

Historical Development
of
Communist Movement
in
India.

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FOREWARD.

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After the time when these pages were finished, many more significant events took place both in India and the world and all could not naturally come into our purview in these pages, but these so far didn't contradict our stand but enriched revolutionary ideas and experiences and justified our forecasts. History being a continuous process, it is never safe to point out any demarcation in development ; still for the sake of convenience, we must ask the reader to take this document as a history of communist movement and thought upto the time when Gandhiji was released, a significant date denoting the end of August movement and a clumsy attempt on the parts of bourgeois and petty bourgeois parties to wash their hands clean of the responsibilities of the last movement. Since then efforts have been made to come to an understanding with Muslim League on the terms of Pakistan as advocated and canvassed by the notorious People's-war-wallas as a Leninist principle of self-determination. This is very natural and a logical culmination of their stand which forces them to go back and back until as at present it is very difficult to distinguish them from the whole reactionary front of the world.

Behind the apparent stagnation in the world affairs, very significant changes are taking place inside all countries of Europe and Asia and the great process of disillusionment is taking place revealing the great bluff of Stalinism all over the world. History, it seems, has again come to a stage when it shall leap forward with a gigantic stride—releasing the world revolutionary forces after the most painful period of reaction it has gone through with the death of Lenin.

We must apologise to the readers for our difficulties regarding the printing and publishing of illegal matters in right time and that is why we cannot present these things to public at the right moment.

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Historical Developement of Communist Movement in India.

1917.

From the heart of the deep white snow welled out the red fire of revolution. The first rapier thirst in the heart of world-imperialism was delivered by the masses of Czarist Russia. Never before in human history did a revolution kindle so much glow of hope in so many hearts. The dark, suppressed under-world of human beings, mutilated in body and soul, opened its Jaws and for the first time millions of down-trodden throughout the world felt in their innermost being the assurance of deliverance from an all-round misery and saw the vision of a world which was not measured and grasped by their intellect but was only vaguely felt instinctively. The masses were not prepared in most of the European countries for the revolution, social-democratic leaders had done their job for the bourgeois to perfection. Yet such was the great urge for freedom-the November Revolution had released, that the masses in Germany, Austria, Hungary, France could not but raise the standard of revolution, though only to be betrayed by the Social-democracy.

Such was the gigantic sweep and depth of the Symphony of the November Revolution.

India, isolated segregated and kept in intellectual quarantine by British imperialism, learnt of the Russian Revolution through papers which represented the Bolsheviks as monsters and were all sympathy for the Czarist government. Practically no information about the Revolution reached India in the years 1917 and 1918.

Only in 1919, some news about the Soviet Government trickled to this country. Some literature of a very vague character reached India along with it some loose talk from persons who had returned to India after the termination of the war. The middle class intelligentsia which was the spearhead of the national movement in India, was attracted by the emotional spell of the people's revolution in Russia and the Soviet form of Government wove round their mind. For a period of twenty years the middle class intelligentsia had adopted the cult of individual terrorism to fight foreign rule in India. Though it had failed to achieve its end it had served its purpose by emotionally preparing the country for a ruthless fight against imperialist domination in India and also by bringing into glaring contrast into its heroism the petition-making constitutionalism of the-then Congress politics.

The Gandhian epoch of the gigantic mass movement had not started yet. The first realisation of the potentiality of a mass movement dawned to the Indian intelligentsia through the information, meagre though it was, of the Russian Revolution. The window looking out to the masses and kept closed so long, was mentally opened out for the first time by the breeze of the great November Revolution. A new vista opened out before the mental vision of the revolutionary section of the Indian intelligentsia. Mentally atleast a corner was turned.

In 1920, the Pan-Islamic Mahajaveen movement started in India. It was more or less an off-shoot of the Khilafat movement which was launched in 1919 in order to put pressure on the British Government to restore Constantinople to the Khalifa of Islam as according to the Islamic tradition, the temporal sovereignty of the Khalifa was the indispensable condition for the exercise of Khalifa's spiritual powers. The Nationalist movement in India under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi, made Khilafat one of its main planks, with the idea of utilising Muslim fanaticism for nationalist end.

Amanulla, the king of Afganistan who was anti-British invited the Indian Musalmans to come and settle down in Afganistan if they found that they were unable to perform their religious duties in British occupied India. At that time

slowly the news of Soviet Russia's aid to Turkey spread in the country and that deepened the sympathy for the Soviet Government in India.

Amanulla's invitation to the Indian Musalmans was a political stunt meant to squeeze out some advantageous terms from the British Government. Ultimately he got what he wanted. British Government recognised the status of Afghanistan as an independent Sovereign state.

In May 1920, first group of Mahajaveens left India. This migration lasted till the end of 1920 and by that time nearly 30 thousand people had left India.

In the first few years nearly thirty per cent of the Mahajaveens were students from the Punjab, United Provinces, North Western Frontier Province, Delhi and from some Indian states such as Bhopal, Patiala and Bikanir. Some tried revolutionaries from the Punjab and U. P. joined these bands with the idea of going to Soviet Russia.

In October 1920, a group of 36 men who had left India some months ago and among whom was Shaukat Osmani reached Tashkent. M. N. Roy who was already in Tashkent met the group and a course of military training was started for the Indian revolutionaries. M. N. Roy, brought over by Borodin to Moscow from Mexico had been by that time entrusted by the Communist International to organise contacts with Indian revolutionaries in India and abroad. He had in those days established himself in Tashkent to get into touch with the groups of revolutionaries that were coming to the Soviet Union through Afghanistan taking advantage of the Pan-Islamic movement. Incidentally it must be mentioned here that also a khilafat deputation consisting of a half dozen of persons and led by one Ikbal Shedai reached Tashkent in October, 1920. It took thirty thousand rupees, returned to Afghanistan, quarreled amongst themselves and did not returned to India at all.

When the group had already completed ten months' training in the Tashkent military School, Shaukat Osmani, Abdul Majid, and Abdul Kahir Sehrai, these three were selected for Political training and were sent to Moscow in January, 1921.

Incidentally a fact may be mentioned here. Some time after in March 1921, soon after the N. E. P. was introduced, the Soviet Government entered into a trade pact with Great Britain and one of the conditions put forward by the British Government as a preliminary to the ratification of the pact was the abolition of the Tashkent Military School.

The school was thus closed down and the Indian revolutionaries who were receiving training there were also shifted to Moscow where they were admitted to the Eastern University for Communist training (known as Kulb in Russian).

About this time in June, 1921, a deputation of Indian revolutionaries consisting of Bhupen Dutt, Lohani, Agnes Smedley, Khankhoji, and Nalini Gupta, and led by Viren Chattopadhaya arrived in Moscow.

This group represented the Indian revolutionaries who had during the world-war of 1914 organised a revolutionary centre in Berlin. The deputation submitted a thesis on the Indian Political situation to Lenin. Lenin personally acknowledged it in a short note which he wrote to Viren Chattopadhaya, the leader of the deputation. An interview with Lenin was arranged in which a detailed discussion was to follow. But M. N. Roy who was then the handyman of the powerful clique (Borodin etc.) dominating the Comintern managed through the clique to frustrate all the efforts of this deputation. After a couple of months' constant but futile efforts, the deputation returned to Berlin without achieving anything. Roy had already established himself as the obsequious handyman of a powerful Russian Communist clique in the Comintern which wanted to determine the Political line, the tactics and the organisation of the Indian Revolution and to keep the Colonial Section of the Third International as the clique's special sphere of influence.

Nalini Gupta who came with the Chattopadhaya group, had in Moscow crossed the floor and joined M. N. Roy.

In India, in the meantime, a revolutionary situation has grown. Under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi a gigantic mass-movement had raised its head. Shauket Osmani who was in Moscow, decided to return to India as soon as possible in order

to do his bit in the movement. M. N. Roy tried hard to dissuade Usmani from returning to India, as he wanted his messenger to reach India before Usmani. In September, 1921 Shaukat Usmani left Moscow for India and reached India in January, 1922. In the meanwhile some fifteen boys who were undergoing communist training in the Eastern University, Moscow returned to India by the end of 1921 and at the beginning of 1922. Nine of them were arrested in 1922 and tried at Peshwar in 1923 and sentenced to one to two years imprisonment. The trial was known as the Tashkend Conspiracy case.

Nalini Gupta who was sent to India by M. N. Roy, reached India some time in the middle of 1922. He went to Calcutta and recruited Muzaffar Ahmed there. Then he went to Bombay and met Dange at the instruction of M. N. Roy. Dange had by then made himself heard in the city of Bombay by leading a strike of college students. Nalini Gupta met and arranged with Dange the publication of a weekly from Bombay. Sometime in the latter part of 1922 the weekly "Socialist" made its appearance in Bombay with Dange as its editor. Usmani who had returned to India in January 1922, soon after left for Persia and after a short stay there returned to India again in September, 1922. He and Nalini Gupta had already met in Moscow in 1921.

Nalini Gupta had contacted Dange and Muzaffar and returned to Moscow to report to M. N. Roy. Soon after Shaukat Usmani received a letter from M. N. Roy to contact Muzaffar Ahmed. In May, 1923 Muzaffar Ahmed and Shaukat Usmani were taken under arrest. Muzaffar Ahmed was released after a few days but Shaukat Usmani was taken to Peshwar where the police made strenuous efforts to connect him up with the Tashkend Conspiracy case. For three months Usmani was kept with fetters as an undertrial prisoner, but as the police failed to implicate him with the conspiracy case, he was released but was immediately arrested under Regulation 3 of 1818 and detained as a state prisoner.

Nalini Gupta who had gone to Moscow to report to M. N. Roy, came to India again in the latter part of 1923. In December 1923; Nalini Gupta and Muzaffar were arrested in Calcutta. On the 4th of March, 1924 Dange was arrested in

Bombay. Muzaffar Ahmed and Nalini Gupta were brought to Cawnpore from Calcutta, likewise Dange from Bombay and Osmani who was already a detenu was brought to Cawnpore from Peshwar Jail. In Cawnpore Jail Osmani, Dange and Muzaffar Ahmed met for the first time in March, 1924. Nalini Gupta was the only one who had known them all before. On the 17th March, 1924 the Cawnpore Communist Conspiracy case started. The other four accused in the case were, M. N. Roy, Singaravellu Chetty of Madras, Prof. Ghulam Hossain of Lahore and Ramcharan Sharma of Pandichery.

M. N. Roy being in Moscow could not be laid hand upon. Ramcharan Sharma absconded; Singaravellu Chetty was arrested but released on bail as he was old and ailing and Prof. Ghulam Hossain who was arrested for reasons best known to police, was not brought to trial. So only Osmani, Dange, Nalini Gupta and Muzaffar Ahmed, these four stood the trial on a charge of sedition. The charge against them was that they conspired with the Communist International and also amongst themselves to deprive the King Emperor of his Sovereignty of British India. The trial lasted for two months and in May, 1924 they were sentenced to four years rigorous imprisonment each. But both Nalini Gupta and Muzaffar Ahmed were released after they have served out their sentence for little over a year on ground of health. Dange and Osmani served out their full sentence and were released in 1927.

At the end of 1925 Nalini Gupta and Muzaffar Ahmed who had settled down in Calcutta after their release, had gathered a group of left-wing nationalists around them and announced the formation of the Bengal Workers' and Peasants Party sometime in 1926.

The party then consisted of a handful of men, the prominent amongst them being Naresh Sengupta, the well-known novelist who was the president of the party, Atul Gupta, a well-known literateur and an equally well-known advocate of Calcutta, Nazrul Islam, the famous poet, Kutubuddin Ahmed, Samsuddin Ahmed, Hemanta Sarkar, a brilliant youngman who had already made his mark as the follower of C. R. Das and Muzaffar Ahmed.

Hemanta Sarkar was the Secretary of the party and Poet Nazrul Islam became the Editor of the Party's weekly organ 'Langal' (the plough). Besides Nalini Gupta and Muzaffar Ahmed, who were communists in thinking, the rest were all petty-bourgeois left nationalists who had been dissatisfied with the leadership of the National movement which pulled the reins of the mass movement in 1920 and 1921 as soon as the masses wanted to cross over the boundaries of bourgeois class interest. It was the dissatisfaction of the petty-bourgeoisie that reflected itself in the Workers' and Peasants' Party of Bengal. One illustration would suffice to show the bourgeois moorings of the petty-bourgeois leaders of this party. One issue of 'Langal' came out with an eulogy of Subhas Chandra Bose together with his horoscope!

Still, the appeal of "Langal" to these youngmen who dreamt of freedom when the Non-cooperation movement convulsed the country from one end to the other, was immense. They were disillusioned and broken hearted. Gandhism had lost its revolutionary charm and terrorism had no appeal for them. By the rejection of Gandhism and terrorism whatever might have been their gain in a negative sense, they had not gained as yet any other ideology to replace them. Youths at that period were in a state of intellectual and emotional vacuum.

Saumyendranath Tagore who was a staunch Gandhist since 1920 and suffered disillusionment like many other youngmen of that period, was drawn by the first copy of 'Langal' which fell in his hands. He joined the Bengal Workers' and Peasants' Party at once and readily. In 1926 the first conference of the Bengal Workers' and Peasants' Party held its session at Krishnanagar, Nadia under the presidentship of Naresh Chandra Sengupta. In this conference the constitution and the line of action of the party was finally adopted.

A new executive was chosen. Naresh Sengupta was re-elected the President, Hemanta Sarkar and Saumyendranath Tagore were elected sectional secretaries of the peasants and workers fronts respectively. Muzaffar Ahmed was elected editor of the party's weekly paper which in the meantime had changed its name from 'Langal' to 'Ganavani' (The voice of the masses).

This was the period when the first contacts with the working class in Bengal were established. Soumyendranath Tagore and Kutubuddin Ahmed went to Badartala, a jute area just outside Calcutta and a meeting of jute workers was held and contacts were established.

Likewise through Hemanta Sarkar the party had established contacts with large number of fishermen of Nadia district, Goalanda, and Chandpore. Some ex-terrorist elements belonging to the intelligentsia joined the party during this period. Contacts with a few districts of Bengal were also established. In the meantime a couple of comrades from other parts of India came to Calcutta. The party had just started to feel the ground under its feet.

Ideologically the party comrades were least equipped. Besides Communist Manifesto, M. N. Roy's secret letters, his illegal paper 'Vanguard' and a couple of Roy's pamphlets were all that the ideological armoury of the party consisted of. The financial position of the party was precarious in the extreme. Two small rooms in a mess in Harrison Road were the office of the Workers' and Peasants' Party of Bengal. Comrades had to work under conditions of semi-starvation and Ganavani had to cease publication now and then due to financial stringency.

