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EDITOR : S. V. GHATE.

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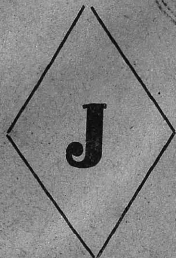
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THE NEW AGE

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HARIPURA—A STEP FORWARD

Vithalnagar is fast being dismantled. The thousand and more delegates have returned to their various homes, to their towns and villages. The lakhs of visitors are once more at their daily tasks. The people generally are moving on to new struggles. How far has Haripura prepared us for these problems, these new struggles? There will be some who will say that though many problems were tackled, nothing was solved—others that nothing was tackled and nothing solved—others again will claim that Haripura is the Master-key to all the problems in the coming year. It is time then, to make an assessment.

A superficial and vulgar estimate of Haripura is that it was a demonstration of national Unity. True, it was—but so was the reception given recently to Subhas Bose at Bombay—so is every Congress Session.

The Haripura Session was a demonstration of national unity in a special and specific sense. It was an instance of the entire national ranks, from the extreme right to the extreme Left, closing together in the face of the onslaught of British Imperialism. But neither the onslaught nor the national solidarity were casual, unconnected or

chance episodes. The very process of of national solidarity led up to the onslaught; the onslaught speeded up the process of national solidarity.

The Faizpur Congress set out the common national policy and programme for the immediate future. The Congress, the Congress Socialist Party, the Kisan Sabha, the Trade Unions and other anti-imperialist organisations together strove to implement this programme, through mass struggle and Parliamentary activity.

The acceptance of ministerial offices by the Congress helped to release still further the forces of mass struggle and organisation for the immediate political and economic demands of the people; for civil liberties, release of political prisoners, repeal of repressive laws, a Constituent Assembly; for relief to the Kisan, reduction in land revenue, abolition of debts; for a rise in wages, better conditions of work, recognition of unions, for the workers. The kisan organisations already developing before the Congress accepted offices, grew with amazing rapidity especially in Behar. The working Class also, in Bombay, Sholapur, Cawnpore, Ahmedabad, Nagpur, and Calcutta in short, in

practically every large city, came out in fighting array in support of the national political programme and its own immediate economic demands. The Youth and especially the students played an ever-growing role in the agitation for civil liberties, for the right to freedom of thought, speech and association, for the right to fly the National Flag on their hostels, schools and colleges, for the right of the Indian people to mass education.

Yet in spite of this tremendous and entirely unprecedented growth of mass energy and struggle on every sector of the national front, there was still a gap between the national leadership and the people. The Congress Ministries were constantly bowing to the pressure of the bureaucracy and the vested interests, falling into their line, into hostility to mass struggle, into regarding the independent class organisations as rivals, as opponents to the Congress, instead of welcoming them as new battalions for the anti-imperialist army. A certain section of Congressmen were going even to the extent of wishing to "purge" the Congress, of banning these independent organisations, which have amounted to a disastrous split in the ranks, at the very moment when the anti-imperialist movement, as a whole, was mounting to unheard of heights of co-ordinated struggle.

Nevertheless, the split did not come. The mass pressure made itself felt. Time and again the Congress Cabinets and the Working Committee were moved by this pressure from outside, to hurry forward with the election programme, to face the bureaucracy boldly. Within the Working Committee itself, the dominant leadership was not only checked from pressing for a split; it was propelled forward to stand more firmly by the Faizpur line.

This, in brief is the background of the Working Committee meeting at Wardha, on the eve of the Haripura

Session. And this meeting of the Working Committee is the starting point for Haripura. The growing hostility and open interference and sabotage of the Congress ministerial work by the bureaucracy, the mass pressure all over India against the Constitution and the Federation generally, for the implementing of the election pledges, for the release of political prisoners specifically, produced a definite hardening of attitude within the Congress leadership. A bold front to Imperialism, accepting (though of course not stating definitely) the possibility of a Nation-wide struggle, was decided upon. Instructions to the Ministers of the United Provinces and Behar to push on with the releases or quit were sent out. This is the background of the Wardha resolutions. A forward policy was generally accepted on the main fronts; on the question of Federation, of the States, and of the Congress Ministries.

