

New Stage in the National Liberation Struggle of the People of India

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Marxism-Leninism teaches that the hegemony of the proletariat is the decisive condition for the success of the national liberation struggle of the peoples of the colonies and dependent countries. It is only under the leadership of the working class, the only consistently revolutionary class, that the peoples of the colonies and dependent countries can free themselves from imperialist yoke and win real independence. Under conditions of the extreme accentuation of the general crisis of capitalism, the further deepening of the crisis of the colonial system and the unprecedented advance of the national liberation movement of the peoples of the colonial and dependent countries, the principal trend of this movement towards a further widening and intensification of the struggle of the oppressed peoples against the imperialist oppressors and internal reaction and towards the consistent strengthening of the leading role of the working class in the national liberation movement, manifests itself all the more clearly. In the majority of the colonial countries, the working class has today become the acknowledged leader of the general peoples' struggle against imperialist oppression, which testifies to the transition of the struggle to a new and higher phase at its development.

In dimensions and in the number of its population, India occupies one of the first places among the colonial countries. Its territory exceeds four million square kilometres and its 400 million population comprises more than three-fourths of the population of the British empire and more than half the population of the whole colonial world. It is natural that the struggle of the peoples of India for their independence has great importance for the entire democratic camp.

India is a typical agrarian country. Britain after her conquest of India converted it into her agrarian and raw material appendage. The overwhelming majority of the Indian population is engaged in agriculture. According to the figures of the last census (1941), 339.3 million people or more than 87 per cent of the entire population of the country live in villages and only 49.7 million people (nearly 13 per cent of the population) in the towns.

In spite of extremely favourable natural and climatic conditions agriculture in India is deteriorating and is characterised by an exceedingly low level of development of productive forces. In spite of being a very large agricultural country, India cannot feed

her own population. Not only has she stopped exporting foodstuffs but is even forced to import them. India represents the classical land of famine – famine that regularly carries off the lives of millions of toilers.

The reason for the degradation of Indian agriculture lies in the prolonged rule of British imperialism and in the system of agrarian relationships based on feudal landownership that have been implanted and nurtured by the British colonisers. More than two-thirds of the total land under cultivation in the country is concentrated in the hands of the British and Indian landowners.

A great majority of Indian landlords hire out their land on lease to big tenants who divide this land into still smaller plots and in their turn also hire it out on lease. In India this “pyramid” of sub-tenants sometimes extends to the twentieth degree and even more. Between the owner of the land and the peasants who cultivate it, there exists a numerous strata of parasitic middlemen sitting on the necks of the peasants. The landlords serve as one of the main props of British imperialism in India. The Indian countryside is enmeshed in all kinds of feudal survivals, which are hampering the economic development of the country and intensifying the degradation of its agriculture.

In spite of the fact that India is one of the most industrially-developed colonies, her industry is not very great. The cotton and jute industry had already arisen during the second half of the last century and are the most developed branches of Indian industry. Following on them, during the period between the two world wars and particularly on the eve of the Second World War, there developed a metallurgical industry. But it is a fact that the production of the iron and steel industry is altogether insignificant. In 1948 it consisted of only 1,470,000 tons of pig iron and 854,000 tons of steel. The Second World War gave an impetus to the development of the chemical industry which till this time had been practically non-existent in the country. The sugar, foodstuff and leather industries saw a significant development between the two world wars.

However, in spite of the growth of certain branches of Indian industry, the general level of industrial development in India is extremely low even today. Industrial production comprises only 20 per cent of the total value of the entire production of India and is less than two per cent of the industrial production of capitalist countries, in spite of the fact that approximately one-sixth of the whole world’s population lives in India. This fact alone eloquently testifies to India’s extreme backwardness, which is the direct result of the predatory rule of British Imperialism.

India’s industry bears a typically colonial character. It is exclusively dependent on

British capital

Even today, it is the branches of light industry – cotton, jute, foodstuffs, etc. – which occupy a predominant place. As before, the specific weight of the branches of heavy industry and above all, of metallurgy, still remains insignificant in the total industrial production of the country. Thus in 1947, the workers employed in the cotton and jute industry comprise more than 44 per cent of all the factory workers of India and the workers in the metallurgical and in the so-called machine-building industry (in which Indian bourgeois statistics include all kinds of machine and other workshops) comprise 14 percent in all. The specific weight of the workers in metallurgy and machine-building industry in the total number of Indian factory workers rose all told by three per cent during the five war years (1939-44). These indices refute the fabrications of the British colonisers about the rapid pace at which the industrialisation of India proceeded during the war years. A machine-building industry which is the foundation of real industrialisation and the basis of the economic independence of the country is practically non-existence in India. The British imperialists adopted every measure to prevent the rise and development of this branch of industry even during the Second World War.

Two centuries of colonial slavery under the heel of British imperialism and the very strong feudal survivals, have fettered the productive forces of India, and have converted this country, so rich in natural resources into one of the poorest countries in the world and made millions of Indian toilers into paupers dragging out a starving existence.

The partition of India into two parts – India and Pakistan – effected by British imperialism in August 1947 and the granting of fictitious independence to both these parts in the form of Dominion Status has not changed the colonial character of the economy of these Dominions. One of the most important aims of partition was precisely to strengthen the backwardness of the economy of India and Pakistan, to create difficulties in the path of their independent development and to ensure their utmost dependence on British capital. The partition of India destroyed the economic ties between different parts of the country and placed both the Dominions in an even more difficult economic position than before.

Pakistan is a backward agricultural country, with quite considerable resources of foodstuffs and certain types of agricultural raw materials (jute, long-fibred cotton), but it is completely devoid of a large manufacturing industry. Apart from railway workshops, the whole industry of this Dominion consists of one woollen and 14 cotton mills, and nine sugar, five cement, four glass and two oil-refining factories. The average yearly consumption of coal is 3.4 million tons but Pakistan can produce

only 300,000 tons annually and that too, of an extremely bad quality. In Pakistan, a metallurgical industry is completely absent.

The Indian Dominion consists of regions that are relatively more industrially developed. Till the partition, approximately 90 per cent of the entire large-scale manufacturing industry of the country was to be found here. Moreover, the Indian Dominion is experiencing great difficulties in respect of food produce and certain types of agricultural raw materials since the important agrarian regions of the country have gone to Pakistan. Jute, which is the biggest branch of Indian industry, is almost completely concentrated in the territory which has gone to the Indian Dominion. (*sic. It should be Pakistan – editor Revolutionary Democracy*)

As a result of the partition of the country, the jute industry has been deprived of indigenous raw materials since more than 73 per cent of the jute grown is concentrated on the territory of Pakistan. The textile mills of Bombay and Ahmedabad have been cut off from the regions where long-staple cotton is grown from the districts of the Punjab, which have gone to Pakistan. The dismemberment of India has increased the economic dependence of both the Dominions and has sharply worsened their economic position and still more hampered the development of their productive forces.

