
THE INDIA CRISIS

Statement of the National Committee of the Communist Party

IT IS zero hour! The United Nations must fight the enemy!

The nation has been warned by the Office of War Information that our country is in danger, that the common cause of the United Nations is imperiled.

Hitler's panzer divisions have cut through our Eastern Front in Europe to within striking distance of the Caucasus oil fields and the gates of India, where they hope to join forces with the Japanese. The Nazis have been able to do this only because they could concentrate overwhelming forces at the point of their own choosing. Meanwhile the armies of Britain and the United States are, with few important exceptions, still in training and maneuvers, not engaging the main enemy, Hitler Germany, the heart of the Axis.

The mounting stream of materiel of war from American factories piles up unused except for important naval fighting in the Pacific Islands, sporadic air raids, limited assistance to heroic China, and a trickle of supplies to aid our only active land front in Europe, where our mighty ally, the Soviet Union, fighting with epic heroism, is left in isolation. We face the zero hour, but the United Nations are not yet fully fighting; only one part is fighting.

In this moment of crisis, when the future of all mankind is at stake, we are confronted with the tragic events in India. Our United Nations armed forces at that crucial point, which should be killing Japanese, and inspiring and organizing the people of India to defend their country from Axis aggression and enslavement, have instead turned their guns upon the Indian people in the streets of Bombay. It is not Japanese who are dying at India's border, but Indians in the heart of India.

It is time to put an end to all this muddle and danger, which is bringing our common cause to one disaster after another. It is the grave duty of all military forces in India—British, Indian and American—to halt the Japanese advance at all cost. Behind these troops the rear must not be thrown into chaos.

It is time to enforce the rule: Everything for victory over the common enemy of mankind: Nazism-Fascism.

It is time to open the Western Front against Hitler without further delay. This is the way to victory. This is the way to smash Hitler's Axis.

We must strike the enemy, and not our Indian friends who are demanding nothing but *the right to*

organize themselves for the fight side by side with us against our common foe and to realize their right to national freedom.

The Second Front to defeat Hitler and his Japanese accomplices is not in India against the Indian peoples. The Second Front to defeat Hitler is in Europe.

Even the most stupid blunders and costly mistakes in the high places of United Nations command cannot change the character of this war. It is and remains a peoples' war of national liberation.

These blunders and mistakes cannot wipe out our vision of the eventual victory of the peoples over the Axis monsters. The peoples will fight on and will win.

But let us not therefore complacently resign ourselves to the "inevitability" of these catastrophic weaknesses in our United Nations, nor ignore their terrible cost.

Every day's delay now in opening the Second Front in Europe is prolonging the war, adding hundreds of thousands to the future American casualty lists, is endangering the outcome of the war.

The United Nations guns turned on the citizens in Bombay streets killed not only the defenseless Indians, they also added a million or more to the number of American lives that will have to be spent for that future victory.

At this moment, it is a double tragedy that American public opinion is being misled, even by such a responsible organ as the *New York Times*. In its editorial on India of August 11, it says the negotiations between London and the

Indian National Congress broke down over the "communal issue" and the future form of government for India. That is simply contrary to fact. Sir Cripps never even discussed the "communal issue" with the Indian leaders, and the Indian demand which was refused was the demand for the right, at this moment, for the Indian people to organize and carry on the defense of their own country as a nation, in unity with the United Nations. We cannot win the Indian people to active participation in this war by telling lies about them, and scandalous lies at that.

At this moment all the rats of the Hitler Fifth Column are scurrying around to add to the confusion, and spread even deeper and more dangerous conflict. Typical of the propagandists of defeat is a sinister columnist writing in the *New York Sun* of August 10, the most vicious Axis propaganda yet to appear in a supposedly respectable newspaper. This journalist openly declares that the United States and Britain are preparing to abandon the Soviet Union to Hitler. This shameful slander reveals the "hell's brew" of the Fifth Column that is stewing behind the scenes, fired by Hitler's advances on the military front and the blunders of the United Nations on the diplomatic front, eagerly awaiting the moment to strike in the back our own United States and the whole United Nations.

We have received a cable from the recently legalized Communist Party of India. It gives a sober and responsible account of the situation

and the issues in India. It correctly places responsibility for the crisis in India on the British rulers. It rejects Gandhi's appeasement policy and the dangerous tactic of civil disobedience. It calls for the defense of India against the fascist invaders and for the establishment of a provisional National Government of the Indian people to actively cooperate with all the United Nations.

The message from the Communists of India makes a suggestion that has already been voiced in responsible circles of all political opinion in this country, such as the recent appeal of the famous writer, Pearl Buck, that the moment has arrived when President Roosevelt must be urged to intervene in this dangerous and fratricidal struggle, which is absolutely unnecessary and destructive of all interests except those of Hitler and the Japanese imperialists, and bring about serious negotiations which can and must result in complete unity of all peoples' forces in India against the Axis aggressors, and the formation of a representative National Government for common victory.

All honest citizens of every political tendency must agree with and applaud this proposal. It was already endorsed in substance last week in the resolution of the United Auto Workers Convention in Chicago. It is the course of plain common sense. It is the necessary demand of every person who puts the cause of victory over the Axis above everything else.

Urge upon President Roosevelt to throw the great moral influence of

our country into the scales to save India as a whole for the United Nations!

Let the entire American labor movement speak out and call upon our government, the British Cabinet and the British Trade Union Congress to help bring about a solution of the Indian crisis in the interests of the victory of all the United Nations, which is as indispensable to the freedom of India as it is to the freedom of all mankind. Let American labor cooperate with the British and Soviet Trade Unions, and the workers of all countries, to strengthen our common struggle against our common enemy—Hitler and Hitlerism.

Strengthen our national unity around our nation's Commander-in-Chief! Strengthen labor's unity and action to support and implement our nation's war policy! Rout the defeatists in the Congressional elections and everywhere!

Raise high the fighting spirit of the American people for the all-out assault upon the hordes of Hitlerism!

Away with inaction and delay!

Carry out the American-Soviet-British Agreements!

Open up the Second Front in Europe Now!

Everything for the destruction of Hitler and the Axis!

NATIONAL COMMITTEE,
COMMUNIST PARTY,

William Z. Foster,
National Chairman

Earl Browder,
General Secretary