

**LETTER OF THE GENERAL SECRETARY, CC COMMUNIST
PARTY OF INDIA, A. GHOSH, TO THE CC CPSU ON THE
REACTION OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF INDIA TO THE
REPORT OF N.S. KHRUSHCHEV**

[Not later than 24th August 1956]ⁱ

Esteemed Friend,

I am dispatching herewith a copy of the resolution of our Central Committee on the question of the struggle against the personality cult.

The resolution, in very mild tones contains the opinion of the majority of the members of the CC as well as mine on the issue. The common members of the party are much more critical of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union than expressed in our resolution.

I read very attentively the report that was read by Com. Khrushchev, as it was published in the bourgeois press. On the one hand, bringing to light the terrible events which took place and correctly judging personality of Stalin, who is held mainly responsible, the report, at the same time, suffers from serious shortcomings.

Firstlyⁱⁱ, I consider that it is difficult to accept some of the facts.

As an example, the assertion that Stalin used to plan military manoeuvres on a globe. In the report itself, reference is made to Stalin's role in the civil war and this means that he had some knowledge of military matters, that, at least, could read military maps. Why, in such a case, would he think of a globe, when it was a matter of much larger operations. One should also not forget that on such personalities as Churchill, who, undoubtedly, had some understanding of military matters and were not among Stalin's friends, Stalin during his meetings with them created an enormous impression due to his ability to understand the essence of the matter and assess the situation. How do we explain this? The myth that Stalin alone guided the war effort needed to be cleared, but was there a necessity to go to the other extreme view that Stalin had no knowledge of military matters, so much so that he could not even read military maps?

Secondly, The report does not create the impression of an unbiased document. It is true that in the very beginning of the report it is stated that a detailed assessment of Stalin's life and actions is not being made in the report. However, as the report mainly talks about Stalin's mistakes and crimes, it should also have shed light on his achievements. From the report it almost appears that Stalin stopped playing any positive role 20 years before his death and in this period committed only mistakes.

Thirdly, The report has nothing to say about the role of many other people. One may understand why it might have been difficult to oppose Stalin openly, but it is difficult to understand the need to **heap praise** on him.

Fourthly, The report does not give any analysis of the factors that helped in the emergence of such a phenomena and of the conditions that allowed these phenomena to persist over such a long period of time.

The members of our party have highly praised Togliatti's article in which many questions are raised.

The CC CPSU in its resolution of 30 June 1956 explains the historical situation in which these mistakes were committed and therefore this resolution is an important contribution. However, many questions raised by Togliatti remain unanswered in it.

Another question arises – the question about the rights of individual in a socialist society and about protection of these rights. It is not possible to keep quiet about these anymore, as we have done in the past. It is impossible to convince people that the ending of exploitation of one class by another class not only creates conditions (and it is so in reality) for fuller exercise of the rights of individual than under capitalism but that ending exploitation in itself is a sufficient guarantee of these rights. Our comrades want to know, can a Soviet citizen, being true to socialist principles criticise not only particular actions but also certain aspects of the policies of the government of the Communist Party. As an example, could a Soviet citizen openly say during Stalin's lifetime that excessive praising of Stalin is against the spirit of Marxism-Leninism or that the theory of intensification of class struggle was wrong? Or even if such views were expressed could such an article be published in any newspaper? Was not the absence of precisely these rights a major factor that allowed the mistakes to be continued to be committed. What is being done at the present time so as to correct these shortcomings.

Further, it may be asked, as already is being done, has the past been completely broken away from? Why do we keep hearing about some closed proceedings that have occurred recently? Was the article by Togliatti, in which pertinent questions have been raised, published in the Soviet press in full? How are we to understand that one of the resorts has been named after Khrushchev and that just a few days ago we had news that an electrical factory has been named after Khrushchev?

I do not expect immediate response to these questions but I do request you to give them a good thought. I have no doubt that it is not only we who raise these questions but also millions of communists in all the countries, at least, in all capitalist countries.

These questions have arisen not because people hold anti-Soviet sentiments or have turned against the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and not because they do not recognise that important changes have been and are presently taking place in the Soviet Union. These questions have arisen as all of us have started to think critically as the recent events have shaken us profoundly and forced us to rethink

the present events. Along with the recent strengthening of the socialist system and also the fact that there can be no doubt about its superiority over capitalism, there is also a view that certain changes are not only possible but also are necessary especially in relation to the broadening of democracy and in relation to rights of individual in the light of the strengthening of the socialist system.

We would like to get a response to our questions about human rights in a socialist society which is detailed and concrete and not, as many a time we ourselves have done, in general terms.

With best wishes
Ajoy Ghosh

RGANI. F.5, Op. 28, D.441, LL. 99-106. Translated from the English to Russian.

Doklad N.S. Khrushcheva o kul'te lichnosti Stalina na XX S"ezde KPSS, Dokymenty, red. K. Ayemermakher, Rosspen, Moskva, 2002, pp. 768-773.

Translated from the Russian by Tahir Asghar.

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ⁱ The date on the note of the desk for relations with foreign communist parties of the CPSU attached. Written on the note: 'Com. Suslov acquainted. V. Vorontsov.' The document has been cleared by L.I. Brezhnev, P.N. Ponamarev, A.B. aristov (F.5, Op. 25, D.441, L.98).

ⁱⁱ Here and henceforth the words emphasised in the text are in bold.