

FIRST EDITORIAL OF 'PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY': OUR MISSION

*[The following is the editorial of the first issue of **People's Democracy**, written by the founding editor, Jyoti Basu, on June 27, 1965.]*

DESPITE the massive attack against our Party by the Government of India and the detention without trial of about a thousand of our leaders and active workers, we take legitimate pride in being able to publish People's Democracy as the central organ of our Party. This has been made possible by the help and sympathy which we have received in abundance from our Party members and sympathisers. We are confident that we shall continue to receive such support in the future also.

WHY PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY?

WE have chosen the name **PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY** for three very compelling reasons:

- 1) We have set of ourselves the immediate task of achieving a People's Democratic State by replacing the present state which represents the interests of a handful of vested sections of society.
- 2) An ignorant or designing Home Minister has described this objective as 'Peking's prescription' and poured venom on it.
- 3) The concept and basic ideas of People's Democracy have been rejected by the Dange group of revisionists.

Our Party considers the objective of People's Democracy as a necessary and noble aim the realisation of which will pave the way to putting the country on the road to Socialism. Such a state will represent the interest of the workers, peasants, middle classes and the non-monopoly national bourgeoisie which will not rely on imperialism to build our economy.

The leadership in such a combine will be in the hands of the working class. This new state will replace the present state of capitalists and landlords dominated by the big capitalists and monopolists who are collaborating with imperialist capital in pursuing the capitalist path of development.

The ignorant and designing Congress Home Minister has denounced our Party as a treacherous party because, among other things we have proclaimed as our objective the achievement of PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY which is purported to be a Chinese prescription.

But since when has it become a crime to adopt ideas and institutions from outside India if they are conducive to our interests? Fortunately it has not been the

tradition in India to shun revolutionary and progressive ideas in struggling for freedom and building up our country.

Need I remind the philistine Home Minister that neither the tricolour flag nor parliamentary institutions for instance have been handed down to the rulers from the Ramayana or Mahabharata. Apart from revolutionary ideas and traditions of Europe, even our colonial masters made their contributions to many ideas and institutions which our rulers cherish in India.

But the concept of People's Democracy was in existence in the world Communist movement before the Chinese revolution and our Party adopted it before the Communists came to power in China.

THE REVISIONIST LINE

The concept of People's Democracy has also created a gulf between us and the Dange group of revisionists who have rejected it particularly because they were averse to accepting the idea of working class leadership in the alternative State and government which will replace the present State and government.

According to them, the present State is the organ of the class rule of the national bourgeoisie as a whole. But the leadership of this State is not in the hands of the big bourgeoisie though they wield considerable influence on the government.

The revisionists, therefore, dream of effecting fundamental changes under the leadership of a section of the Congress representing the national bourgeoisie which will oppose monopolists and condescend to share power with the working class. Thus it is not a question of individuals or groups of Congressmen joining the democratic front, it is their objective to work for some sort of a coalition government with a section of the Congress party and in this combine the working masses to begin with will be junior partners. They are afraid to visualise working class leadership lest the national bourgeoisie is frightened.

It shall be our persistent endeavour through our columns to debunk such revisionist theories and misleading ideas in order that the people may realise the true nature of revolutionary tasks which have to be carried out and thus prevent the working masses from tailing behind the Congress Party, its government and the bourgeoisie. Our weekly will be guided by Marxism-Leninism and the decisions of the SEVENTH CONGRESS of our Party held in Calcutta. We are aware that vigorous ideological struggles are essential in order to free the masses from the influence of bourgeois ideology and draw them to the positions of scientific socialism.

Our ruling class distorts the Marxist doctrine and uses the weapon of anti-Communism in order to isolate us from the democratic forces. It shall, therefore, be our purpose to expose and fight anti-Communism through the columns of this paper in the interest of the nation.

WITH THE PEOPLE

We do have an important mission to fulfil and we are publishing our journal at a time when not only the Communist Party has been attacked by the government but democracy, rule of law, parliamentary institutions, free and fair elections have all been assailed. Unable to solve the crises which it has created and afraid of the mounting protest and resistance of the people, the government is taking recourse to such despicable measures.

Our weekly will mirror the trials, tribulations and struggles of the masses of our people. It will reflect their true interests in the economic, political, social and cultural spheres. It will help to raise the consciousness of our people and to expose the anti-people, undemocratic measures of the Congress government.

We are also aware that contradictions exist and will arise again and again between the Indian bourgeoisie and the imperialists. Therefore the Congress government will find itself opposed to the imperialists on various issues in the economic and political spheres as also on question of world peace and anti-colonialism.

Whenever such situations arise and the government takes a stand against imperialism, we shall not hesitate to lend support to such measures in the interest our people, whilst entertaining no illusions of united front with the Congress Party.

Our weekly will place facts and truths before the people about ourselves and our policies as against the slanders and lies which have become the stock in trade of the Congress rulers and their servile Press. We are confident that Goebbels' 'big lie' theory adopted by the Congress rulers will fail much sooner here than it failed in Germany and truth will prevail.

Our paper will be not only an instrument for propagating our views but also for unifying and organising our Party throughout India. It shall be our bounden duty to listen to the views and criticism of our readers in order to improve our paper and carry out the tasks which we have undertaken to discharge.