of Indo-China, too, news is scarce ; but ask any patriotic-minded Indian officer who has been to Saigon lately and he will tell you that the core of the Viet Minh, Indo-China's National Congress, is Communist.

Malaya—here the Communists lost hundreds of their Party Members in the battle against Jap slavery—but they built a 10,000 strong people's army, and are acknowledged by all to be the dominating progressive force in their country.

And lastly, let us write of the great China from which both Pandit Nehru and our Party seek inspiration and which both of us want our national movement to know.

When Marshal Chiang Kai-shek was killing Chinese Communists and slandering them as you are slandering our Party today up and down our own country, Pandit Nehru was not on "the other side" in China but on our side at the World League Against Imperialism. That period is known to Indian patriots who have read books about China written by Smedley, Edgar Snow and Israel Epstein, all non-Communist journalists and authors.

Whenever Marshal Chiang Kai-shek's soldiers shoot, Chu Teh's soldiers shoot back in self-defence, never otherwise ; but whenever Marshal Chiang Kai-shek wants to talk, Comrade Chou En-lai is ever ready to talk. What is more, Comrade Mao comes down to Chungking if his coming to Chungking will help towards building a unified democratic China. The Chinese Communists have only one slogan, "Chinese must not kill Chinese", and they make only one demand on Marshal Chiang Kai-shek : "Immediate unity on the basis of immediate democracy, no dictatorship over the people, no war between brother patriots."

The latest figures available to us are from Comrade Mao's report to the Seventh Congress of our brother-party in China in April 1945. Our brother Chinese Party heads a "liberated" (from the Japs) area of 3,53,000 square miles, more than the total area of Bengal, Bihar, U.P. and the Punjab. General Chu Teh leads an army of 9 lacs. The form of Government in the liberated

China, in sharp contrast to Kuomintang China is on a *democratic and united front* basis, the Party ensuring that not one more than one-third of the members of the Government bodies are Party members but one-third are pro-unity Kuomintang and one-third are non-party. And it is common knowledge that their strength has leapt up in the months since last April.

Meaning Of Fighting Our Party

The freedom movement of all South East Asiatic countries should mean a lot to every Indian patriot for the sake of our own freedom movement. You said 'Quit India' in 1942. You say 'Quit Asia' now. You should know that on the heart of every Communist all the world over, from the day he joins the Party, is engraved the urgent demand that the Imperialist ruling class must 'Quit the World', because it is the enemy of their own and all peoples. We ask you as seriously as you utter *Quit Asia*: How do we achieve it in our own country by "Indian fighting Indian" which is just what you are doing today through all that you say and do, not only against our Party, but also against the League?

The League leadership speaks to you for itself. We do not at all agree with what it says against the Congress and intensely dislike the way it says it, nor do we agree with all that it says about itself and the way it says it. But we accept it as India's organisation No. 2 and support its aim of self-determination for Muslim peoples for the same reason that we support the Congress aim of national independence.

We totally disagree with the claim of the League leadership for six provinces but unlike you, we have defined what we consider to be just boundaries for Muslim homelands and for which alone we support the application of its Lahore Resolution on Pakistan. The League leadership itself thinks no more and better of our Party than what you did before 1942 and for the same reasons. We have criticised it as sharply as we criticise you whenever we disagree with them. Our conviction is that for what is happening in our own country today and the way it is very unfortunately

going, you both are *equally responsible* and you both are *equally wrong*.

We are primarily concerned here with you and our Party. Our Party is not what you imagine it to be : a small group of *fanatical* intellectuals and a small section of *loyal* masses who are loyal to them because they can work for their daily welfare hard and well which Congress workers cannot ; and all that is necessary to wipe them out of existence in our country is to denounce their Party and its leadership for being " on the other side " ever since 1942 and then even those masses who are behind our Party today will forsake us.

Quite apart from what you think of us, it is a very unworthy, undemocratic attitude towards the masses, it is the " comfortable middle-class " attitude the world over towards their own masses that they are dumb, humble cattle. Whoever tends them well for the time being they blindly follow. We expect the leadership of our premier national organisation to think differently about and have real democratic respect for the masses at least that *consciously* follow the banner of our Party as their own banner, for their own *new life*, for their *country's freedom*.

Our Party is not what you imagine it to be, and despite its differences with you, in smaller or greater degree ever since it was born, it has grown to be the third party of the country and comes after the Congress and the League as the third most important organisation, if, for no other reason, at least through the number of Indians it can set in motion behind its own policy even where it differs *both* from the Congress and the League.

Our Party is the leading force in and the chief organiser of the Indian Trade Union Movement. The General Council of the All-India Trade Union Congress is headed by a Communist majority. In its total membership of 5 lakhs the unions we have built up and lead in their respective localities constitute a membership of over 3 lakhs.

Our Party is among the founders of and is today the leader of the 8 lakh strong All-India Kisan Sabha. If some of its leaders left the AIKS it has been despite our best human efforts to keep them in. They wanted to assert their own views over the mandate of its duly elected delegates.

In an enslaved country its organised working class and peasant movements are the best allies of its own freedom movement, living bases for its future democracy. This has been proved true in every country of the world. It is equally true in and for our country.

In the name of freedom and democracy, which alone can be the link between one party and another we appeal to you to have some respect for our Party by having some respect for our own working class and peasantry whom we have served and organised in their own unions and Sabhas which are *their own movements*, and which did not exist before our Party was born. Whatever the worth of our Party to our country, it is reflected and embodied in these movements and organisations.

Must you make your best effort to keep them as friendly allies of the Congress or destroy them? You will not succeed where the British Imperialist rulers of our country have failed and for the same reasons. These new mass movements have grown, as you know, despite your differences with us all through and not because of your help to us, but only through our efforts, through all that we could inspire and build by the fire of our own words and the sweat of our own brows. We only ask you to remember that when you fight our Party, you fight the people—the organised mazdoor and kisan movements of our land; when you seek to uproot our Party, you are destroying these living bases of India's future democracy.

Why We Resigned From Congress

We called upon our Party members to resign from the Congress when we read your charge-sheet and report and after we saw at the Bombay AICC what lead you were giving the Congress, the lead of fighting the League with your back to the wall and of uprooting the Communist Party immediately.

We obviously could not carry out such a policy; we could not even remain dissenting Congressmen as we have been over several issues in the past.

We knew from your own speeches that you were prepared to let us remain primary members of the Congress but that you

had decided to ban our holding any elective or executive posts. In other words, while you kept us as prisoners inside the Congress, you wanted to be free to tell the Indian people that Communist policy was never right for the Indian freedom movement and that it was a betrayal of the country after 1942.

If words mean anything, this is what you had proposed to do. For you were free to attack our policy among the people in the name of the Congress but we were not free to defend it even among fellow Congressmen and through the Congress organs as any other Congressman is free to do. You wanted not only to bar for us the door to Indian democracy, i.e. the Indian people, but also to deny us Congress democracy even if the mass of Congressmen through their primary membership elected us and proved their confidence in us and endorsed our party.

And you wanted to do all this in the name of *discipline* as you understand it.

You are free to think that you are right but you cannot expect us to agree with you. We are freedom fighters, we accept no gag, we can live in no prison, not even as prisoners inside the great Indian National Congress.

You had declared war, a war against all we stood for and stand for. Why should you expect us to acquiesce in it, even when you wrote the report you have against our Party? We would not be what we are, Communists, we would not be even honest men if we remained inside the Congress under such circumstances.

You forced on us our most elementary duty, to defend ourselves among our people for all we were worth, to justify our political policy as a patriotic policy, and to save what we had spent all our young lives in building up.

You started the war—for it is nothing less than an actual political war against our Party, its policy, its work, its future in our country. We had to think out the best way to defend ourselves, explain our policy, strengthen what we have built, and do all this with the least damage to the Congress, the Indian national movement, the cause of freedom and the interests of the people. And our Party leadership decided to call upon our members to resign from the Congress and go direct to the people

for their verdict, to dig deep into the soil that gave us birth, to make our voice heard by the people as best as we could speak.

This was the best possible way to avoid bitterness between Congressmen and ourselves ; this was the way by which we could talk to them with self-respect and expect to be heard with respect. May be the mass of Congressmen may say that we should not have resigned, however much we disagreed with your decision about us.

We will tell them all : The Congress leadership wanted us to remain as their prisoners, it wanted to tie our tongue and hind our hands. We would not be worth being in the Congress if we accepted such a humiliating position. We want every Congressman to feel that we are their comrades-in-arms in freedom's battle and that the course that our Party followed is the best. Yours is a war for the extermination of our young Party, ours the battle for " Congress-League-Communist " unity.

The real judgment does not lie with you but with the mass of Congressmen, Leaguers and Communists all put together, today, tomorrow and till India is free. Yours is the way of war among brothers, ours the battle for best mutual understanding, brotherly unity among Indian parties for the surest and fastest path to Indian freedom, a *real* and not a *wordy* battle. You think that it is necessary to bring the League and the Communist Party down on their knees and make them accept what you think best for our common country and the cause of immediate Indian freedom against British rule.

Our best endeavour is and will be that you do not fight but realise that it is your first duty because you are the leadership of India's freedom organisation No. 1 to understand and unite with India's freedom organisations No. 2 and No. 3 for a common war against the British rule, for the quickest possible common victory. There is no difference which cannot be liquidated by honest discussion as between brothers and in that spirit. There is and can be no other path to immediate Indian freedom and it should be the foremost accepted concern of all the three parties.

Whenever you want to talk not as the Dispenser of Justice described in the books but as man to man, one freedom fighter to another, one political leadership to another, you will find our

entire Party the happiest, our Party leadership the most willing and most helpful, in the literal sense of the words.

Who Betrayed What?

We appeal to you in the name of the moral integrity of the Indian national movement to be fair to our Party, to use words that are true in their real meaning, and see for yourselves what havoc you are playing with our common political life and with the morale of Congressmen, by the words you are using.

You tell the people that we betrayed the country in the post-August days. If you really believe this of us, you betray the trust of the Congress membership by your proposals to let us remain 4-anna members.

If we could accept what you say about us we would voluntarily demand that we be expelled from Congress membership and pledge ourselves to work our way back into your confidence through our work for the Congress without remaining even its formal members, i.e. by acting as its real members.

If you were the Government of a free country and if we had been traitors we would voluntarily plead to be shot for being untrue to our own country and in token of our confidence in you.

It is unworthy of you to take on superior airs and say as Pandit Nehru (*speech at Beawar*) said, that the Congress is dealing with us so leniently. Criminals plead for leniency. We ask only for justice.

We appeal to you to explain to your own conscience, to the satisfaction of all Congressmen and in bounden duty to us: How is it that you want only Communist Congressmen to explain and defend their conduct during and after August 1942?

We have explained ourselves as honestly and truthfully as we could as we were duty bound to you and to ourselves. Why did you not put the same issue to the Congress Socialists and the Forward Blocists? You should know what *all* groups inside the Congress did, if you really want to review the period since August 1942.

We ask you in all seriousness: what sort of political morals are you practising as the leadership of the Congress as a whole

if you discriminate against our Party and in favour of other parties inside or friendly to the Congress ?

We know your answer : They were moved by patriotic motives. Must we not then ask you how is it that you go by motive, despite pro-Jap words (which we have quoted from their own documents), despite sabotage activities which every man knows they organised and tried to organise, which you yourselves say was NOT Congress policy. Why is it that you do not give us alone even the benefit of patriotic motive even by implication in your report and in a single word in the hundreds of public speeches you have made against our Party ?

How are we wrong in thinking that you only want Congressmen to be loyal to you in the worst and not in the best sense of the word ? What Marshal Chiang wanted the Chinese to do but failed ? Must that be the way of India's political leaders ? Must words and deeds not be taken in their literal and best sense for the sake of our own freedom movement ? We know India can win her freedom in no other way and that is why we ask this simple question.

We do not want you to victimise them for their past but when you ask us questions, was it also not your duty to ask them questions, publish all questions and all answers together with your final decision about what you think was and would have been Congress policy if you had been free in 1942, to carry it out and what you think is today the official Congress attitude towards what was said and done after August 1942 by all the parties.