All this creates favourable conditions for the British imperialists to retain Pakistan and India as agrarian and raw material appendages of Britain. The economy of India and Pakistan is in a state of decline. Both the Dominions continue to remain an object of the predatory exploitation and robbery by the British – and now also by the American imperialists. The industrial production in both the Dominions is at present at a lower level than that which was attained during the war. Production in the jute industry fell lower than even the pre-war level. In 1946-47, the output of cotton textiles was 3.4 milliard yards or 79 per cent of the war maximum and 90 per cent of the production in 1938-39; in 1947-48, the smelting of pig iron was 74.5 per cent or the highest war level and lower than the 1938-39 level. The production of steel and rolling-steel although rather higher than the prewar level is lower than the war maximum and for the last three years it has been systematically falling.

After the partition of India, both the Dominions continue to remain in fact economically, politically and militarily, dependent on Great Britain. And even after the partition of the country, British capital has retained and is increasing its dominating position in the economy of India and Pakistan. This is proved, for example, by the fact that many British-Indian joint stock companies in which the leading position of British capital is guaranteed, have been created in various branches of industry in both the Dominions. The British capitalists are not in the least

attempting to utilise their position in these companies in the interests of industrialising India. It is well-known that many joint companies are offering in India under their own stamp articles that have been mainly manufactured in Britain.

The ruling circles of India and Pakistan have betrayed the interests of the people and are applying all their energies to creating the most favourable conditions in these Dominions for the domination of foreign capital. In speaking not long ago, before the annual meeting of the Indian Associated Chambers of Commerce, the Indian Government's Finance Minister, Matthai, assured the British capitalists with the statement:

“We have no intention of taking any step which might, to the smallest degree, be detrimental to British interests in India. On the contrary, we shall be glad if the interests you represent are retained in the country and continue to prosper.” (*People's Age*, December 19, 1948)

The representatives of the ruling circles of Pakistan are no less frank about their aspirations to make the country subservient to the interests of foreign monopolies.

In the postwar years American capital is penetrating the economy of India still more actively. The specific weight of the USA in the imports of India rose from 7.4 per cent in 1938 to 30.3 per cent in 1947 and equalled Britain's share, which in that year was 30.2 per cent of the total Indian imports (in 1938, it was 31.4 per cent). In 1948, the specific weight of the USA in Indian imports declined a little while there was an increase in the share of Britain. The American monopolies are attempting in every way to consolidate their position in India. This is what explains in the first place, the creation in both India and Pakistan of Indo-American joint stock companies and enterprises. This also explains the granting of loans to India by the International Bank of Reconstruction and Development, loans which are, of course, reserved not for effecting the industrialisation of the country but only for developing agriculture and transport. The organ of the Indian capitalists, *The Eastern Economist*, wrote in its issue of January 14, 1949:

“For many years India will be in need of foreign capital and foreign technical experience. And all this must come mainly from the USA and Britain.”

Both the British and American imperialists in spite of the aggravation of the contradictions and the competitive struggle between them in all parts of the world and particularly in India and Pakistan, are both interested in crushing the national liberation struggle and creating difficulties in the way of independent economic development of both the Dominions. At the basis of the American and British policy in India and Pakistan as well as in other countries of the Asiatic continent there lies as before the aim of strengthening the imperialist rule and hindering in every way their

industrialisation, retaining these countries as colonial agricultural raw material appendages and markets for the goods of the imperialist metropolitan State.

At the behest of Anglo-American finance-capital, the reactionary Press in England and in the USA has lately intensified its propaganda of a false thesis to the effect that in the countries of the East, the development of heavy industry does not correspond to the demands of the economic development of these countries, that they ought to concentrate their efforts mainly on agricultural production. With idle talk of this type, the British and American imperialists are attempting to conceal the real colonising essence of their policy and to guarantee the retention and extension of the former economic base of their domination in the countries of Asia.

The USA and Britain continue to obstruct in every way the importation of industrial equipment into India and Pakistan. Their trade with these Dominions bears even at present a clearly expressed colonial character.

In spite of these facts, the leaders of the ruling parties of India and Pakistan, the National Congress and the Muslim League, talk as though a “bloodless revolution” had taken place in their country, as though they had attained “independence” and as though the prerequisites for the “rapid industrialisation” of both the Dominions had been created. The facts quoted above decisively refute such false fabrications. It is absolutely clear that it is impossible to achieve any economic advance under conditions of the domination of the monopolies of imperialist countries and under conditions when the ruling circles in India and Pakistan pursue a policy dictated by the interests of the exploiting classes. It is only complete freedom from imperialist oppression and from the feudal survivals, nurtured by the colonisers, and the fundamentally democratic reconstruction of India and Pakistan which can create the lasting prerequisites for overcoming their economic backwardness and for a rapid development of their productive forces.

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The mass anti-imperialist movement which developed in India with unprecedented force after the Second World War was an integral part of the general revolutionary advance of the national liberation struggle of the peoples of the colonies and dependent countries, and it assumed new features, which distinguished it in essence from all preceding stages of the revolutionary struggle of the popular masses of India. After the war, the national liberation movement of the peoples of India entered a new stage. This stage is determined above all, by the fact that it was the working class, led by the Communist Party, that stood at the head of the popular masses and their struggle for freedom from imperialist yoke, for real independence and democratic

reconstruction of the country and by the fact that the Indian big bourgeoisie had openly gone over into the camp of reaction and imperialism.

The tasks of the national liberation movement have also extended. At present, the struggle of the peoples of India is directed both against foreign imperialism and also for the carrying out of decisive democratic transformations inside the country, and above all, the agrarian revolution without which it is impossible to lead the country out of the economic impasse and to win over the wide masses of the peasantry to the side of the working class.

The re-grouping of class forces that has taken place inside the country and the emergence of the proletariat as the leader of the mass movement of the Indian peoples and also the wider content of the tasks of the struggle demonstrates the fact that the national liberation movement in India has entered a new and a higher phase of its development and that it will develop at an even more quickening pace.

The assumption of the leadership of the national liberation movement in India by the working class was conditioned by the entire course of the historical and socio-economic development of the country.

Along with the development of capitalist industry which – the British colonisers, despite their attempts, were not able to stop completely, there arose, developed and consolidated within the country a working class called upon to assume leadership or the struggle of the Indian toiling masses for national and social liberation and to carry it to a victorious conclusion.