Imperialism replied to this stiffening up of the Working Committee with a direct attack. Alarm at the development of the agrarian and working-class movement, especially in the U. P., had been voiced in the London "Times" a month previously. This alarm, coupled with the delicate international situation, Lord Lothian's report on his Indian impressions regarding the prospects of the Federation, and the desire to prevent the growth of the national forces in the Punjab and Bengal, all these combined to make the bureaucracy speed up its policy of trying to keep the national forces in check, through the instrument of the Congress Ministries. It decided to call, what it imagined was the Congress "bluff". Hence the intervention of Lord Linlithgow. But no bluff was called: instead the Congress Ministries resigned.

The effect of the Ministerial crisis on Haripura was electric. Though the delegates were at first stunned by the news, they rallied in a day or two,

and the Session turned into a determined preparation for the struggles ahead.

In these preparations was suddenly exposed all the weakness of the Left, springing from the fact that they are still isolated from the national movement as a whole, and their under-estimation the still powerful grip of Gandhism on the people. Though pressure had been put on the national leadership, and it had moved forward this pressure was largely from *outside* the Congress organisation. The inability to cement national unity in all the great and major mass struggles of the previous years, especially of the last six months, resulted in the slowing down of the process of radicalisation within the Congress itself, so that it did not correspond to the radicalisation of the national forces in general.

In the Provinces, where lakhs of new members had been drawn into the Congress, the Left did not succeed in carrying these new masses with them. For the most part, the Gandhian ideology prevailed. Consequently the delegates to Haripura had not been generally drawn under the influence of the Left. In some places the Left had actually lost ground.

The powerful compulsion of the ministerial crisis swung all these elements and the entire Left together, for a joint front against Imperialism. But in the face of the crisis, the initiative shifted altogether into the hand of the dominant leadership. The Parliamentary action of the Ministers and not mass struggle, was made to appear the cause of the crisis; putting the Viceroy and the bureaucracy in the wrong, on constitutional grounds and not the release of all political prisoners was made the condition for ending the crisis; in the case of further refusal on the part of Imperialism, mass struggle was hinted at, but for that the initiative was left to the Working Committee and Mahatma Gandhi.

The idea of a clear plan of direct action *now* for a general strike and a no-tax campaign was put aside on the ground that direct action was implicit in the resolution on the crisis. The resolutions on the Federation, the States, War, China and Palestine were passed practically in the same form as at Wardha. In the case of the States, certainly some heat was engendered. There was a good deal of opposition to the idea of entirely liquidating the Congress Committees in the States and Maulana Abdul Kalam Azad's reference to the Congress Committee in the States as "toys" was greatly resented. At one time in the proceedings it seemed as if the Working Committee's proposal would be rejected. As it was, the Working Committee was compelled to accept Pattabhi Sitaramayya's compromise, recognising the right to form Congress Committees in the States (tho' the right to political action, Parliamentary or direct, was denied). But the policy of non-interference in the States was merely modified, not ended, as the situation urgently demands.

The resolution on the Federation goes forward in one respect from the previous Congress position: it recognises the fact that India is a unit, and that independence is not for a part, but for the whole, for Indian States as well as for British India. The Congress stands for democracy and equal civil rights for all the units of the Federation. But the resolution is weakened by the fact that it does not emphasise the most objectionable aspect of the federal scheme, its denial of vital powers, control over National finance, banking, defence, railways, etc., its special bureaucratic and imperialist safeguards; and moreover if read together with the resolution on the States, it loses operative value still further, because though the demands for equal units within the Federation are postulated, the effective way of pushing on the struggle for political

rights and civil liberties in the States is in practice, denied. However, the necessity of mass struggle to prevent the inauguration of the Federation is admitted; the Provincial and local Congress Committees, the people generally and the Ministries are called upon to resist it in every way; the A.I.C.C. is recognised as the proper authority to draw up a further plan of action when the time comes.