There were hardly half a dozen communists throughout India at this period. Dange and Osmani were in prison, Muzaffar Ahmed, Nalini Gupta, Saumyendranath Tagore, Kutubuddin Ahmed and Samsuddin Ahmed in Calcutta, Ajodhya Prasad in U. P., Iyengar in Madras, these comprised practically the entire communist personnel that was scattered in different parts of India. As yet there was no communist party.

This was the situation in the country when George Allison, a British comrade arrived in India. He came under a false name with a false passport. Campbell (Allison's assumed name in India) met the various trade union leaders in the country and after he had been in the country for quite a long time, he contacted the communists of Calcutta.

Soon after his false passport was discovered during a raid on the Jute Workers' Union office at Bhatpara, Allison was

arrested, sentenced to two years imprisonment and was shipped off to England at the termination of his sentence. That was 1926. By the end of 1926 Saklatwala, the famous communist member of the British Parliament, arrived in India. By his wonderful oratory and flaming denunciation of Gandhism, he created a great impression on the youths of the country.

The second annual conference of the Workers' and Peasants' Party met in Calcutta in December 1926. Atul Gupta presided and Saumyendranath Tagore was the Chairman of the reception committee of the conference. Saklatwala came and addressed the conference on the second day. In this conference Saumyendranath Tagore was elected the General Secretary of the Workers' and Peasants' Party of Bengal.

Organisational and propaganda work went apace. A peasants' conference was held in Kusthia presided over by Atul Gupta. Through Nalini Gupta valuable contacts with terrorist parties were created and efforts were made to win them over to the programme of the Workers' and Peasants' Parties. Contacts with the jute workers of Bhatpara and the workers of the Titagarh Paper Mills were established. The base of the party had undoubtedly broadened out but the ideological preparation of the party members was practically nil.

Our contact with the Communist International was more a myth than a reality. It was truly speaking a contact with M. N. Roy and his emissaries. Neither the programme of the Communist International nor its various theses on organisation, propaganda and political subjects were at all known to the comrades of the party. The party comrades were kept on the ideological diet sampled out by M. N. Roy in the form of secret letters, 'Vanguard' and pamphlets.

This was felt to be too insufficient an ideological nourishment for communists. It was decided to send some one to Moscow to establish direct contact with the Communist International. In April, 1927, Saumyendranath Tagore left for Moscow with a mandate of the Workers' and Peasants' Party of Bengal, there being no Communist Party of India as yet. In June, 1927 Saumyendranath Tagore reached Moscow and presented his mandate to Comintern.

In pursuance of the established rule of the Comintern, Saumyendranath Tagore submitted two reports—one organisational report and the other political report. Bukharin presided over that committee meeting of the Comintern in which the political report was submitted. In the course of the report Tagore pointed out among other things how since the world war of 1914, due to war exigencies British imperialism had been forced to modify its industrial policy vis a vis India. Its old policy of keeping India as a source of raw material for British industries and as a dumping ground for British goods had undergone certain modifications due to the presence of economic necessities of war, and the new colonial policy of Finance capital. Bukharin in his concluding remarks said that it appeared to him that a process of decolonization has started in India. We shall have occasion to revert back to the theory in connection with the Sixth World Congress of the Communist International.

Soon after Piatnitsky, the then General Secretary of the Central Committee of Comintern sent for Tagore and had a long talk regarding the work of the communists in India. It was evident from the talk that quite a different picture of the communist activities in India had been presented to the Comintern by M. N. Roy. Piatnitsky had an idea that there were hundreds of communists in India in those days. When Tagore told him about the actual number of communists in India in those days, which did not exceed more than a dozen, Piatnitsky was quite taken aback. He said that it seemed unbelievable as Roy had reported the existence of hundreds of communists in India. Tagore told him in reply that Roy might have hidden those communists in the Himalayas, they were neither heard nor seen in India. It was also evident from the talk with Piatnitsky that the Comintern had given enormous sums to M. N. Roy for financing the communist movement in India. Tagore informed Piatnitsky that hardly any money had been received in India and the growth of the Communist movement was tremendously handicapped due to the lack of money and literature. From Piatnitsky's words it was clear that enormous sums had been placed at the disposal of M. N. Roy for catering

to all those needs of the communist movement in India.

When Tagore arrived in Moscow and submitted his reports to the Communist International and had the above mentioned talk with Piatnitsky, M. N. Roy was then away in China. A month or more, after Tagore's arrival in Moscow M. N. Roy returned to Moscow from China.

It was clear from the talks that Tagore had with Roy that Roy had already sensed the danger of exposure and was very keen on Tagore's early return to India. Soon after his return from China, Roy submitted a report on the political situation in India in which he picked up the stray remark of Bukharin about the so-called decolonisation process in India and supported it. We shall have occasion to speak about it in connection with the Sixth World Congress of the Communist International.

In November, 1927 during the tenth anniversary of the Russian Revolution a conference of the oppressed people of the East was held in Moscow under the chairmanship of Madame Sunyat Sen. M. N. Roy and Tagore spoke in that conference on behalf of India.

In India Dange and Usmani came out of prison in May and August, 1927, respectively. Meantime Workers' and Peasants' Parties had been organised in Bombay and in the Punjab and an All-India Workers' and Peasants' Party was in the making.

In November, 1927, the annual session of the Trade Union Congress met in Cawnpore. This was the first session of the T. U. C. which was attended by industrial workers. The Cawnpore Majdoor Sabha was formed in 1922 by Ganesh Shnaker Vidyarthi, a radical nationalist who was also sympathetic to the communist cause. The communist and socialist workers of the Majdoor Sabha worked hard to make the workers T. U. C. minded. This was also the first annual session of the T. U. C. to hoist the red flag. Bengal and Bombay comrades came in large numbers to attend the conference, also Shaukat Usmani, and Sohan Singh Josh from the Punjab. It was felt at this period that the time had come when the various communist groups

scattered throughout India should be co-ordinated by the creation of a centralised Communist party of India. In December 1927, during the Madras session of the Indian National Congress a dozen communists from various parts of India met in Madras, amongst whom Dange, Nimbkar and Joglekar came from Bombay, Muzaffar Ahmed and Abdul Halim from Bengal, Sohan Singh Josh from the Punjab, Singeravellu Chetty, Iyengar and Ghate from Madras and Usmani from U. P.

Under the chairmanship of Dange, the conference met where the constitution of the Communist Party of India was adopted, a decision was taken to affiliate it to the Third International, and a Central Committee of the Party was elected. The first Central Committee of the Communist Party of India consisted of the following members:— Muzaffar Ahmed, Shaukat Usmani, Dange, Ghate, Saumyendranath Tagore, and three others. Ghate was elected the General Secretary of the party. A future programme was also drawn up, Dange and Nimbkar were entrusted to organise the Girni Kamgar Union in Bombay. Usmani settled down in Delhi to carry on propaganda work through news papers, and Ghate took up the work of party organisation.

In the Madras session of the Congress the little group of communists made their influence felt. The Communist members of the A. I. C. C. decided to table a resolution on the full independence of India in the open session of the Congress and distributed their leaflets in thousands. Jawaharlal Nehru who just then arrived from Europe to attend the Congress session at Madras, also sponsored an Independence resolution. The Communists withdrew their resolution in his favour and exerted all their influence in support of Nehru's resolution.

In the middle of 1927 one Philip Spratt, a good but ineffective man, was sent out to India by the Communist Party of Great Britain for organising the communist party in India. Some months after about October 1927 one Ben Bradley was sent out by the C., P. G. B. for organising the trade union movement. Bradley had been to India previously. He was in Government Service in Peshwar and served imprisonment for cheating.

These two Englishmen, who were absolutely raw and knew nothing of Indian conditions or the cross-currents of Indian politics, were made the pontifical authorities of the communist movement in India. What followed was inevitable. They were the easy prey of the clique—Ghate, Muzaffar Ahmed and Joglekar—that had with amazing rapidity crystalised within that tiny party of a dozen men. The clique and the satraps both needed each other and were like two sticks made to stand on mutual support. Patronising, fawning and financial corruption had branded the growth of the Communist Party of India from its very beginning.

Usmani who at that time had settled down in Delhi, went to Bombay in April, 1928 and had a brush with Bradley on the question of the immediate task of the party. Usmani stressed on the necessity of concentrating more efforts on the organisation of the Party than on the trade unions. Bradley who was specially deputed to India for trade union work could not allow any one to minimise the importance of his job, which to him appeared as minimising his own importance. All that Usmani meant and stressed was not the unimportance of the trade union activity which every Communist knows to be indispensable basic work of the working class movement but the relatively greater importance of party organisation.

In the early months of 1928 news reached India about the coming world Congress of the Communist International.

Usmani decided to go to Moscow and to place before the Comintern the entire case of the Indian Communists.

He informed his party comrades about his plan to leave for Moscow. Dange, the diplomat supported him in private but expressed his helplessness to support him openly. The triumvirate clique—Ghate, Muzaffar Ahmed and Joglekar—supported by the two satraps—Spratt and Bradley tried their best to persuade Usmani to give up his proposed trip to Moscow. When they found that their persuasion had no effect on Usmani they refused to give him a mandate from the party.

In June, 1928 Usmani left India with two other comrades for Moscow. He reached Moscow just in time for the Sixth World Congress of the Communist International which met in the third week of June, 1928.

A letter had in the meantime reached the Comintern from the Indian party informing the Communist International that Usmani did not represent the party at all and that he represented none but himself.

The following were chosen as Indian delegates to the Sixth World Congress—Shaukat Usmani, Clemens Dutt, Lohani, Shafique and Saumyendranath Tagore.

Habib was chosen as the delegate to the Communist Youth Congress which was meeting at the same time.

M. N. Roy was in Berlin at that time. He conveniently kept himself away from the World Congress knowing fully well the fires that would be directed against him. Bukharin presented a draft programme of the Communist International to the Congress. Discussions on that draft programme continued for weeks and was finally adopted with certain modifications.

In the meantime preparatory committee meetings were being held on all major problems. On the Indian question a series of meetings took place. It was attended by a number of Russian comrades from the Comintern and by the entire Indian delegation.

Bukharin's unfortunate stray remark about decolonisation was the subject matter of strong attacks both in the committee meetings and in the open session. Undoubtedly the so-called decolonisation theory was wrong. It gave quite a wrong estimation of the role of British imperialism in India and also of the co-relation of class-forces vis-a-vis Indian revolution. But as has been pointed out earlier Bukharin had mentioned "the process of decolonisation" only as a stray remark in his concluding remarks on the political report presented to the Comintern by Saumyendranath Tagore. Bukharin never for a moment advanced it as a theory, nor did he add a word more than what he had said— "It seems a process of decolonisation is going on."

The real 'culprits' were M. N. Roy and G. Lohani. Bukharin was at that time the president of the Communist International. Both Roy and Lohani represented unprincipled opportunism and careerism. Lohani left Chattopadhaya group and joined M. N. Roy when Roy through the support of the Russian clique vanquished Chattopadhaya group. Roy, as we

shall see later is the last word in unscrupulousness so far as it concerned his own interest. Both these men picked up the stray remark of Bukharin about decolonisation and wrote article after article, veritably building up a theory out of a stray remark.

Roy was asked to come to Moscow from Berlin, which he refused on the ground of health. Thus Roy managed to escape the fire of the opposition which was directed against Lohani in the open session of the Congress. There was also a joint meeting of the British and Indian delegations. In the committee meetings Usmani and Tagore represented two divergent views and estimation on the political situation in India. We shall have the occasion to go into details about it when discussing Kusinen's thesis on the colonial problem.

On another issue there was difference of opinion between Usmani and Tagore. Workers' and peasants' parties in India came in for lot of criticisms during the Congress. There is no doubt that a two-class party is a theoretical nonsense and a breeding ground of petty bourgeois opportunism. On the Leninist conception of one-class party there was no difference between Usmani and Tagore. The difference expressed itself in the fact that while Usmani only attacked the workers' and peasants' party, Tagore though agreeing that they should be abolished, maintained that the workers' and peasants' parties played a very necessary role in drawing the disgruntled petty bourgeois revolutionaries to mass front.

Trotsky from his exile sent a thesis in criticism of Bukharin's draft programme. This document marked as strictly confidential was circulated amongst the delegates. Trotsky's thesis was a trenchant criticism of Socialism in one country, of the liason of the communists in China with Chinese bourgeoisie and of the various other international problems discussed in Bukharin's thesis. Delegate after delegate spoke on the draft programme of Bukharin and from amongst the Indian delegates Lohani, Usmani and Tagore took part in the discussion.

The colonial thesis was presented by Kusinen to the Congress. This was the period when Stalin's class-collaborationist tactics in China had fatally stabbed the Chinese revolution. Yet Stalin stuck to his policy with that ignorant obstinacy so characteristic of him. And so far as...

concerned, they had no other alternative but to ditto their master as their neck and pocket both depended on Stalin's mercy.

It seemed that the tragic experience of China was not sufficient to stop Stalin and Stalin's men from their class-collaborationist policy with the bourgeoisie. It is true that in China Stalin's policy had swung from extreme right to a pseudo-leftist adventurist stunt. Newman, the Stalinist indulged in a most gruesome adventure in Shanghai which cost thousands of communist lives. This was done by the way of covering Stalin's rightist follies during the Comintern Congress. Kusinen dealt on the revolutionary role of the colonial bourgeoisie in the national liberation movement. Tagore opposed Kusinen and pointed out that the colonial bourgeoisie had absolutely no revolutionary role to play in the national liberation movement of India, or as a matter of that of any colony. On the contrary the colonial bourgeoisie is bound to play an increasingly counter-revolutionary role in relation to the national freedom movement.*

Finally Kusinen's thesis was modified on the basis of the various suggestions and criticisms made during a week's discussion. The role of the colonial bourgeoisie was definitely declared to be a counter-revolutionary one.