Already in 1925, in his historic speech to the University of the Toilers of the East, Comrade Stalin in speaking of the characteristic features of the development of colonial and dependent countries of the East, pointed out that in certain of these countries, India, for instance there had arisen a more or less numerous class of native proletarians and that

“the question of the hegemony of the proletariat in such countries and the emancipation of the masses from the influence of the compromising national bourgeoisie is assuming an increasingly urgent character.” (Stalin, Address to the University of the Toilers of the East, May 18, 1925, Lenin, Stalin, Zhukov, *On the Colonial Question*, PPH Ltd., p.56)

Since that time, the number of the Indian industrial proletariat has increased considerably. In 1947, nearly 3.5 million people were employed in the manufacturing industry, in the mines and in railway transport in India. Of course, for a country with a 400 million population, this is an extremely small figure, and it bears witness to

India's colonial backwardness. It is a fact that there are also a considerable number of workers in plantations, in irrigation works, etc. Finally, even according to the official statistics, the agricultural workers in India number a few tens of millions.

However, the role and the importance of the proletariat in revolutions, in national liberation movements is determined not so much by its number as above all, by its organisation, the firmness of its ties with all the toilers. The proletariat is the only class which is revolutionary to the end and as such called upon to be the leader, the hegemon, in the struggle of all the toilers and exploited against the oppressors and the exploiters. In the colonies where the exploitation of the peasantry which represents the greater mass of the population bears monstrous forms, there is a broad basis for creating a stable alliance by the proletariat with the peasant masses for consolidating in every way the ideological and organisational leadership of the peasantry by the proletariat, for the successful conquest by the working class of hegemony in the people's struggle against imperialism and internal reaction.

The struggle of the working class of India against feudal-capitalist exploiters, and for the improvement of its conditions was from the very beginning closely bound up with the struggle against imperialism. Under colonial conditions, as a result of the interweaving of capitalist and pre-capitalist forms of exploitation, the growth in the impoverishment of the masses, which is the inevitable accompaniment of the capitalist method of production is proceeding with particular sharpness and at a particularly rapid pace. In pursuit of their super-profits, the imperialists are employing the most inhuman, and predatory methods of exploitation of the working class of the colonies. In consequence of this, the struggle of the workers in the colonies for the realisation of their immediate demands, for relieving their economic conditions cannot be separated from the struggle against imperialist oppression, from the struggle for freedom and independence. In the measure of the strengthening of their class organisations, the Indian workers have emerged all the more resolutely as the leading force in the national revolutionary movement in the country. It is precisely owing to the activity of the working class and its influence on the broad masses of peasantry that the national liberation movement in India became increasingly mass and revolutionary in character.

In India, already in the beginning of the twentieth century, there appeared on the political arena in the person of the rising proletariat, a force capable of unifying and leading the broad toiling masses in the struggle for over-throwing the domination of British imperialism. In connection with the first mass political action of the working class of India – the general strike of the Bombay textile workers as a mark of protest against the sentence on the Indian democrat, Tilak – Lenin had pointed out in 1908

that

“the Indian proletariat has already matured sufficiently to wage a class-conscious and political mass struggle, and that being the case Anglo-Russian methods in India are played out” (V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Russ. Ed., Vol. XV, p. 161)

Since that time, the Indian working class has gone through the stern school of the class and the anti-imperialist struggle and it has immeasurably grown politically and organisationally. It has learnt much from the Russian workers, who had destroyed the capitalist order in their country in October 1917.

Even the first mass advance of the working class movement in India was organisationally linked with the advance of the national liberation struggle embracing the country in 1918-22 under the influence of the Great October Socialist Revolution in Russia. Already in these years the working class played a most active role in the in the people’s struggle against imperialist oppression and colonial exploitation, in spite of the fact that there was no Communist Party within the country and trade unions had only begun to be formed.

During the new advance of the national liberation movement in India, beginning in 1930, the working class in the country in the person of its foremost detachment had already emerged as an independent political force and from the very beginning conducted a fight for the leadership of the national liberation movement. This was a new and exceedingly important feature of the movement. However, even at that time revolutionary trade unions existed only in a few larger towns, an all-India Communist Party had not yet been created though Communist groups were active in a number of Provinces and in some industrial centres.

The role of the working class increased still more in the years preceding the Second World War when the mass anti-imperialist movement flamed up once again in India. This was possible, in the first instance, because of the fact that in 1933, as a result of the unification of different Communist groups an all-India Communist Party had been created. The formation of an all-India Communist Party was of tremendous significance for the further development of the working class and the general mass anti-imperialist movement. The Communist Party began extending its influence in the course of the anti-imperialist struggle and by attempting to wean away the peasantry from the influence of the bourgeois leadership of the National Congress, was winning it over to its side.

During the Second World War, the Indian working class was considerably strengthened both politically and organisationally. From 1937-38 to 1942-43, the number of workers organised in trade unions rose from 390,000 to 685,000, i.e., by 75

per cent. Towards the end of the war, the number of trade union members exceeded one million. Communists were elected to the leading organs of the majority of the trade unions that were formed. The Communist Party became the leading force in the working class movement in the country. In the war years, the working class under Communist leadership came forth with a detailed programme of struggle for improving the conditions of the toilers, for carrying out the demands of the national liberation movement. This to a considerable extent, facilitated the growth of the influence of the working class and its Party among the broad masses of the Indian people. The toilers of India are more and more convinced that it is precisely the working class led by the Communist Party which represents that force capable of rallying all the toilers and leading them in a resolute struggle against the imperialist oppressors of the country and against the “native” exploiters and capable of carrying out the tasks of the national liberation movement.

At present the Indian working class has won considerable success in the fight for hegemony of the national liberation movement. This is confirmed by the whole course or events in India, especially after the Second World War.

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The successes of the Indian working class in the struggle for hegemony in the national liberation movement are above all expressed in the organisational and in the ideological growth of the vanguard of the proletariat – the Communist Party of India. This is of great significance since as Comrade Stalin teaches us: “The hegemony of the proletariat can be prepared only by the Communist Party.” (Stalin, Address to the University of the Toilers of the East, May 18, 1925, Lenin, Stalin, Zhukov, *On the Colonial Question*, PPH Ltd., 1948, p. 19)

The Second Congress of the Communist Party which took place during the end of February and beginning of March 1948, was an important step in the life of the Communist Party of India and a big political event inside the country. The Congress demonstrated a big increase in the influence of the Communist Party.

The Congress advanced as the most important task in the new stage, the struggle for the consolidation by all means of the People’s Democratic Front, which must be the embodiment of the alliance of the working class, the peasantry and the urban petty bourgeoisie under the leadership of the working class, The Congress proclaimed the following demands as the central slogans of the People’s Democratic Front at the present stage of the national liberation movement in India:

(1) Complete national independence, severance from the British empire and the

Anglo-American reactionary bloc, and the establishment of close economic, political and cultural ties with the genuinely democratic countries and above all, with the Soviet Union.