The Socialists moved certain amendments calling for a clear plan of action *now*, but this was interpreted by the Right as not only injudicious at this stage, but also as a reflection on the intentions and wisdom of the High Command. "You know, we all know, what our methods are. What is the good of putting it all down in so many words? Congressmen are men of action, not of empty words." This was generally the line taken up against the Socialists.

The resolution on the Kisan Sabhas, though it generally supported the line of the Behar Provincial Congress Committee, was a distinct step forward. The right of the kisans to form their own organisations was recognised and Congressmen were permitted to take part in the work. Only if the activities of the Kisan Sabhas were found to be against the Congress, then only would action be taken against Congressmen working in them. As it is the primary object of the Kisan Sabhas to support and strengthen the Congress, there should be no occasion for such action. The representatives of the Kisan Sabhas and the Socialists did not speak on this resolution by agreement. This was another instance of national unity.

On the resolution regarding the States, the Socialists as well as the representatives of the States made effective speeches in reply to Maulana Abdul Kalam Azad and Jairamdas Daulatram. Com. Stayavati Devi's speech in the Open Session was

acknowledged as a brave and brilliant plea for the States, but in this case, Pattabhi Sitaramayya's amendment having been accepted, it was difficult if not impossible, to go further in the Open Session.

The main resolution, relating to the resignation of the Congress Ministries, should have been a great occasion for the Socialists, when they could have vindicated the line of mass struggle, while paying homage to the bold stand of the Congress Ministers. Even a prominent Socialist like Com. Masani, who was acting as the Congress Socialist Whip, entirely missed this opportunity, and kept to the same constitutional plane as the Right. He adopted more or less the view that. "Well, yes, you have done what we wanted you to do, and for that we congratulate you. We were always opposed to the whole idea of Office Acceptance, and you see what it leads to. We appreciate, however, what you have tried to do, though we as Socialists would have approached the problem differently. We do not agree with all that is in the resolution, but however, for the sake of unity, we shall not now quarrel over our differences. We shall be with you, for the Left are as good Nationalists as the Right after all."

This was the line which drew down the wrath of Sardar Patel, who was able to dispel the atmosphere of unity in a moment. He accused the Socialists of creating disunity in the Congress by introducing the talk about Left and Right. The Congress, he maintained, was a united whole. They had put up with the Socialists for the last two years, and they were not going to stand for it any longer. Let the Socialists clear out of the Congress. This provoked the Left, as it was obviously intended to do, but it appeared to expose them, to make them look foolish, isolated and ineffec-

tive. These are hard words, but the lesson of experience must be learnt. The Left had no need to lay themselves open to this attack, by posing the question so sharply in this Left—and Right form. It was they, it was their mass struggle that had brought about this crisis itself. They should have shown the background of the crisis, they should have congratulated the Working Committee and the Ministers for the recognition of the unity of the Parliamentary and extra-Parliamentary struggle, and they should have immediately given positive suggestions for the Congress organisations, for the Provincial and local Congress Committees to take further action in support of the Ministries (as was acutally suggested in a meeting of the U. P. delegates). It was a mistake to expect the Congress delegates immediately to support the idea of a general strike on docks and railways, though of course this weapon of struggle should be popularised on the Congress platform. But emphasising this, without telling Congressmen who were not closely associated with the working class, what *they* ought to do, is talking abstractly, and exposing oneself to the attack of the Right. Sardar Patel came down hard on Com. Shibnath Banerjee, taking this opportunity to launch an effective attack on the working-class strike in general.

The amendments to the Constitution tend to concentrate power at the top, and make the ever-growing Congress organisation a less, instead of a more, democratic body, in which the advantages of power and means would undoubtedly count. A special Committee was set up to go into the question of elections and methods of voting, with the suggestion that the principle of indirect election should be extended to the Provincial Committees. and the alternative vote should be replaced by the single distributive vote. These proposals, if carried out, would tend

to perpetuate the present complexion of the Congress and seriously hold up the process of democratisation. The demand for collective affiliation and democratisation has not been sufficiently raised in the Congress, and hence the present position. We must see to it that sufficient pressure is put on the Congress as a whole, and on this drafting committee especially, to bring about a further democratisation, a more initiative from the primary committees.