* Here is a portion of the speech delivered in the Sixth World Congress of the Comintern by comrade Narayan, the adopted name of Comrade S. N. Tagore :— "After our experience in India, in 1922 when the bourgeoisie betrayed the great mass movement, which shook India from one end to the other, it is high time now to formulate it more clearly to show that the bourgeoisie can never fight imperialism genuinely. The demonstrations which the Indian bourgeoisie has organised all over the country against the Simon Commission has given rise to illusions in the minds of some of the comrades here that the bourgeoisie is still going to play a revolutionary role in India. But if we look for a programme, the concrete steps the bourgeoisie in India are taking for the fulfilment of a revolutionary programme, in order to carry on a genuinely revolutionary struggle against foreign imperialism, we find that there is absolutely no revolutionary programme at all put forward by the Indian bourgeoisie

It is only a first which will lead to a compromise on

There were two other important reports made in the Congress—one was the organisational report of the Communist International, placed before the Congress by Piatnitsky, the Secretary of Comintern, dealing with the development and shortcomings of the communist movement throughout the world, and the other was a report on the Bolshevik Party's method of work in the Czarist army before the revolution. The latter report was submitted by Yaroslavsky, the Secretary of the Central Control Commission of the Bolshevik Party.

After nearly a month's session the Congress concluded in the third week of July, 1928.

Soon after the cessation of the Congress M. N. Roy was expelled from the Communist International. In the resolution of the Communist International expelling M. N. Roy the following reasons for expulsion were mentioned :— (1) Forgery, (2) Uncomradely behavior, (3) Indiscipline.

The first charge requires elucidation. Roy forged a document in his own hand writing which he wanted to pass off as Abani Mukherji's writing. Handwriting-expert of the Comintern proved it to be Roy's writing. This heinous crime Roy better divisions of the spoils which will be gathered by exploiting the Indian masses. Surely there are contradictions between the imperialist bourgeoisie and the native bourgeoisie as there always will be contradictions between plunderers for the monopoly of the same spoils. Of course, the Indian Communist Party and the proletarian movement there should take advantage of these differences and utilise them for the purpose of the furtherance of the revolution, but we must not forget that this quarrel among the national and imperialist bourgeoisie is in the nature of a family quarrel between two brothers over property, and that the forces of the rising proletariat in India will be met by a common front of the native and imperialist bourgeoisie, if not today then tomorrow. The Indian bourgeoisie is fighting on the same old constitutional issue, and that is for its own benefits. It is clearly seen in all its programmes and tactics, through every phase of its struggle. Even partial alliance with the bourgeoisie means the abandonment of the slogan of agrarian revolution which means the virtual abandonment of revolutionary struggle in the colonial countries, especially in such a predominately

committed in order to put Mukherji in difficulties. The other two charges require no elucidation, they are clear enough.

From the above-mentioned resolution of the Comintern it is clear that Roy's expulsion from the Communist International was not due to any political difference with Stalinism. Roy, the careerist, always served the man in power. He was always the most servile agent of Stalin and is still a Stalinist with the hope that the wheel of fortune may turn in his favour and he may again be re-instated in his former position by Stalin.

Roy joined the Brandler opposition in Germany, only after his expulsion from the Communist International. And he did that only to give a political colouring to his expulsion. After covering his expulsion with a political coating he reverted to Stalinism soon after.

There was at this time some sharp differences between Kusinen and Tagore on the question of the management of the Indian affairs. India being a colony of British imperialism, it was natural that the Communist Parties of India and Great Britain would evolve special contacts for revolutionary activities. But what actually happened was that the British Communist Party wanted to monopolise and boss over the Communist Party of India in the same way as British imperialism bossed and monopolised India. In the eyes of the clique in Comintern, which arranged the Indian affairs in this way, this was internationalism and to criticise this was nationalistic deviation. Such was the bureaucratic conception of internationalism of the clique dominating the Comintern.*

agricultural country as India is. I think that this formulation is not a happy formulation and neither a right one. I emphasise that the bourgeoisie in India has completely gone over to the side of the reaction, if not as yet to the side of open counter-revolution." (from—International Press Correspondence, Page 1203).

* Another portion of Comrade Narayan's (the adopted name of Comrade S. N. Tagore) speech is being given here :— The "colonial aspect of the world revolution as formulated in the programme confronts us with certain difficulties.

Take for example, that section in the first chapter of

The Indian comrades present in Moscow hardly knew what arrangement the Piatnitsky-Kusinen clique were making with their yes-men of the Communist Party of Great Britain about the work in India.

Both Clemens Dutt and Lohani expressed to Tagore their dissatisfaction with the way Indian affairs were conducted and managed by the Comintern. But they were not ready to bell the cat. That they conveniently left to Tagore. It resulted in Tagore's brush with Kusinen. Tagore decided to return to India. End of December, 1928 Tagore left Soviet Russia for Berlin on his way to India.

Shaukat Usmani returned to India in December, 1928 and immediately proceeded to Calcutta to meet other comrades. The All India Workers' and Peasants' Party's conference had just then concluded its session in Calcutta.

All those important communists who had gathered in Calcutta, because of the All India Workers' and Peasants' Party's conference, held a Party meeting and exhaustively discussed the tasks that were facing the communists at that particular time. Work was concretised and allotted to each and every comrade. Muzaffar, Halim and Spratt were given the charge of Bengal work, such as the jute workers' organisation etc. Dange, Nimbkar and Mirajkar (who was not a party member yet but whose application was under consideration) were entrusted with the work of organising Bombay textile workers, Bradley and Joglekar were given the charge of G. I. P. Railway workers. Sohan Singh Josh was given the charge of the journal "Kirti" (Revolution).

the draft programme where we find the statement: "That the colonial movements of the proletariat should march under the leadership of the revolutionary proletarian movement in the imperialist home countries". This means that the proletarian movement in India should march under the leadership of the British Communist Party, or, that the Javanese Communist movement should march under the leadership of the Dutch Communist Party. Nobody will deny that in the organic structure of British imperialism India and England are closely connected with each other and for the same reason the

Usmani was to organise the N. W. R. and Ghate, the secretary of the Communist Party, was to devote himself to party organisation.

By the end of January, 1929 Usmani went to Bombay by the order of the party to edit the communist party's Urdu weekly 'Pyeme Majdoor' (The workers' Message). Dange started weekly 'Kranti' in Maharatti. Only three issues of the Urdu weekly had come out when on the 20th of March, 1929 arrests took place all over India. All the prominent communists, some well-known Trade-Unionists and a sprinkling of left-wing nationalists were arrested. Altogether thirty one persons were arrested. Large number of persons outside India who could not be arrested were declared by the Government as accused in the case. Amongst them were M. N. Roy, S. N. Tagore, G. Lohani, and Mahammad Ali.

The Meerut conspiracy case started on the 12th of June, 1929. Tagore who was in Germany at that time was informed not to return to India just then but to wait till the trial end as Tagore's letters to Muzaffar Ahmed and Kishori Ghosh and also Muzaffar Ahmeds' letters to Tagore were the exhibits on behalf of the prosecution in the Meerut conspiracy case. The case dragged on for more than three years and ended only in August, 1932. Judgement was still pending. Nothing made so much propaganda in India for communism as did the Meerut conspiracy case. The entire attention of political India was focussed on the Meerut conspiracy case and hundreds of radical youths were drawn to the Communist Party because of it. There was also good bit of propaganda in the International Press.

Communist Parties of India and Britain are also organically linked up with each other for carrying out the Proletarian Revolution in these two countries, but this on no account means the subordination of the colonial party to the leadership of the party of the imperialist home country. I am quite sure that the author of this Draft Programme does not mean this at all. But the formulation forces one to this conclusion and we must correct this. Of course the movements in the colonial

One can say with justice that the Meerut conspiracy case placed communism on a sure footing in India.

In the prison the witch's cauldron was boiling. The clique of Ghate, Joglekar, Muzaffar, Spratt and Bradley was carrying on its nefarious activities. Dange was charged with sectarian activities in the middle of 1929. It was alleged that Dange was trying to monopolise the Mahratti weekly "Kranti" and that he was carrying on fractional activities in the Girni Kamgar Union against the interest of the Communist Party. Controversy and bitterness developed to such an extent that Dange resigned from the Communist Party, though later on he explained it away by saying that he had seceded from the communist group in the Meerut jail but did not resign from the Communist Party. While in jail Dange had a visit from Victor Sassoon, the Bombay mill-owner.

Funds were being raised in India and in England for conducting the case. As soon as funds began to pour in, disagreement started. The clique wanted to keep the funds entirely in the control of the communists whereas Usmani and a few others maintained that the funds, raised for the defence, should be controlled by all the thirty-one accused of the case irrespective of whether they were communists, nationalists or trade unionists. Sharp differences manifested on this issue between the sectarian clique and Usmani and others.

The cleavage deepened when on their way to the Almora Jail, the clique let down Usmani when he had a fight with the police. When Usmani went on hunger strike as a protest against police behavior, the clique not only did not support him; on the contrary, did everyting to run him down. In September, 1932 Usmani tendered his resignation from the Party. But the clique did not stop at this. From prison they sent out

countries should not be deprived of the experiences of the world proletarian movement and of the guidance of the Communist International. The only leadership acceptable is the leadership of the Communist International. I think the formulation should be made quite clear and this Section should be differently formulated.' (from International Press Correspondence, page 1203).

letters to Bombay to their yes-men to start a campaign of vilification against Usmani in the press. All sorts of baseless and dirty propaganda they started against Usmani in the press. They even went so far as to bring out in Bombay press that Usmani had applied for King's pardon!

In January, 1933 judgment was delivered in the Meerut conspiracy and the curtain was drawn on a case which dragged on for four long years.

In January, 1934 Saumyendranath Tagore returned to India. In Europe he had lived through the Nazi counter-revolution in Germany in 1933. The European working class was facing one of the greatest crises in its existence.

Proletarian revolution was at its lowest ebb in Europe. Thousands of German communists, socialists and radicals had left Germany and settled down in Paris. Paris in 1933 was the centre of the revolutionaries from all the countries of the world. The German debacle had opened out the flood gate of fascism in Europe. Deep and anxious discussions were going on amongst the revolutionaries in Paris. The causes of the defeat of the revolutionary forces in Germany in the hands of Hitler's counter-revolution, the perspective of the proletarian movement in Europe, the immediate strategy and tactics to be adopted by the proletarian front for stemming the fascist tide, so on and so forth, all these problems engaged the deepest attention of the emigre revolutionaries in Paris.

Tagore who had gone to Paris immediately after his release from Nazi prison, was in constant touch with the revolutionaries of all shades of opinion. In that huge anti-Nazi demonstration which took place in Paris in May, 1933, Tagore was one of the speakers. He had in the meantime met Romain Rolland and got from him a message to the Indian youths to build up an anti-fascist front. Tagore also met Henri Barbusse, the President of the International League against Fascism and War and made with him all arrangements for opening a national branch of the league in India.

Soon after his return to India Tagore published his book "Hitlerism or the Aryan rule in Germany". This book was published by one Abdul Halim on behalf of the Bengal provincial

branch of the Communist Party of India.

Abdul Halim whose services to the Workers' and Peasants' Party of Bengal were always strictly limited to the manual plane and to the creature comfort of Muzaffar Ahmed, was Muzaffar Ahmed's pet creature. After the arrest of Muzaffar, Muzaffar managed to put Halim on the head of the Bengal organisation of the party.

After the publication of his book Tagore received a note from Abdul Halim to the effect that they did not agree to the viewpoint of Tagore regarding the causes of the victory of fascism in Germany.

Tagore had written in this book that the reason for the tragic defeat of the German working class in the hands of Hitler and his gang was due to the treachery of German Social-democracy and the fatal political mistakes committed by the Communist Party of Germany.

This statement was objected to by the chorus-boy of Stalin. Halim wrote to say that they had received the resolution passed by the Communist International on the German situation. In that resolution the German socialists had been made entirely responsible for the Nazi victory in Germany, and the Communist Party of Germany's political line and tactics in this period were declared to be correct. This suicidal, unrealistic and thoroughly ignorant resolution of the Stalinist clique in Comintern was a sure indication of the utter degeneration of the Communist International. Once a mighty organisation of world-revolution in the period of Lenin, fearlessly criticising its own mistakes, it had been slowly transformed by Stalin into a clique apparatus, fearful of historical objectivity and mindful of its own existence only.

Great dissatisfaction prevailed in the ranks of the communists of Europe and America regarding this resolution. Specially amongst the German communists including such Stalinists as Neumann and Ramelle, there was great disappointment and disagreement with the resolution. Everyone felt that it was a resolution completely unworthy of the critical and revolutionary tradition of Lenin's Third International. Men who had been for years Stalin's stool pigeons such as Hans,

Neumann, Ramelle etc. they even could not swallow this extremely stupid resolution. Dissension and revolt were rampant even in the orthodox rank of the Stalinists. Later on Neumann and Ramelle paid with their lives for this disagreement with Stalin.

There is no doubt that the German Social-democracy had betrayed the revolution and was moreover to a very great extent responsible for the victory of fascism in Germany. But that is not the whole truth. The general anti-revolutionary and at all critical periods counter-revolutionary tendencies of the German Social-democratic leaders were known to everyone since the imperialist world-war of 1914. Lenin had waged decade-long war against the opportunist and compromise-craving leadership of European social-democracy in general and the German Social-democracy in particular. So the betrayal of the revolution by such lackeys of the bourgeoisie may be tragic but nothing unexpected and surprising.

But what about the Communist Party of Germany which was formed with the object of wresting the working class from the clutches of the German Social-democracy and of organising the proletariat for the revolution? In 1933 when the German Communist Party had sent nearly one hundred deputies to the Reichstag, when it had built up an enormous party machinery had its own powerful press and had even gained some seats at the expense of Social-democracy, how was it that it collapsed like a house of card at the crucial moment of Nazi onslaught?

This question was worrying the revolutionary communists all over the world, and they were determined to go at the root of the problem and to find the answer. In 1923 the German workingclass had placed itself under the leadership of the Communist Party of Germany and was ready for revolution. At Strelitz in 1920 the Social-democratic party of Germany had polled 25 thousand votes and the Independents 2 thousand. In July, 1923, at Strelitz, the Social-democratic party polled 12 thousand votes and the Communist Party 11 thousand.

Voting in Berlin Metal Workers' Union resulted in 51 thousand votes in favour of the communists and 22 thousand

votes for the Social-democrats.

On 29th July, 1923 a conference of left-wing deputies demanded a cessation of coalition with the bourgeoisie and co-operation with the Communist Party.

Brandler, at that time the leader of the Communist Party of Germany, declared in a meeting of the Executive Committee of the Communist International—"There were signs of rising revolutionary movement. We had temporarily the majority of the workers behind us, and in the situation believed that under favourable circumstances we could proceed immediately to attack."