You are all saying *different* things at *different times* and *places* and even you, the members of the Congress Working Committee and Gandhiji, have spoken in different voices about the main issues, events, personalities of the period.

Where will it all lead the country ? It certainly will not lead to a true understanding of its past and therefore it can never lead to a good and desirable future. In plain words it is that you are teaching a dual morality which will lead people to say one thing but do its opposite.

This is how you talked of immediate freedom during the war years but missed every chance to win it. This is how you talk of the *future* final battle against British rule but with an

easy conscience you are conducting an actual battle against Indian parties and not even conceding the formal need of uniting them. The supreme tragedy of India is that you are so convinced that you are right while you are totally blind to what you are doing—war against Indians and not war against British rule.

This happens only at that stage when a political leadership begins to indulge in self-glorification and becomes incapable of any self-criticism, when it goes bankrupt and begins to decay fast and the stage when it goes down with what it built up itself, goes back on its own best past and towards its own doom as a political leadership of the people. We do not desire this to happen and hence our very plain words to you.

New Period, New Policy

We also concede the worth of patriotic motive but do not let our heart run away with our head but use it our best even in the most trying times. That is why we called the C.S.P. and the Forward Bloc "traitor" only after with the Japs at India's door, they began preaching a pro-Jap policy and advocating sabotage as the practical task of the hour. The moment the Japs were defeated, the world war was over and you came out to speak for the Congress, the Japs issue went into the background and they could no more speak for the Congress but only you could. It was a new situation for the world, for our own people—so we thought hard, discussed and worked out a new policy for the situation.

We demand their legalisation and the release, of all their prisoners even when they continue to call us traitors and keep mum over the release of our comrades behind the bars, famous names in the freedom movement as a whole. We know it is not for the British rulers to deny them freedom, it is for the Indian people to judge. We hold back to define our final attitude towards them for the new present period, the post-war India and the world, after we have heard their own policy for it and seen their practice too. Against the British Imperialist vindictiveness against them, we set our face and work for their release ; against their attack on us, we defend ourselves.

To illustrate and confirm our point, we are enclosing the statement of P. C. Joshi on the reported death of Shri Subhas Bose and the editorial in the *People's War* on the Indian National Army.

We have done this not in order to get the chance to "swim with the current." We have swam against it before as we have swam with it before. It is the duty of a Communist to know when to swim with and how to swim against it ; it is his duty to be true to his own people, in freedom's very broad current. Communism does not breed the sort of patriots who seek short-cuts only to go down into the whirlpool, it teaches how to swim steadfastly and seriously in the stream of freedom towards the final sea of Socialism.

We do not seek cheap popularity. We forsook the easy path, every one of us, in his own personal political life, the day we joined our Party. Our Party has known days of widespread and almost universal popularity and has also consciously risked it only to win it back again through preaching its own policy doggedly and through the practice of all its members before the eyes of the people amidst whom they live and work.

We know we are a young party and have to prove our patriotic worth over and over again not in our own estimate but in the estimate of our fellow patriots, not inside and among our own people but right outside the Party among the entire people, immediately to the satisfaction of those who look to us for a lead and till we satisfy those who may not agree with us but are willing to listen to us and even to those who are certain we are wrong. This is what our Party teaches its members and seeks to do among the people.

We hate hypocrisy, we struggle to be sincere. We use no words that mean two things. We concede the patriotic motives of our patriotic opponents. But we go by *their actual words, actual deeds*. We never forget that however much we may differ today, the final judgment does not lie with us but the people and our own endeavour is always to carry conviction to the people, to help to liquidate differences, to learn from our opponents, they are patriotic, and to work to bridge the differences with

How Goondaism Has Come

We hear and read you whenever you go and speak in public these days denouncing our Party as a "traitor" Party. We watch for its effect in the words and practice of Congressmen of the locality concerned.

We read with dismay Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya's statement that Congress non-violence was only against the British Government, it did not apply to our Party. His words stank in every nostril that can smell true patriotism wherever it be. But it did not come to us as a surprise. We knew what anti-Communist Congressmen of Andhra were saying and doing even before Dr. Pattabhi gave the lead and which A. S. R. Chari described in his pamphlet *Lid Off Andhra Anti-Communism*. We knew that the dirtiest lies, real goonda methods will now be used against us in the name of the Congress itself which Congress leaders will neither own nor disown when face to face with us, just as you have neither owned nor disowned the "1942 struggle."

We attended the three big mass meetings addressed by Pandit Nehru, Sardar Patel and Syt. Sarat Bose in November at Bombay, Chowpatty. We saw with our own eyes and heard with our own ears what was its effect so far as our Party was concerned.

After Pandit Nehru's meeting had ended on 10th November a group of "Students' Congress" boys, Congress-minded C.S.P. influenced stock-brokers and professional goondas came to our Party Headquarters shouting, Mahatma Gandhi ki Jai, Pandit Jawaharlal ki Jai, Netaji Subhas Bose Zindabad, Communist Party Murdabad, But they did not stop there. They went on to say :

Niche Uthro

Teri Ma ko

Teri Bahin ko

Teri Joru ko



They spat on the faces of comrades standing at the gate.

They got no answer except pained and angry faces from the comrades defending the gate physically by just blocking it with their own bodies, not opening their mouths, not using their hands ; and this in spite of the fact that the same group had already come and uttered similar abuses twice before, once after Sardar Patel's meeting, again after Syt. Sarat Bose's meeting.

Any one else except a Communist would have given them the answer they deserved by knocking their teeth out with his fist and by making them take to their heels with a flying kick. We could have done it on the spot.

We did not do it because we knew what would happen next day. All the newspapers in India would have displayed the "news" that a peaceful procession was going back from such and such a meeting shouting Congress slogans and as it was passing in front of the Communist Party Headquarters, Communists rushed out to attack it, several Congressmen were injured !

We knew it would have been playing into the hands of our enemies. We Communists are taught when to fight with our fists and when to have superhuman patience to bear what no man ever bears.

Our Party Secretary, P. C. Joshi, instructed Mohan Kumaramangalam, one of our youngest Party leaders, and personally known to Pandit Nehru to ring up Pandit Nehru and seek an appointment and tell him just what happened and request him to put two and two together, see the relations between his remark about our Party and what happened in front of our Party Office.

Pandit Nehru's host answered on the phone that he had no time. Mohan therefore sat down to write out in a letter to Pandit Nehru exactly what had happened after his meeting.

He received another phone call that he could meet Pandit Nehru later in the day. Mohan gave him the letter he had already written. He told Mohan that he could not accept his words without making inquiries himself. And he saw no connection between his own meeting and what Mohan said had happened in front of our own office, we all heard and bore.

Panditji had come to a stage that he could not accept even

the word of a Communist leader about what he heard with his own ears!

Panditji before parting asked him if he could give him some advice; he then went on to say that we Communists should not begin to think that we were being persecuted, nor get the "persecution complex" which is bad for the growth of young minds. That is elementary psychology but applied to us it is absence of elementary human feeling and in the idiom of our Hindi-speaking people it was: first inflict the wound, later sprinkle salt on it and say while doing it to the victim and to his face, it is all for your own good! In the pages of our ancient scriptures it was the privilege of *Yamaraj* alone. Today Panditji was taking on the role of the God of our fathers and wanted us to play the role of the penitent sinner.

Panditji was regarded by us as the best of the older leadership of the Congress. In his evening meeting that day he did say that Congress was against goondaism and he was pained to hear that some uttered his name while doing and saying things Congressmen should not do. But he did not say a word about our Party. We expected him to say all that he wanted to say against our Party but we also expected him to say that goonda methods should NOT be used against our Party. We expected him to say that one of the Communists had told him about the events the other day. However, though he did not know whether he was speaking the truth or a lie, if what he said was true, no Congress follower should do it.

This is the least we think Panditji owed to the Congress which he loves with all his big heart and even to our Party which he thinks has gone mad in his best judgment.

But he was only concerned with *his own name* and he had satisfied his own conscience by condemning goondaism in words.

We know most of you think, what you desire to believe,—that "the people" are against us and the Congress cannot control them all.

We entreat you to believe us that what we wrote above has been happening throughout the country only since your release. Some Congress Socialist supporters and Forward Blocists were saying such things in whispers all the while but they dared not

say it openly. Your anti-Communist speeches create just the general anti-Communist atmosphere in which tiny gangs of them with the help of professional goondas dare say and do such things in the open and expect to pass it off as genuine *national* indignation against our Party.

From Abuse To The Lathi

We went totally "wrong" according to you in August 1942. We said and did what we have written here and in every place our Party units exist. But such crude goondagiri never took place between 1942 and 1945 on a country-wide scale because those who wished to, could not organise it on their own just as they could not organise what they call "the August revolution" and for the same reasons. Your speeches created the atmosphere in which they could do and are doing what they dared not on their own before. That is all.

We request you to consider seriously if you do not yourselves bear the MORAL RESPONSIBILITY for the use of goondaism against our Party.

You do your part of the job by denouncing our Party as traitors. Some of your followers and some of our enemies use your name and start the battle where you leave it. They take to the lathi and the knife and they bring in the professional goonda because they are too weak and cowardly to undertake such dirty jobs on their own. And what we have described above inevitably takes place.

If we *are* traitors why should not the rank and file Congressmen beat us to death as they would a snake? Would you not have hanged us if you were the Government of free India? In his mind, he only uses the stick or the knife to teach us a lesson because India is yet enslaved and the hangman's noose cannot be tied round us so long as the British rulers are saving us for their own sake!

If we *are* traitors why should he regard our mothers, sisters and wives as *Indian* mothers, sisters and wives; they are outside the pale of patriotism, the code of Indian civilised life cannot be applied to them; and so the anti-Communist uses the langu-

age that comes *naturally* to him about women, words which express his own ethical outlook ; and finally, if traditional Indian manners hinder his tongue, the goonda is there to use *his* tongue.

This is how the battle against Communism went in every country. This is how it must go in our country and is going.

This is exactly how the "struggle" went after 8th August. The inevitable logic of inherent self-contradiction is working its course mercilessly on.

Leave aside the big issue of policy. Take the much simpler and equally vital issue of respecting civil liberties in our political life, observing the elementary code of civilised behaviour among ourselves.

We make to you an earnest offer. After your release, you have *virtually* endorsed the anti-Communist crusade of the past few years and you are yourselves heading the campaign today in your own way and in your own words.

In the period following your release we have published in our central organ some (which are far from being all) accounts of goondagiri, organised against our Party by those who call themselves Congressmen.

We ask you to appoint a Sub-Committee including, of course, one responsible Communist Party leader from the province concerned, for you *do not* today have our confidence and for no fault of ours, as we understand elementary confidence, and get the report published.

We agree to publish the report ourselves in thousands of copies and let the people know what was the truth, according to both the official Congress version and also the Communist version. if there cannot be an agreed report.

We assure you that the punishment inside our Party for lying in one's report to the Party press is summary expulsion, for exaggeration, a severe reprimand, very often in public. All parties say it should be so ; it is only inside our Party that everything humanly possible is *done* to ensure that it is so.

AS

Our Appeal To You

Why should it be difficult for you to see the *living* connection between your propaganda that the "Communists are traitors" from the top and the use of goonda weapons and the language of the brothel at the bottom? Such is India today, as you are making it yourselves; why can you not see it through the evidence of eyes and ears?

Why must Pandit Nehru expect the anti-Communist wave he himself is proudly heading to stop just where he wants it to stop? That will only be trying to be a modern Canute and it cannot and will not happen.

Your propaganda that "Communists are traitors" encourages the worst of the Congressmen to bring the professional goonda into the service of the Congress and against our Party; it encourages or condones Congress boys who spread lies through whisper campaigns and manufacture the slanders which they think will turn the people against the Communists.

Your own characterisation of the Communist Party as a traitor party automatically becomes a passport for the use of goonda methods against us and for repeating slanders with the confidence that true or false, they serve the cause of freedom today.

We all know from personal experience that it is so. Whatever you think of the Communist Party, we think it is your IMMEDIATE duty, to the Congress and the country, even as you define it, that you publicly proclaim that the physical ways of the bully or the coward should not become the Congress way to fight our Party and no Congressmen should use words and express sentiments they do not want another civilised Indian to use about the Congress.