But viewing the session as a whole, Haripura is definitely a stage forward in the national struggle. Faizpur was a victory for the forward *policy* for the acceptance of the immediate national anti-imperialist programme. Haripura opens the doors to the acceptance of what the Left has been insisting on, the unity of Parliamentary and extra-Parliamentary struggle. The doors are opened—each resolution proves that to mass struggle, and to mass agitation side by side with Parliamentary activity. National solidarity has been achieved, through struggle, through insistence on struggle. National solidarity does not in any sense mean the liquidation of struggle. On the contrary, it means carrying the struggle further. It means struggle through *the Congress organisation itself*.

We have now to fight for a more rapid carrying through of the Parliamentary programme, for the unity of Parliamentary and extra-Parliamentary struggle and for the unity of the Congress struggle and the struggle of the independent mass organisations of the workers, the peasants, the people of the States—in short, for the National United Front against Imperialism, against the Federation, against War, and for Indian Independence, the Constituent Assembly, bread and peace. That is the meaning of the national solidarity demonstrated at Haripura. That is the message of Vithalnagar for the coming year.

THE LENINIST-STALINIST NATIONAL POLICY

(By L. Winow)

During the last legal census (in 1926), the population of the Soviet Union was divided, according to the statements made by the inhabitants, into 172 different nations, and national groups. In reality this figure was a trifle exaggerated. Included in these nations are the Russians, with 78 million people, but also others, such as the Buduchi, of which only one inhabitant is a subject of the Soviet Union, so that these can in no way be considered as a separate nationality. And many of the nationalities mentioned in the census were in fact only other names for the same nation.

But if this exaggerated figure is disregarded and only those nationalities with a more or less fair-sized population considered, there still remains the figure of 50 *nations or nationalities*, which are represented by thousands, tens of thousands, hundreds of thousands, of a million inhabitants of the Soviet Union. Those nations or nationalities that form a more or less compact national unity in adjacent territory, to-day live in sovereign or autonomous state areas, or administrative areas (11 Union Republics, 22 Autonomous Republics, and 9 Autonomous Provinces, as well as a few national provinces). The others live in scattered groups. Their national individuality is secured by other means.

The largest nations (according to the 1926 census, since then the populations have greatly increased) are the Russians with 78 million, the Ukrainians with well over 31 million,

the White Russians with almost 5 million, the Uzbekians with 4 million, the Kazakhs with 4 million, the Tartars with well over 3 million, the Jews with 2.6 million, the Georgians with 1.75 million, the Tjurks (the tribal race of Aserbaidshan) with 1.7 million, the Armenians with 1.6 million, inhabitants. Apart from these, the Germans, Tschuwasch, and Mordwins, number more than a million. The Turkmens, Kirgisi, Baschkirs, Tschadikens and Poles a million or almost a million. There are also a number of other peoples who number more than 100,000.

The socialist revolution's task of emancipating the nationalities is carried out under three main headings.

(1) The Right of Self-government including the Right of Secession from the Mother Country

This right was proclaimed by the Bolshevik Party in all statements on programme long before the conquest of power. To quote only one of *Lenin's* remarks from the year 1913:

"In order that the different nations may live together in peace and liberty, or (if this is desired) separate and form independent states, complete democracy, which is advocated by the working class, is essential. No privileges for any one nation, for any one language! Not the slightest limitation, not the slightest injustice, towards any national minority!—That is the principle of working class democracy.

(Russian edition of *Lenin's Collected Works*, Bd. XXIV., 8, 657.)

(Continued on page 467.)

1. DO WE WHOLE - HEARTEDLY SUPPORT THE SOVIET UNION ?

Ajay Kumar Ghosh

Com. Masani says that Socialists cannot swallow Stalinist dictatorship and that is why the French Socialists rejected the Communist's approaches for Unity.

