

# Fight Against Revisionism Political-Organisational Report

Adopted at the seventh Congress of the Communist Party of India, October 31-November 7, 1964, Calcutta

## I. Long-Standing Differences

This Congress will go down in history as the Congress of struggle against revisionism, as the Congress which made the decisive break with revisionism and class collaboration in the Communist movement of our country.

Inside the Communist Party of India, a struggle has been going on for the last ten years against the repeated attempts to take the Communist Party and the working class movement on to the path of class collaboration. Due to the stiff resistance inside the Party, these attempts to take the Party along the line of class collaboration did not succeed. In successive Congresses of the Party, the line advanced by this group was rejected. However, when this group got an opportunity in November 1962 to be in charge of the Party apparatus, it threw to the winds all the norms of Communist Party organisation and adopted bourgeois organisational methods with a view to imposing its own line on the Party. And when all attempts to make this group give up its anti-Party methods were frustrated, it has become absolutely indispensable to hold this Congress of the Communist Party, independently of the Dange group.

The differences that have been persisting and gathering momentum in the Party have certainly been accentuated by the ideological differences that have broken out in the world Communist movement. But it must be realised that the differences inside the Party have been accumulating long before the

ideological differences in the world Communist movement came into the open and these relate to the assessment of the political-economic situation in India, on the role of the bourgeoisie in our democratic revolution, on the shifts inside the bourgeoisie, on the class character of the Government of India, on the attitude that the working class and its Party should adopt towards the bourgeoisie, its Party and Government, and on the role of the working class in our democratic revolution.

Differences existed inside the Party on the role of the bourgeoisie during 1948-50. They were resolved in 1951 when the Programme was adopted at a Special Conference. However, these differences came to the forefront again during the inner-Party discussions that took place before the Fourth Congress at Palghat in 1956. At that time, the Government of India, due to great changes in the international situation as well as the internal situation, had made a shift in its foreign policy, and also had published the second five-year plan draft. The bourgeoisie had to take into account the mood of the people who were getting more and more radicalised and, therefore, adopted at the Avadi session of the Congress Party the goal of "socialistic pattern of society".

All this was taken to signify that the national bourgeoisie had split into two, the monopolist sections standing for out-and-out collaboration and compromise with imperialism and native feudalism, while the other section was made out to be opposing imperialism and feudalism.

Bhowani Sen, one of the chief protagonists of this line, stated:

"The pro-imperialist and pro-feudal circles amongst the big bourgeoisie and in Government are not interested in India's independent capitalist development. They fear the people more than the imperialists and know that Nehru's progressive policies will ultimately strengthen the popular forces and hit themselves."

(Fourth Party Congress Document—No. 2, p. 8)

Thus, in the period of strengthening of the Soviet Union and other Socialist countries, when India could look forward to getting their disinterested aid and use it as a bargaining counter with the imperialists, at a time when there was no threat of

internal social revolution which would threaten the big bourgeoisie, we are told that a section of the big bourgeoisie was not interested in independent capitalist development and was objectively pro-imperialist and pro-feudal! We are told that the Nehru Government represented not the bourgeoisie as a whole, but "only the anti-imperialist anti-feudal, progressive section of the Indian bourgeoisie"!

And this is stated without any ambiguity. In the same document he says :

"The Nehru Government, representing the progressive section of Indian big business, in the main, abandoned collaboration with imperialism and embraced the policy of peaceful co-existence and established co-operation with socialist States."

(Fourth Party Congress Document—No. 2, p. 3)

He then refers to "the promotion of national bourgeois interests in trade and industry (drive for industrialisation, export drive, nationalisation of the Imperial Bank, the Companies Bill against the managing agency system) and draws the conclusion: "These measures are undoubtedly steps towards eventual liquidation of semi-colonialism, leading to economic independence." And what is more, he asserts that "Nehru has been able to take these steps only by moving towards an alliance with the camp of peace and anti-imperialism."

Thus, it is made out that the Nehru Government has given up collaboration, is liquidating vestiges of semi-colonialism, viz., grip of foreign capital in the economy and feudal and semi-feudal relations in agriculture, and in foreign policy, given up non-alignment and moved over to alliance with the socialist, peace camp against the imperialist camp.

From this, the following tactics was worked out:

"This tactics, translated in terms of demands, means 'radical reorganisation of the government' and in terms of central political task it means 'building the united national front'. Our movement for a united national front will pave the way for a government of national unity, as an emergency alliance to resist the pro-imperialist and pro-feudal offensive."