(2) Abolition of landlordism without compensation and distribution of land to the tillers of the soil.

(3) A determined democratisation of India and its conversion into a union of national, People's Democratic republics on the basis of the principle of national self-determination; the abolition of Princely States.

(4) Nationalisation of the key branches of industry and the confiscation of foreign and above all, of British enterprises; a radical improvement in the position of the working class.

The Communist Party set itself as a specially important task, the building of unity of the democratic movements in the Indian Union and Pakistan and emphasised that this unity is the indispensable condition for the liberation of both, these Dominions from imperialist oppression and the most important pre-requisite for a successful democratisation of both these parts of India.

The influence of the Communist Party amongst the workers in both the Dominions has increased considerably and above all, because on the fundamental question of the struggle against imperialism and colonial oppression, and for the improvement of the conditions of the workers, it has come forward with its own platform which expresses the aspirations and the hopes of the broadest masses of the Indian people.

The conditions of the Indian working class who even before used to drag out a starving existence has worsened sharply during the Second World War and after its termination. The partition of India has aggravated even more the process of the absolute and relative impoverishment of the working class. The Indian capitalists and the Anglo-American monopolists along with the Governments of India and Pakistan have intensified their attack on the living standards of the workers and on all the toilers of both the Dominions.

The rise in the prices of foodstuffs and manufactured articles of wide consumption has brought new riches to the Indian and foreign capitalists and also to the merchants and speculators and led to a further lowering of the living standard of the workers, Even according to the official falsified figures the index of the cost of living for the working class is steadily rising. In Bombay, which is one of the biggest industrial centres of the country, it rose from 103 in 1939 to 265 in 1947 and upto 296 in March 1949; in Nagpur, it was 104, 320 and 374 respectively; in Kanpur 105, 378 and 468 (The Eastern Economist, July 1, 1949 p. 36). Even at present, as a result of the continuous rise in prices, the real wages of the workers are steadily falling. Everywhere, under the

guise of “rationalisation” of production, the exploitation of the workers is increasing and the intensification of their labour is becoming greater. The army of unemployed is growing. In 1948, those of the unemployed registered with the urban employment exchanges alone numbered more than two million people.

After the war, the struggle of the working class in India assumed tremendous proportions. The strike movement reached an unprecedented level. In 1947, in the Indian Dominion alone, nearly two million workers and employees participated in economic strikes; as a result of these strikes nearly 16,000,000 working days were lost. In India, the strikes of the postwar years are distinguished by their mass character, their solidarity and the active role of the workers and by the inclusion on a wide scale of new strata of the proletariat and the toilers, the workers in small enterprises, workers in States, those employed in Government and private enterprises, etc., etc. It is characteristic that the specific weight of general strikes embracing broad strata of the workers and employees in the strike movement is increasing in both the different industrial centres (the number of general strikes in Bombay, Calcutta and other cities) as well as in entire provinces (the general strike of the textile workers of the Central Provinces and Berar, the general strike of teachers in the Bombay Province, in the Punjab and in the United Provinces, etc.). The workers of different branches of industry also went on strike on a nationwide scale (the general strike of the Post and Telegraph workers). The very broad sweep of the strike struggle of the Indian working class played a big role in the growth of the revolutionary consciousness of the popular masses and in rallying them around the proletariat.

The Indian working class, fighting for the satisfaction of its economic demands is at the same time, the pioneer and the leader of mass anti-imperialist actions directed against the British rule. During the mass anti-British disturbances in Calcutta in November 1945 and in February 1946 and in other towns during the bloody clashes and the barricade battles in Bombay in January-February 1946, the working class drew the broad masses behind it and as a result of its active role, these actions assumed a militant and revolutionary character.

The uprising of the sailors in the navy in Bombay and other places in February 1946 would have been impossible without the active support of the working class. The general strike of the Bombay textile workers as a mark of solidarity with the sailors, running into three-day long barricade battles as well as the solidarity strikes in other centres of the country, brought out clearly the leading and guiding role of the working class in the anti-imperialist movement of the Indian toilers. The vanguard role of the working class was to be seen also in the mass movements that flared up after the termination of the war in a number of feudal Princely States (Travancore, Hyderabad, Indore, etc.) – these bulwarks of reaction. The workers’ struggle was the signal for the

unfolding at a mass movement against the feudal Princes and the British rule, for the liquidation of the feudal order in the States, for their democratisation.

After the partitioning of India into two Dominions, the strike struggle against the attack of the capitalists and of the ruling circles on the living standard of the workers and all the toilers has not ceased. In the Indian Dominion 1,634 economic strikes involving more than 1.3 million workers took place in 1948.

After the partitioning of the country, the political strikes and the mass actions of the workers against the anti-popular policies of the Congress Government in India and of the Muslim League Government in Pakistan, against the persecution of the Communist Parties, the All-India Trade Union Congress and other progressive democratic organisations by the Governments of both the Dominions, have assumed a wide sweep.

The most important events in the life of India were such political actions of the proletariat as the one-day general strike of 700,000 workers of Bombay as a mark of protest against the lifting of price control by the Congress Government (December 1947), the one-day general strike of 100,000 workers in Calcutta against the adoption of the law by the Bengal Provincial Legislative Assembly giving the Bengal Government extraordinary plenary powers (January 1948), the one-day general strike of 200,000 workers of Central Provinces and Berar against the anti-working class policies of the Government (March 1948), the one-day strike of 50,000 Calcutta workers as a mark of protest against the introduction of anti-working-class legislation (July 1948) and a whole number of other big political actions as well as a large number of protest strikes against the persecution of the Communist Party.

The brilliant successes of the national liberation army in China evoke a broad response in India and Pakistan. In a number of towns in both the Dominions meetings and demonstrations of solidarity with the Chinese people are taking place under the leadership of the Communist Party and other progressive organisations. The heroic struggle of the Chinese people for freedom and democracy cannot but have a big influence on the further widening and deepening of the national liberation movement in India and Pakistan.

The growing political struggle of the Indian proletariat clearly proves that it is resolutely emerging in defence not only of its own economic interests but is leading the struggle for the defence of the interests of the broad toiling masses and against the reactionary bloc of the imperialists, the big bourgeoisie and the landlords. Thus, in practice it rises to the level of the leader of the general struggle.