Lenin was in death bed at that time but Stalin who was already controlling the party apparatus in the last days of Lenin, wrote in a letter to Zinoviev and Bukharin—"In my opinion the Germans must be curbed and not spurred on." The reasons that Stalin gave for backing his opinion was amazingly naive. He wrote—"When we seized power, we had in Russia such reserves as (a) Peace, (b) the land to the peasants, (c) the support of the great majority of the workingclass, (d) the sympathy of the peasantry. The German communists at this moment have nothing of the sort."

It was absolutely historically false to say that "The German communists at this moment have nothing of the sort." The German communists in 1923 had the backing of the majority of the German workingclass. Moreover Germany was not predominantly a peasant country like Russia. The numerically powerful and politically conscious German proletariat in the course of its revolutionary march would have swept the peasantry along with it against the Junkerdom. The urban petty bourgeoisie would have also fallen in line with the revolution for its inherent grudge against high finance. But then it was not reasons that stood against the revolution, it was Stalin's lack of faith in the proletariat and world-revolution that militated against it. And that is clear from the following words of Stalin—"Of course they have the Soviet nation as their neighbour, which we did not have, but what can we offer them at the present moment?" Already Stalin was on the way of letting down the world-revolution for socialism (?) in one country.

But the most amazing passage is yet to come. Writes Stalin in the same letter—"Of course fascists are not asleep, but it is to our interest that they attack first: that will rally the whole workingclass around the communists (Germany is not Bulgaria). Besides according to all informations the fascists are weak in Germany."

Thus the German communists were asked by Stalin to wait till the fascists attack. According to him, it is to the interest of the communists that the fascists attack first! This was in 1923 and exactly ten years after we had occasion to see if it was to the interest of the Communists to let the fascists attack first! Moreover Stalin had the information that "the fascists are weak in Germany." So from Stalin's superb reasoning it followed that the communists should not attack first but should allow the fascists to attack first; but as the fascists were weak we should wait till they were strong to attack, for surely the fascists were not such fools that they would attack when they were weak!

Such is the extraordinary logic of Stalin! But whatever may be the quality of that logic, the net result was the betrayal of the revolution in Germany.

In the meanwhile Brandler was forced by Stalin even to enter a coalition government with the Social-democrats.

It is difficult to visualise a more opportune moment for revolution in Germany than that of 1923. Later on Brandler was to pay for Stalin's betrayal of the German revolution. Stalin put all the blame on Brandler for the failure of 1923.

After sacrificing Brandler as the offering to the tribal god, Stalin in 1924 swung the German Communist Party from its ultra-rightist course to the ultra-leftist course. Since 1924 to 1933, this ultra-leftist course was followed in Germany and this was the reason why the Communist Party of Germany failed so miserably in 1933. The Red Trade Union Organisation (known as R. G. O. in German), the united front from below tactic, the slogan "Social Fascists" coined by the German Stalinists to dub the Social-democrats and the under-estimation of the importance of the middle strata in the revolution, all these serious blunders were at the root of the defeat of the German working-class by German fascism.

But then the Stalinists of Europe and America may get perturbed, they may be overwhelmed by the enormity of the German tragedy and may for once be shelled by colossal revolutionary tragedy out of their clique-bound existence but not the Indian Stalinists. These Indian Stalinists had their social root in the most degenerate section of the Indian petty bourgeoisie. These Stalinists, in fact, represented the lumpen intelligentsia section of the intelligentsia.

Ignorant and greedy, dishonest and unscrupulous, fawning to the strong and utterly disloyal to their own comrades, these despicable Indian Stalinists as true samples of lumpen intelligentsia, were only concerned with their pocket-nerves which by the way were being sufficiently tickled by Stalin.

To the Indian chorus-boys of Stalin, the Comintern resolution on the German debacle was the holy word which required no analysis. It was to be accepted with the same religious irrationalism which marks the acceptance of religious dogmas by religious people all over the world.

Tagore in his reply to the Stalinists pointed out the necessity of a thorough study of the causes of the German tragedy, and of forming considered opinion on the basis of such studies, irrespective of resolutions. But the pocket-nerves of the lumpen intelligentsia stood against their taking such a rational and revolutionary attitude towards political happenings. The fight with the clique started.

In 1931 a Red Trade Union Congress had been established by the Communists in opposition to the existing All India Trade Union Congress. This ultra-leftist move was suicidal. On the one hand the newly grown trade union movement of India was weakened by this split, on the other hand the communists had segregated themselves from the mass of the organised workers.

Tagore condemned this ultra-leftism and advised the dissolution of the Red Trade Union Congress and the functioning through the All India Trade Union Congress. Tagore pointed out to the Stalinists how the Red Trade Union opposition in Germany had failed to mobilise even five percent of the organised workers and how it proved fatal to the cause of the revolution.

But historical experience never teaches the Indian chorus-boys of Stalin anything and the revolutionary thinking is foreign to their nature. So Tagore's pleading went unheeded in 1934. In 1935 when Stalin had swung from ultra-leftism to ultra-rightism all along the line, his Indian gang received the order to liquidate the Red Trade Union Congress. This time no argument was necessary. The order of the pay-master was a sufficient argument. In the Calcutta Session of the T. U. C. presided over by Hariharnath Sastri, the Stalinists grovelled on the dust before the reformists and conceded more grounds in their indecent haste to carry out the order of their pay-master than it was necessary. Tagore also participated in that particular meeting in which the final dissolution of the Red T. U. C. was accomplished.

But in 1934 the Stalinists stuck to their blunder with the obstinacy of hirelings whose thought process consists only in carrying out the order of the pay-master. In 1934 the Stalinists had also assumed an ultra-leftist attitude towards the petty bourgeois intelligentsia. Having come from the lumpen section of the intelligentsia, these men suffered from a sense of inferiority complex vis a vis the intelligentsia. This prevented them from making an objective estimation of the role of the petty bourgeois intelligentsia in the revolutionary movement in India. They alienated the most radical section of the intelligentsia and picked up the lumpen. That suited the clique alright but was detrimental to the development of communist movement in India.

Tagore stood against this tactic of alienating the intelligentsia. The need of the professional revolutionaries for the development of the communist movement in India was too great and urgent to be trifled with. And in the conditions of India in 1934, only the intelligentsia could supply the professional revolutionaries.

Disagreement on all these fundamental questions continued till the middle of June, 1934. The clique of Somnath—Halim controlling the Bengal apparatus of the Stalinist party started a campaign of distortion of Tagore's viewpoint. The clique was frightened lest the control of the apparatus slipped away from its

hands.

When after a series of discussions with the various Stalinists of Bengal and of other parts of India it became quite evident that corruption and degeneration had eaten up the core of the so-called Communist Party, it was decided to start another parallel party. In 1934, the Communist League of India was started with Sudhir Dasgupta, Probhat Sen, Ranjit Majumdar, Arun Banerji and Saumyendranath Tagore as its members. The name Communist League was chosen because of its historical association with the Communist League of Karl Marx. Marx and Engels had published their epoch-making "Communist Manifesto" on behalf of this League.

Ganavani (the voice of the masses) made its appearance first as a weekly, then as the monthly organ of the party. Marxian literature poured out of the Ganavani Publishing House. In 1938 "Red Front", the illegal organ of the party made its first appearance with the draft platform of the Communist League.

The programme dealt mainly with the following subjects :-

- (1) The Role of the Indian bourgeoisie,
 - (2) The Indian National Congress,
 - (3) The character of the Indian revolution,
 - (4) The political misdeeds of the Stalinists
- and (5) The tasks before the Communist League.

International Neo-Menshevism was rampant at this period with the introduction of the People's Front tactic. The swan-song of revolution—the class-collaborationist tune of Menshevism—became the main tune of the chorus-boys all over the world. In India this class-collaborationist Neo-menshevism expressed itself in the Indian Stalinists' sudden outburst of love for the bourgeoisie and for the bourgeois Congress. They had since long characterised the Indian revolution as a bourgeois revolution, but now this ignorant blunder was made doubly worse by ascribing revolutionary role (later on of course they changed this revolutionary role into an oppositional role of the bourgeoisie.) to the bourgeoisie. The wholesale condemnation of the Congress gave place to unprincipled sycophancy of the Congress. The Congress became by a stroke of the pay-master's pen the only anti imperialist organisation, the realisation of the

Indian people's anti-imperialist struggle and the organ for the completion of the national revolution !

Here are some relevant quotations from the Draft Platform of the Communist League of India in Red Front No. 1 Vol 1 :—

"Colonies and dependencies of which India constitutes a classic example are the deeper reserves of imperialism. It is out of the vast reservoir of colonial super-profit that the imperialists bribe a section of the proletariat at home, infect them with a national chauvinism and thus secure the social-economic basis of reformism in the labour movement. Now if the imperialist system of exploitation is to be destroyed the world-front of anti-imperialist revolutionary forces must extend from the very centre and heart of the imperialist home countries to the colonial lands. The final defeat of Imperialism is then conditioned by the emancipation of the colonies from the octopus of Imperialism. This is why in the anti-imperialist struggle the movement for the liberation of the colonies is an important and decisive factor—a factor of revolution."

"The national question, the problem of national emancipation, of independent national development is not a static question. It must not be viewed as an extra-historical phenomenon, an abstract metaphysical concept isolated and detached from the central task of the epoch, the overthrow of imperialism and the establishment of socialism. It is only an item, a significant detail in the general process of historical social changes. It has no absolute or independent magnitude but is determined by the whole course of social development."

"But in this epoch of the decline of imperialism and of proletarian socialist revolution, the content of the national liberationist struggle of the colonies and dependencies has changed. The banner of bourgeois nationalism is discredited. The concept of bourgeois emancipatory national movement is sterile. The fight for national freedom shall be won under the banner of proletarian internationalism, under the banner of the socialist conception of self-determination. The national

question has grown into the general question of liberating the nations, colonies and semi-colonies from the yoke of imperialism."

"Historically, the I. N. C. was the political organisation of the Indian national bourgeoisie, who created, fashioned, moulded and welded it for wringing some concessions from British Imperialism. Objectively, it thus initiated the first phase of anti-imperialist struggle. Gradually its social base widened. But this widening does not change the class-role and class-face of the congress. After reaching a definite stage of struggle the social class leadership of the congress, caught in the mesh of inherent social contradictions, tries to blunt the revolutionary edge of the anti-imperialist struggle. Nevertheless its social class-basis is wide enough to enfold vast masses of the middle classes, peasantry and the workers. It is in this sense that congress is a multi-class organisation. That is why in the anti-imperialist united front of the people, the national congress is a factor of account but not the organisational realisation of the anti-imperialist people's front."

"The working class must necessarily constitute the driving force of the Indian national revolution. And the proletariat and the peasantry cannot grow into a vital political force if they confine their struggle to economic sphere only. In fact the rigid division between political and economic struggle is arbitrary and fantastic. Economic struggle shades off into political struggle and political struggle develops into a struggle for power of a particular social class against some other social class or classes. The working class and the peasantry through their economic organisations cannot indeed participate as a class in the political struggle for national independence. It is through the political party of the proletariat that the working class and the peasantry fashioned into a distinct political force in the process of active political struggle will participate in and guide the national revolution. But the working class and the peasantry must at first become independent political force before they can be the central dynamics of the

anti-imperialist struggle. The very idea of an alliance necessarily involves and postulates independent existence of the class organisations forming the alliance."

* * *

"The working class is not simply an aggregate of individual workers. The working class is a developing social force and can fulfil its role in the anti-imperialist struggle only acting as a class. Hence individual enrolment of workers in the national congress does not enable the working class to infuse its militancy into the national struggle. Simple numerical addition of some thousand workers to the national congress shall not enable the working class to act as powerful social lever in raising the anti-imperialist struggle to a higher and more consciously revolutionary plane."

* * *

"We are not opposed to fractional work in reformist trade unions but we must not forget to organise independently vast mass of un-organised workers. Neither are we opposed to co-operation with the congress on specific issues but we are not prepared to perpetuate congress influence in the working class to transform it into bourgeois reserve and paralyse its independent class-action."

* * *

"The threatening growth of really revolutionary upsurge of the exploited and toiling masses of India, not only against British imperialism but also against its native servitors, seriously set the congress leaders a-thinking. The rapidly growing mass revolutionary temper must be kept within proper limits under the stupefying bourgeois influence. Gandhism, as the theory of class-collaboration, as a powerful brake upon revolutionisation of the masses proved inadequate to the changing conditions. The political terminology of congress leadership must be smacking of more revolutionism and radicalism. A new type of men must be requisitioned to steer the congress helm. The rank and file of the bourgeois political party was greatly dis-illusioned by the criminal treachery and betrayal of the anti-imperialist struggle. They tended to break away from the congress. Thus

when the bourgeois congress was threatened with the loss of its social base, congress-"socialism" stepped in and stabilised the social base of the bourgeois congress. The task of keeping the process of radicalisation confined and restricted within and under the congress was set forth in the Congress-Socialist of 29th September, 1934, "Hitherto elements dissatisfied with the policy officially pursued by the congress tended to break away from it with the formation of the congress-socialist party we hope the stage of infantile disorder is over."

* * *

"That Congress-"Socialism" is a left manoeuvre of the bourgeoisie and not a radicalising agency and that it cannot be the rallying ground of the anti-imperialist elements are determined by its (a) attitude to the congress, (b) its work in the congress on definite issues and (c) characterisation of the nature of colonial revolution."

* * *

"The immediate task of the communists is :—

- (1) To speed up the independent communist organisation of the working class, peasantry and the middle-class.
- (2) To organise and develop independent class organisation of the working class and the peasantry on the basis of class struggle, on the basis of unflinching opposition to landlordism, capitalism imperialism and to maintain their ideological and political independence.
- (3) To develop the anti-imperialist movement along the active struggle for the immediate class demands of the toiling masses, along the lines of class struggle, for raising the tempo, width and intensity of the movement.
- (4) To organise a genuine left bloc within the congress to deepen and sharpen the conflict between the counter-revolutionary leadership and the anti-imperialist rank and file and to rally the rank and file around the genuine anti-imperialist platform, developing outside the congress.
- (5) To detect every subtle bourgeois manoeuvre (eg. Jawaharlal's "socialism", Roy's theory of multi-class leadership etc.) and apply communist criticism against it.
- (6) To explain to the working class the implication of

tailism and class-collaboration that are inherent in the particular way in which the C. S. P. and the "C. P. I." have launched their drive for individual enrolment and to organise the pressure of the mass movement to effect recognition of the principle of collective affiliation by the national congress.

