

Report of the Debate on Ideological Resolution of the CPI(M) Adopted at the Central Plenum at Burdwan, April 5–12, 1968

The Plenum of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist), on April 11, adopted the Draft on ideological questions with some amendments proposed by the Central Committee. Of the total 207 delegates attending the Plenum, 162 voted for the Draft, 27 against, and 9 remained neutral. The nine amendments proposed by the Central Committee were to strengthen some of the formulations in the Draft regarding the contributions of National Liberation Struggles in the present day world, the role of Stalin, the question of Yugoslav revisionism, and the issue of unity in action of the socialist camp in Vietnam.

After three days of general discussion on the Draft, in which 41 delegates participated, the Plenum on April 10 rejected a major amendment moved in the form of alternate drafts by some comrades from Andhra Pradesh. Twentytwo delegates voted for their documents while 158 delegates voted against them and thirteen remained neutral out of a total 207 delegates.

Among major amendments pressed to vote and were defeated by the Plenum were those :

—Demanding deletion of the entire section on Unity in Action which received 45 votes in favour, 153 voting against the amendment;

—Stating that the revisionism in a concentrated form in all actions of the CPSU leadership was endangering world

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revolution. This amendment secured 52 votes in favour, with the majority voting against it.

Demanding the deletion of the sentence in the Draft which states that "our criticism of the compromising and collaborationist policies pursued by the revisionist leadership of the CPSU and the Soviet state does in no way imply the totally erroneous idea that the Soviet Union has become an ally of U.S. imperialism or is working for sharing world hegemony with American imperialism and for the division of spheres of influence in the world, as this is tantamount to nothing short of placing the Soviet Union outside the socialist camp." This amendment received 37 votes in favour and the Plenum by an overwhelming majority retained the sentence in the final document.

The demand that the Chinese Cultural Revolution should find a place in the document was not pressed after the C.C. statement that the Party's stand on the question had been explained in M. Basavapunniah's article in *People's Democracy* and inclusion of the topic in the document without further comprehensive discussion and decision would be incorrect.

Two main points of controversy on which attention was focused for a major part of the discussions were the characterization of the leadership of the Soviet Union as allies of U.S. imperialism for world domination and following from it, the question of united action by the entire socialist camp on the specific issue of fighting U.S. imperialist aggression in Vietnam.

The entire Plenum was unanimous that the Soviet leadership was a modern revisionist leadership and by its policies had done immense harm to the world Communist movement, and the national liberation struggles in Asia, Africa and Latin America against imperialism.

The alternate drafts had taken up the position that the revisionism of the Soviet leadership had reached to such proportions that they had become the political representatives of bourgeois elements in the Soviet Union. They were

collaborating with U.S. imperialism and had become its allies in the global strategy of world domination and were rapidly restoring capitalism in the Soviet Union.

To substantiate their case, they advanced the following arguments : Inside the Soviet Union material and profit incentives had been introduced; centralized planning is being undermined; the extent of personal holdings of collective farm peasants had been increased and they were allowing foreign monopolists to set up industrial units inside the Soviet Union, and at the same time were collaborating with private capital in foreign countries to establish joint ventures; the Soviet leaders say their state is not a dictatorship of the proletariat but a people's state and the Communist Party a people's Party.

Externally, the Soviet leaders had with their policies of collaboration with U.S. imperialism, refused to give necessary and adequate aid to the Vietnamese people, betrayed the struggles of the Congo and Cuba and of West Asia; on the question of the nuclear non proliferation treaty they had joined hands with U.S. imperialism to safeguard their nuclear monopoly and exert pressure on the non-nuclear states, all their agreements with the U.S. imperialists were designed to contain China and hand over the national liberation movements bound hand and foot to the imperialists.

Since the Soviet leadership had become an ally of U.S. imperialism and was collaborating with it for world domination, and since, according to them, it refused to consider U.S. imperialism as an enemy, they held that China was correct in rejecting united action with the Soviet Union on the question of Vietnam.

The Plenum by overwhelming majority rejected this understanding as un-Marxian and totally erroneous and upheld the standpoint of the Central Committee as put forward in its Draft.