It is nothing more than the observance of the very elementary rules of the survival of civilised code, in the service of our enslaved motherland and for the survival of its ancient civilisation—the way of life for our peoples and not the way of death for us all.

XV. IN THE NAME OF DEMOCRACY

WE HAVE EMPHASISED AT LENGTH HOW YOUR PROPAGANDA that "Communists are traitors" inevitably destroys the very moral fibre of our national movement. Once its proudest claim was that India's freedom fighters have to be and are morally superior to the British rulers. Today its practice is becoming that it does not matter what methods are used but the Communists must be destroyed.

And the ways of the British rulers against the Congress are tried by Congressmen against our Party, similar lies, similar slanders, similar goondagiri, similar control of propaganda in the press.

We have no doubt in our own minds that we will ultimately win, for the same reason that the Congress won against the British, because our ways are cleaner, because our cause is more just. But what will happen to India in the meanwhile? If our great national movement begins to lose its moral integrity, how will it ever reach its goal?

The ways of the British rulers against the Congress are already becoming the Congress way against the Communist Party. The basic cause is the same—the claim to the monopoly of wisdom in the interests of India.

Equally shocking to us is the new set-up of the Congress that is taking shape. We are being asked to quit or to accept the chains and the gag. But the old allies of the British are welcomed as new friends of the Congress. A new link-up between the leaders of Indian vested interests and the political leadership of the Congress is taking place openly for all except the blindest to see.

They are getting into the Congress because they see that their own profit does not lie by being in the good books of the Government any more. They see that the Congress is going to be the next Government of the country and soon after the elections. They know that they can save their own selfish interests only by being with the Congress, not by remaining neutral any more

and of course never by going against it, a fact which most of them had seen by 1930.

A spate of Indian business and industrial magnates are becoming Congressmen donning the patriotic garb for the sake of their own profit-interest. And the immediate task is to get into the good books of the Congress leaders, make themselves useful to the Congress, offer blank cheques for the Congress Election Fund. It is no accident that while in contrast to the past, few mass collections are being made by Congressmen at the bottom, it has become one of the daily duties of the top Congress leaders to dine with the top profiteers and receive fat cheques or big purses from the "leaders of business."

What shocks us is that the persons you honour by dining with on your political tours are just the persons who should be shunned by you as anti-national social lepers. It is not that they are capitalists and you are Congress leaders. During the war years they all became notorious hoarders and black-marketeers.

Their profit-motive made them lose all sense of shame, all sense of any social obligations. Their hands are blood-stained with the victims of the Bengal and Kerala and other famines, their faces black with shame of our mothers and sisters who were denied even a *sari* to wear, and the curses of every Indian housewife are on their heads. Indian capitalists who did not go in for anti-social acts are a handful; the vast majority of them put their profit above the interests of their people, minted millions through illegal war-profiteering while millions of our countrymen suffered or died of starvation.

Joining Up With Profiteers

Pandit Nehru once spoke of hanging the hoarders but we read of him only hugging them every day and know him only shunning the Communists who alone fought the hoarders.

We know your argument, you will say as you already have said that if Indian Big Business today supports the Congress it is only recognition of Congress strength; they cannot use the Congress for their profit; rather the Congress will use them and their capital for the good of the country. But we would remind

you that the English people have a good and true proverb : He who pays the piper, calls the tune.

We look for who is using whom and how successfully in what actually happens in real life. And here are some very disturbing features of Congress life as you are guiding it.

A few of you spoke against profiteering and black-marketing in your very first speeches after release. But in your election campaign, there is no denunciation of hoarding and hoarders and no proposals to end black-marketing ; there is no word of what you will *immediately* do with Indian industry and agriculture and of how you will fight unemployment and guarantee food to the people. You only talk of the glory of the Congress and the shame of other parties. You only assert that the freedom of India can only be won by following you (and as you put it the Congress and you become synonymous). You do not deal with the life of the people, torn to pieces, with the social-economic structure of our country gone out of gear, you do not talk of the hell that exists but only of the heaven that will come under your dispensation—and that too in the vaguest and most general terms.

In the industrial areas that you visit, you denounce the Communists for betrayal before the workers and other citizens and almost immediately you rush off to feast with the owners and get a fat cheque for the Congress. From next day on the jobbers start propagandising inside the mill :

“ If you want to keep your job vote Congress and not Red ! Do not go to Communist meetings, you will get marked by Sethji's men, I am warning you in your own interest ! You have a family, think of it ! Be on the safe side of the bank, the *bekari* wave is coming, the war is over ! Do you not know that so and so leader came to dine with our Sethji last night ? ”

Local Congressmen also start visiting the working class area and say :

“ You have heard such-and-such a leader yourselves ; are you now convinced that the Congress is against the Red Flag ?

The Congress Ministry is coming and if you want the Ministry to listen to the workers' demands, give up going to the Red Flag Union, come to our Congress office. Your leaders have already lost their battle, anyway, Congress leaders will never listen to them, they betrayed the country as you yourselves heard."

Backing Company Unions

We see another new development ; the top Congress Leaders now speak from the platform of Hindustan Majoor Sevak Sangh, whose main objective is to set up rival unions to the existing Red Flag unions, thus splitting the unity of the working class and helping only the profiteering bosses, and whose branches have the patronage of the local bosses but not the support of the mass of workers except in Ahmedabad.

All this is certainly pitting the Congress against our Party, patriotic demagogy before the workers and actual fraternisation with the profiteers. It does not stop at reliance on owners for winning the workers' vote but seeks to split even working class unity. Red Flag Unions are slandered as traitor unions while in contrast semi-company unions glorified as Congress unions. It is a clean right-about-turn in the relationship of the Congress with the working class and it arises straight from the latest policy of anti-Communism.

Instead of a middle-class—working-class alliance against the vested interests, we get greater demagogy for the workers, greater reliance upon the owners for certain electoral victory, and official Congress support to rival semi-company unions to wean the workers away from Communist influence.

The profiteers do gain if the Congress can break the organised strength of the working class embodied in their Red Flag unions and if they can shake the hold of the Communist organisers over the mass of the working class. If the strength of the working class is weakened and the profiteers strengthened, how will the Congress Ministries cope with the fast growing industrial crisis and unemployment wave ?

The plan of the profiteers is a simple two-point plan.

First, help the Congress to win and earn the right to demand the removal of controls, thus getting the chance to make more profits under Congress Raj than British Raj.

Second, resist measures of immediate rehabilitation with the plea that industrial planning is only possible after freedom has been won and argue that in the meanwhile unemployment is inevitable if Indian industry is to be run at all.

No top Congress leaders have even referred to any immediate plan to stop the unemployment wave, to find more employment, to liquidate profiteering and produce more goods.

On the other hand utterly wrong ideas, which play straight into the hands of profiteers, are being preached. For example, Pandit Nehru in the *Hindustan Times* report of his New Delhi speech (Nov. 2) warned against Communists fomenting strikes under Congress Ministries.

Pandit Nehru has no time to see the bitter economic crisis in the India of today. He therefore does not see that the strikes taking place are not *fomented* by Communists but the natural and inevitable battles of the workers to safeguard their existence, to fight back unemployment and wage-cuts.

Clearly enough, if this outlook of Pandit Nehru persists, then under Congress Ministries, Panditji will be logically led to justifying the jailing of Communist strike-leaders and the shooting down of the strikers.

But what will the working class say? The only conclusion they will be forced to will be that the Congress Raj is no different from the British Raj so far as the workers are concerned. The owners would, of course, be able to get away with their propaganda that unemployment is inevitable in the post-war period and the Communists are trying to exploit the situation against the Ministry because they are anti-Congress.

We assure you beforehand that we know how to face bullets but we can also promise you that Congress Ministries will have to face from Communist MLAs concrete proposals for providing immediate employment, with available technical means.

Zemindars Also Join Up

Exactly a similar, if not worse, development is taking place in the rural areas where the Kisan Sabha is strong and we are contesting the elections. Village Communists are no other than the large majority of active Congress workers themselves who became organisers of Kisan Sabha and later joined our Party.

The same zemindars who opposed the Congress in the past now are getting inside the Congress or supporting it. They see the real danger to their parasitical existence and overlordship of the village in the strength and work of the Kisan Sabha and realise that our Party can be fought through the Congress ; thus they are convinced that under cover of Congress patriotism their own past sins can be hidden and landlordism saved in some form or the other.

Anti-Communist Congressmen think they are *using* the landlords against the Communists because most of the old Congress workers have unfortunately turned Communist and Communists have gained popularity during their own absence in jail by working for food, cloth and any other dire necessity of the peasant. They argue : let us now smash Communist influence by all the means that we can use now ; then later, we will be able to reorganise the Congress ; if these landlords were against the Congress in the past, does not their coming with the Congress show how strong the Congress has become.

Using the feudal landlord's influence and his gang unleashes such a flood of obscenity and goondagiri that what is happening in the towns pales into insignificance.

The Congress Press, taking its cue from your speeches, popularises your anti-Communist lead as resurgent Indian nationalism liquidating treacherous elements, a struggle between a *giant*, the Congress, and the infant, our Party.

If it were so, by now we would have been crushed. You have spoken the word, the Congress Press has done its part of the job and the whole country knows what the Congress leadership thinks of the policy of our Party. But still we live, fight and grow.

New Stage In Congress History

Anti-Communism is not only an expression of ignorance of the modern world and a factual gross under-estimate of the influence of our Party. All this was always there.

Anti-Communism being hoisted on the Congress banner marks a new stage in the growth of the Congress : it marks the end of the battle to acquire a greater democratic base at the bottom as had happened from stage to stage in the past history of the Congress. It is, on the other hand, the beginning of the stage of a new strengthening of the vested interests inside the Congress, of their greater hold over the Congress leadership, of their greater influence in shaping practical policies.

Every national organisation is faced with a similar choice on the eve of power, either to place greater reliance on the vested interests or to have greater faith in the people. The first leads to struggle against the democartic elements within the movement itself, the latter to new efforts for more popular awakening and for greater unity of all popular elements for the final leap forward.

Anti-Communism is another name for going anti-democratic not more and more into the people, but off into the arms of the vested interests.

If the Congress relies upon the profiteer-owners for destroying the Communist-built working-class movement, who will build new industries for the nation, produce more goods for the people, even with available resources ? The triumphant profiteer ?

We Communists cannot be wiped out without destroying the Trade Unions and the Kisan Sabhas. And the more we are attacked the deeper we will go into the working class and peasantry, deeper than ever before. The more we work among the toilers, the stronger we become as a political force. We are thus immortal.

We are not bothered about our fate at your hands. But your anti-Communist policy only results in giving the line clear to all Congress leaders to organise the Congress for a head-on conflict with the organised Trade Union and Kisan movements of our country. It automatically leads to a closer alliance of the Con-

gress with the local vested interests and to giving the Congress badge to the most unprincipled Labour leaders who can be found in every industrial area.

It is very easy to produce anti-Communist mass frenzy in the town middle class through the press but if this is done, what will the conscious working class and organised sections of the peasantry say about the Congress ?

How does it lead to struggle against British rule ? For it is only struggle against sections of the Indian people and worst of all, it is struggle against the forces of new democracy, the organised working class and the peasantry of our country.

Anti-Communism is anti-national because it means that patriot fights patriot, because it divides people from people, because it disrupts the toilers' movements while strengthening the exploiters. It has been the banner of reactionary politicians and greedy profiteers. The longer you flaunt it, the greater shame will it bring and never any glory.

XVI. IN THE NAME OF OUR CULTURE

THE CONGRESS IS THE GREATEST NATIONAL ORGANISATION of our people and you are its respected and acknowledged political leadership. To differ from you is no pleasure but a painful duty. We get the strength to stand up to you on the basis of the soundness of our policy, the strength of our Party and the support of the people among whom we work from day to day. And more.

While we find you, the top political leaders of our country, becoming blindly prejudiced against our Party and calling it names, we find the best of the leaders of our Cultural Renaissance expressing solidarity with us, admiring our work and looking upon our Party with hope and respect. While you use poisoned arrows, they give us flowers instead.

We will only mention a few of the tallest from our cultural world.