To every honest Socialist, the breakdown of negotiations between the Socialist and Communist Parties of France for the formation of a single United Marxist Party would come as a shock. Political unity of the French Proletariat, as a consummation of the United Front movement began so triumphantly in February 1934, would have given a tremendous impetus to the world anti-Fascist struggle inaugurating a new period of advance. We would therefore naturally expect every honest Socialist to be grieved by the present turn of events, and to hope that the breakdown would be temporary.

Not so Comrade Masani. The breakdown proves his pet thesis that Communists, "accepting Moscow discipline are an incorrigible set of people not only in India, but in France as well (and for that matter, in every country in the world) and therefore unity with them is impossible. From the breakdown he draws some 'invaluable' lessons.

Socialist Unity is a task facing Marxists all over the world—including India. We feel it necessary to deal with Comrade Masani's article "A lesson from France" (Congress Socialist, January 1.) because from the development in France he draws the conclusion that immediate Socialist Unity is unachievable in India as well.

The Two Obstacles

On the 11th of November, 1934, an article by Dimitrov, the General Secretary of the Communist International, appeared in *the Humanite*, (Organ of the Communist Party of France). The Socialist leaders broke off negotiations for unity and justified their action taking this article as their basis.

Comrade Masani applauds the action of the Executive of the Socialist Party of France in breaking off negotiations and states that no "democratic, self-respective Socialist Party" could agree to the 'outrageous' theses of Dimitrov that

1. "One must swallow unreservedly not only the *Stalinist Dictatorship* but all its acts." (Our italics).

2. Socialist "unity can only be based on the growing influence", or domination of the Communist Party which claims to have a monopoly of 'authentic Marxism'."

Masani adds, "Even without Dimitrov's Manifesto there were insuperable obstacles to the building up of a united Revolutionary Socialist Party in India at present. Dimitrov has made it doubly impossible." (Our italics).

Let us take the two 'outrageous' theses of Dimitrov point by point.

What Dimitrov Wrote

1. *The Soviet Union*: "The touchstone in checking the sincerity and honesty of every individual in the working class movement, of every

working class Party and organisation, and of every democrat in capitalist countries is their attitude towards the great land of Socialism. You cannot carry on a real struggle against Fascism if you do not render all possible assistance in strengthening the most important buttress of the struggle, viz., the Soviet Union. You cannot carry on a serious struggle against the Fascist instigators of a world blood bath unless you render undivided support to the U. S. S. R., a most important factor, for the maintenance of World Peace. You cannot carry on a real struggle for Socialism in your own country unless you oppose the enemies of the Soviet State where this Socialism is being fulfilled by the heroic efforts of the working people. You cannot be a real friend of the Soviet Union if you do not condemn its enemies, the Trotskyist - Bukharinist agents of Fascism."

This passage has been interpreted in the International Information and quoted from there by Comrade Masani as follows:

"According to Dimitrov one is not a real friend of the Soviet Union if one does not accept, without reserve, its form of dictatorship, its "Stalinist Constitution", its "leading role of the Party of Lenin-Stalin"; if one does not approve the sentencing of the Bolsheviks who are alleged to have become "its enemies"—the Trotskyist-Bukharinist agents of Fascism. *Further, if one is to believe him, whoever does not accept absolutely without reserve what has been just enumerated is an enemy of peace, democracy, working class and Socialism.*" (Underlines and inverted commas as in the original.)

Comrade Masani says that no "self-respecting" Socialist, "no Indian Socialist who is not bound to accept Moscow discipline" can accept Dimitrov's formulation, as it amounts to surrendering "freedom of criticism" and that this subservient attitude towards the

Soviet by Communists is an obstacle to Socialist Union in India. Comrade Masani claims that he is a friend of the Soviet Union. Yet he whole-heartedly supports the statement of Zyromski:

"I think that one must proclaim without reticence international working class solidarity with Soviet Russia, *as with every other nation upon which international Fascism has designs*" (our italics.)