(7) To set up local united front action committees between the congress and the organisations of the workers, peasants and students on the basis of the struggle for appropriate and concrete anti-imperialist issues."

In 1938 met the first convention of the party. The main thesis before the convention was on the united front tactic. The tragic history of the united front tactic practised in France and Spain was too serious a happening to be passed over without assuming a definite stand on such a tactic. The party had since 1934 condemned the class-collaborationist united front tactic followed in China in 1925-1927. This tactic had spelled disaster to the Chinese revolution and was thoroughly un-Marxian and un-Leninist. It was Menshevism in ideology and practice.

In his, "Address to the Communist League" Marx wrote in 1850,—“In the case when a struggle against a common enemy exists, a special kind of alliance is un-necessary. As soon as it becomes necessary to fight such an enemy directly, the interest of both parties fall together for the moment. During the struggle and after the struggle, the workers at every opportunity must put up their own demands in contra-distinction to the demands put forward by the bourgeois democrats.”

And Lenin says—“Here we have before us the new Iskra philosophy in its complete, pure and consistent form, the revolution is a bourgeois revolution, therefore we must bow to bourgeois vulgarity and make way for it By that we would place the proletariat entirely under the tutelage of the bourgeoisie (while retaining for ourselves complete freedom to criticise...) and compel the proletariat to be weak and mild in order not to frighten the bourgeois away. We emasculate the immediate needs of the proletariat, namely its political needs which the Economists and their epigones have never thoroughly understood, out of fear lest the bourgeoisie be frightened away. We would completely abandon the field of the revolutionary struggle

for the achievement of democracy to the extent required by the proletariat in favour of the field of bargaining with the bourgeoisie and obtaining their voluntary consent ("not to desert") at the price of our principles and of the revolution itself."

Little did Lenin know that in 1925 and again in 1934, the consent of the bourgeoisie "not to desert" should be obtained "at the price of our principles and of the revolution itself." Little did he imagine that the emasculation of "the immediate needs of the proletariat namely its political needs ... out of fear lest the bourgeoisie be frightened away," would be practised in 1925-27 and 1934, by the Bolshevik Party under the leadership of Stalin.

The convention repudiated this un-Leninist variety of United Front practised in China, France and Spain with such disastrous results, and declared it to be a betrayal of the revolution.

The second imperialist war started in September, 1939. The party of the revolutionary proletariat immediately came out with its pamphlet, "The imperialist war and India." It exposed mercilessly the real implication of the so-called democratic front stunt of the British Communists (Stalinist brand) of the Indian Stalinists, of the Indian bourgeois nationalists such as Gandhiji and of the petty bourgeois Congress-socialist (national socialist) Party.

It was the period of national-chauvinistic defencist policy of the Stalinists of England and France. The secret and open alliances of Stalin with Hitler and Stalin's supply of war materials to Hitler had not become known as yet. So Harry Pollitt, the British Stalinist came out with a thoroughly chauvinistic pamphlet in defence of British imperialism. He had soon to recant it when his master entered into open and secret pacts with Hitler and tied himself with a golden chain of friendship with him. The Stalinists of Great Britain and India (as a matter of that Stalinists all the world over) immediately shunted their bogey from the "democratic (!) rails of British imperialism to the anti-imperialist (?) rails of German fascism. This was the second period. In this period—a'la the international chorus-boys of Stalin—Hitler became democratic, revolutionary and what

more the defender of the world against British imperialism. Stalin's shameful secret pact with Hitler according to which he sent his invading army to Poland when Poland was writhing in agony under Nazi boots and grabbed territories according to his secret arrangement with Hitler and Stalin's supply of necessary war materials (oil, timber and manganese) to Hitler—all these unpardonable crimes were supported with vehemence by the chorus-boys of Stalin all over the world. Then came the third period. Hitler attacked Stalin erstwhile his comrade in-loot. Overnight the tune changed. Churchill became the only champion of democracy, the imperialist war became the people's war and Churchill the leader of the people's war against fascism.

These are the three phases of the 'dialectical' (a word used by Stalinists to cover up all their stupidities and criminalities) development of the international hirelings of Stalin in the period of the second imperialist world-war. The Indian bourgeoisie through its party, the Indian National Congress declared its fullest sympathy for the 'democratic' front of British imperialism. Gandhiji in grateful sympathy with British imperialism burst into tears before the imperialist butcher Linlithgow. Jawaharlal Nehru, the Gandhian national-socialist, clowned the cap of Micawber and played the role of gentleman in politics. He ascribed to himself the title of statesman and declared with holy wrath that an enemy in peril could not be attacked. That would be a violation of the gentlemanly code of the Micawber statesman. Behind all these clownish games of Gandhiji and Nehru was hidden the naked class-interest of the Indian bourgeoisie.

The Indian bourgeoisie could not afford to start a genuine mass movement against British imperialism. It knew fully well that in this epoch an anti-imperialist mass-movement would mean its own negation as a class. Its dread of the Indian masses—its class-enemy is infinitely deeper than its dissatisfaction against British imperialists, its partner-in-robbery. That explains the attitude of the bourgeois Congress and its accredited leaders like Gandhiji and Nehru. That explains why the Congress resigned the ministry in such a tame drawing room fashion, instead of forcing Linlithgow to drive them out of

office. That could have been the starting point of a great mass movement—the forcible suppression of 'popular' ministry—but that is exactly what the Indian bourgeoisie did not want at that time, world-situation was yet not in its favour. Stalin was reaping the benefit of his pro-Hitler 'neutrality' and grabbing territories in a way which was rather disquieting to the Indian bourgeoisie. It was extremely nervous in the early phase of the war. Red menace seemed to be growing too unpleasantly fast for its taste.

That is why Jawaharlal Nehru waxed so eloquent on his being a gentleman (not a fighter) for India's freedom and Gandhiji opens out his lochrymal glands in sympathy of imperialist democracy.

The individual Satyagraha was in perfect tune with the attitude explained above. It was just a stunt to put a stop to the murmurs of the dissatisfied elements within the Congress.

The Communist League took its firm stand on the profound teaching of Marx and Lenin and exposed all the political chicaneries of the Stalinists, the bourgeois Congress and its satellite organisation—the Congress-socialist Party.

Here are some relevant quotations from Red Front, March, 1940—as adopted in the Second Party Conference:—

"So, the (second) imperialist war broke out not in defence of people's democracy and freedom, not really in the protection of the independence of Poland as the hypocritical bourgeoisie would proclaim, but as the direct outcome of the rivalries for imperialist brigandage on the masses. And the masses are dragged into this horrible carnage by a propaganda of rabid chauvinism and made to fight a battle to which they are not parties but their exploiters and oppressors are.

"In explaining the task of the proletariat in socialist revolution Lenin exploded the idea of imperialist war breaking out on an immediate issue of fight for peace or democracy and called upon the proletariat to overthrow the power of capital for the achievement of democratic peace. "The war is a product of half a century of development of world imperialism and of its million thread and connections," he said, "one cannot escape

from the imperialist war, one cannot achieve democratic non-oppressive peace without first overthrowing the power of capital and without the overthrow of the power of state to another class, the proletariat." (Lenin, The Task of the Proletariat in our Revolution)."

"In view of the present situation created by the Second Imperialist War, the Communist Party of India takes its stand :-

- (1) For the Independence of Poland, the present victim of fascist aggression.
- (2) Against fascism, the arch-enemy of the people and its satellites, the bourgeoisie of all countries.
- (3) Against all patriotic, compromising and "democratic" sophism of the bourgeoisie and pacifists.
- (4) For full self-determination of the colonial peoples.
- (5) For the support of the international proletariat for the successful overthrow of its own national bourgeoisie in all countries.
- (6) For the conversion of imperialist war internally into a civil war and externally into a revolutionary war for the real defence of Soviet Union and the carrying forward of the world revolution."

Soviet Russia was all along under Stalin a partisan in the war. It was Stalin's open pact with Hitler that brought about Hitler's attack on Poland and it was Stalin's secret pact with Hitler that led to the partition of Poland by Hitler and Stalin. Stalin took Bessarabia and the Baltic states as a price of his neutrality in favour of Hitler, whom he supplied war-materials till June, 1941. Thus it is wrong to say that Soviet Russia was not in the war. Stalinism was in the war from the very beginning in favour of German fascism, its neutrality was with certain reservations like the neutrality of fascist Italy. In this period both Stalinism and Italian fascism played the rôle of the supplier of raw materials of war to Hitler.

In the first conference of the Communist League of India the two main theses that came before the party were the thesis on the People's Front and the thesis on the Third International

and Soviet foreign policy. The conference declared the so-called People's Front of the Stalinist variety as in essence a front against the people and condemned the Soviet foreign policy of the Stalin-regime and the subservience of the Third International to the needs of Stalin's foreign policy.

Stalin had attacked Finland in October, 1939. This unprincipled aggression of Stalin on Finland was supported by the Stalin's hirelings all over the world. The Communist League sharply condemned this un-communistic action of Stalin. It declared that—"The Soviet invasion of Finland was an act of pure and simple aggression. It has no connection whatsoever with the revolutionary proletarian movement in Finland. Of course, the myth of the Finnish people's government was incubated three weeks after the Soviet army had invaded Finland, in order to give aggression the honourable appearance of revolutionary help to a people in revolt. The fact remains that there was no popular uprising in Finland to justify the intervention of the Red Army. The subsequent action of the Soviet Government signing peace treaty with the Finnish Government denounced by them as fascist, dealt the last blow in demolishing the myth of the Finnish people's good."

(On the Self-determination of Nations.)

Further—"Let us be quite clear on this. If by military intervention it would have been possible to overthrow capitalism and imperialism we would have welcomed it unhesitatingly. If it had meant the quickening of the world-revolution and the seizure of power by the working class, we would have welcomed it as by this alone could the Soviet Union justify its existence as the citadel of revolutionary internationalism. The working masses and the oppressed people of the world demand bold revolutionary interventions by the Soviet Union on the world arena, but not the type of military aggression as on Finland. We strongly object to such military aggression because we are convinced that military interventions when not in the nature of a help to revolutionary uprising started by the people of a country, causes the greatest setback to the revolutionary movement. It actually helps the bourgeoisie to befool the people and to temporarily utilise the masses for its own capitalist cum-nation-

alist interests.

In Finland the Finnish workers and peasants had fought for the independence of their country against the Red Army. The Red Army did not appear to the Finnish masses as their saviours but as the enemies of their country's freedom. The Soviet Government did not come to them as champion of social justice and national integrity but as the destroyer of their national integrity. It did not represent to them the cause of the revolution but the expansion of the Soviet territory. This is a historical tragedy of the first magnitude. It has injured the cause of communism and has lowered its moral prestige as nothing else has done.

Mannerheim and the Finnish bourgeoisie had been helped by this aggression and the proletarian revolution had been submerged by the nationalist flood let loose by Stalin's action. The great teaching of Lenin about the self-determination of nations as the necessary step towards socialism, has been completely ignored by Stalin who it seems has failed to realise the profound revolutionary implication of this principle.

We have to bring back the faith of the oppressed people of the world, in the Soviet Government by condemning Stalin's aggression on Finland, and by asserting our whole-hearted support to the principle of self-determination which in the words of Lenin is "in accord with the general task of the immediate struggle for socialism" and is moreover "absolutely necessary for the sake of the final aim."

(On the Self-determination of Nations.)

Further—"The aggression against Finland was carried out on the basis of two pleas put forward by Stalin :—Firstly that fascist Finland was being made the base of attack on Soviet Russia by all imperialist powers, that it was being made into some sort of an imperialist jumping ground for attacking the Soviet Government. Secondly that some Finnish territories were necessary for the effective military protection of the Soviet. The first plea put forward had no immediate bearing on the issue of aggression against Finland. At the moment of aggression there was no sign of any imperialist or fascist concentration in Finland for launching an attack on Soviet Russia. That such

a future probability existed, may be granted for argument's sake ; but then such a probability existed also from the sides of Poland and Rumania. On the assumption of a future probability aggression cannot be undertaken. That smacks too much of an imperialist and fascist method of putting forward a plea for aggression. The second plea that some Finnish territories were necessary for safe-guarding the integrity of Soviet territory also does not fare too well. In these days of modern mechanical warfare twenty miles of territory, here and there, does not and cannot play any significant role in the protection of the integrity of any country. History has put an ironical commentary on this plea of Stalin by forcing him to abandon these Finnish territories in a few weeks time when the Nazi-Soviet war started.

The government of Finland was also not a fascist government in the sense that Hitler's or Mussolini's or Franco's governments are. It was a bourgeois democratic government dominated by the social-democratic elements. But there is no doubt that like bourgeois governments in this period of acute crisis of imperialism, the Finnish Govt. was also fascist in content. It was fascist in the same way as Baldwin's or Chamberlain's national governments were and Churchill's and Roosevelt's governments are. If on the score of its being fascist that Finland had to be attacked, then Stalin surely should have been on a much more sure ground if he had attacked either Nazi Germany or Fascist Poland or Fascist Italy or Fascist Spain. Our main point is that by this method of aggression neither Sovietisation can be achieved nor the cause of world-revolution can be furthered. It cannot be achieved because the citadel of world-capitalism cannot be battered by just nibbling at its outer periphery. If by aggression we could conquer fascist Germany or the so-called democratic countries of France and England then of course we should carry out such aggressions by all means. Such a conquest will smash the very heart of world-imperialism. Sovietisation and world-revolution will surely then make colossal strides forward. But we all know that speculations of such attacks on the principal imperialist powers cannot form even the subject-matters of intelligent discussion. The Soviet army cannot be expected to launch in near or distant future such attacks against imperial-

ist powers. This sort of aggression against small powers can not do any appreciable damage to world-imperialism, but it does definitely harm the cause of world-revolution. It harms because the bourgeoisie of the major imperialist countries and also of all capitalist lands would use such aggressions as a handle to play on the nationalist sentiments of the people and to win them over to their side (however temporary that may be and historical temporariness may mean many years) from the revolutionary mass front.

That was exactly what happened when in the days of Lenin the Red Army marched into Poland without being invited to come by any popular uprising. The Polish bourgeoisie made good use of the nationalist sentiments of the masses and got them to fight the Red Army. Lenin, the great revolutionary frankly admitted his mistakes.