(Ibid, pp. 17—18)

P. C. Joshi, S. S. Yusuf and others also came to the same conclusion. They concluded their note thus:

“In our opinion the slogan of a national democratic coalition Government will, in the present circumstances, most effectively enable the Party to defeat and isolate the pro-imperialist and pro-feudal reactionaries, forge an alliance with national bourgeois elements and help realise the hegemony of the proletariat over the national movement.” (Ibid, p. 54)

At the Fourth Party Congress itself, these people, viz., P.C. Joshi, C. Rajeshwar Rao, Ravi Narayan Reddy, S. S. Yusuf, H. K. Vyas, L. R. Khandkar, Bhowani Sen, Somnath Lahiri, K. Damodaran and Ramesh Chandra, moved an alternate resolution. It stated in the end:

“The CPI believes that as a result of the development of national unity and on the basis of the changed correlation of forces in favour of the progressive forces, an alternative Government of national unity can be brought into being.”

This alternate resolution was defeated.

Despite the defeat suffered in the Congress, within a few months, they sought to reopen the question. The opportunity was provided by an article by Modeste Rubinstein published in two issues of ‘New Times’ dated July 5 and August 2, 1956. In this article, Rubinstein had made out that the Nehru Government had embarked upon the path of non-capitalist development towards socialism.

Immediately, these same people demanded of the CC that the political line adopted at Palghat should be reopened and revised in the direction advocated by Rubinstein in that article.

The Central Committee discussed the article and firmly rejected the understanding behind it. On the basis of this rejection, Comrade Ajoy Ghose, the then General Secretary, wrote an article in the party organ which concluded thus :

“To conclude there undoubtedly exists a non-capitalist path for underdeveloped countries like India. But it would be an illusion to think that the present Government, headed by the bourgeoisie, can advance on that path. The Communist Party of India does not suffer from such illusions. Therefore, while fully

recognising certain possibilities of advance in the existing situation and while fully supporting all measures of the Government which help to realise these possibilities and strengthen the cause of peace, national freedom and national economy, the Communist Party simultaneously strives to strengthen the forces of democracy and socialism in our country so that power passes into the hands of the democratic masses led by the working class. That alone can complete the tasks of the democratic revolution with the utmost rapidity and advance the country towards socialism.”

Then came the second general elections. It resulted in considerable strengthening of communal and feudal reactionary forces as well as separatist forces. The same question was now raised in a different form. In view of the emergence of these forces, they argued, the understanding of the Party of the national political situation must be revised. The main fire must be concentrated on right reaction and to that end, the Party must unite with the Congress. In view of the fact the Kerala Government led by the Communist Party was sought to be removed by Congressmen themselves they could not put forward the old slogan of a coalition government.

The controversy was settled at the Fifth Congress of the Party held at Amritsar in 1958, which decided in favour of ‘simultaneous battle’ against the forces of right reaction on the one hand, and against the policies of the Government which have ‘strengthened the position of these anti-national elements in our economic life and offered them opportunities of building links with foreign monopolists on the other’.

Even this only resolved the differences in a formal sense. For, the ideological and political moorings of that section remained the same. Their tendency to align with the bourgeoisie naturally found expression in bourgeois nationalistic and even chauvinistic stands, whenever such issues arose. During the days of the attempts made by the counter-revolutionary forces in Hungary with the aid of U. S. imperialism, to overthrow the socialist regime and return to capitalism, S. A. Dange, in a statement to the ‘Times of India’, echoed the statements of Pandit Nehru. He

said that the Hungarian counter-revolutionaries' attempt—overthrow of socialism was a "national upsurge of the Hungarian people". One of the important members of this revisionist group, C. Achuta Menon who was then a member of the Central Committee, resigned not only the positions he held in the Party but his membership of the Party itself saying that the Hungarian events had shattered his faith in the Communist movement.

This bourgeois nationalism found expression on the question of boundaries of linguistic states also. Several State Committees came out with public statements on the question of state borders contradicting each other. Bourgeois nationalism found expression on the question of language as well. In 1957, the Maharashtra Committee, under the direction and guidance of S. A. Dange, decided to demand that Balgaum district should be detached from Karnataka and included in Maharashtra and for this purpose it was decided in 1958 to conduct a satyagraha. All this was done without any consultation whatsoever with the Karnataka Committee or with the Central Executive Committee or National Council. At its Madras meeting in 1958, the National Council had to intervene and issue a mandate to the Maharashtra Committee countermanding the decision to go on satyagraha. Dange who was away in Europe when the National Council took this decision, on his return sabotaged the decision of the National Council.

Later, in 1959, when the border dispute between India and China came out, S. A. Dange, in open defiance of the Party made statements, whose only purpose was to drag the Party to line up behind the bourgeoisie. At the Meerut session of the National Council, he was publicly censured for such gross violation of Party discipline. That meeting of the National Council adopted resolution on the India-China border issue which categorically pointed out that the entire border question was a disputed one and as such the question of aggression does not arise. The resolution urged that the entire border should be settled by negotiations, taking into account the existing relations.