Josh - "Shair-e-Inqilab"

Josh Malihabadi is the greatest living Urdu poet and in the grand tradition of Urdu poetry. He has been a firm friend of the Congress for long. He knows all our young Urdu poets and writers and helps them in every way. Our political opponents have put into his ears every conceivable slander against us, he discussed them all with our comrades, as also the political turns in our patriotic policy. He is popularly called *Shair-e-Inqilab*. And all through he has remained a firm friend of our Party, contributes to all our funds. He sent the following letter and a couplet to us after your anti-Communist hunt had already begun, along with his Rs. 150 in response to our call for our latest 5-Lakh Party Fund.

"Herewith, I enclose my contribution to your Fund.

"Today your Party is being attacked from many sides.
But the moral and spiritual level of your opponents is as

low as your aims and ideals are high, praiseworthy and full of strength.

"I am confident that in the end success and the victory are yours !

"Each moment hangs upon you its weight of new sufferings—

"As to a crooked world the living truth you tell,

"God's help keep your light ever burning—

"Men who tread the path of the turbulent storm."

Poona, Nov. 15, 1945.

Sd. Josh

(Translated from the Urdu)

Sumitranandan - Hindi's Sweetest Lyricist

Sumitranandan Pant is considered the foremost Hindi poet of the day : he initiated and led what is called the Tagore epoch in Hindi literature. He came to accept Marxist ideology and for about a decade has been a friend of our Party. When he sent in his last donation to the Party Fund he wrote :

" . . . It is from you people that I get inspiration and food for the mind. I am a lover of Beauty and my Beauty is the life of the People : that is why Communism impresses me. I wish that some talented poet should free the Beauty of Communism—which is the Good of the People—from its political and economic fetters so that the people easily grasp it and retain it for ever in their hearts. I am charmed by the Beauty of Man and I believe that Communism alone can remove the wordly dross and let the human Soul shine in its pristine glory. I welcome Communism as a new force in culture and wish a rich growth of the Communist Party. Here and there in my "Gramya" ("Of the Village") and "Yugavani" ("The Voice of the Age"), I have tried to throw some light on this new world cultural force."

Sd. Sumitranandan Pant

He sent Rs: 100 to the Party Fund.

Vallathol-Tagore Of Kerala

Mahakavi Vallathol is to Kerala what Poet Tagore was to Bengal in every sense of the word. He naturally became pro-Soviet quite early and afterwards friendly to our Party too.

Recently he came to Bombay with his Kathakali troupe. The anti-Communists tried their best to dissuade him from speaking on the platform of the Friends of the Soviet Union of which he is the Vice-President. When they saw that he was undeterred, they tried to break his meeting and threw stones at him while he was speaking. He lowered his head and putting his long finger on his head, said :

“It is all bald, with only a few white hair left, you can break it open very easily. If you think that by fighting among ourselves and killing me, you can get freedom, you are welcome.”

The audience was shocked but the anti-Communists were not shamed. They continued booing and hissing. Such is anti-Communism.

The Mahakavi visited our Party Headquarters to express his fraternal sympathy for our cause. He told P. C. Joshi :

“They come (the anti-Communists) to me in Kerala, they come to me here too. I talk to them in my own way. But they have no sense. I tell them I know the Communists, they are good people, they do good things, they say good things. Why do you waste time fighting them? They can give me no answer but ultimately go away.”

And his big laugh continued even after the interpreter had finished translating his words. Mahakavi's heart is as simple as his own Malayalee people are. He sticks to the old way of life and is *national* if any Malayalee is today. His own traditional scale of the Good of course made no sense to the “modern” anti-Communists and the simple-hearted Mahakavi is at a loss to understand why they lack sense to the extent of insulting and beating a venerable old man like him and go mad against our Party.

The Mahakavi is known throughout Kerala as a friend of the Congress and also the Communists. He regrets present-day conflicts from the bottom of his heart and takes every opportunity to speak out his mind.

We could multiply names from the second rankers in every walk of literary and creative activity for a new cultural revival in our ancient country.

What Does This Mean ?

We are no pettyfogging lawyers to pit them against you in our defence. They were and are firm supporters of the Congress. They are equally good supporters of our Party. We appeal to you to see in our Party what they see, the continuity of the same national movement at whose head you yourselves stand and not inimical hostility to it as you paint us. Irrational prejudices make you grossly factional. The openness of the creative mind keeps them non-partisan even in the most distressing and trying times. If your blind hostility dispirits us, their fraternal support sustains us and we endeavour not to get provoked by you and to continue to remain worthy of the warm sympathy of the greatest leaders and thousands of workers on the cultural front.

As we would intensify our political work to meet your suicidal offensive, stand our own ground and ensure that you welcome us back into the Congress or seek unity with us as a party, so would we intensify our cultural work to rouse our people against social degradation, national enslavement and cultural extinction so that every honest Indian sees that creative work, inspired and inspiring writing, truthful description of reality, merciless exposure of falsehood and hypocrisy is coming only from the Communists or pro-Communist writers and cultural workers.

The very fact that the tallest leaders in our cultural world today sympathise with and support us and our Party which helped to initiate and strengthen two new movements, the Progressive Writers' and People's Theatre which are getting wider and wider support and great popular response, should come as an eye-

opener to you and prove if any non-partisan living proof was necessary, that we are on the right side, the side of our people and that we play a worthy growing role in their cultural revival too.

All we seek to remind you is that even since its birth, Indian awakening took two forms, the political movement for our national independence from British rule and the Renaissance for a new cultural revival and the two together make our national movement for a new, free and happy India.

Both these movements are inevitably interdependent and have grown up as such. Today we, a young and rising force in both the movements, hear from you the foremost leaders of our political movement, words of passion and not reason and hear the call of strife and not solidarity ; but from them, the foremost leaders of our cultural movement, we hear words of love and get expressions of sympathy for the common cause of the reign of Truth, Justice and Freedom in our great and ancient country. We get the strength that comes from being right in a great and hard battle.

XVII. TRAITORS ? TREACHERY ?

WE ASSURE YOU THAT YOUR ATTITUDE TOWARDS OUR policy and Party made our Party leadership carry on the most intensive heart-searching and the most serious thinking of which we were capable. But the more the different facets of your anti-Communism became visible, the more we became convinced that we are right and you are wrong.

You call us a Party of traitors. Coming from you, the leadership of the oldest organisation of our people, this accusation hurts so hard that we have to close our eyes and bring back to ourselves the image of our Party as it is in different provinces.

Revolutionaries Of All Ages

We think first of the Land of Five Rivers where the founders of the Ghadr Party were born and work even today under the banner of our Party. They were sons of poor peasants themselves and among the earliest of Indian revolutionary groups. They have spent more years in jails than most of you have been in the Congress.

We think of the Babbar Akalis of the 1920s whose tales of epic heroism and selfless sacrifice are the pride of every Sikh peasant. They too are all today under the banner of our Party.

We think of the present leaders of the Party in the Punjab, Sardar Teja Singh Swatantra and Sardar Sohan Singh Josh whom the Akalis of the twenties considered among the most promising of their young leaders.

We think of the immortal Bhagat Singh and know that his four living comrades serving their life terms in jails have all joined the Party.

The memory of Bhagat Singh takes our mind to his doubles in Bengal. We recall that the vast majority of the young revolutionaries thrown up in the widespread terrorist upsurge of the thirties, all came to accept Communism while yet in jail. We recall the most common remark inside all the political circles of Bengal, that "the best of the terrorist boys of old have gone

over to the Communist Party, we have no workers." We think of our Bengali comrades yet behind the bars, some household names throughout the province, all in their own districts, 26 of them who together have spent 378 years in confinement. They are from every single terrorist case of the period. (The full list is enclosed as an appendix.)

Recently 29 of these pre-Reform prisoners were released, 24 of them after serving a total of 290 years inside prison walls reported for immediate duty at our Provincial Party Headquarters.

We think of Kerala where the peasants lovingly call our Party, "the Party of our Kayyur boys" (4 young peasant-comrades including Hindu and Muslim, touchable and untouchable), hanged in 1943 and immortalised in every peasant home through the songs that the peasant youth sing of their martyrdom, whenever they march to a kisan or political rally.

We think of K. P. R. Gopalan and his 16 young lieutenants serving life terms for Kisan Sabha activity. We think of the fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters and wives of these comrades who are either inside the Party or regard the Party as their own and help it in every way.

We think of the three ex-Secretaries of the Kerala Provincial Congress Committee who will contest the Elections as Communist candidates.

We think of Sardar Chandroth Kunhiraman Nair, the initiator and organiser of the 3,000-strong Congress Volunteer Corps of 1934, who is now a leader and organiser inside our Party.

We come to Bombay last where our opponents talk the loudest; where the Party has organised and led four industrial general strikes in 1928, 1929, 1934 and 1940 and three political strike actions (Anti-Simon Commission in 1927, Anti-Black Bill in 1938 and Anti-War in 1940), where every working-class street has its own tales of heroism against the police and owners' goondas, where several workers were martyred in fighting battles, including Parshuram Jadhav, Babu Maruti (Marathi), Papa Mian (Muslim), Bahiru Chavan and Waghmare (Untouchable).

It is a great and proud record, of sacrifices untold, heroism unparalleled, of martyrs who mounted the gallows with "Com-

munist Party Zindabad" on their lips, battle-sacred warriors of all ages and classes ; from the snow-white bearded Babas of the Punjab to the shiny black peasant boys of Kerala ; from the *bhadralog* youth that was Ambika Chakravarty as a Chittagong Armoury Raider, to the Ambikada of our comrades, who has spent 26 out of his 55 years inside jail and says : " I have after all found the Party of my dream " ; from Parshuram Jadhav who was shot dead by a police bullet in the general strike while yet a youngster, to Babu Maruti's mother who when in Bombay on a visit from her village home in Poona District came to a Bombay workers' rally to once more pledge in the name of her martyred son her devotion to the Red Flag and to repudiate the foul slanders against our Party.

Names after names roll on, stories after stories come to the mind. And despite all patience that such names and stories inevitably give, we cannot but say that never before has a more shameless lie been uttered in our country than the lie that our Party is a traitor party. Some of the oldest and the bravest names of Indian revolutionaries adorn its register of membership, its total membership is the living embodiment of every phase of the revolutionary movement of our country.

Treachery? - This !

Ever since its foundation in the early twenties, our Party has been the most consistent champion of the demand that the aim of the Indian national movement must be declared to be complete independence. Most of you were in the Congress leadership even then and in annual session after session you were the most consistent champions of the line that Swaraj cannot be and need not be defined, that its meaning was written in every Indian heart.

Swaraj was supposed to be best left undefined until it was realised, like the realisation of God within. Metaphysical word-spinning used to be done to escape clear and unequivocal formulation of the Congress aim itself.

The calculation of the leadership then was : let us see what

the British offer ; why make a tall demand and never even reach the stage of bargaining ?

When the British sent out an All-White Mission (Simon) and thus when there was no room left for nursing illusions about the plans of the British, only then the Congress leadership turned and allowed the independence resolution to be passed. And even this elementary turn took four years (1927-30) of swaying to and fro.

We were the first to preach the need for the adoption of the democratic demands of the toiling masses as the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the Indian people, to give them, those needing freedom most, a clear idea of what Indian freedom will mean for their own life, better in contrast to their life under British rule.

We used to be sneered at for importing foreign ideas from books on Socialism, for being young lads who pretended to know better than the Mahatma, the leader and father of the Indian national movement. We used to be told self-confidently that we should go away to Russia if we seriously wanted to put into practice the ideas we preached, and were wasting our breath inside the Congress if we had any hope of the Congress adopting such demands and thus throwing away the zemindars and capitalists into British arms. Most of you were the Congress leadership even then and the opposition of many of you was mainly from two angles. First, ideological—that they were new-fangled, foreign and anti-national ideas. Secondly, practical—that they would strengthen the British and weaken the Congress in the battle for freedom.

When we are called anti-national as we are even today, it is worthwhile to recall that period and who used to stand for what at that time.

It needed the experience of the failure of the first movement of the thirties (1930) to come to the conclusion that the formulation of the Fundamental Rights was necessary to draw the toiling masses into the national struggle ; minus their participation, the British could always crush it through superior force and the movement itself petered out after the arrest of Congress workers.