If we accept this formulation, we miss the whole significance, the whole meaning of our solidarity with the Soviet Union. The USSR is not in the same category as that of other Nations which are threatened by international Fascism. It is in a category by itself. It is the land of the victorious revolution, it is the land where for the first time in history tremendous human effort is being spent in building up the new Socialist Civilisation. Its defence is, therefore, of special importance for the toilers of the whole world, inasmuch as the defeat of the Soviet Union would be not only a calamity to the people of the USSR but an incalculable setback to the world revolution as well. Comrade Masani has apparently failed to see this.

On whose behalf does Comrade Masani make these statements? Does he mean that the Congress Socialist Party or the majority of its members share his views?

We do not for a moment believe that this is the view of the Congress Socialist Party as a whole. We are sure that the overwhelming majority of the Socialists in India do not consider Dimitrov's statement on the Soviet Union a hindrance in the way of unity. On the contrary we are confident that they will acclaim it as the correct attitude for the Socialists to take on the USSR and hence one of the corner-stones on which Socialist Unity can be built up in this country.

In view of its importance we feel that it is high time that the CSP defi-

nately laid down its policy in unequivocal terms on this question. The present position of uncertainty and absence of clarification creates further confusion in the minds of those who look to the CSP for a lead, and ultimately gives the impression that the CSP is incapable of giving such a lead. Meanwhile, such statements as Com. Masani's, going unchallenged, are taken to be the views of the Party, when all the time this is far from the case.

We could refer to hundreds of resolutions passed at Labour, Peasant and Socialist meetings on the Soviet Union to illustrate this point—we could quote from articles written by Congress Socialists and even Left nationalists to disprove Com. Masani's thesis. Here we shall only refer to a resolution passed at a recent Conference at which Socialists, Communists and non-Party Trade Unionists were present.

The AITUC met at Delhi on the 1st and 2nd of January, 1938. There were present nearly a hundred delegates representing over a hundred thousand organised workers of India. The overwhelming majority of the delegates were non-communists (or, as Masani calls them, people 'bound to accept Moscow discipline'). A very large number of delegates belonged to the Congress Socialist Party among them being *three members of the National Executive*, Comrades Shibnath Banerji, the President, Yusuf Meherally and S. Batiwalla. Besides the Communists and Congress Socialists there were "left-Congressmen also among the delegates."

A resolution on the Soviet Union moved in the T. U. C. Session reads: "The AITUC conveys the greetings of the Indian workers to the Soviet Union, the land of *victorious Socialism*, the pride and hope of the toilers of the world, the *citadel of the world revolution*. In the capitalist world the people are sinking deeper and deeper in the mire of starvation and poverty; in the

Socialist world poverty and starvation have been banished for ever within 20 years of the overthrow of capitalism. In the capitalist world the last vestiges of democracy, culture and civilisation are being destroyed by Fascist barbarity; the Soviet Union *with the inauguration of the Stalin Constitution enters into an era of Liberty, Democracy and material and cultural progress which has no parallel in the history of mankind*. This very contrast between the two worlds—the world of Socialism and the world of capitalism—is a most powerful revolutionary factor. More and more the masses in all lands are turning towards the Soviet Union and inspired by its success are moving towards the path of revolution. That is why international Fascism, masquerading as anti-Communist alliance, wants to destroy the Soviet Union. That is why Fascist Agents have been carrying on their despicable spying and wrecking activities in the workers' Fatherland.

"*The AITUC congratulates the Soviet Union for successfully weeding out the Fascist wreckers.*

"*It whole-heartedly supports the peace policy of the Soviet Union which has been one of the most powerful force against world war.*

"It emphatically condemns the war pact between the Fascist powers Germany, Italy and Japan for the overthrow of the Soviet Union. It denounces the pro-Fascist policy of British Imperialism.

"It declares that the Indian working class will fight for the defence of the Soviet Union with all its might and at all costs."

This resolution was *passed unanimously* by the AITUC. No delegate, no member of the CSP, not even members of its highest organ, the National Executive, thought that it was derogatory to their "self-respect", or subservience to Moscow to support

the resolution. And what does the resolution amount to?