The Indian working class and its Party in its fight for the masses will have to overcome serious difficulties and above all, it must fight to establish unity within its own ranks. In the Indian Union, the reactionary leadership of the National Congress and the Socialist Party are trying to split the trade union movement. Apart from the All-India Trade Union Congress which is led by progressive leaders, including Communists, since the time of partition three new parallel trade union centres have arisen inside the country – the National Trade Union Congress, which is a Government-owners' organisation and is the creation of the leaders of the National Congress and the Patel-Nehru Government; the Hind Mazdoor Sabha which was formed at the initiative of the leadership of the Socialist Party and the United Congress of Trade Unions which has recently been formed in Calcutta. And notwithstanding the fact that these latter three organizations are considerably weaker than the All-India Trade Union Congress, the disruptive and splitting activities of their leaders constitute an obstacle in the way of the struggle of the working class. A clear example of this is the disruption by the Socialist leaders of the general strike of the eight-hundred thousand railway workers, scheduled to take place in March 1949, and for which 95 per cent of the members of all the trade unions of the railway workers had cast their vote. The trade union movement in Pakistan is also split.

The lack of unity in the Indian working class is to a great extent a consequence of the fact that certain of its sections have still not shaken off the influence of bourgeois national reformism. National reformism appears both in the reactionary form of Gandhism which continues to remain the most important ideological weapon of the bourgeoisie as well as in the "Left" garb of the Socialist and other "Left" parties. At the present time, "Left" national reformism, which is attempting to conceal its subservience to the interests of foreign and national capital, its fawning before them by demagogic and pseudo-revolutionary slogans, represents a big danger to the working class movement. The attempt to retain inside the country imperialist-colonial slavery and capitalist oppression runs through all the activities of the leadership of the Socialist Party. The Socialist Party is intensifying its disruptive activity amongst the workers, peasants, youth and other organisations.

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One of the decisive conditions for the realisation of the hegemony by the Indian proletariat in the national liberation movement is the strengthening of its ideological and organisational influence among the peasantry – constituting, in this typically agrarian country, the overwhelming majority of the population. The peasantry is the most important driving force in the colonial revolution and the main ally of the working class in its struggle against imperialism, for national liberation and for democratic reorganisation. The success of this struggle depends on the extent to which

the greater masses of the Indian peasantry, along with the working class and under its leadership are drawn into the revolutionary struggle against colonial oppression, against the remnants of feudalism and for a democratic reorganisation.

The domination of British imperialism and the retention of strong remnants of feudalism doomed the millions and millions of peasant masses to dire want, terrible privations and subjected agriculture to degradation. The pauperisation of the peasantry in India has reached such dimensions that the main figure in the countryside at the present time is the poor, landless or the almost landless peasant. The impoverishment of the peasant is clearly illustrated by the systematic growth of the number of agricultural workers. In India, the number of the agricultural proletariat rose from 7.5 million in 1882 to 21 million in 1921 and to approximately 33 million in 1931. At present, the number of agricultural labourers has increased still more and according to even the Indian bourgeois economists represents in some districts of the country approximately one half of the entire population engaged in agriculture.

The big army of the agricultural proletariat is a clear indication of the relative agrarian over-population in India. Indian agricultural workers are essentially different from the agricultural workers of the advanced capitalist countries. Side by side with the workers employed in kulak and landowners' farms (as a rule on a daily basis and for not more than three or four months in the year), the great masses of agricultural workers also comprise of those enslaved, the so-called agricultural servants, debt-slaves and others amongst the dispossessed strata of the rural population crushed down by feudal exploitation. To the same category belong the impoverished and proletarianised rural artisans (the potters, the tanners, the blacksmiths etc.). The position of the small proprietors and the small tenants working on very tiny plots of land is very little different from the position of the agricultural workers. It is absolutely self-evident that only fundamental changes in social relationships, only an agrarian revolution, can abolish the feudal remnants and ameliorate the conditions of the Indian peasantry and the agricultural proletariat.

The many millions of the Indian working peasantry, crushed by untold want and driven off en masse from the land, cannot but become the most important ally or the proletariat. The peasants can win their emancipation only under the leadership of the proletariat, just as the proletariat can lead the colonial revolution to victory only in alliance with the peasantry and by leading it.

The struggle of the peasant masses of India against feudal-landlord exploitation, against the yoke of the British colonisers had assumed quite considerable dimensions, even in the second half of the nineteenth century. However, it was only in 1918-22 that a broad peasant movement began in India. But at that time the peasant movement

in spite of the fact that it was developing under the influence of the strike movement of the working class, bore a spontaneous isolated character and often proceeded under religious slogans. The struggle of the peasants assumed a still broader sweep during the mass anti-imperialist movement from 1930-32. But even at that time, the peasant movement to a great extent developed spontaneously. The peasant masses continued to remain under the bourgeois leadership of the National Congress and in particular, under the influence of Gandhism. Nevertheless, in a number of places, peasant actions bore a militant, revolutionary character. Independent peasant organisations began to spring up in some places.

The influence of the working class and the Communist Party among the peasant masses showed a marked increase on the eve of the Second World War. There arose in the country a considerable number of peasant unions (kisan sabhas) led by revolutionary elements. Many mass actions of the peasants were already being conducted under revolutionary slogans under Communist leadership. During the war years and in particular, in the postwar period, the peasant unions united in the All-India Kisan Sabha strengthened considerably and are at present at the head of the mass peasant movement. At present all over the country as well as in the Princely States, there exist kisan sabhas led by revolutionary elements. They enjoy a particularly strong influence in the south of India.

The postwar peasant movement in India is developing under the slogan of the consolidation of the alliance of the working class and the peasantry and it is closely interwoven with the general democratic movement, which is developing under the leadership of the working class and the Communist Party. It must, however, be noted that in spite of the fact that the peasant movement has in certain districts attained a high level it is still distinguished by great unevenness and does not bear an all-India character. In Pakistan in particular, the peasant movement is at a weaker stage of development.

In the East and North Bengal as well as in certain districts of Orissa, the tenants are waging a struggle for a reduction of the landlords' share of the crop. Immediately after the war, this movement assumed the widest dimensions and a militant character in Bengal. The tenants of twenty districts of the province stopped taking the grain gathered in the fields to the barns of the landlords and refused to give up the one-half of the crop which the landlords were demanding. They kept the harvest to themselves and delivered up to the landlords not more than one-third of the crop. This movement of the Bengal peasants widely known as "Tebhaga" (which means one-third i.e. the struggle for reduction of the rent to one-third of the crop) has in fact been going on for nearly the past three years, sometimes dying down and then flaring up again.

In a number of districts in Bihar and Orissa (India) as well as in West Punjab and the N.W.F Province (Pakistan), the struggle of the peasants against mass evictions by the landlords from tenanted land is spreading. Often the peasants refuse to leave the plots tenanted by them and enter into an open fight with the police.