In the meanwhile, immediately after our birth as a Party,

we went straight to the working class and demonstrated that our "foreign" ideas worked on our native soil and among our own people. We founded the biggest and most militant Trade Unions that Asia had yet seen and organised one of the most widespread and well-organised strike waves in Indian history (1926-30) ; we produced a living Indian working-class movement under the Red Flag which the Imperialist Government tried to nip in the bud through the Meerut Conspiracy Trial (1929).

Among the disillusioned Congress youth of the thirties we carried on the most intensive study circle propaganda on the real nature of Imperialism, the need for a genuine anti-Imperialist programme for the national movement based on the democratic mass movement of the workers and peasants. Through the example of our strike actions, we had already demonstrated that large scale and long-drawn mass actions could be fought even by unarmed people, without the fetish of non-violence and that police repression could be defeated by the vigilance and the actions of the militant worker youth organised as Strike Volunteers.

Ahead Of All

The actual example of the failure of the 1930 national movement and the living example of the birth of the working-class movement was there to make the Congress workers give an attentive ear to our ideas, programme, plan of action.

A general Left pro-Socialist ferment began to grow inside the Congress against which Gandhiji threatened to go out of the Congress in 1934, but it grew and grew in volume and the Congress Lefts organised themselves as the Congress Socialist Party and adopted a fraternal attitude towards our Party with the tacit understanding that they knew better how to approach the Congress mind but we had more practical experience of organising the masses and their actions and knew more of "ideology", i.e. fundamental policies and their correct analysis and formulation.

This new trend ultimately reflected itself in the new orientation of policy of the Congress itself under the leadership of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru from the Faizpur Congress onwards.

Pandit Nehru talked of a Constituent Assembly based on universal franchise, of a full-fledged democratic economy, of fraternal relations with all anti-Imperialist organisations and of the Congress becoming the United National Front against British Imperialism in alliance with the forces of world democracy and in friendship with the USSR in the West and China in the East.

The old leadership yielded because these new ideas seemed to go down among the people better and in fact led the Congress to its unparalleled electoral victory in 1936 general elections.

We were "anti-national" in the sense that we were the sharpest critics of the compromising attitude (remnants of old liberalism) and of the self-destructive tactics of leaders and workers "going to jail to win Swaraj" instead of organising the masses and educating them for mass action.

We were "more national" in the sense that ever since our birth, we were one step ahead of the Congress leadership in formulation of the national programme and working out methods of effective action.

We began pleading earlier for what the Congress itself later adopted as the basic programme of Indian freedom. We began doing first what Congress workers later thought must be done by Congressmen themselves—the organisation of the toiling masses and establishing their close relationship with the Congress.

We preached and practised FIRST what rose like a flood from within the Congress itself within a decade and in the next became common national heritage.

No Congressman today will argue that stating Swaraj to mean complete independence was unnecessary, that acceptance and popularisation of Fundamental Rights weakens the Congress, that workers and peasants should not be organised in their separate organisations. If he did, he would be considered a piece from some historical museum, and that too not Indian!

Who Failed, Who Succeeded ?

☞ Yet it was the Congress leadership that said all this to us in the years when we were in our infancy as Communists and as a party; the tragedy is that memory is such that, today after

we have worked our way to maturity by ceaselessly preaching and tirelessly carrying out in practice the very ideas at which they sneered, this very same leadership now turns round and tells us that we have been alien, anti-national and anti-Congress all through.

But it is during the war years particularly that we are alleged to have actually "betrayed" the country and stabbed the Congress in the back, through our unreal internationalism and through our lack of true nationalism. When our political policy is denounced by picturing it out of focus and by putting wrong titles underneath, it becomes necessary to recreate the background, to get the object in focus, to make the correct picture and finally to ask : What title must be put under whom ?

Those whose nationalism did not boil over into the choicest curses when Gandhiji's heart bled for the Westminster Abbey and he was prepared to postpone the struggle for national independence for the sake of Britain, later turned on us and when our heart bled for our own bombed cities and our love for our soil began asserting itself, we were told that we had no heart at all except for the Soviet Union.

Those who first proposed the tactic of *no mass struggle while Britain was in danger*, later proposed and threatened to implement the tactic of *mass struggle when India was in danger*. They failed to realise the national aim either way. Yet, instead of explaining their own national failure, they now claim the monopoly of patriotism and charge us in turn with national betrayal.

To charge one's fellow patriots of treachery in order to cover one's own failure as the leader of our people is not very good nationalism.

We are not ashamed but very proud of our role during the war period in the defence of our own country, in helping to save it from falling into Jap hands.

If the Jap plans for the invasion and subjugation of our country did not succeed, the causes are these :

- (1) First and foremost comes the heroic defence of Stalingrad and the annihilation of Hitler's armies at the hands of the Red Army which changed the whole course of

the war and dealt a decisive blow to the world plan of the Fascist aggressors.

It made India safe from the West and put the Jap aggressor on the defensive in the East.

(2) The strength of the Allied armies at the front so that despite all obstacles, they could put up a better and better defence the more time they got to get reinforcements while the Japs lost time, having to mass more forces and supplies to undertake the invasion of India single-handed, unaided by the attack from the West by their German allies.

(3) The role of our Party in keeping the whole working-class off sabotage and at the task of keeping up production for the Allied armies at the front and the railway lines running.

If during the years 1942-44, there was any conscious INDIAN contribution to the defeat of Japan and the defence of India, we would proudly claim that it was the continued production by the Indian working class under the leadership of our Party.

We never said nor did we ever believe that we could bring immediate Indian freedom on our own; that was clearly the task of all parties, as we said so many times. But we did say that we would do all in our power to help the defence of the country. Every non-Communist group forecast that we would be swept off our feet and that we were only committing suicide ourselves as a Party—but life itself has shown us alive and growing, their forecast all wrong.

We did what we had decided to do as our elementary patriotic duty to our country in danger and did it so well that the very elements who were certain that we were only liquidating ourselves as a political force, began charging us with betrayal of the national struggle. Human wit could make no better somersaults.

Ours was the only Indian political party that worked its hardest to keep its head on its shoulders and to do the job on hand, that suffered no illusions. Ours is the satisfaction of having done our duty as well as we could and against all odds.

Self-Determination - Real Issue

The real issue that divides us sharply today is not "People's War" but our ceaseless advocacy of self-determination. In fact it is a common saying among you that the Communists could be excused for their slogan of "People's War" which is now all over, after all ; but they now have taken to supporting Pakistan ; how can that be forgotten ? If we showed, the argument goes on, any signs of penitence about our past and there was any hope of our being reasonable in the present, and of our supporting the Congress in the elections against the League it would have been another question but the Communists are always known to be impossible, just fanatics, nothing can be done with them.

Such is the argument that goes on among you. And it has peeped through in your report too.

In other words, our unholy betrayal of the Congress in the past could be excused if we today lined up faithfully in the holy war of the Congress against the League.

We did not let our freedom sentiment within us lead us to doing the job of the Japs for them by going in for sabotage activities and imagine it was really fighting the British.

Similarly we do not let the same freedom sentiment within us lead us to fighting the Muslims, denying their just right and imagine that we are destroying the reactionary League and clearing the ground for fighting the British.

Our freedom sentiment, guided by the freedom principles as taught to us under our Party, never goes insane, but is transformed into the freedom programme for the period by our Party.

Since you, the Congress leadership, yet deal only with the freedom sentiment of the people in the evolution of your tactics and never go deeper, since you have always resisted new ideas that have come within the Congress to give a broader and deeper basis to the then existing aim and programme of the Congress, so also you resist our advocacy of self-determination.

In 1942 you only went by the freedom sentiment of the people and when we forecast the certain failure of your dead, you thought that we were being insolent and only coming in the way of fighting

the British and you were certain that the freedom sentiment of the people would sweep us away.

You were proved wrong and we were proved right in every single calculation and in the final outcome as well.

You now exploit the freedom sentiment of the people by misrepresenting our policy of that period as also our daily practice.

The task then was to win freedom by the tactics employed ; you were certain of victory and we forecast certain failure ; yet today it is you who turn on us and ask us to explain ourselves.

You think that the use against us of the words " freedom " and " betrayal " will finish us, for you argue : Was not our only capital against you the word " revolution," which you can now turn against us ?

This is the level to which you have brought political controversy in our country.

While we Communists are to be dealt with by freedom and revolution being turned against us, the League is also threatened with what you think to be its only weapon, its only capital, being turned against it ; this time not the " freedom " and " revolution " —but Islam and Religion !

Learned Ulema are now denouncing Pakistan as unIslamic because Mr. Jinnah has already said that it will be secular and democratic. English-knowing Muslim nationalists do research work into the marriage certificates of the League leaders and the records of the Assembly debates to find out how many times the League has advocated or supported progressive legislation instead of the dictates of medieval Islamic jurisprudence. The local Moulvis are mobilised to count the names and make the list of the local League leaders who keep no beards and the number of times they really visit the mosque for prayers.

Apply Freedom Principles To All

Such have never been and never will be our principles nor our ways. Those that want others to be their loyal stooges and ~~the~~ thinking men nor fighting warriors damn others for being the stooges of this or that. We were supposed to be British stooges in 1942, we are considered League-stooges in 1945. But we

could not be attacked as League stooges to the satisfaction of Congress masses, there is the sentiment for Hindu-Muslim unity and to plead for Congress-League unity cannot be very easily shown to be anti-national.

But the case for being British agents is much simpler. It is very simple indeed to argue that these ceaseless talkers about Revolution did not join the Revolution when it actually took place ! This, you all think, has just to be uttered and the people who are boiling over against the British will see us as being really an anti-national treacherous element.

The frustrated freedom sentiment of freedom-loving Congress masses is thus sought to be turned against our Party and its policy.

This and no other is the only interpretation of the way in which you all of the Congress leadership are denouncing our Party in your speeches. We have heard them with our own ears and we read their most detailed reports in the Congress dailies of the localities you visit.

We, however, treat the freedom-sentiment of our people much more sacredly and argue much more seriously, always taking for granted that our political critics and even opponents nurse the same sentiment within and that the issue to be argued out and struggled for is one of programme or of tactics. Our constant endeavour is to transform the freedom sentiment of our people into a programme based on freedom principles and evolve tactics that will be the most effective methods of achieving freedom in the period concerned.

It is on the plane of freedom principles that we advocate self-determination and demand its inclusion in the basic programme of the Indian national movement, for its next phase of *final* struggle for victory against British rule.

How can self-determination be opposed at all on the plane of freedom principles ? Self-determination is the very principle behind the national demand of complete independence against British Imperialism.

How can we refuse to apply it among ourselves ? We expect the British people to support our freedom demand against their own ruling class. How then can one justify one's oppo-

sition to the demand made by sections of one's own countrymen that we should apply it among ourselves first!

If the stage has come to tell the British to "Quit India" then the stage has also come to define the shape of that India for which we seek freedom. Against the British it is an idea, among ourselves it has to be made a reality or there will be misunderstanding, quarrels and all, as is but inevitable. This is just the plain issue of today.

Against the British we are all one and that is why no party could retain or win new popularity unless it adopted "complete independence" as its aim whether it was there at the time of its own birth or not.

But among ourselves we have differences and they arise from and live in our history, in our economy, in our culture, all the aspects of life that go to make a people. That is why when one is deeply moved by patriotic sentiments and closes his eyes it is not the image of India as a whole that comes to the mind but his own home in his own homeland and his own mother-tongue that comes most naturally to his tongue. Just because these differences are there, deep and vital, and freedom means different things to different people, so also different parties arise.

Against the British all our political parties swear enmity.

But among themselves they do not swear fraternity!

Define The Rights Of All

More, the nearer comes freedom, the more the differences among ourselves multiply. It is but natural that the minor parties should ask the major: "When the freedom of India has been won, what will happen to our own freedom, to those for whom we speak?" It is then not enough to define Indian freedom as against British domination; its shape and form as it will operate among ourselves must also be defined. To refuse to do this is patent injustice and cannot but lead to calamitous results, as it is happening today, when each attacks the other and goes down to the worst in order somehow or other to defeat the other party.