However, S. A. Dange organised a virtual revolt against these decisions of the National Council. The Meerut National Council

resolution on the India-China border dispute was, for all practical purposes, put in cold-storage.

What was worse, the bourgeois press was utilised by this group, to spread tendentious reports against those who would not toe their bourgeois-nationalist line, as the "anti-national, pro-China-wing" of the Communist Party.

The differences inside the Communist Party went on getting accentuated. In May 1960, when the National Council met in Calcutta, the Executive Committee's draft resolution for the Party Congress could not be considered. Earlier this draft was opposed by S. A. Dange on the ground that it overestimated the penetration of foreign capital, particularly U. S. capital, which according to him was a false picture. In a note prepared by him and circulated to the National Council, he pooh-poohed the talk of penetration of foreign capital and stated foreign capital investments were after all in "Baby Johnson Powder". Nonetheless, the resolution had been passed by a big majority in the Executive Committee.

Due to Dange's opposition, the General Secretary of the Party refused to move the resolution, adopted by a big majority of the Executive, in the subsequent meeting of the National Council which had been called for the specific purpose of discussing the Executive's draft. Ultimately, they pleaded that more time must be taken to study facts, and the National Council that had been called only for discussing the draft, dispersed without considering it!

In the latter part of 1960, ideological differences in the international movement developed and a world conference of Communist Parties was called. Our Party was invited to the preparatory meeting of the world conference. The CEC was called and discussions revealed that sharp differences existed on the ideological questions. However, a decision was taken by a slender majority as brief for our delegation to the world conference. Even when the CEC was divided so sharply, the National Council was not called and the majority decision was reported to the entire Party and imposed upon it as the decision of the Party. After the Moscow Conference no discussion on 81 Parties' Statement was held in the CEC or National Council. No

attempt was made, therefore, to resolve the differences that had been accumulating and getting accentuated.

Without making a principled effort to resolve these differences two Commissions were appointed to draft the Programme of the Party and the political resolution for the Sixth Congress of the Party, which was to be held at Vijayawada in 1961.

At the meeting of the National Council, held early in 1961 to consider the draft resolution and draft programme, two drafts of both the political resolution and of the Programme emerged from these commissions.

On the India-China border dispute, the reports of the official teams of the two Governments had just then been published. Even when the National Council was studying the reports, one of the important members of the group, M. N. Govindan Nair, in Parliament declared that India's case had been proved.

This was sought to be made the basis of a resolution of the National Council. However, the National Council took the only correct position that the dispute cannot be settled by going into these historical data, for each side would produce its own data and would cling to it, and hence demanded that a political settlement at the highest level should be sought.

As was to be expected, this resolution was also put in cold-storage.

After that meeting of the National Council, hectic efforts were made by this group to work up a majority in the Party Congress. For this purpose all manner of anti-Party methods were adopted. Election of delegates took place in those states in which they were in majority in a factional way.

The Programme, drafted by S.A. Dange, P. C. Joshi and G. Adhikari, which they placed before the Sixth Congress was an out-and-out revisionist programme.

Although the drafters of the document proclaimed that they had based themselves on the understanding given by the 81 Parties' Statement and used parrot-like the phrase 'National Democracy', the document had nothing to do with the revolutionary understanding of the Moscow Statement. The Moscow document had pointed out how the national bourgeoisie of under-developed

countries tried to compromise with imperialism and domestic reaction, as social contradictions develop.

The draft programme of Dange, Joshi and Adhikari, completely ignored this compromising role of the Indian bourgeoisie, both at the time of the transfer of power and since it came to wield state power.

Instead, it stated: "India too has accepted the goal of socialism as her final aim of social development, much to the dislike of the imperialists and the exploiting classes." The approving reference to the Congress party and Indian Parliament's resolution on socialistic pattern of society is obvious.

The total dependence of the Congress Government on imperialism in the first few years, its generally siding with the West on all issues that came up in the U. N.—all this was sought to be justified thus:

"There were serious difficulties in finding the correct answer quickly, without pitfalls, sufferings and fiasco. These arose because of the legacies left behind by imperialism and the attitudes of the ruling classes and the ruling party."

The Moscow document sharply underlines the third stage of the general crisis of capitalism. There was no understanding of the all-sided nature—political, economic, social and ideological—of this general crisis, particularly in its third acute stage. As a result, what effects the attempt of our bourgeoisie to develop capitalism in India, and that too without eliminating foreign capital and semi-feudal relations in agriculture, has on our entire political, economic, social life could nowhere be found in the document. No understanding of the extremely limited possibilities of such development could be found in the draft.