The same mistake was repeated by Stalin by his aggression on Finland. Finnish workers and peasants sided with the Finnish bourgeoisie to fight against the Red Army. Stalin's aggression served as the bridge by which the gulf between the Finnish masses and the Finnish bourgeoisie was bridged for the time being. The revolutionary cause of Finland suffered thereby. Since Stalin has launched on the policy of united front with the 'democratic' imperialist bourgeoisie to-day and the united front with the fascist bourgeoisie to-morrow he has shelved the task of world revolution completely. He thinks that what is only possible of achievement by consistently organising the revolutionary movements in each imperialist and capitalist country (the task which he has given up already many years) he will be able to achieve it by small diplomatic pilferings. But as we have seen that the task of world-revolution can never be achieved through such tactics, it can only be then wasted and injured. Only on that ground we have objected to Stalin's aggression against Finland. (Red Front, March, 1942).

We have seen how in this period the Stalinists gloated over every victory of Hitler and eulogised him as the defender of democracy. But suddenly the table was turned. Hitler attacked Soviet Russia in June, 1941 and over-night dialectics (the dialectics of pocket) came to the aid of the hirelings. For

us; the revolutionary communists, Hitler was since 1933, if not earlier, the filthy criminal, the murderer of the German communists, socialists, liberals and pacifists,—in one word Hitler was the hangman of all those elements that signified progress and enlightenment in Germany. For us Hitler never "dialectically" changed into a saint from satan and again satan from saint. The cause of world-revolution determined our thinking, not the greedy open jaws of the pocket.

Likewise, Churchill, the arch-imperialist, the criminal slave-driver of colonial people did not for the revolutionary communists transform himself into an angel just because it was to the interest of Stalin now to cuddle close to Churchill, being so unceremoniously released from the bond of "golden chain of friendship" (Molotov) with Hitler.

But for the Stalinists, the third phase of their metamorphosis has already begun. Hitler, the champion of people's democracy (according to Stalinists) became the blood-thirsty savage (which he really was all the time, even at that period when the Stalinists called him an angel) once more. The war lost its imperialist character as soon as Soviet Russia entered the war openly (as covertly it was all along in the war like 'neutral' Italy) and became the people's war.

Red Front, the organ of the Revolutionary Communist Party of India wrote in March, 1942—"The Stalinist Notorious (N) Funkers (F) group once propagated united front with democratic (I) imperialist bourgeoisie because they were ordered to do so by Stalin. Then when Stalin made his pact with Hitler and Molotov grew lyrical over "the golden chain of friendship" (Molotov) that bound Soviet Russia with fascist Germany, the Stalinist N. F. group over-night discovered that the democratic (?) imperialist bourgeoisie were not half so democratic as they thought; Hitler was much better. Then the Nazi attack on Soviet Russia brought the sudden revelation to these N. F. traitors that British imperialism is waging a people's war against Hitler. These traitors can be made to side with either British imperialism or Nazism according to the order they receive from Stalin."

The Third Conference of the Communist League of India met in 1941. In this conference the name of the party

was changed from the Communist League of India to the Communist Party of India. The party considered the situation created by Hitler's attack on Soviet Russia and had prolonged discussions on the point whether Soviet Russia's entry into the war had not changed the character of the war. After prolonged discussions the party came to the conclusion that the character of the war had not changed because of the entry of Soviet Russia in war.

"The imperialist character of the world-war has not undergone any change even when Soviet Russia has been entangled in it. And why? Because firstly, as a whole the character of the world-war remains imperialist. One cannot and must not judge the character of a world phenomenon like the world-war in a piecemeal fashion. One cannot say that part of the world-war is imperialist in character and part of it is people's war in character. The absurdity of such a viewpoint is more than obvious. One must judge such a world-phenomenon by its world-aspects and judging its total aspects we see that the prime movers are imperialists and the objects for which it is fought is entirely imperialist.

"Secondly, even if we accept the contention for argument's sake that Soviet Russia's entanglement in the second world-war has changed its imperialist character and has transformed it into the people's war, we will have to ascertain before that whether the U. S. S. R. is still a genuinely people's government. That question has to be decided before the transformation of the imperialist character of the war into a people's war by the coming of Soviet Russia into war arena can be judged.

"We are of the opinion that though the government of U. S. S. R. remains still Soviet in form, in content it is no longer a genuinely people's government. Under Stalin the Soviet Government has slowly transformed itself into a government of bureaucratic caucus which rules with a ruthless terror against the people of Soviet Russia itself. The proletarian democracy which was surging in mighty flow right from the masses, enundating the lowest as well as the topmost rung of the Soviet structure during the period of Lenin, has been checked

impeded, smothered and crushed by Stalin and the bureaucracy of which he is the leader.

"Tried servants of the people, seasoned revolutionaries, have all been murdered by Stalin and his gang on the plea of the most shamefully false charges manufactured against them. The democratic rights (proletarian democratic rights) of the people of Soviet Russia, the inner party democracy of the Bolshevik Party of Lenin were swamped by the slimy bureaucratic tide of Stalinism. Every opinion that differs from Stalin is dubbed as counter-revolution and the person who dare utter political views not liked or shared by Stalin and his bureaucratic caucus, is branded as a spy of either this or that imperialist power and is shot. Political jesuitism of Stalin has surpassed in savagery the inquisitory method of Spanish Jesuits. Stalinism has not only not freed bourgeois democracy from its class-limitations and make it proceed to the next higher stage of proletarian democracy, Stalinism has even limited the rights even enjoyed by the people under bourgeois democracy and has reverted back to the unabashed rule of bureaucratic autocracy. Thus we are driven to the conclusion that the present Soviet Government has lost its character as a people's government which once it had in the period of Lenin.

"Also the foreign policy pursued by Stalin during the last nine years reflects the non-people's government character of the present Soviet regime. If the revolutionary working class of Soviet Russia which has successfully carried out the greatest revolution of the world and had thereby ushered in the era of world-revolution, had the Soviet Government really in their hands, they could never have then formulated the policy of class-collaboration with the bourgeoisie, the policy known as the united front and people's front which was really the front against the people.

"They could never have carried on aggression against Finland knowing that such aggression can never be a method of Sovietising the world and that such a method cuts at the very root of the Leninist principle of self-determination of nations which forms an integral part of revolutionary socialism. Moreover it should never be forgotten that such aggression only helps the world-bourgeoisie to alienate the masses from the

Soviet by playing on the nationalist sentiments of the masses. It harms the cause of revolution and communism.

"If the Soviet Government is really the people's government, it would not have allowed Stalin to enter into secret pact (not the non-aggression pact) with Hitler for dividing Poland with him. All these facts prove that the revolutionary working class of Soviet Russia is not at the helm of the Soviet Government. It is a bureaucracy led by Stalin which rules the Soviet Government to-day. Therefore even from the standpoint of the Soviet, it is not a people's war."

(Red Front, the organ of the Central Committee of the Revolutionary Communist Party of India, March 1942.)

Regarding people's war it says further—"People's war presupposes that the people of a particular country or a group of countries which are involved in war, have snatched the political power from the hands of the bourgeoisie and have become the masters of that particular country or group of countries. People's war presupposes the existence of people's government. Only when the people's government fights for the Protection of the people's government or for the revolutionary extension of the people's government in any other land in response to the invitation of a revolutionary people's uprising, can such a war be called a people's war. The mere fact that people have been drawn into the war and that they have been made to fight their masters' battle does by no means allow us to designate that war as people's war. For in that case every imperialist war can be called a people's war. Because it is the people of every imperialist country that who are forced to fight by ideological terror and physical terror—in one word by the organised terror of the bourgeois state to fight against the people—their own class-brothers—of another country."

(Red Front, March, 1942.)

As we do not consider the war to be a people's war even from the standpoint of the Soviet, what then is our attitude to Soviet Russia now engaged in a life and death struggle with German fascism ?

"Our attitude towards Soviet Russia would be clear from the slogan—All aid to the Soviet—that we gave out. But this

slogan must be understood in a revolutionary way. Our aid to the Soviet does not mean the petty bourgeois Jawaharlalite method of sending ten rupees or a bottle of iodine or two Red Cross nurses to the Soviet. This petty bourgeois non-revolutionary romantic method has been adopted by all petty bourgeois "friends" of the Soviet including the Notorious (N) Funkers (F) group. We know very well that placed as we are we cannot send substantial and direct help to Soviet Russia to-day. Every help must go through British imperialism which is most likely to usurp and utilise most of the help intended for the Soviet for its own purpose. Moreover under the present circumstances we are not in a position even to render effective help to the Soviet in the manner discussed above. Our aid to the Soviet to-day can mean :—

(1) Mobilisation of the masses of our country for the Soviet idea.

(2) Organisation of the people of our country into anti-fascist mass organisations.

(3) Utilisation of the quandary in which British imperialism finds itself at present for striking at it when the opportune moment comes.

And thus (4) the establishment of a free and Soviet India.

Only in striving to accomplish these tasks and by accomplishing these tasks, can Soviet Russia be effectively helped."

(Red Front, March, 1942.)

Red Front, the central organ of the Revolutionary Communists further declared—"M. N. Roy and his gang, and the Stalinist legal-communists both declared the war as the people's war, M. N. Roy, from the very beginning of this imperialist war and the legal-communists since Soviet Russia has been engulfed in war. But at present both the groups consider the imperialist war as the people's war and both the groups have declared their unstinted support of the war. Now this support necessarily includes support to British imperialism which is a party to this war. Both M. N. Roy and the legal-communists have clearly and unhesitatingly declared their readiness to help British imperialism with all their strength. Both the groups have volunteered themselves as recruiting agents and war fund

collectors of British imperialism. This means that these preachers of people's war stunt will go about amongst the Indian masses and ask them to assist British imperialism in its fight against Hitler. The result will be that firstly there will be great confusion in the minds of the people. They will wonder as to why those who had so long opposed British imperialism and had talked of revolutionary struggle against it, should now talk of helping it. Has there then taken place any change for the better in the villain called British imperialism? The masses will be greatly confused as a result of such propaganda.

"Secondly, if by this perfidione propaganda the legal-communists and the Royists would succeed in making the Indian masses side with British imperialism, then it would mean that a change of attitude has been brought about in the mentality of the masses towards British imperialism. It would signify a change from the attitude of opposition to it, to that of co-operation with British imperialism. It is clear that no revolutionary struggle against British imperialism can be carried on if the masses of India develop a mentality of co-operation with British imperialism.

"The vendors of people's war ideology are trying to bring about that psychological change in the attitude of the Indian masses towards British imperialism. That will mean nothing else but weakening, disintegrating and disrupting the revolutionary mass front for India's independence. That amounts to a treachery to India's revolution." (Red Front, March, 1942.)

And that unheard of treachery started with the legal-communists' conversion to people's war ideology. One by one the Stalinists trooped out of prison by abject surrender to the terms imposed upon them by British imperialist fascist regime in India. The terms were—support of the imperialist war and sabotage of the national revolutionary movement as far as it was in their power to do so. On these terms these Stalinists bought their personal freedom and the legalisation of their party. They became openly the agents of Linlithgow-Maxwell. At government's expense their men were sent to attend the Delhi student convention straight from prisons. The legal-

communists were subsidised by the All-India radio to preach support of the imperialist war. They went round in police-lorries in the city of Bombay asking people not to oppose the imperialist war. They started their weekly journal "People's War" in half a dozen languages with the money they received from Linlithgow-Maxwell for prodagating support of the imperialist war. They acted in scores of cases as informers of the C. I. D. and got their political opponents arrested.

The black record of misdeeds of the Indian Stalinist legal-'communists' leaves the records of Stalinists or fascists of other lands far behind in sheer perfidy and criminality. The reason is not far to seek. It is as we have already seen the lumpen-intelligentsia social root of these legal-communists that is responsible for their loathsome political behaviour.

In the meantime another sly attempt was made by the legal-communists and their supporters to use the Kornilov incident of the Russian revolution as a plea for the justification of the legal-communists' support to British Imperialisin. The canard was started by Swami Sahajanand, a 'Kisan' leader who had developed a sudden love for the people's war theory. In a letter to Indulal Yagnik, another 'Kisan' leader Swami Sahajanand "made an effort to justify his present conversion to people's war theory on the plea that Lenin and the Bolshevik Party had supported Kerensky and joined hands with him when Kornilov raised the standard of revolt against the Kerensky government.

"This amazing travesty of historical data and this most astounding example of the mechanical and unhistorical use of false analogies, has gained currency amongst the Stalinist National Frontists who hang on Swami Sahajanand's Kornilov fiction with the desperate tenacity of a drowning man clutching at a straw." That is what the revolutionary Communists wrote in their brochure—Sahajanand, Kornilov and People's war.

They wrote—"The Bolsheviks not only entered the Committee of Defence, inspite of their being a negligible minority in that Committee, they moreover announced that in the struggle against Kornilov they are reday to form a "military technical union" even with the directory. Lenin wrote—"It

would be the profoundest mistake to imagine that the revolutionary proletariat is capable, so to speak, out of 'vengeance' upon the Social-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks for the support that they have given to anti-Bolshevik raids, to shootings at the fronts and disarming of workers of refusing to support them against counter-revolution. Support the provisional government in a "technical military sense" but not politically, that is what Lenin advised the Bolshevik Party to do. Time and again Lenin warned the Bolshevik Party not to lend political support to Kerensky and the provisional government. In one of his letters to the Central Committee Lenin wrote— "We ought not even now to support the government of Kerensky. That would be unprincipled. You ask: But mustn't we fight Kornilov? Of course, yes. But that is not the same thing. There is a limit here. Some of the Bolsheviks are crossing it, slipping into 'compromisism, getting carried away by the flood of events'.

"On August 29th, 1917 Piatakov, a Bolshevik leader, declared at a session of the Kiev city Duma—"In this dangerous moment we must forget all the old accounts.....and unite with all revolutionary parties which stand for a decisive struggle against counter-revolution. I summon you to unity etc. etc."

"This was the false political tone against which Lenin wrote these memorable words—"To forget the old accounts would have meant to open new credits for the candidates in Bankruptcy." Further Lenin wrote—"We will fight. We are fighting against Kornilov, but we are not supporting Kerensky, but exposing his weakness. This is a different thing.....We must struggle ruthlessly against phrases about supporting the provisional government etc. etc., precisely as mere phrases."

"Thus in fighting Kornilov, the Russian proletariat was not supporting Kerensky, it was only pursuing its own special aims.

"From the above quoted utterances of Lenin we can draw the following conclusions:—

"Firstly, only a "technical military union" with the provisional government; this was all that Lenin could recommend to the Russian proletariat and to the Bolshevik

Party.