The first stage in the awakening of our people was the strug-

gle for the definition of the goal, against British Imperialism and for complete independence.

The second stage in the awakening of our people was the battle for the definition of the democratic rights of the people, irrespective of class and other differences, for mass mobilisation against British Imperialism and for the destruction of the mass influence of the allies of our British rulers—Indian vested interests.

The third stage has come today, the stage for the application of the principle of self-determination within the framework of a Free India, where all the people will enjoy democratic rights. The demand is being pressed home by the Muslim minority that fears domination by the Hindu majority as the weak fears the strong.

It cannot be opposed on principle. What is wrong with the demand that the freedom of India to be real must be the freedom of all and guarantee against domination by any ?

Unless the problem of self-determination is faced and solved by applying and evolving just principles, just boundaries and just mutual obligations, we cannot unite all freedom-loving Indians, we cannot win a free India.

The basic principle is already there as the very principle behind the Congress demand of national independence against the British ; it has to be carried forward to mean the independence of every section of the Indian people in their own natural homelands.

The basic concept is already there in the concept that the Congress has done the most to evolve and popularise the concept that all Indians are one family against the British rulers. It has to be carried forward to mean that a free India will be a family of free nations, with no chance or danger of one oppressing another.

The basic urge is already there in the very best Congress tradition of being the first and foremost champion of Hindu-Muslim unity before the masses, in its first heyday during the twenties.

The problem can be ignored no longer and only at our common peril.

Unity - Most Burning Issue

It is a basic programmatic issue, either the principle of freedom is applied within our country by our parties voluntarily or freedom does not come to our country and the British dictate what they decide. Freedom is not a principle that only has to be used and fought for as against the British but it has to be applied to the living problems of our own country and in building up our own freedom movement, for our own free State.

It is the most burning practical issue of the day, either the two main Indian parties, the Congress and the League, come to an understanding about the basic principles and structure of a Free India and together face the British Government with it or each will be appealing to the British to agree with itself and turn down the proposals of the other side, i.e., a British-imposed Constitution will emerge which will be neither of a free nor of a united India.

Neither on the plane of principles nor on that of practical urgency can our demand for the acceptance of the principle of self-determination as the basis of the Constitution of a Free India, nor our tireless advocacy of immediate Congress-League negotiations for its concrete application to achieve an agreed Indian Plan for the coming Constitution-making body, be resisted.

The form of Congress-League unity and the principle of self-determination came to us first rather than to any other Congress group or party for the same reasons which have made our Party the *first* consistent advocate of every *new* idea in our national movement.

An average Congressman today does not take the need for Hindu-Muslim unity for granted, the Congress leadership has been losing the Muslims more and more ever since 1920. Every Communist takes it for granted because if there are any *joint* mass organisation both of Hindus and Muslims, if any were born as such and have grown up as such ever since the joint Hindu-Muslim upsurge of 1920 movement collapsed, they are the Trade Unions and the Kisan Sabhas. Every Communist comes to love and respect the Muslims through his living experience of the Muslims at their best in strike struggles and other common

actions. Daily needs and daily battles knit together the masses we organise and lead. We do not just *talk* of Hindu-Muslim unity, we practise it in our daily life and work in the service of our people.

Our Party as the party of the oppressed seeks justice most and therefore was the first to give its ear to the grievances of the League and to think of a solution in terms of justice to all just claims.

Our Party considers freedom's battle as its foremost concern. The first thing a Communist learns is to learn the need for unity in action ; the second thing he is taught is that his heart must always respond to the call of justice ; the third thing he is taught is how to apply his head to whatever is the most burning problem for the freedom of India. Naturally enough we are the foremost advocates of the principle of self-determination in our national movement.

We Only Are Non-Communal

It is a tribute to the scientific outlook Marxism *imparts* that neither the League nor the Congress leadership charges our leadership with being communal as they do each other. They both regret that we do not agree with them when we refuse to join their factional drive against the other and suspect that we must be having some game of our own ; they go on to imagine us in their own image, the League leadership that we want to run away with the Muslim youth having lost the Congress youth by our attitude in 1942, and the Congress leadership that we want to become popular in the Muslim masses having lost the Congress masses in 1942. Both think we are clever enough to cook up new ideas and arguments to become popular. It is no accident that both have the typical elderly middle class professional politician's outlook not only towards our youth but also towards the people !

We know and respect thousands of Congressmen as being intensely freedom-loving and inherently just. We have ~~no~~ no doubt that their own patriotism and sense of justice within them which has grown through 60 years of ever-growing nobler Con-

gress tradition will rise to the occasion as they see the havoc that unfolds itself through the present anti-Communist and anti-League lead. Neither our Party nor the League would have lost any popularity among those sections of the people they at present lead because they represent something real, vital, distinctive which cannot be destroyed. All the problems that the present orientation of Congress policy are supposed to solve will come back to roost. The Constitution-making body will be a worse Simla Conference unless Congress-League agreement is achieved along the lines that we have been advocating. There is no other alternative.

You are the oldest political leadership of our greatest political organisation of which we have been very proud to be members. A generous heart and a tolerant mind should have been your natural possession. But things in India as they are, are not what they should be. You have called us what no fellow countryman of ours, however much he differed from us, ever called our Party—a party of traitors. You tell the people that we betrayed the country to the British. We could say with equal justification that you tried to sell it to the Japs. But we do not because it would be a lie. Tit for tat is not the Communist way, that's the law of the jungle.

Unable to take the country forward to its goal and finding other parties growing despite your opposition to them, you are reduced to slandering those from whom you differ.

In an enslaved country where freedom is and must be the common aim, you, the leadership of the premier freedom organisation, are engaged in slandering and fighting rather than understanding the view-point of and uniting with the second party of our country which represents the Muslims (as much as any organisation can, by any rules so far known to test the popular character and representative capacity of an organisation), and our Party which has organised and leads whatever we have of the working-class and peasant movements in our country.

In your mouth, freedom has been reduced to a *mantram*. From your head come such "plans of freedom" that are unleashing the forces of civil and class wars.

The more you slander our Party the more we shall keep

our head for we know how bad is the future for our country when you, its foremost leadership, are reduced to uttering political slanders instead of making political arguments and when all your practical plans are for fighting each other and you do not even think of a common plan for fighting our British rulers.

Freedom, Only This Way

For we know that if you do not call off your anti-League campaign after the elections are over and you have seen that the Muslims are behind the League and that you must unite with the League, you will be forced to preach anti-Muslim ideas, e.g., the Muslims as a whole are reactionary, they do not love freedom, they cannot be got to fight the British, and the rest.

For we know that if you do not call off your anti-Communist campaign after the elections and seeing that the Communists despite your full-throated opposition have managed to get returned from the labour seats, you will have to go on to the stage of strike-breaking, shooting the workers and jailing the Trade Union leaders, repeating the slanders that the British bureaucrats used to utter time and time again against Communists provoking strikes, some insignificant Reds wanting to become somebodies in labour etc., but what they have not dared openly repeat after the Meerut Trial and the experience of more than one country-wide strike wave.

We had to teach the Burra Sahebs to respect labour, will we have to teach the same lesson to the Burra Leaders of our own people ?

For we know that the more the Congress and the League fight each other and the less we can prevent it, the more inevitably will come a British-manufactured constitution for India.

The more you slander our Party, the more shall our Party glorify the Congress. For we cannot associate a slandering and bankrupt leadership with the greatest freedom organisation of our country. In fact, all our criticism against you will be directed from the point of view of the freedom of India ~~itself~~, in terms of freedom principles themselves and for the shortest and surest path to its immediate realisation.

You can fight us your hardest but you will find that our Party remains not only alive and kicking but our mass influence also continues to grow.

It is easy enough to slander us but it is the anti-Communist slanderers who have always lost.

It is easy enough to say that we shall finish the Communist Party in our country but in all countries it is the professed liquidators of Communism who stand liquidated.

We Indian Communists have no other battle before ourselves than the battle of Indian freedom, the battle for brotherly understanding between the Congress and the League and for an agreed plan of Indian freedom to escape the imposition of a British plan for an Imperialist post-war Constitution.

How can slanders disgrace a Party whose immediate slogans are the basic principles of patriotism itself :

—Indian must not fight Indian !

—Freedom of India must mean freedom of all Indian homelands !

—Strength of India against all aggressors and unity of India for reconstruction must live in a great Indian Union which will be a family of free nations, all equal among themselves and yet together for defending Indian freedom and for co-ordinated planning of prosperity in every homeland !

One against All is the law of the jungle. This is what the Congress-League and the Congress-Communist conflict really is. *One for All, All for One* must become the true Indian way for Indian freedom, Indian prosperity and Indian greatness.

These are the noble ideals of patriotism at their best, and in their most modern form, uniting the just demands of the Congress and the League and eschewing their unjust claims against each other ; these are the ideals that our Party preaches today when it works for Congress-League-Communist unity in the common battle for the freedom of our peoples.

Those who slander our Party soil their own mouths, set brother against brother and postpone the day of Indian freedom by paving the path for the introduction of the British Imperialist Plan for post-war India, the plan of continued slavery for our ancient nation.

APPENDICES

I. AN OPEN LETTER TO THE WORKING COMMITTEE FROM THE INDIAN COMMUNISTS

DEAR COMRADES,

IT IS THE GRAVEST HOUR IN THE LIFE OF OUR ANCIENT NATION. An alien imperialist bureaucracy keeps our great people chained and goes as the Government of the land. Our country is threatened with foreign invasion, both from the East and the West. To-day the heroic resistance of the Chinese people in the East, the epic resistance of the Soviet people in the West is holding the Fascist invaders at bay. This is how when these two peoples are fighting to defend their own homelands they are saving our land too. Tomorrow, any day, and in the very near future, we too will have to perform our own patriotic duty.

You are the respected leadership of our proud national movement, represented by the great Congress, which has been built up with the blood of our martyrs, which is supported by countless millions of our people. Yours is the serious responsibility to guide our 50 years' old movement for freedom. We Communists are 15 years old, born in the womb of the same broad national movement and we have endeavoured our very best to strengthen it. All of us proudly carry our Congress membership card, as a treasured possession of our national heritage, as a living inspiration to fight the battle of India's freedom, shoulder to shoulder with our fellow patriots.

In the present national emergency you have given a lead to the country. We consider it our duty to speak our mind to you. We think we have a right to be heard by you and all our fellow fighters for freedom.

Before you gave the nation your present lead, the national leadership among themselves were sharply divided, which is no more a secret to any patriot. The most revered leader, Gandhiji, himself, suffered from the illusion that the Japs may not come to India, that an honourable peace with the Japs may be possible. His faithful lieutenants damned all talk of national resistance as moonshine and argued that it was too late to talk of defending the country and fighting for National Government.

We are glad, as all thinking patriots are, that this suicidal policy has been rejected on the persuasion of Pandit Nehru, Maulana Azad and others.

We rejoice that the defeatists inside the national leadership have been defeated and you have unanimously come to the conclusion that :

India Must Defend Herself.

India Must Resist Fascist Aggression.

India Must Line Up With The United Nations.

India Must Have Power To Organise Her Defence.

India Must Be Free to Fight For Freedom.

We, however, deplore the practical lead you have given. We are fanatically convinced that it does not lead the patriots towards the fulfilment of the tasks you have yourselves set the nation ; but will produce the opposite results.

You rightly point the accuser's finger at the imperialist bureaucracy which keeps our people down, which is itself unfit and incompetent to halt the Fascist invaders and which won't let us defend our motherland. You say before we fight the Fascists let us fight these gentlemen. Let us work this out.

You are right when you say the imperialist bureaucrats must go, they can't defend our country, they will hand us over, bound hand and foot, to the Fascist enslavers, as they did in Malaya, as they did in Burma. How to kick them out of the seats of power, how to ensure that they cease being the Government of our country ? There is no other way to achieve this except the total and rapid mobilisation of the strength of our nation, which in our enslaved condition, means nothing else than to achieve our *National Unity*. The struggle against the imperialist bureaucracy is the struggle for national unity. Let us have Congress-League unity, backed by all the patriotic organisations of our people. The day we succeed in achieving this all-in national unity, the bureaucrats go and National Government comes. *Unity For Freedom !* You yourselves made this the key slogan of the national movement and to-day you say freedom first, then unity will follow ! Will freedom come as a gift ? Surely that is an illusion. It has to be fought for now as always. To-day fighting for freedom means being busy day and night forging our national unity. This you give up as an impossible task. This, however, is the only way to get rid of the bureaucrats and get ready to face the Japs. This is the only way to utilise the valu-

able time given by the Chinese and Soviet Armies. You have turned your back towards this course.

