



September 06, 1947

**Notes of the Discussion of Comrade A.A. Zhdanov with
Comrade S.A. Dange, Member of the CC of the Communist
Party of India**

Citation:

“Notes of the Discussion of Comrade A.A. Zhdanov with Comrade S.A. Dange, Member of the CC of the Communist Party of India,” September 06, 1947, History and Public Policy Program Digital Archive, RGASPI f. 17, op. 128, d. 1127, ll. 231-234. Available on Revolutionary Democracy site. Translated by Tahir Asghar.

<http://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/119260>

Summary:

Andrei Zhdanov instructs Shripad Amrit Dange on the Soviet Union's suggestions for the formation of an Indian Communist Party, following India's 1947 Partition.

Credits:

This document was made possible with support from the MacArthur Foundation.

Original Language:

Russian

Contents:

- English Translation

Notes of the Discussion of Comrade A.A. Zhdanov with
Comrade S.A. Dange, Member of the CC of the Communist Party of India

Discussion was held on 6.IX.1947.

In the discussion the following participated:

Comrade M.A. Suslov,
Secretary of the CC AUCP(b)

Comrade L.C. Baranov
Deputy Head of the Dept of Foreign Policy
CC AUCP(b)

Comrade I.I. Kozlov

Interpreter – Instructor of the Dept. of Foreign Policy
CC AUCP(b)

Comrade Zhdanov welcomes Cde. Dange and informs him that he, i.e. Cde. Zhdanov, has made a report to the CC about the questions which were discussed during the previous discussion and which were of interest to Cde. Dange and that now he is in a position to reply and make suggestions.

But Cde. Zhdanov cautioned Cde. Dange that he, com Dange, and the Communist Party of India should not view these suggestions as a directive. If they find these suggestions useful and correct, they may follow them, and if not—then reject them.

Cde. Dange replied that he understands these sentiments.

1. On the partition of India into Hindustan and Pakistan, and on the situation of the Communist Party and other social organizations in these circumstances.

Cde. Zhdanov states that, as the partition of India into two states Hindustan and Pakistan has now become an established fact, and as it is now impossible not to take it into consideration as an existing reality, then, in the opinion of the CC AUCP(b), the Communist Party, and the Trade Unions, it is essential to have separate communist parties and trade unions in each of the countries.

The CC AUCP(b) accepts the fact of the existence of the two states, and whatever may be our attitude toward the creation of these two states, we have to contend with this fact. As you know—Cde. Zhdanov continues—communist parties everywhere are established not on an inter-state basis, but in each state separately. Depriving a party of the right to exist within a state means depriving it of the right and possibility to influence the affairs of the state.

This, certainly, does not exclude—Cde. Zhdanov says—but, on the contrary, presumes the presence of fraternal ties and solidarity between the two communist parties also, just as these ties and solidarity exist between all the other fraternal communist parties.

It is understood—Cde. Zhdanov says—that both parties must take all measures toward the cessation of killings between Muslims and Hindus happening at the present and toward establishing fraternal relations and solidarity between them. This is the main task of both parties. Understandably, both of the parties will become the source of friendship and not enmity. That the parties would be able to achieve this—says Cde. Zhdanov—we do not doubt.

2. On the name of the party.

We are inclined to think—Cde. Zhdanov continues—it would be better for the Communist Party of India to reorganize itself from a communist party into a workers' and peasants' party or a Party of Labor. The experience of other parties shows that the peasantry, especially during the initial stages, is afraid of the name 'communist' and therefore prefers to organize itself in other parties. In order not to frighten the peasants away, and because the party will be able to rely not only on the workers but also on peasants and intellectuals, the communists in India must present themselves in the form of another party, e.g., the Party of Labor. The way we view the matter is that when the peasants become used to considering the party as their own and start to trust it, when the movement shifts to a new and higher stage, then the peasants will not be afraid of communist slogans, and the name can then be dispensed with in favor of the old one.

If—says Cde. Zhdanov—the Indian communists do not have the aim of the immediate inception of communism, then there is no need to annoy people with communism.

The slogan of the transition to communism needs to be put forth only when conditions mature for this [and when] the situation is ripe, when the party has prepared the masses on the basis of democratic slogans.

I can refer to the experience of the Communist Party of North Korea, where the communist party united with other democratic organizations, including the peasants' organizations, and formed a single united Party of Labor, [thereby] establishing a leading position for itself in this party and spreading its influence over the majority of the peasants and the population. Thanks to this, the communists of North Korea successfully conducted a series of important democratic reforms and transformation (nationalization of large scale industry, land reforms, eight-hours working day at the enterprises, equal rights for women, equal pay for women and men, etc.) and established a people's democratic government with Prime Minister Kim Il Sung at its head.

We—Cde. Zhdanov said—would desire something like this for you too.

We request you not to think that we want that the Indian communists stop being communists (Cde. Dange laughs). It seems that such forms need to be selected which would allow you to carry the majority of the people with you. We always adhere to the Leninist principle—Cde. Zhdanov pointed out—which teaches us not to skirt around the stages yet to be ushered.

Such is our second suggestion, which comes from a pure heart and a sincere wish for your success.

Concerning the platform: We think that it should be formulated in accordance with the prevailing conditions and must envision democratic reforms that would change the balance of forces in India in favor of the working people in preparation for the transition to socialism and destroy the capitalist roots. I do not consider it necessary—com Zhdanov said—to talk about the details of such a platform as the Indian communists are more competent than us. I have just elaborated on the general principles.

3. On the caste differences and the struggle for the eradication of the remnants of the caste system.

It appears to us that without the eradication of the remnants of the caste system, it is impossible to move forward, as the caste system obstructs the working people from recognizing class distinctions and replaces these with the distinctions from an archaic past. We consider—com Zhdanov continued—that this is the most reactionary vestige and poses the biggest difficulty for the Indian communists. But the Communist Party must make all efforts in order to eliminate these vestiges, though we are aware that this cannot be achieved in the near future.

We request that the Indian comrades—Cde. Zhdanov said—pay serious attention to this question.

These are the basic suggestions of the CC AUCP(b).

Regarding some specific questions—Cde. Zhdanov said—we also give a positive reply.

We have no objection to Indian communists studying here, taking into consideration the organization of such studies in the near future.

We positively relate to your proposal for more frequent visits of trade union delegations to the USSR.

We will be very happy to have direct ties with the Communist Party, but there are certain difficulties in this area, and therefore, for the time being, we will have to limit ourselves to certain 'occasions.' We recommend you to include communists with specific commissions in future delegations.

Regarding improving the supply of materials relating to the Soviet Union—said Cde. Zhdanov—it will be done through various state and social organizations (*Sovinformbureau*, *Mezhdunarodnaya Kniga*, *Voks*, etc.) that are meant for the purpose of strengthening cultural ties with foreign countries.

Cde. Dange expressed his gratitude for the suggestions and said that all the major issues on which he has had discussions would be placed before the CC CP on his return.

At the same time, Cde. Dange drew attention to the unsatisfactory working of the *Sovinformbureau* and the *Radiocommittee* (the transmissions are conducted in incomprehensible language) and requested that measures be taken for improving the works of these organizations.

Comrade Zhdanov promised to take the necessary measures and also requested that the Indian communists also intensify their efforts to conduct radio propaganda of the Soviet Union, as this would produce much better results than the Soviet people themselves.

Cde. Dange concurred.

Written: (L. Baranov)
8 September 1947.