"Secondly, Lenin warned the Bolsheviks not to support the government of Kerensky in any case. That would be unprincipled (Lenin). Here Lenin wanted to point out that only technical support can be given to Kerensky, but no political support.

"Thirdly, Lenin pointed out that fight against Kornilov by no means implied support to Kerensky. "That is not the same thing. There is a limit here. Some of the Bolsheviks are crossing it, slipping into compromisism, or getting carried away by the flood of events" (Lenin). Here Lenin hinted at the attitude of Piatakov and such other Bolsheviks.

"Hasn't Swami Sahajanand taken up exactly the same attitude as that of Piatakov and hasn't he in a panic got himself "carried away by the flood of events"? Don't the slogans 'people's war' and 'democratic front' which Swami Sahajanand finds himself so deeply attached to these days, lend political support to British imperialism? Is it not "slipping into compromisism" (Lenin) with British imperialism? Doesn't the acceptance of these slogans amounts to ideological concession to British imperialism which must lead to political concessions?

"We are the sworn enemies of fascism and against it we must carry on a prolonged and ruthless struggle till fascism is exterminated. But it is one thing to fight against fascism and quite another thing to mis-represent the character of the present war and to propagate such false slogans as 'people's war' and 'democratic front'. This is thoroughly unprincipled. The Bolsheviks opposed Kornilov, and it is because of them that Kornilov was smashed, without supporting the government of Kerensky. They brought pressure on Kerensky and forced the provisional government to accede to the demands of the workers of Petrograd to arm themselves. They could do so, firstly, because there was a revolution which had overthrown autocracy, and secondly, because there were the soviets, the mighty organs of the revolutionary masses of Russia. Even then the Bolshevik Party did not support the provisional government and Lenin pulled up those Bolsheviks who like Piatakov got panicky and craved for unity with the government of the Russian bourgeoisie.

"Lenin castigated those who like Piatakov took up a defencist position. Lenin wrote—"We will become defencist only after the transfer of power to the proletariat. Neither the capture of Riga nor the capture of Petersburg will make us defencists. Upto that moment we are for proletarian revolution. We are against the war. We are not defencists." And Trotsky wrote—"The fall of Riga is a cruel blow. The fall of Petersburg will be a misfortune. But the fall of the international policy of the Russian proletariat will be ruinous."

"And moreover is there even the slightest justification for using the Kornilov incident as a plausible analogy to the present situation in India ?

"The historical back-ground of the Kornilov incident had the following characteristics :—

Firstly, the masses had already destroyed autocracy.

Secondly, though the masses had to surrender the state power into the hands of the bourgeoisie in February due to the weakness of their political parties, yet the masses had kept sufficient power in their hands through their soviets.

Thirdly, though the bourgeoisie usurped the state power, it was powerless to exert it fully on the masses. The phenomenon of dual power had made its appearance in February.

Fourthly, by lending only 'technical military help' to the provisional government, on no account political help, the workers of Petrograd got the chance of arming themselves.

"Does the political situation in India fulfil even a single one of these conditions ? Are analogies meant to be used as a claptrap for the masses, for the ill-informed and for the justification of one's panicky state of mind and one's consequent surrender to reaction ?

"And moreover are analogies justified when there is a similarity only in most superficial non-essentials between the events compared and when there exists profound differences between the subjects of analogy in their fundamental aspects ?

"We hope this will be enough for Swami Sahajanand and we trust that this will cure him (or is it a vain hope ?) of the malady of false analogy, panic, compromisism and defencism.

As for the so-called National Frontists (Stalinists), no reasoning can do them any good. Saboteurs of revolution have their own logic, propounded and codified in the school of treachery and opportunism.

"Let us mobilise the masses of India against fascism and rouse them to oppose fascist aggression. But that task can only be fulfilled when we explain to the masses the imperialist character of the present war and rouse the masses to action both against imperialism and fascism.

"We must follow a distinct course with a definite aim in view just as the Bolsheviki did in their fight against Kornilov.

"And that, Swami Sahajanand, cannot be accomplished by covering imperialism with one's own unprincipled opportunism and by making it appear thereby democratic and respectable."

(Sahajanand, Kornilov and People's war).

Standing firm on the foundation of revolutionary defeatism of international Marxism, the revolutionary communists exposed the imperialistic-chauvinistic implication of the people's war slogan.

Even the fall of Riga and Petersburg was not considered at all sufficient a reason by Lenin to become chauvinistic-defencist. Only after the revolution can the communists become defencists. But here the legal-communist Stalinists of India became defencists of British imperialist colonial empire because for the moment that suited the political purpose of their paymaster, Stalin.

Red Front wrote—"Since the war started, the Stalinists and the Royists advanced one step more in pursuance of their united front tactic. From the united front with the Indian bourgeoisie they passed on to the united front with the British imperialism. The myth of People's war was created in order to cover up the shameful surrender to imperialism. When Stalin bound himself with the golden chain of friendship with Hitler, these Stalinist chorus-boys discovered democratic virtues in Hitlerism, to-day when Stalin and Churchill are so by an equally golden chain of friendship, the Stalinist legal-communists in India have no other alternative but to serve British imperialism. They have reduced the great principle of revolutionary inter-

nationalism to the principle of wage slavery of Stalin's clique. The change of policy of the Stalinist National Frontists will depend entirely as in the pact on the order of Stalin and on nothing else." (Red Front, October, 1942).

In Red Front, March, 1943 we read—"Attempts of the once "National Frontists" and now Imperialist Frontists and other so-called independent 'kisan' and labour leaders like Swami Sahajanand, Indulal Yagnik etc. proved ridiculous in its effect upon the general picture of the movement and their sudden somersaults, as a natural culmination of their opportunities, have brought political suicide for them, confusion for their followers and indignation and disgrace for their avowed political ideals and helped the Indian bourgeoisie to ridicule any idea of class-organisation, independent of the Congress. Thus we see these Maxwell-boys (these Stalinist legal-communists), the Royists who could never dream of any other organisation but the Congress) and the confused independent leaders have now neither the Congress nor the masses nor even their 'mass organisations' to stand upon. They have left the native bourgeoisie, left the masses and the intermediate classes. They now stand nowhere on Indian soil. They are now hanging on foreign interests."

In 1942 the Indian bourgeoisie under the leadership of Gandhiji started the 'Quit India' movement. We have seen that when the second imperialist war started in 1939, "the bourgeois Congress adopted a policy of futile neutrality. Neither help nor obstruct, this most absurd policy was adopted." ('Revolution and Quit India' number of the Red Front, October, 1942).

We have also seen as to why the Indian bourgeoisie adopted this policy of purposeful hypocrisy in 1939. Red Front writes—"In 1932 British imperialism had not as yet received any hard knock from Nazi Germany and its power was not weakened by the continuous reverses that since then have weakened British imperialism considerably. Then there was another factor which was causing great uneasiness to the Indian bourgeoisie.....The Indian bourgeoisie realised with alarm that the result of the war was going in favour of its most dreaded enemy, the Soviet Government. Whereas to the European and American bourgeois had long ago unmasked himself, to the

Indian bourgeoisie, he still appeared as the incarnation of world-revolution. The apparent success of Stalin's unprincipled diplomacy frightened them. They sensed in the victory of Stalin's diplomacy the growing power of the Soviet Government and of their own approaching doom. Thus the international political situation in 1939 militated against the possibility of the Indian bourgeoisie launching a mass movement against British imperialism. What appeared to them to be Stalin's diplomatic victories had unnerved the Indian bourgeoisie. It stated seeing the unwritten world of its class-destruction on the wall of international political development. That is why we witnessed the political phenomenon of the resignation of ministry stunt and the melodrama of 'Individual Satyagraha' enacted by the Indian national Congress under the guidance and patronage of its class-owner, the Indian bourgeoisie. In 1939 the world political situation did not allow the Indian bourgeoisie to go further than this." ('Revolution and Quit India' number of the Red Front, October, 1942).

This was the reason of the hypocritical 'moral protest' gesture of the Indian bourgeoisie in 1939. By 1942, the international political background had undergone a colossal change. Fascism has not only scored victory after victory against the so-called democratic powers, fascism has moreover given infinitely worse and deadly blows to the Soviet power. Whether the naked fascism of Hitlerian type or the veiled fascism of Churchillian type will ultimately win, one thing is certain, world-imperialism as a whole will emerge out of this war immeasurably stronger than the world-revolutionary front. Soviet Russia for years to come will be dependent on the Anglo-American imperialist powers. Soviet Russia under Stalin had long ago ceased to be the ideological centre of world revolution, now it ceases to be one also from the point of view of financial and technical assistance to the international revolutionary movement.

"The present day dependence of Soviet Russia on Anglo-American imperialism has forced the Soviet Government to lend its support to the notorious Atlantic Charter and to enter into pact with British imperialism in which the Soviet Government promises not to interfere in any way the 'interests' of British

imperialist domination for another twenty years. "Stalinism has finished the role of Soviet Russia as the yeast of world revolution. In 1942, the forces of world-revolution have reached its extreme low water mark. For the time being counter-revolution has come out supremely triumphant. The Indian bourgeoisie is not primarily concerned as to which combination of the two warring imperialist power come out victorious in this world-war, because whichever side wins, it will not materially alter its class-position. The victory of neither side can or will destroy the economic privileges of the bourgeoisie which the victory of Soviet Russia would certainly have meant. Therefore the defeat of Soviet Russia and its tragic weakening is a most welcome thing to the world-bourgeoisie To-day the Indian bourgeoisie is confident that a mass uprising in India can receive no help of any importance from Soviet Russia. Any mass movement which the Indian bourgeoisie would organise in order to put pressure on British imperialism will not be able to break through the bourgeois limitations of the movement and assume a revolutionary form because those two factors which are necessary for such a break through are missing; firstly, the revolutionary leadership of the masses in India, and secondly, the help given to a revolution by an international revolutionary centre. The utter characterlessness of the leftist movement in India as a whole and its miserable weakness on the one hand and the mortal weakening of the Soviet power by the Nazi on the other, both these phenomena have negated the possibilities of a successful revolutionary movement in India for some time to come." ('Revolution and Quit India' issue of 'Red Front, October, 1942).

That is the reason why the hypocritical mist of "moral gesture" of 1939-1941 evaporated in 1942 by the rays of class-interest. The hint of the possibility of a scorched earth policy being followed in India in case of a Japanese attack on India, the collapse of the British imperialist regime in Burma, the growing food scarcity in the country, the terrible battering of Soviet Russia by the Nazis,—all these factors contributed their shares in the decision of the Indian bourgeoisie to launch a pressure movement against British imperialism in Autumn, 1942.

"The India" slogan reflects all these political

reflections and epitomises the political conclusions reached by the Indian bourgeoisie. It is an admirable slogan for inflaming the masses and for mobilising them against British imperialist domination. But the bourgeois wants only a pressure movement not a revolutionary movement. It declares that the movement, would be short and swift. In other words, the Indian bourgeoisie is fighting shy of the prospect of leaving the masses too long in a state of mobilisation. Such a state of mobilisation spread over a long period may lead on to the revolutionary transformation of the masses. Such a risk the Indian bourgeoisie is naturally not prepared to take. Therefore the movement is contemplated as a short and swift one..... But it must not be allowed to get linked up through a centralised leadership. Its spontaneous, atomised and non-centralised character must be maintained. This is the political implication of the programme of action of the Quit India movement that the Congress has placed before the country. The state power can not be seized by spontaneous non-centralised episodes of violence. The seizure of power can never be made by a movement of spontaneous and decentralised nature; it can only be attained through a movement led consciously by a political party with a centralised leadership. In other words the seizure of power can only be the outcome of revolutionary process; and a revolution is by no means a huge pile of unrelated and unconnected episodes of violence. Revolution is a planned action undertaken by a political party for the seizure of power. That the authors of the Quit India movement do not want a revolutionary movement but just outbursts of localised mob-violence, is quite evident from the plan of action they have put forward. They themselves are determined to see that the present episodic character of the mass violence is maintained. The intentions of the leadership is also apparent from the way that the entire Congress leadership has meekly allowed itself to be transported to the jail. To expect a political movement to succeed without the guidance of leadership is something like expecting the army to fight without a general staff. Thus we are driven to the conclusion that seizure of power has not been contemplated at all. Transference of power by the pressure of world-development and of internal anarchy is the high water mark that the

political movement led by the Indian bourgeoisie can reach to-day." ('Revolution and Quit India' number of Red Front, October, 1942).

Bourgeois Congress raised the cry of 'Quit India' but gave no programme of action and the leadership betrayed the masses and consciously kept the movement within the bounds of disconnected episodes of violence. Yet what the masses of India did without any leadership, without any plan of action, being supplied to them, will be a proud heritage of the generations of fighters for freedom and social equality all over the world. Unarmed, left in the lurch by the Congress leadership, without any help from any outside source, the masses of India challenged the British imperialist fascist regime in India in hundreds of heroic encounters. Thousands and thousands gave their lives, hundreds of villages were pillaged and burnt by imperialist soldiers, mass rape of women was carried out according to imperialist plan, nearly hundred thousand were arrested, still they fought on, attack after attack, one more heroic than the other, hoping against hope that revolutionary help and direction shall reach them. But nothing came, no direction, no help. After two months of heroic struggle they retreated before the inhuman savagery of British imperialist forces in India.

It can be asked that whatever role the bourgeois Congress may have played, where were the leftists, what were they doing at this crucial phase of mass upsurge?

Why did not the leftist parties which had been swearing by revolutions for so many years, take the leadership of this gigantic spontaneous mass upsurge in India and direct it on the path of revolution? The question is more than pertinent and requires a thorough answer.

There have been so far four parties in the field which constituted the left movement in India:—

- (1) The Congress-socialist Party,
 - (2) The Communist Party of India (The Stalinist legal-communist party),
 - (3) The Royist party
 - and (4) The Revolutionary Communist Party of India.
- (During the August Movement, 1942, the name of the

party was changed from Communist Party of India to Revolutionary Communist Party of India.—see Red Front, March, 1943).

Of these four parties, the Stalinist legal-communist party and the Royist party have become imperialism-defencists and open saboteurs of national revolution.

The other two parties, the Congress-socialist Party and the Revolutionary Communist Party of India though both had joined the mass upheaval released by the Quit India movement, their approach to the Quit India movement has been totally different from one another.