You have called upon the British bureaucrats to go home and leave our country to us. We won't insult your intelligence by suggesting that you expect them to act like obliging gentlemen and not the enslavers of our people. How else then do you expect them to leave India for the Indians? You obviously expect the peoples of the United Nations to intervene. Does it not hurt your national self-respect, as it hurts ours, that we should leave it to the other nations to do our job for us?

If the peoples of Britain, the U.S.A., China and other freedom-loving nations are unable to make the British Government see sense you plan to launch the traditional type of struggle. Such a "struggle" to-day will not liquidate but strengthen the bureaucracy. Most of you know from the experience of the Cripps negotiations and some of you have said it openly that the British imperialist rulers don't want the Indian *People* to fight the Fascist invaders, for they know that that leads India to freedom and the end of their domination.

Is it not plain enough that to start your "struggle" is just to play the game of the imperialists and the bureaucrats? What will happen if and when you start the struggle?

They will quietly put you and thousands of active Congress workers inside jails and sanctimoniously declare that it is their unfortunate duty to be able to save India from the Fascist invaders. They would have divorced you from contact with the people who need you and every patriot in their own midst more than ever before. It is your historic responsibility to organise our people for national resistance. And here you would leave them leaderless and at the mercy of the mad bureaucrats. You would leave the defence of our nation in the hands of a mercenary army and a foreign Government. Can't you imagine what our fate will be, would it not be the same as that of the Malayans and the Burmese peoples? Does this not make you shudder and shoulder instead the responsibility for forging Congress-League unity here and now.

The bureaucrats would damn the Indian national movement before the freedom loving nations as Fifth Columnist. No amount of passionate declamations against Fascism, no amount of our friendly declarations for the United Nations could hide the naked truth that "struggle" of the type you visualise to throw the British bureaucrats out objectively would help to let the Jap

Fascists in. In your mind, of course, you want to fight the Fascists when they come and, therefore, want to clean-up the British bureaucrats now. The British imperialist rulers will call upon the people of the world to listen in to the Tokio and Berlin Radios to convince themselves that your struggle suits the Fascists fine. Instead of getting for India's national demand the intervention of the United Nations your "struggle" would lead to its postponement. The ignorant will say India's patriots are unreliable, our friends will call us confused. Is this the way you want world democracy to react to Indian democracy? The very thought makes us hang our heads in shame.

We beseech you to see how by *your proposed struggle you will not be really hitting at the alien bureaucrats but hitting our own cause.*

The battle for India's freedom has to be fought, and fought by us; and more, it has to be fought today within a broader, a worldwide framework, alongside the peoples of the world. The old enslaver holds us down, a new and a worse enslaver is blasting his way towards us. British imperialist rule over us is doomed. The only issue is: will the Japs "destroy" the British Imperialist hold over us, i.e., replace it by Jap Fascism or will we be able to rescue our country from the hands of the bureaucrats in time to establish a National Government, organise successful National Resistance and march to our own national liberation in a liberated world? From the sources of our rich heritage the only weapon that counts to-day is our national unity, for, it is our national existence that is at stake, then let us rely upon it and rally for it. In our enslaved position the only strength that we have is our national unity. That is our shield and our sword. You are the leadership of the nation. You can't afford to take a single false step which will spell disaster for our people and lead to the death and destruction of our nation under Fascism. You have to take the initiative to forge national unity for National Government. This is the course that at once liquidates the British hold over us and enables us to put up an effective resistance to the Fascist invaders.

Against the Imperialist Bureaucracy, National Unity for National Government.

Against the Fascist Invaders, National Unity for National Resistance.

Such alone is the path of the real national struggle of the Indian people.

The sort of struggle Gandhiji is visualising and in which the rest of you have acquiesced is not a plan of struggle but a gamble, it is not fighting for freedom but escape into jails, it is not leading the people but forsaking them, it does not liquidate the imperialist bureaucracy but makes us live under it now to be passed on as chattel to their successors, the Jap Fascists. Such a "struggle" will not get us freedom but Fascism.

Prepare the country to fight the Fascist invaders to the death. That will be fighting for freedom, because such is the only path to our freedom.

Go out to unite the nation. The day you forge Congress-League unity, National Government comes and the bureaucrats go.

You properly lead and we will loyally follow
India will emerge free in a free world.
INQILAB ZINDABAD !

(From *People's War* dated July 26, 1942.)

II. INDONESIAN LEADER HATTA ON COLONIAL PEOPLE'S ATTITUDE TO WAR AGAINST JAPAN

We give here a statement by Mahamed Hatta now Vice-President of the Indonesian Republic which is heroically fighting against the British-Dutch Imperialist reconquest of Indonesia. It was made soon after Pearl Harbour on December 8, 1941, and gives clearly what attitude the Colonial peoples enslaved by British or Dutch Imperialism should take towards the Japanese invaders. No one in his senses can charge Hatta with going over to "the other side," the side of the Imperialists. His line is based on the principle "rely on yourself" JUST AS OUR LINE WAS.

OUR PEOPLE WHO ARE, WITH THE EXCEPTION OF A SMALL NUMBER in the armed forces and in the militias, unarmed, and who are deprived of taking any responsibility for their fate, must think that this war does not concern us. One should not think under these conditions that it does not matter much as to who is the master, the Dutch or the Japanese. This stand-point is

wrong, and will surely damage the interests of Indonesia for ever. No doubt there are people who think this way, and there are even those who say that Japan will rule us for 100 days (old Indonesian legend), after which we will be free, but it is our duty, as conscious human beings, to oppose such line of thinking. We must tell these fools, that such wishful thinking will jeopardize for ever the interests of Indonesians.

I am making this public statement, because there are among us (some) who are fond of imitating the actions of outsiders. We have seen that Rashid Ali has invited German help for the establishment of his country's independence from the British. We believe that Rashid Ali is an Arab nationalist who loves his country. But don't forget that his narrow-minded outlook will bring his country more suffering than ever before. If the Germans come into Iraq, the people of Iraq will not become "freer"; on the contrary they will be enslaved, and that under the heels of the Nazis. For the Nazis there are no such things like a Parliament, and rights for the foreigners (non-Nazis—*Writer*); for the Nazis there is only one thing, i.e., obey the Government orders. If not, there is for you the bullet or the concentration camp.

While judging Rashid Ali, don't forget that he is an Arab nationalist, who does not know of any definite political line. A People's movement of the European and Indonesian type never existed there. Usually only those who have the money become the leaders, and they have no definite political programme. Their aim is only one: Independence. And every leader wants to be a dictator. I have obtained this information not merely from reading books but also verbally from the mouths of Syrian and Egyptian leaders whom I know when we were together in the League For Struggle Against Imperialism And For National Independence; most of the Arab leaders tried to obtain help from the enemies of their opponents. In 1915, he sought British help to fight his Turkish masters, and now in order to be completely free, he is seeking German help against the British. He forgets what the Italians and the Germans have done in Palestine in the last world war. He forgets that many of the leaders have been shot dead with German bullets. All these because they have never learned to fight for freedom in accordance with the principle of 'rely upon your own self.' They all expect foreign help.

There is another instance of a leader's political line, which

is apt to be followed as an example, and that is that of Subhas Chandra Bose, who, in accordance with the latest reports, has outspokenly sought the help of Germany and of Italy to drive the British from India. Bose was once the President of the Indian National Congress, and for that reason he has acquired great influence and popularity, and just because of this latter, his actions can easily become an object of imitation. Bose's course of action does not surprise us at all, for since long he has had Fascist leanings. Fascism with its kind of propaganda and its boisterous show, has a great attraction for the young and the hot-tempered. A young man likes bragging, hero-worship and is ready to be at the feet of a hero, his idol. And Fascism and Nazism with their resources to produce these necessary factors can easily capture the heart of the young man. The youth likes action and Fascism supplies this. And Bose is a man of this type.

If you want to take an example from India, take Jawaharlal Nehru and not Bose. *Nehru has always been opposing British Imperialism but he respects the British, he never asks for help from the Fascists or the Nazis.* In his writing and in his actions he has supported China's struggle against Japanese Imperialism. He even wants to form an Asiatic League, but Japan on account of her aggressiveness should be excluded. It is small wonder that in this war Nehru remains opposing Japanese Imperialism.

III. ON THE REPORTED DEATH OF SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

SUBHAS BOSE IS DEAD. SOME HOWEVER DOUBT IF THE NEWS IS correct.

Bose went out of India to seek the support of the Axis. The Indian national movement stood against the Axis, only very few had the illusion that Indian liberation could come with the aid of the Fascists. Vast majority believed that Bose's path could not but lead to India's passing from the British to the Jap hands.

It is of course the British overlordship of our country that creates a Bose. But much worse has happened. The severity of post-August repression and the continued denial of power to

the people has today led a great majority of our political leaders and the press to glorify Bose as a patriot and martyr, some of course qualify by stating that he was misguided.

To think only of his motives and forget the pro-Fascist policy that he pursued is to lose the confidence and respect of the democratic elements abroad for the Indian freedom movement and train the rising generation of Indian youth in the belief that Indian freedom cannot be won except through an alliance with rival imperialism.

Our differences with Bose and his Forward Bloc have been political and we have fought with political weapons despite their use of slanders and daggers against us which have led to the death of five of our comrades in Bengal alone. But we are against a foreign Government keeping them in prison. We demand and support the campaign for the release of his followers. We want them to put their policy before the people and face their verdict. We will judge them anew by the new policy they formulate in the new situation. We are prepared to forget a lot because of British domination over our country. If they formulate a policy that will help our suffering people and enslaved country we will welcome them. If they pursue a policy that looks to any Imperialist power for support, divides our patriots or helps the hoarders, we will doggedly oppose them.

(P. C. Joshi's Statement,
issued on the 27th August, 1945.)

IV. INDIAN NATIONAL ARMY

THE TRIAL OF THE INDIAN NATIONAL ARMY LEADERS IS THE CENTRE of public attention. The British Government treats those who joined the I.N.A. as ordinary war criminals and patronisingly proclaims that it is being as lenient as it could be by putting up for trial only the leaders. The Congress leaders and the Nationalist Press are glorifying them as national heroes.

If the legal quibbling of New Delhi seeks to hide imperialist vindictiveness, the glorification in the Nationalist Press is not a true expression but a distorted reflection of national sentiment.

To be able to come to an honest and democratic conclusion the simple questions everyone has to ask himself are : Can we

call I.N.A. a freedom army? Could Indian freedom be won in alliance with Fascist Japan? Behind the I.N.A. stood the sword of the Jap Samurai; that sword would have been hanging over the heads of our people if the I.N.A. venture had succeeded.

Our hatred of the British should not lead us to giving direct and indirect support to such reactionary ideas which are a repudiation of the democratic past of the Indian national movement.

In defending victims of British terror, can we ourselves afford to preach ideas and glorify elements whom we were pledged to resist as reactionary pro-fascists, who had nothing in common with the progressive democratic ideals of Indian freedom.

Our younger brothers soon enough and certainly our children in the immediate future will rue the day if we go wrong now.

Background And Origins

Again, the I.N.A. was constituted of very diverse elements. Its ranks were drawn from both the ex-soldiers of the Indian Army left behind by the British High Command and the poorer Indian civilians in Malaya, Siam, etc. Similarly, its officer corps had two origins. A good part were the officers and N.C.O.'s of the old Indian Army pushed up into higher ranks; another part was drawn from the middle-class Indians who were abroad for a living and became supporters of Bose's Provisional Government.

The vast bulk of the I.N.A. thought, lived and worked just like the "Indian Army" we know. Just as they join up under the British "for the belly," they joined up under the Japs as the only way to get back to their "hearths and homes."