1. It recognises the Soviet Union to be the citadel of world revolution.

2. It recognises that the strengthening of the Soviet Union strengthens the world revolutionary movement.

3. It recognises that the Stalin Constitution inaugurates a period of democracy and progress, unparalleled in the history of the world.

4. It condemns the Trotskyist-Fascist spies and wreckers and congratulates the Soviet Union for successfully weeding them out.

5. It whole-heartedly supports the peace policy of the Soviet Union.

6. It pledges the support of the Indian workers to the Soviet Union.

As one can easily see the resolution incorporates all the major points in

Dimitrov's article and yet the Socialists, Communists, non-Party Trade Unionists, all supported it. It may further be pointed out that Dr. Banerji, the newly elected President of the TUC and a leader of the Bengal CSP was the mover of the resolution in the open session. Comrade Meherally, a member of the National Executive of the CSP was to have been one of the speakers in support of the resolution, but due to lack of time he did not speak.

Yet Comrade Masani would maintain that Dimitrov's article has made unity "doubly impossible". If he is speaking only for himself he may be right. But if he seeks to represent the views of the Socialists and Communists in general in India we are perfectly sure that he is mistaken. In the next article we shall deal with the second 'obstacle' of Comrade Masani.

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II. "DOMINATION OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY"

A. K. G.

The second obstacle to unity according to Masani is that Dimitrov holds that "such unity can be based only on the growing influence or domination of the Communist Party which claims to have a monopoly of authentic Marxism."

This is sheer distortion of what Dimitrov wrote *even according to the interpretation of the International Information* published by the Labour and Socialist International from where Com. Masani quotes.

Let us give the extract in full from Com. Masani's own article:

"Dimitrov further declares that the only means of putting an end to the split in the political working class movement is the rallying of Socialists to Bolshevism which must be regarded as the only "authentic Marxism". It is upon the growing influence of Communism in the ranks of the working class movement" that the Secretary of the Moscow International counts in particular to cause Socialist Parties to move towards Unity with Communists in a single Party of the Proletariat."

In this extract, phrases from the context of Dimitrov's article have been torn off and presented to convey the meaning that all the while that Communists talked of unity, they had the nefarious plan of "rallying Socialists to Bolshevism," in their mind but they never divulged it. Comrade Masani goes one step further and speaks of "growing influence or domination of Communist Party" and

"eating up of Socialists by Communists".

Let us examine the two points: 1. Does Dimitrov's article reveal some new plan for disrupting the Socialist Party which justifies the breakdown of negotiations? 2. Is Comrade Masani's interpretation of Dimitrov's thesis correct?

For answer to the first question we shall turn to no less an authoritative document than Dimitrov's historic report at the Seventh world Congress of the Communist International where-in he lays down the basis for political unity of the proletariat. He says that unification is possible only under the following circumstances:

"On condition of their (Social Democratic Parties') *complete independence of the bourgeoisie and the complete rupture of the bloc of Social-Democracy with the bourgeoisie.*

"On condition that the necessity for the *revolutionary overthrow of the bourgeoisie and the establishment of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat in the form of Soviets be recognised.*" (Dimitrov's Italics)

These basic formulations have never been altered and they cannot be altered. Political unity is not ordinary United Front for limited specific objects. It can be based only on revolutionary theory and practice.

Why was it necessary to define the basis for political Unity so clearly?

During the war, all the Parties of the Second International, all the Social Democratic Parties with the

exception of the Bolshevik Party of Russia threw aside the Stuttgart resolution laying down the line of transformation of imperialist War into Civil War and rallied to the support of their respective bourgeois governments. This betrayal resulted in the "political split of the working class" and the formation of the Communist International. Twenty-three years have passed away since the beginning of the War. The experience of the victory of the Great October Revolution and the triumphant rise of a new Socialist civilisation in Russia on the one hand and the collapse of Social-Democracy, the destruction of the last vestiges of democracy and the victory of Fascism in Central and Southern Europe on the other, confirmed once again the Marxist theory that the victory of the Proletariat is possible only by means of a revolutionary overthrow of the bourgeoisie, that the bourgeoisie would rather drown humanity in blood than allow the proletariat to establish Socialism by peaceful means. The path chalked out by Marx-Engels-Lenin and Stalin—the path of proletarian revolution and the establishment of Proletarian Dictatorship in the form of Soviet embracing all strata of workers, the basic masses of peasantry and toilers in general—has been *proved in practice* to be the only path to Socialism. This is being increasingly realised by the masses of Social-Democratic workers and even part of the Social Democratic leadership as the resolutions of the German Social Democratic Party indicate.