The Congress-socialist Party as behoves, a wing of the bourgeois Congress was all praise for the leadership of this movement and had not a word of criticism for it. Its criticism was limited to a 'philosophical' (!) discuss on non-violence. Even in the period of a mass upsurge all the criticism that it had to offer against the betrayal of the revolution by the bourgeois Congress has been only about Gandhian non-violence! Such is the revolutionary (!) role of this petty bourgeois party! Its leaders never learnt the simple truth that for a socialist party (of course they may protest against it and say, when has it ever been one?) it is absolutely necessary to criticise the halting nature of its bourgeois ally even at the time when they are both attacking the common enemy. It must caution the masses against the bourgeoisie, the compromising character of the bourgeoisie and place its own demands and plan of actions before the people. This is the political tactic that every party calling itself leftist, must follow.

Remember what Marx wrote in 1850 in his address to the Communist League—"In the case where a struggle against a common enemy exists, a special kind of alliance is unnecessary.etc." (as quoted before), and also remember Lenin's important advice, "Strike together but march separately." The Congress-socialist never thinks himself separate from the Congress—a congress-man first; then a socialist. This policy and faith, however good for being a blind follower, can never be the mettle for any independent leadership. Thus for example, when Gandhiji came out, openly dissociated himself from the August Movement and condemned all violent activities and condemned those

Congress men and women who took part in it and asked them to stop all sorts of violent talk and movement, there was nobody, not even the C. S. P.—to own the responsibility of the movement—not to speak of having the courage to continue it. It has no voice to-day, its lamentable weakness in political conception has created wild confusion as revealed in the book of Masani "Socialism Reconsidered" which is nothing but "socialism with drawn", Dantwalla's "Gandhism Reconsidered" which is nothing but "Gandhism and not socialism" and in Atchut Patwardhan's letter to workers on labour front to abandon Marxian teachings of class struggle and to accept the Gandhian tactics of Mazdoor Mahajan as revealed in Ahmedabad—i.e. class-collaborationism, and in Dr. Lohia's mystical meaninglessness in 'Inquilab'. Obviously the influence that C. S. P. wields to-day is not due to its theory (which it has none other than the bourgeoisie leadership at every critical stage) but to its capacity to follow the whims of its masters.

There can be no real truce with the class-enemy at any stage. Even when along with the bourgeoisie the masses will strike at the common enemy, they must at every opportunity oppose the bourgeoisie with their own demands. In no case should the leaders of the working-class parties allow the workers and the masses to lose sight of their own special ends.

In one of the circulars issued by Jaiprakash Narain, the congress-socialist leader after his escape from Jail, he says—"Nothing like it ever happened or was expected to happen in this our long suffering and suppressed country. It truly was the "Open rebellion envisaged by our incomparable leader Mahatma Gandhi."

The utter bankruptcy of the leadership, its conscious betrayal of the mass revolution, its deliberate plan of not planning the mass uprising, its intentional sabotage of the mass movement, the inevitable class-limitations of this bourgeois leadership etc. etc., there is not a simple word about these things in the circular.

All that we learn from the lips of the congress-socialist worshipper of the 'incomparable leader Mahatma Gandhi' (which really means—the incomparable leader of the Indian

bourgeoisie) is that there have been two reasons for the suppression of the movement, firstly that "there was no efficient organisation" and secondly that "after the first phase of the rising was over there was no further programme placed before the people."

So this is the worth of Jaiprakash Narain's "incomparable leader" who neither created efficient organisation for the uprising, nor placed any programme before the people. Yet he talked of "open rebellion" ad nauseum and when asked to give a concrete programme, he is reported to have said that all that is there to do is to carry the message 'open rebellion' to the villages. The masses will do the rest! In other words keep the movement a spontaneous and unorganised in character as one can.

Such is the incomparable leadership!

He has not the heart to analyse the actions of his "incomparable leader" and find out if the lack of efficient organisation and the lack of programme of action are not the deliberate designs of the incomparable bourgeois leadership that is frightened to death in the name of a mass revolution.

Jaiprakash Narain wants the masses to be prepared for the second phase of the 'revolution' under the same 'incomparable leader' and his still more incomparable 'socialist' worshipper.

But there is nothing strange or unfamiliar for us in this attitude of Jaiprakash Narain and the Congress-socialist party. Congress-socialism has since the day of its inception has been in the service of the Indian bourgeoisie and Gandhism. "It sided with Gandhism every time when the decisive moment came. Its betrayal of the left wing has been so brazen-faced that it hardly needs comment. Jaiprakash Narain, the pontiff of congress-socialism, is perfectly justified when he writes that the congress-socialist have often disagreed with Mahatma Gandhi but never opposed him." The revolutionary communists are quite correct when characterising the Congress-socialist Party they write—"It was the bourgeois seed that fructified within the womb of the Indian petty bourgeoisie and resulted in the political illegitimate.—congress-socialism."

How can such a party which fulfils the role of His Majesty's Opposition within the congress which averts its utmost

to dupe the masses into the sty of the bourgeois congress, and which owes its political existence and prestige (1) to Gandhiji and Nehru, ever give a correct revolutionary leadership to the Indian masses? It was never created with that end in view. It was created to stem the tide of leftism in this country and to strengthen the bourgeois congress. Congress-socialism, the Indian variation of socialism reflect all the degeneration of international socialism with amazing clarity. It created its mass organisations, only for handing them over to the bourgeois congress. It sabotaged the Kisan Sabha (peasant committee) at the bidding of the congress.

The Revolutionary Communist Party of India had stood shoulder to shoulder with the masses in their grim battle against the British imperialist-fascist regime. Hundreds of the revolutionary Communists have been imprisoned all over India. Five have been killed by the imperialists' bullets. Helped by the Stalinist legal-communist informers, the government had let loose its savage repression against the revolutionary communist party. Every where they have been the special target of imperialist wrath. Yet unflinchingly the revolutionary communists stood by the masses. As early as November 1941, in the second conference of the party, a detailed plan of action for the coming struggle was drawn up and sent to the various organisations of the party.

When the 'Quit India' movement started and the masses surged forward in mighty revolutionary waves, the party was not caught unawares. Its ideological weapons were never allowed to get the bourgeois rust. It never identified the mass movement with the Congress, nor did it prove its political bankruptcy like the Congress-socialist Party by forfeiting its revolutionary right of criticism of the bourgeois Congress.

The Revolutionary Communist Party was not slow to point out the treachery of the bourgeois leadership of the 'Quit India' movement. As early as October, 1942, only a month and a half after the commencement of the movement, the party brought out a thorough analysis of the movement in the party organ, Red Front. The party warned the country not to mistake this movement for a revolution. The fate of the movement was sealed

by its bourgeois leadership. The Congress leadership had sabotaged the movement even before it started. Not for a moment did the party surrender to the Congress-romanticism of the petty bourgeois congress-socialists, nor did its feet were swept off from the grounds of revolutionary ideology and tactics by the sweep of the movement. Petty bourgeois politics bowled over by a movement is a common phenomenon all the world over. The party fought relentlessly against this danger of sudden ebullition of petty bourgeois romanticism regarding the bourgeois Congress amongst the revolutionaries in the ranks of the party and outside it.

The party stood by the masses, stood by the mass upheaval, never did it stand by the bourgeois Congress.

The gigantic mass heaval of August and September, 1942 should never be confounded with the Congress. Besides giving impetus to the movement by the slogan 'Quit India' and its propaganda, the Congress was nowhere in the field when the actual mass uprising swept over the land. Almost all the big and small leaders had already hastened to jail to seek safety there. And to-day Gandhiji openly denies any congress responsibility for the movement!! Once the students of India had ignited the fire of revolt, the masses started the fight without any help from the Congress. The revolutionary communists went along with the masses through the ordeal of fire, not faltering for once, not leaving the masses in the lurch for once, knowing fully well that due to the betrayal of the bourgeois Congress leadership of the movement, the movement was doomed. The revolutionary communists marched with the masses in the hour of their struggle with imperialism. They did not follow or support the Congress even once. It is one thing to join the revolutionary upsurge of the masses, even when one knows that the uprising is sure to be defeated, and it is another thing to solidarise with the treacherous leadership of the movement, to sing its praise as the congress-socialist Jaiprakash Narain and his followers do. The Revolutionary Communist Party to-day is not shy of what it has done to help the movement and it shall never disown the masses in their movement, however defective it had been in practice.

"The conclusions that we draw from the 'Quit India' movement are:-

Firstly, the utter bankruptcy of the Congress, the Party of the Indian bourgeoisie; and its total inability (as the class-party of the bourgeoisie) to lead the national movement.

Secondly, the complete overthrowal of non-violence as the technique of struggle.

Thirdly, the complete exposure of 'National Frontist' legal-communists, the germ-carriers of Stalinism in India.

Fourthly, the phenomenal tempo of the revolutionisation of the masses of India.

Fifthly, the ripening of the ideological premises for the growth of real leftism in India, as a result of the political development, both national and international. The national revolutionary movement in India has definitely jumped over the hurdle of Gandhism and has scornfully rejected the petty bourgeois congress-socialism which is at the service of the Indian bourgeoisie.

(Revolution and Quit India...Red Front, October, 1942).

In March, 1943, the party changed its name from the Communist Party of India to the Revolutionary Communist Party of India. In this connection, the Red Front wrote--"The Revolutionary Communist Party is the party of toiling masses struggling to become the most conscious and the most consistent exponent of revolutionary communism on the line of Marx, Engels and Lenin in opposition to the most severe onslaught, of imperialism on the one hand and profanation spread by the P. C. Joshi group disparaging the ideal of communism itself in the eyes of the public, on the other hand. It has from its very inception in the year 1934, tried its best to organise the masses in their own class-organisations independent of the Congress and independent of any bourgeois influences. Time has shown the correctness of its analysis and in near future it will show more the exactitude of its formulation of the Indian struggle in the arena of world socialist revolution. In the course of its history, it had to change its name twice—once from the Communist League to the Communist party of India and thence to the Revolutionary Communist Party of India. We know as most students of politics know that communism is nothing if not a revolutionary theory, but communism in the hands of

the so-called official communists have become so profaned and shamelessly distorted that we have been forced to add an epithet "revolutionary" before communism in order to differentiate our stand from those betrayers" (Red Front, March, 1943).

In the national field the immediate task of the party are (1) "to undertake the task of teaching the masses, the science and art of revolution" (Red Front, March, 1943).

The confusion created by the betrayers, the spirit of defeatism spread by the impatient bourgeoisie and the terror created by the 'Goonda-Raj' of British imperialism shall lead the masses to reaction unless we, the revolutionaries rightly educate the masses in right earnest." (Red Front, March, 1943).

(2) "To build up the organisational apparatus. Unless the masses have their own organs of power and fight, independent of the Congress, how can the masses fight when the Congress halts? These independent organisations of the masses and their own leadership are absolute preliminaries of continuing the struggle into the revolution. (Red Front, March, 1943).

(3) "To explain the sinister implication of the Congress offer to the British imperialism that if they agree to the Congress demands, they will join the war against the Axis. We must stand unequivocally against this resolution. We, the Indian masses shall not buy our freedom with the cost of continuing the imperialist war. We shall not fight Japanese imperialism for the British nor shall we fight British imperialism for the Japanese." (Red Front, March, 1943).

In the international sector the following changes are inevitable:—

"Firstly, the dismemberment of the British Empire,
"Secondly, the virtual extinction of Soviet Russia as an international revolutionary force. Ideologically it has since the beginning of the Stalin regime ceased to function as a revolutionary centre, now after the war, for years to come, it will not be in a position to lend material and technical help to the revolutionary movements of other lands.

"Thirdly, the formation of an international revolutionary centre after the war. The national revolutionary movements

in the colonial countries—national in form, proletarian in content will have to form an international revolutionary centre in co-operation with the European revolutionary movements. This task cannot be relegated in the background for an indefinite period after the war. It must be immediately and effectively tackled."

This was what the Red Front wrote in October, 1942, long before the dissolution of the Third International by Stalin.

The Revolutionary Communist Party had all along been critical of the ideological and tactical line of the Third International under Stalin. The complete subservience of the Third International to the political necessities of the Soviet state, the maintenance of the Third International solely for the furtherance of the Soviet foreign policy, the complete domination of the Comintern by the Russian Stalinist clique, the systematic destruction of democracy within the ranks of the Communist International, the class-collaborationist United Front policy of the Comintern—a factor which contributed enormously to the blunting of the edge of the international proletarian revolutionary movement and prepared the ground for the advent of fascism, the seal of consent that the Comintern gave to Stalin's chauvinistic theory of 'socialism in one country', the support that the Comintern gave to Stalin's aggression on Finland in complete disregard to Lenin's revolutionary teaching on self-determination of nations,—all these tragic deviations from Marxism-Leninism, the Revolutionary Communists had unequivocally condemned.

Yet they had not given the slogan of a new International before 1942. And why? Because each and every alteration and deviation from communist principle can surely be condemned and must be condemned, but they are not sufficient for launching forth the slogan for a new International. A major crisis is necessary for taking such a step. It is only when the very ideological foundation on which an organisation or a party is based has been liquidated, does such a moment come. To precipitate it is adventurism, to postpone it after such a moment is come is opportunism. The Revolutionary Communist Party shuns both. Just as Lenin could not advance the slogan of Third Interna-

tional till the first world-war, though he had been a constant critic of the opportunistic and class-collaborationist tactic of the Second International since a decade earlier, the Revolutionary Communist Party of India could not advance the slogan of a new International, till Stalin gave the last stab to the Communist International by siding with German fascism at the beginning of the war, by supplying Hitler with raw materials of war and by entering into secret pact with Hitler for dividing up Poland between German fascism and Stalinism. This heinous crime of Stalin sounded the death-knell of the Third International. The lesser perfidies of supporting the Atlantic Charter, entering into twenty years' pact with British Imperialism, by which Stalin promised to maintain British imperialist 'status quo', were the last straw on the back of the camel.

The Revolutionary Communist Party realised that Lenin's Communist International has been finally murdered by Stalin, no hope of its resuscitation remained.

That is the reason why in 1942, the party advanced the slogan of a new International.

Stalin by his announcement of the formal death sentence on the Communist International in 1943, only killed once more the corpse of a great international organisation, the soul of which he had killed long ago.

The revolutionary communists had long ago visualised this end of the Communist International as the logical development of Stalinism.

When the revolutionary soul of the Third International was sucked out finally by the vampire of Stalinism, the Revolutionary Communists discarded the corpse of the Third International in 1942 and raised the battle cry,—A new International for India's revolution and for the world-revolution.

The End.