That the bourgeoisie, while it takes the help of the socialist countries, has been actually seeking more and more 'aid' from the West and particularly the U.S.A., that it is going in for collaboration in the private sector and has adopted a more or less 'open door' policy—all this is totally underplayed.

On the other hand, the draft actually becomes an apologia for the bourgeoisie's running after Western aid when it says:

“In its eagerness for rapid development of the Indian economy, it underestimates the danger of the penetration of Anglo-American capital into strategic lines of India’s development. It feels confident to contain the poison, because it thinks imperialism can take away a few crores from the country, but it cannot take away our independence and freedom. Imperialism tried it in Egypt and Iraq and it failed. It uses the existence of the socialist camp as a ready help on call, as the basis of its tactics and confidence.”

It is well-known that in the pre-Congress discussions S. A. Dange also put across the same argument against those who wanted to fight this foreign aid and collaboration. He said: “Why do you see only the dollars coming in? See also the rouble in the till.” He also pooh-poohed this foreign investment as of no consequence by saying they are “investments in Baby Johnson Powder”!

In direct contrast to this is the warning of the Moscow Statement of 81 Communist and Workers’ Parties on the question of foreign imperialist aid. According to the Moscow Statement, “The U. S. imperialists seek to bring many states under their control by resorting chiefly to the policy of military blocs and economic ‘aid’. Further, “The United States is the mainstay of colonialism today. The imperialists, headed by the U.S.A., make desperate efforts to preserve colonial exploitation of the former colonies by new methods and in new forms. The monopolists try to retain their hold on the levers of economic control and political influence in Asian, African and Latin American countries. These efforts are aimed at preserving their positions in the economy of the countries which have gained freedom, and at capturing new positions under the guise of economic ‘aid’ ....”. A serious warning, one would think, of the grave danger of foreign imperialist economic ‘aid’. But for Dange it constitutes no danger at all!

And as regards feudalism, the draft is silent over the fact that the national bourgeoisie has compromised with the feudal landlords and is actually sharing state power with them.

And the only criticism that the draft makes about the capitalist

path of development the bourgeoisie has embarked upon is that it is not fast enough and gives rise to the inevitable contradictions of capitalism!

All this is necessary for them to give up the struggle of the working class for hegemony in the democratic front, create illusions that the bourgeoisie itself would lead the struggle against foreign capital and semi-feudal relations in agriculture. That is why the draft is silent on the question of the leadership of the front.

In line with this assessment of the role of the national bourgeoisie in today’s context in the political-economic developments, the draft also assessed the Congress party. It said that the most reactionary wing of the bourgeoisie had walked out of the Congress Party into the Swatantra Party, although many of their supporters were still in the Congress.

It stated that the Congress “pursues an anti-imperialist foreign policy”, “keeps India in the peace camp and takes anti-colonial positions, carries on independent development of the country, takes the help of the socialist camp and is eager for greater help from foreign imperialist capital”.

Thus, the Congress party is pictured as in the main a progressive party with the most reactionary wing of the bourgeoisie having walked out of it into the Swatantra Party!

Thus the draft programme, if adopted, would take the Party to the path of out-and-out class collaboration.

The political resolution (being the current tactical line) that was placed before the Congress reflected this class collaborationist understanding.

The Party thus faced the most acute crisis at the Sixth Congress at Vijayawada. A split was avoided by making the political report speech of the General Secretary the basis for amendments. The Programme drafts, after introduction, were kept in abeyance and referred to the National Council.

Thus, all the ideological and political differences that divided the Party remained unresolved. The only basis of unity was with regard to the broad tactics that were to be pursued in the elections that were due eight months later.

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But when the elections to the National Council came, the Party again faced a crisis because the Dange group had made a determined effort to conduct them on factional lines. The usual practice in putting up the panel for the National Council was for the CEC to allot the number of seats to the various states and get the states, delegations' recommendations. The CEC used to accept these recommendations and put up the panel. The recommendations that came from the states' delegations upset the Dange group. They, then manoeuvred to put up a new panel, in utter disregard of the recommendations of the states' delegations. A split was avoided by some sort of patch-work, for which the Constitution was amended. The National Council could not elect the Executive or the Secretariat, and dispersed after electing the General Secretary only.

At the next meeting of the National Council, the Executive was elected. But Comrades P. Sundaraya, Jyoti Basu and Harkishan Singh Surjeet had to remain out of the Executive. A full-fledged Secretariat could not be elected. However the tactics for the general elections were further concretised.

At the next meeting of the National Council, the detailed election tactics were worked out with near-unanimity, though the conflicting points of view were expressed in the meeting.

With this, the Party went into the third general elections. Meanwhile, Comrade Ajoy Ghosh died. National Council did not meet till April 1962, after the general elections.