Naturally enough they did not build up a good name for themselves either among the Malayans or Burmans. We are putting it very mildly when we say that the people of South-East Asiatic countries, who know the I.N.A. first-hand, thought of it in exactly the same way as the people of East Bengal and Assam think of the West African Negro soldiers—and for similar reasons.

We have news in our possession from the Indian labourers—Tamil, Andhra, Oriya and Chittagonians, working in Burma through the war years and earlier and they looked upon the I.N.A. as THEIR Army as little as we Indians here think of the existing Indian Army as OUR Army—and for similar reasons. This much about the past.

Alien Government Cannot Try Them

After the defeat of Japan, a vast bulk of the I.N.A. fell into British hands and are being treated shockingly and vindictively.

They are first put in prison camps and tortured to give information. After the Intelligence Officers have dealt with them, some are released only to get interned in their village where the *Patwari* and the petty police officers make their life unbearable. We have with us numerous stories of harassment etc. from the Punjab villages.

Thousands more are still in prison camps. The Government is giving no precise information about them, not even about their exact numbers, treatment, etc.

An alien autocratic Government has no moral right to try them. The I.N.A. is their own creation, the result of the denial of power to the Indian people, born of frustrated patriotism.

If we had won a National Government during war-time, thousands of these unfortunate countrymen of ours would not have been kept in prison camps, but treated as misguided patriots needing political re-education and material rehabilitation to become useful citizens and help rebuild our country.

Release To Better Indo-British Relations

Our Party calls upon the present Government to assuage public feeling by permitting the Indian press and public leaders to visit the prison camps where the I.N.A. men are detained.

Our Party demands the immediate release of all I.N.A. men and leaders.

To punish them is to be vindictive, and can only serve to make Indians of all parties more bitter towards Britain. The more the British Government does things that only remind us of the slave status of our country, the more it hurts India's soul and the worse it will be for the future of Indo-British relations.

The large mass of them are simple peasant lads, the moral and social sensibilities of some have been destroyed first under the British and later by Jap "training". Among the officers, some have been indoctrinated with reactionary fascist ideas, others are honest middle-class young men—burning with fanatical hatred of British Imperialism—who acquiesced in the dirty deeds of their comrades as a temporary war-time necessity, i.e., are really not fascist-minded at all but misguided patriots.

Let us not glorify them, but do our best to get them out,

back to their own homes and farms, back to honest labour, back into the arms of their own people.

This will really save them and reclaim them for the country's battle for freedom.

(*People's War* Editorial from
Vol. IV. No. 18, dated Oct. 28, 1945)

V. BENGAL EX-TERRORIST COMMUNISTS STILL BEHIND THE BARS

WE GIVE HERE THE NAMES OF THE 26 PRE-REFORM REVOLUTIONARY prisoners who have declared their adherence to our Party and are still behind the bars in Bengal. Together they have served 378 years in jail.

NAME	CASE	Term served with remission (approx. years)
1. Ambika Chakravarty	Chittagong Armoury Raid Case.	Transportation for life 15½
2. Ananta Singh	Do.	Do. 16½
3. Ganesh Ghose	Do.	Do. Do.
4. Sukhendu Dasidhar	Do.	Do. Do.
5. Sahal Ram Das	Do.	Do. Do.
6. Subodh Choudhury	Do.	Do. Do.
7. Lalmohan Sen	Do.	Do. Do.
8. Kali Chakravarty	Chandpur Police Sub-Inspector Murder Case (Tipperah)	Do. 18
9. Haripada Bhattacharji	Asanullah Murder Case (Chittagong)	Do. 17
10. Sunil Chatterji	Watson Attempt Case (Calcutta)	Do. 15
11. Nalini Das	Cornwallis Street Shooting Case (Calcutta)	Do. 14½
12. Jagadananda Mukherji	Do.	Do. 14
13. Benoy Roy	Grasby Attempt Case (Dacca)	Do. 15

APPENDICES

14. Kamakshya Ghose	Burge Murder Case (Midnapore)	Do.	13
15. Sukumar Sen Gupta	Do.	Do.	Do.
16. Provat Chakravarty	Inter-Provincial Conspiracy Case (Calcutta)	Do.	12
17. Hrishikesh Bhatta- charji	Hili Mail Dacoity Case (Dinajpore)	Do.	13
18. Biraj Dev	Comilla Spy Murder Case (Tipperah)	Do.	15
18. Amulya Roy	Dacca Spy Murder Case (Dacca)	Do.	14
20. Aashu Bharadwaj	Faridpore Spy Murder Case (Faridpore)	Do.	11
21. Naren Ghose	Dinajpore Conspiracy Case (Dinajpore)	15 years	14
22. Hem Bakshi	Rangpore Conspiracy Case (Rangpore)	Transportation for life	15
23. Mokshoda Chakravarty	Bathua Dacoity Case (Chittagong)	Do.	13½
24. Priyada Chakravarty	Do.		
25. Amulya Acharji	Chittagong Spy Murder Attempt Case	Do. 10 years	Do. 9½

PRE-REFORM SECURITY PRISONERS RELEASED AFTER FULL SENTENCES SERVED, BUT REARRESTED

26. Madhu Banerji	Governor Murder Case	At- 10 years tempt	3 years af- ter rearrested
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During the last three months, 29 Pre-Reform Prisoners have been released in Bengal. Of them, 24 joined the Communist Party while in jail. These 24 altogether served a total term of 290 years approximately.

**WORKING COMMITTEE'S RESOLUTION
AND P. C. JOSHI'S STATEMENT**

**WORKING COMMITTEE'S
RESOLUTION**

THE CONGRESS WORKING COMMITTEE WHICH MET AT Calcutta on December 11-12 considered the report made by the Sub-Committee consisting of Sardar Patel, Pandit Nehru and Pandit Pant and passed a resolution removing the Communist members of the A.I.C.C. from all elective bodies in the Congress. The following is the text of the Congress Working Committee's resolution :

The report of the Sub-Committee appointed to consider the charges brought against the Communist members of the A.I.C.C. was considered and their recommendations were approved.

It is resolved that disciplinary action be taken against (1) S. G. Sardesai, (2) V. G. Bhagvat, (3) V. D. Chitale, (4) K. M. Ashraf, (5) S. Sajjad Zaheer, (6) Sohan Singh Josh. (7) Karyanand Sharma and (8) R. D. Bharadwaj, and their names be removed from membership of the A.I.C.C. and from all other elective Congress Committees of which they may be members.

Further, that Provincial Congress Committees should be directed to take similar action for the removal from all Congress elective offices of members of the Communist Party of India.

SUB-COMMITTEE'S REPORT

The special Sub-Committee appointed by the Congress Working Committee at Poona in September last consisting of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and Pandit Govind Ballabh Pant made the following recommendations to the Working Committee about Communists in the Congress :

A large number of complaints against the activities of the Communist Party and its individual members were received by the A.I.C.C. Office from subordinate Congress Committees and also from some prominent Congressmen. The Working Committee appointed a Sub-Committee to examine the material and to take such action as might be necessary. We framed certain charges after carefully and dispassionately weighing the evidence.

The charge-sheet (Annexure A)* was delivered to the Communist members of the A.I.C.C. on September 21. They were asked to send their reply in writing within two weeks. They were also told that they could, if they so desired, see the members of the Sub-Committee and explain their position personally. On their request a copy of the report (Annexure B)† on which the charges were based was given to them on September 24. A letter dated September 28 was subsequently received from Shri Sardesai on their behalf asking for a week's extension to enable them to prepare their reply to the charge-sheet. This request was granted. On the expiry of the period of three weeks another communication was received from Shri Sardesai stating that it had not been possible for them to prepare the reply within even the extended period. He definitely promised to send the same by the end of October, but again failed to do so. Their reply was despatched from Bombay about a month later on the 27th of November.

*See Part One P. 15 of this book.

†See Part One P. 1 of this book.

CHARGES NOT DENIED

It is a bulky volume meant primarily for propaganda. Hardly any attempt has been made in it to meet the specific charges, nor is there a word of regret in it. The evidence on which the charges are based is not impugned. The authenticity of the documents cited in the report is accepted. The signatories have throughout pleaded justification and attacked the fundamental policy of the Congress in unmistakable terms.

Their explanation amounts to a tirade against the Congress. Its tone throughout is one of self-righteous arrogance. It leaves no doubt whatsoever about the validity of the charges framed against them. It is clear from their reply that they have been actively opposing and obstructing the policy and the programme of the Congress for a considerable time. They are still acting in a hostile manner so as to undermine and injure the prestige and position of the Congress organisation.

They have altogether forfeited the confidence of the Congress and are unworthy to occupy any responsible or elective places in the Congress. They seem to have already realised their position. Conscious of their guilt, their members have already resigned from all subordinate Congress Committees and also from the primary membership of the Congress. We recommend that the eight members of the A.I.C.C. should be expelled from the A.I.C.C. and necessary directions should be sent to all Provincial Congress Committees so that they may take appropriate steps wherever necessary to remove members of the Communist Party from all elective offices.

Bombay Chronicle, Dec. 13, 1945.

P. C. JOSHI'S STATEMENT

P. C. Joshi, General Secretary of the Communist Party of India has issued the following Press Statement on the latest Working Committee resolution expelling the Communist members of the A.I.C.C. :

“ Anyone who reads the Working Committee resolution and

our answer to their charges will see for himself that the judges do not seem to have even read our answer. They have closed their eyes and ears to the mass of documentary evidence marshalled by us to disprove every single charge made against us.

"We have honestly admitted the authenticity of all our Party documents but we have proved to the hilt that they have either misquoted or misused our quotations to suit their charges and not themselves endeavoured to get at the truth.

"They are such judges that, though we asked for the evidence against us, of which they have made great use in their final resolution, they refused to give it to us.

"The less said about the language the Congress leaders have used the better. They have gone to the extent of using the same language which imperialist Prosecutors have always used against our defence in the numerous conspiracy and sedition trials we have faced, saying that our defence was meant for "propaganda." We have shown all the respect that is due to the leadership of a great national organisation. But we have defended truth as we know it with the tenacity that the descendants of Ram Mohan and Tagore, of Sir Syed and Iqbal, must show if they are at all to be true to their own conscience and the common cause of freedom. It is not we who suffer from "self-righteous arrogance" but it is the Congress leadership that is demonstrating blind sectarian pride. We suffer from no sense of guilt, we seek no favours. Therefore we use plain and blunt words.

"We are pained at the disruptive policy that the Congress leadership is following, not because it hurts us ; we can look after ourselves ; we have not built up either our Party or the working-class and Kisan movements through their favours, but with our own sweat and through our own sacrifices. But we are pained because their policy hurts the common cause of freedom, sets brother against brother and postpones the day of a united final struggle against British Imperialism.

"In our answer to the Congress leadership we have shown that it is not we but they who went against the fundamental policy of the Congress by adopting double-faced strategy of diplomatic bargaining with the British rulers and demagogic speech-making with the people. It only means swinging to and fro from a

policy of negotiating with the New Delhi Sahibs to one of **talking** big of struggle to the people.

" Their struggle demagogy after the Simla shame and then their sermons on non-violence after the Calcutta firing close upon another talk with Lord Wavell is only the latest example of the path the Congress leadership has been following ever since 1920. We do not believe that such double-faced duplicity can be the fundamental policy of our freedom movement. It is a bad day for a great patriotic organisation when its leadership begins to think that it is not only the organisation but also the entire people and the sole monopolist of all the patriotism that exists in our great land.

" We have stated our agreement and differences about the past in our answer. The future alone will show who will undermine the prestige of the Congress ; the traditional allies of the British Imperialists, the profiteering black-marketeers and the feudal parasitical landlords whom the Congress leadership is openly embracing and welcoming into the Congress ; or we Communists who are being hounded out, and who have built up whatever of the organised working-class and peasant movements exist in our country.

" They damned our Party as a traitor party long before they looked into the facts. We had to resign from the Congress to be able to explain and defend our policy freely and work earnestly for Congress-Communist unity.

" Their policy is doomed because it is based on pride and prejudice. We shall work our hardest and win because ours is the path of brotherhood and the struggle for a truly patriotic policy for the entire national movement with all its sectors, territorial, economic and cultural, for the final bid for power from British Imperialism."

..December 14, 1945.

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