In the Madras province, where the bad harvest and famine have specially worsened the conditions of the peasantry in recent years, the peasant movement has assumed an extremely acute form. In this province not only entire villages but whole districts are rallying behind the revolutionary kisan sabhas. Here the peasant struggle mainly assumes the form of confiscation of the landlord's grain which the kisan sabhas then distribute among the particularly needy peasants. Quite often the peasants distribute a portion of the confiscated grain among the workers and in particular, at the time of strikes (it was thus in Chirakkal and in other districts). The movement for the confiscation of grainstocks from the landlords developed particularly widely in north Malabar and very often passed over into an open fight of the peasant masses against police and military detachments. Peasant partisan detachments are active in certain districts of the Madras Province (Krishna, Godavari, Guntur).

The agricultural workers who cannot but be a very important force in the developing agrarian revolution are playing a very big role in the peasant movement in many districts of the country. The strikes of the farm labourers in Bihar had a decisive influence on the growth of the peasant movement. In Bengal, the districts where the "Tebhaga" movement is developing, the agricultural workers are participating side by side with the peasants in conducting strikes and they are taking an active part in the meetings and in the demonstrations of the peasants. In the province of Madras, those organised in the unions of agricultural workers are taking part alongside with the peasants in the confiscation of grain from the landlords. The struggle of the agricultural workers is also intensifying in the U.P. and in other provinces. In the district of Gorakhpur, 1,500 farm labourers of one locality in reply to an attempt to deprive them of their rights to till their plots of land for themselves, proclaimed this land as their own and planted the Red Flag in this locality. In Bombay province (India) and in East Bengal (Pakistan), the struggle of the agricultural labourers for their emancipation and for the payment of wages in cash assumed considerable proportions (Warlis and Halis in the Bombay province, Nankari in Bengal).

In India and in Pakistan, the peasants are beginning to put forward more and more frequently the demand for the confiscation of the land of landlords, without compensation and transferring it to the peasants. The numerous peasant meetings and conferences in the provinces of Madras and Bombay, in Bihar, in West and East Bengal, in the N.W.P. province and in other places have put forward this demand. The total inability of the Congress Government in India and the League Government in

Pakistan to introduce even the most modest democratic agrarian reforms and their open support to feudal-landlord reaction cannot but, lead to the strengthening of the peasant movement and to its transition to a higher phase.

The numerous peasant meetings and demonstrations which took place all over the country as a mark of protest against the persecution of the Communist Party and against the mass arrests of Communists, testify to the growing influence of the working class and the Communist Party among the peasantry and a growth in the political activity of the latter.

In the district of Guntur in the province of Madras many thousands of peasants held a demonstration with the slogan: "We demand an end to repression against the Communist Party"! The demonstration received a warm welcome from the peasant population and it terminated in a meeting attended by ten thousand people.

In Betuak (Bihar) seven thousand peasants attended a meeting called by the kisan sabha where they demanded the immediate confiscation without compensation of the landlords' land, release of arrested Communists and the withdrawal of the ban on the Communist Party in West Bengal.

In Darbhanga (Bihar), where a meeting of the Provincial Committee of the National Congress was being convened, a 15,000 strong peasant demonstration took place with the slogan: "We demand an end to repression against the peasants! Long Live the Communist Party!" the peasants would not allow a Government Minister attending the conference to make a speech and he was compelled to leave the platform. Similar meetings and demonstrations of the peasants are taking place everywhere. In the postwar period, the peasant movement attained its highest peak in the territory of Telengana in the Princely State of Hyderabad. The peasants, who in the main belong to the Telugu (or Andhra) nationality, rose in battle against the feudal exploitation and simultaneously put forward the demand for incorporating their national territory which was included in Hyderabad with the respective national territory of the Indian Union. It was the combination of the anti-feudal and the national struggle which conditioned the particular acuteness of the peasant struggle in Telengana. In Telengana the peasant movement against the landlords and against the despotic power of the Nizam assumed the character of an armed revolt and an agrarian revolution. As a result of this, the rule of the Nizam and the landlords was overthrown on one-sixth of the territory of the Princely State with a population of four million people. In 2,500 villages of Telengana, the land of the landlords was distributed amongst those peasants who had no or very little land and amongst the agricultural labourers, the indebtedness of the labourers to the landlords and the moneylenders was abolished, people's elected organs and courts were created and a people's militia was formed. In

September 1948 the Government of the Indian Dominion sent its armed forces into Telengana in order to suppress the revolutionary struggle of the peasants. It is already one year since the punitive detachments began to run amok in Telengana but they have not succeeded in breaking the fighting spirit of the peasants and in crushing their heroic struggle. The peasant struggle is continuing – it is very often assuming the character of partisan warfare and is extending to the neighbouring districts and in particular to those districts of the Madras Province where the Andhras live.

The peasant movement in Telengana is closely bound up with the struggle of the workers of Hyderabad and is being waged under the leadership of the working class and Left organisations. The events in Telengana are the most striking instance of the revolutionary struggle for land and democracy and represent the first attempt at creating People's Democracy in India. And although this attempt is limited in its scale and in its character, it has indisputably tremendous importance for the further development and intensification of the general democratic movement in India and Pakistan. The struggle in Telengana is the harbinger of the agrarian revolution and constitutes the most important content of the present stage of the national liberation struggle in India.

In different parts of both India and Pakistan, the peasants have already begun to follow to one or another degree the example of Telengana. In a number of rural districts of the United Provinces, the Central Provinces and of other provinces, peasant revolts against landlord oppression are taking place more and more often. According to the information of the agency of the *Press Trust of India*, 2,057 peasant revolts and disturbances took place in the United Provinces alone in the first six months of 1949.

The working class and the Communist Party of India have to overcome serious difficulties in the fight for the peasantry. The influence of reactionary Gandhism is still strong amongst the peasants. In spite of the treachery and the betrayal of leading top sections of the National Congress, the Congress still continues to retain considerable influence amongst the peasant masses and the fact that the disruptive All-India Kisan Congress led by the proteges of Patel and Nehru (Ranga and others) finds soil for its treacherous activity amongst the peasants can be explained by the illusions with regard to the National Congress which have not yet been dispelled. The Socialist leaders are also trying to carry out their disruptive activity amongst the peasant masses. Not long ago they formed a parallel peasants' organisation aimed at undermining the developing revolutionary struggle of the peasantry and the growth of the influence of the Communist Party.

An important ally of the Indian proletariat in its fight for freedom, independence and

democracy is also a considerable section of the urban petty-bourgeoisie. Their difficult conditions and their exploitation by foreign and native capital are more and more forcing the broad strata of the petty-bourgeoisie on to the path of common struggle with the proletariat. In recent years the authority of the working class has been considerably strengthened amongst the lower strata of the urban petty-bourgeoisie. Their active participation in the mass militant political actions taking place under the leadership of the Communist Party is a testimony to this. In recent years, the influence of the Communists has increased in a number of mass democratic, student, youth and other progressive organisations. In spite of this the influence of national reformism is still strong among a considerable section of the urban petty-bourgeoisie. This is especially manifested in the fact that in some provinces there exist not a small number of petty-bourgeois parties and groups who frequently screen themselves behind “Left” labels and are in actual practice utilised by reaction in the struggle against the democratic movement.