According to this, the Soviet leadership was undoubtedly following revisionist policies, doing immense damage to the world Communist movement and betraying anti-imperialist

struggles. But it was wrong to conclude that there was already a developed bourgeois class in the Soviet Union whose political representatives were in the leadership of the Party and state. The Soviet Union is still a socialist state and a part of the socialist camp.

Also there was no such economic class in the Soviet society, like the imperialist bourgeoisie of the Western countries, which needed foreign markets and exploitation for its existence. Collaboration with U.S. imperialism because of revisionist policies was one thing, but the Soviet Union itself becoming an imperialist country was a totally different thing.

While developments in the Soviet Union and some of the East European socialist states needed further study, the Plenum, on the basis of Marxist-Leninist analysis of classes in Soviet society, rejected the totally wrong conclusion that the Soviet Union was allying with U.S. imperialism for world domination. The Plenum upheld the C.C.'s understanding that the Soviet Union was still a socialist country, that restoration of capitalism had not already taken place in the Soviet Union, but if the leadership pursued its present course there was the danger of the restoration of a new type of capitalism there.

On the question of united action also, the Plenum upheld the view that while there could be no unity between Marxist-Leninists and revisionists in the same Party, unity of action between the Soviet Union and China cannot be forbidden in principle on the ground that revisionists are at the head of the Soviet state. In the context of the grim struggle being waged by the Vietnamese people against U.S. imperialism and the U.S. aggression on the socialist state in North Vietnam, there is urgent need for united action by the socialist camp as a whole to beat back the aggressor.

But, the Plenum held, such united action had been made difficult by the collaborationist policies of the Soviet leadership, its anti-China postures and actions and tardiness in giving the necessary aid to liberation struggles. Mutual confidence

which had been lost because of wrong Soviet policies and actions had first to be restored, particularly since the joint action in the present case means military action. The Plenum thus placed the responsibility for the absence of joint action in Vietnam squarely on the shoulders of the Soviet revisionist leadership while at the same time disagreeing with Chiga for ruling out united action with the Soviet state in principle on the ground that the revisionists were heading the state.

With the wrong conclusion about the Soviet Union not being a socialist state which in fact meant the denial of the existence of the socialist camp as the Soviet Union and all the other socialist countries supporting it were put out of its pale, the alternate viewpoint had challenged the entire concept of the new epoch in which the correlation of forces on a world scale had changed vastly in favour of socialist and anti-imperialist forces.

Once the concept of the new epoch was challenged, it was inevitable that the basis of the Party Programme adopted in 1964 was also challenged as that Programme was based on the ideological understanding of the new epoch and the possibilities it had opened up. The alternate viewpoint characterized India's independence as "formal", wanted a change in the definition of the class character of the Indian state stating that it was a state of the big landlords and comprador bourgeoisie and not a bourgeois-landlord state headed by the big bourgeoisie; wanted to change the characterization of the stage of the Indian revolution since, according to them, the basic contradiction in India is between U.S. imperialism and its lackeys on the one side and the country as a whole on the other. In the process of challenging all this, they also rejected the concept of socialist aid to backward countries saying it only facilitated further U.S. penetration into these countries. They also challenged any such foreign policy as non-alignment and also challenged the united front tactics of the Party.

The Plenum rejected this entire understanding as a departure from Marxism-Leninism and upheld the Programme and other basic documents of the Party.

It held that Indian independence was not “formal” as the alternative drafts made out, nor was it “full and complete” as the Dangeite revisionists tried to make out but that the Indian ruling classes had been able to utilize the political independence won to strengthen themselves and to develop to a limited extent an independent economy because of the new favourable correlation of forces in the new epoch.

It held that the Indian state was a bourgeois-landlord state led by the big bourgeoisie, the main contradiction in Indian society today was that between the bourgeois-landlord Government and the people and as such the Indian revolution was in its second stage, i.e., the agrarian stage. The Plenum came to the conclusion that the Party’s participation in the U.F. Governments of West Bengal and Kerala has strengthened the Party and popular movements of the two States.

It held that, while the revisionists were wrong in saying that socialist aid would help India to develop an independent economy, socialist aid will help the ruling classes to develop industries to a certain extent and to strengthen their position to bargain with the imperialists.

Thus by rejecting the erroneous, un-Marxist positions on the controversies in the international Communist movement and on the question of the strategy and tactics of the Indian Revolution, the Plenum becomes a landmark in the history of our people’s struggle for democracy and socialism.