The dislodging of the national bourgeoisie from the leadership of the movement and its isolation constitute one of the most important conditions for the hegemony of the working class in the national liberation movement.

The Indian bourgeoisie, not only the mercantile but even considerable sections of the big industrial bourgeoisie, was from its very inception closely bound up through diverse threads with the British imperialists. These connections were established and strengthened through the credit system, since all the principal banks in India belong to British capital, and through the so-called “Managing Agencies” which represent one of the special forms of the subservience of Indian industry to the British financial oligarchy; these connections have also been established in other ways. The financial magnates of Britain have always occupied a dominating position in the Indo-British capitalist alliance.

A considerable strata of the Indian industrial bourgeoisie is closely linked with feudal landlords and quite often with usurious capital. To a great extent the British policy of hampering the industrial development of the country contributed to this.

Finally, one more characteristic peculiar to the Indian big bourgeoisie must be noted. As is well-known India is a multi-national country and the process of the formation of nationalities is proceeding in a uneven fashion inside the country. Alongside regions which are more capitalistically developed and in which nationalities have already been constituted, there also exist in the country a considerable number of regions that are economically extremely backward and in which the process or formation of nationalities is still far from complete. The process of the formation and growth of the bourgeoisie of the different nationalities of India is intimately bound up with the

process of capitalist development and the formation of nationalities. At present in India there exist not merely large enterprises owned by native capital but national monopolist combinations have also been formed (the joint companies or Birla, Tata and Dalmia, etc.) which play a big role in the country's economy. Of course, these monopolies have a special colonial character; they are closely linked with foreign capital and directly dependent on it. The Gujerati and Marwari groupings of the bourgeoisie occupy a dominant position in these monopolist combinations and it is in the first instance, these monopolist combinations that the Right-wing leadership of the National Congress and the Indian Dominion Government represent.

The fight of these already constituted monopoly groups for domination over the internal market inevitably meets with the resistance of the rising bourgeoisie of those national territories of India which are more backward in the level of their capitalist development.

In Pakistan where the industrial development and capitalist relations are still characterised by their extreme backwardness the big industrial bourgeoisie is relatively weak. In both the Government of Pakistan and in the top strata of the Muslim League, the leading positions are mainly occupied by feudal-landlord elements.

The characteristic features of the Indian big bourgeoisie which have been noted above and which are determined by the distinctive features of India's colonial development, are of important significance for an understanding of the position of the Indian bourgeoisie in relation to British imperialism, and in relation to the struggle of the popular masses.

The policy of British imperialism which invariably aimed at holding back the industrial development of India could not, of course, provoke anything but the dissatisfaction of the Indian big bourgeoisie. There existed serious differences between the Indian bourgeoisie and British imperialism. Nevertheless, the Indian big bourgeoisie which from its very birth was closely linked with British capital and feudal reaction inside the country, was not capable of or inclined towards any kind of active struggle against imperialism.

True, the Indian bourgeoisie through the leadership of the National Congress attempted to utilise the mass movement in order to bargain for some concessions for its own benefit from British imperialism. The decisive and constant endeavour of the Indian bourgeoisie has, however, always been one of not allowing the struggle of the broad toiling masses for their independence and for freedom to assume an active, extensive character, since in the epoch of imperialism, real freedom implies freedom

not only from the oppression of the colonisers but also from the oppression of one's "own" national bourgeoisie. The Indian big bourgeoisie has always come to a compromise with British imperialism and has reckoned on its support in the struggle against the proletariat and the toiling masses of India.

Even in 1920, V. I. Lenin had emphasised that

“a certain rapprochement has been brought about between the bourgeoisie of the exploiting countries and those of the colonial countries so that very often, even in the majority of case, perhaps, where the bourgeoisie of the oppressed countries does support the national movement, it simultaneously works in harmony with the imperialist bourgeoisie, i.e., it joins the latter in fighting against all revolutionary movements and revolutionary classes.” (Lenin, The Report of the Commission on the National and Colonial Questions at the Second Congress of the Communist International. July 26. 1920, *Selected Works*, Lawrence & Wishart, London, Vol. X, p. 241)

The position of the Indian bourgeoisie is an example which clearly confirms this Leninist observation. The Indian big bourgeoisie took to the path of treachery, to the path of national betrayal and compromise with imperialism even during the very first stages of the national liberation movement, when the direction of the movement was mainly against foreign oppression and when the Indian proletariat had still not yet become an independent political force.

Even the mass movement of 1918-22 pointed out that the big industrial bourgeoisie of India represented by the leadership of the National Congress is a compromising bourgeoisie and that it cannot be considered as a revolutionary force in the struggle against imperialism. Comrade Stalin pointed out:

“Dreading revolution more than imperialism, concerned more about its moneybags than about the interests of its own country, this section of the bourgeoisie, the wealthiest and the most influential section, is completely going over to the camp of the irreconcilable enemies of the revolution, having entered into a bloc with imperialism against the workers and peasants of its own country.” (Stalin, Address to the University of the Toilers of the East, May 18, 1925, Lenin, Stalin, Zhukov. *On the Colonial Question*, PPH Ltd., 1948, p. 19)

Even in 1930-32 at the time of the advance of the national liberation movement of the Indian toilers, the big bourgeoisie betrayed the masses and came to a compromise with British imperialism,

After the Second World War and in connection therewith the national liberation movement assumed an unprecedented sweep, its leadership passing more and more into the hands of the working class. The Indian big bourgeoisie openly went over into the camp of reaction and of imperialism and began savagely to suppress the democratic movement in the country. Its fear of its own working masses is intensifying as a result of the growth and the solidarity of the democratic forces of the whole world led by the Soviet Union and as a result of the unprecedented advance of the revolutionary movement in the countries of South-East Asia and the brilliant victories of the national liberation armies in China.

If earlier the Indian big bourgeoisie, in spite of a whole chain of betrayals and capitulation before imperialism represented some opposition to imperialism, then at the present time it has completely and openly gone over to the camp of imperialism.

The fact that not only the landlord-bourgeois top strata of the Muslim League but the bourgeois-landlord leadership of the National Congress completely accepted the “Mountbatten Plan” testifies to the open passing over of the Indian big bourgeoisie into the camp of reaction. As a result of the carrying out of this plan into practice, both the Dominions continue to remain dependent on Great Britain although the forms of this dependence have changed and although the British imperialists have allowed the native exploiting-classes to be in power in both the Dominions. The whole domestic and foreign policy of the ruling circles of both the Dominions also proves that the big bourgeoisie of India and Pakistan has betrayed the national interests.

The internal policy of the leading circles of India and Pakistan is wholly at the service of the interests of the reactionary bloc of the Indian big bourgeoisie, the landlords and the feudal princes. After coming into power, the Indian big bourgeoisie took all steps to retain such a survival of mediaevalism and bulwark of reaction as the feudal princes – the bases of British imperialism in India. It is bending all its energies to preserve landlordism which represents the main basis of feudal survivals and is at present the pre-dominant form of the oppression over the Indian peasantry. The bills for agrarian reforms which are being elaborated in a number of provinces of the Indian Dominion clearly testify to this. These reforms retain the survivals of feudalism and landlordism everywhere. But the implementation of even these reforms is being prevented by the ruling circles in India. Regardless of the former demagogic statements made by the leadership of the National Congress, the rulers of India are refusing to nationalise large-scale industry. Like the ruling circles of Pakistan, they are opening wide their doors to foreign capital and are now increasing the economic and political dependence of both the Dominions on British and American monopolies.

The ruling circles of both the Dominions are resorting to brutal repression against the

working class and its organisations and against all democratic elements. They are employing essentially fascist methods in their struggle against the progressive forces and in particular against the Communist Party. Trade unions and peasant organisations led by democratic elements are savagely persecuted. Thousands of democratic leaders have been thrown into jails. In India, in February 1949, more than three thousand people were arrested solely in connection with the threat of a general strike of railwaymen. News about brutal firing on striking workers, on peasant meetings and on student demonstrations is coming in from different parts of India. At present, laws are being prepared which will in fact completely ban strikes. At a session of the Constituent Assembly, Nehru threatened to ban the Communist Party, which as it is, is working under semi-illegal conditions. In their foreign policy, the ruling circles of India are following the dictates of the bosses of the Anglo-American imperialist bloc. Ignoring the demands of the people, they have obediently expressed their readiness to remain as a Dominion and further, within the system of the British empire. They are taking an active part in the formation of a bloc of the countries of South-East Asia and the Pacific Pact.

The Indian bourgeoisie and its agents in the trade union movement are carrying out the plans of Anglo-American reaction and have taken the initiative in splitting the working class movement of the countries of South-East Asia. The formation of the Asiatic Federation of Trade Unions was brought about through the direct and active participation of the reactionary Indian National Trade Union Congress organised by the National Congress.

Facts irrefutably prove that the Indian big bourgeoisie has willingly taken upon itself the role of a steward of Anglo-American imperialism by rallying all the reactionary elements in the countries of East Asia for the struggle against the national liberation movement of the oppressed peoples against those forces that stand for lasting democratic peace.

Therefore, the statements of certain leading statesmen of the Indian Dominion about India following an “independent” or “neutral” foreign policy, about her adhering to a “third” path in the sphere of international relations in particular sounds altogether unconvincing. All this talk is designed at duping the popular masses and deceiving public opinion both inside the country and outside. In actual practice, the reactionary circles both of India and Pakistan are adopting a course of consolidating the position of their countries in the role of satellites of the Anglo-American imperialist bloc. Even some Indian bourgeois journalists were compelled to admit that “the middle path” followed by India in its international policy is very little different from the policy of the Western Powers and their satellites.

The Communist Party of India is resolutely exposing the bourgeois machinations directed towards keeping India tied to the Anglo-American bloc. The Communist Party has come forth against the so-called London Agreement for retaining India within the British empire and has characterised this agreement as one step further in the path of converting India into a satellite of the Anglo-American imperialist bloc. The Communist Party notes that the South-East Asia bloc and the Pacific Pact created by the imperialists is a complement to the aggressive North Atlantic Pact and an instrument for the struggle against the rising national liberation movement in the countries of South-East Asia and a preparation in the East for a base of attack against the USSR. The Communist Party emphasises that the working masses of India look upon the Soviet Union as a leading force in the struggle against world reaction and are resolutely taking their place in the camp of democracy led by the USSR.

Both in India and Pakistan, the popular movement for lasting peace and democracy, and against the Anglo-American instigators of war and their myrmidons is assuming a broader and broader sweep. At a crowded meeting in defence of peace which was recently held in Ferozabad, the following resolution was adopted:

“Under no circumstances will the Indian workers ever take up arms against the Soviet Union, the greatest defender of peace and democracy. If the imperialists attempt to convert our country into a war base for an attack against the Soviet Union, they will meet with a shattering rebuff from the Indian people. The working class of India alongside the working class of the whole world will fight for peace, democracy and Socialism.” (*Pravda*, August 19, 1949)

The final going over of the Indian big bourgeoisie into the camp of reaction and imperialism does not exclude the fact that individual groupings in the national bourgeoisie can still at one or another time, during one or another period, become fellow-travellers with the democratic forces in their struggle against imperialism and its allies in India. In the first instance, they comprise those elements of the bourgeoisie whose interests in particular run counter to those of the foreign capital that is flowing increasingly into the country. It also comprises the rising bourgeoisie of those national regions of India, which are more backward in their development. This bourgeoisie is dissatisfied with the predominance of the already constituted monopolist groups. At the same time, one must bear in mind that under the present conditions of the extreme accentuation of the general crisis of capitalism, when a specially sharp polarisation of class forces, is taking place both on an international scale and within the bounds of every capitalist country taken individually, these oppositional strata of the Indian bourgeoisie ought not to be regarded in any way as reliable or stable members of the anti-imperialist camp.

Closely connected with the final passing over of the Indian big bourgeoisie into the service of the Anglo-American imperialists, it is necessary to consider also the policy of the Indian National Congress whose leadership had always remained in the hands of the bourgeoisie and the liberal landlords. At the present time, the National Congress has been finally converted into a party of the reactionary bloc of the Indian big bourgeoisie, the landlords and the feudal princes, with the bourgeoisie retaining its leading position in this bloc.

It is impossible not to take into account the fact that the National Congress still enjoys a certain influence among the masses. This can partly be explained by tradition since in the course of a long period of time, the Congress was considered to have been in considerable opposition to the policy of British imperialism in India. This can also partly be explained by the nationalist demagogy of the Congress leaders, by which they are trying to screen their compromise with British imperialism. But the reactionary policy of the National Congress is beginning to arouse greater and greater dissatisfaction and indignation amongst the Indian workers. With the exposure of the reactionary and treacherous role of the bourgeois-landlord leadership of the National Congress and of reactionary Gandhism, the influence among the masses of the National Congress is being more and more rapidly dispelled.

It is becoming more and more evident to the broad masses of Indian workers that it is the working class alone which is called upon to be the leader in the national liberation movement and that it is only under its leadership that the victory of the working people can be ensured.