What could be the basis for unity between Socialist and Communist Parties for the formation of a single political Party of the working class? Could it be only a pact of mutual non-criticism? Could it be a tacit understanding that the 'unpleasant' past, the treacherous counter-revolutionary past of Social Democracy be forgotten and never referred to even in historical surveys? (Dimitrov's article was a

survey of the period between the October Revolution and today). Could it be an acceptance by the Communists of the Social Democratic theories and practices of 'Peaceful transition to Socialism'—of class-collaborationism, of renunciation of Revolution and Proletarian Dictatorship?

Comrade Masani as a Socialist would not, we hope, reply in the affirmative to these questions. He would agree with us that the only basis for political unity could be the programme of revolution. This programme however cannot be imposed mechanically on an unwilling Socialist Party, a Party that yet retains faith in Parliamentarism. Therefore it is necessary that the masses of socialist workers *really* come to realise the need for revolutionary action. It is necessary for the Socialist Party to get rid of the last remnants of the ideology of bourgeois Parliamentarism for the realisation of revolutionary Socialist Unity. That is what Dimitrov means by 'the rallying of Socialists to Bolshevism' and the growing influence of *Communism* (and not the Communist Party as Masani 'interprets') in the ranks of the working class.

Let us revert to the question posed earlier:

Is the statement of Dimitrov an "obstacle" to Socialist Unity in India? Has Dimitrov made "Unity (in India) doubly impossible"?

Comrade Masani challenged the claim of Bolshevism or Communism to be the only authentic Marxism and says "this again is a claim which cannot be accepted by any self-respecting Socialist Party." Obviously what he implies is that there are other "authentic" brands of Socialism as well.

Here again we say that Comrade Masani is expressing his own views and not the views of the Congress Socialist Party.

Let us quote from Comrade Jai Prakash, the General Secretary of the

Congress Socialist Party and its acknowledged leader.

"Today, more than ever before, it is possible to say that there is *only one type, one theory of Socialism—Marxism.*

".....*Only Communists have vindicated their theory of tactics by their great and remarkable success in Russia. The proponents of other methods are today everywhere in the trough of failure.—* (Why Socialism—pp. 1-2. Italics ours).

Comrade Jai Prakash obviously does not subscribe to the theory of various brands of "authentic Socialism." He recognises that there is "Only one theory of Socialism—Marxism" and further that of the various "schools" of Marxism, Communism alone has been vindicated, other "Marxists" are "everywhere in the trough of failure."

Not so Comrade Masani. For him both the French Socialist Party, which refused to join hands with the Communists for governmental action for lifting the embargo on arms to Spain and ultimately broke off unity-negotiations on the ground that Socialists were appealed to "rally to Bolshevism", and also the P. O. U. M. which organised a counter-revolutionary rising in Barcelona for establishing a 'Workers' State', represent "authentic brands" of Marxism. The fact that one party attacked the Communists from *the Right*, and the other from a *pseudo left* position does not prevent him from applauding the actions of *both* (See "Foreign Policy for India" by Masani) because the *targets of both were Communists.*

Comrade Masani knows full well that whatever the Socialist Party of France might think of Dimitrov's statement about the need for workers to rally round the banner of Bolshevism the Socialists in India would not consider the statement to be an expression

of anti-unity sentiments. On the contrary, as in the case of the statement on the Soviet Union, they would welcome it. Therefore he distorts the statement to convey the sinister meaning that Communists want "to eat up Socialists." He wants to exploit the organisational loyalty of Socialists to the C. S. P. in order to misinterpret Dimitrov and make it appear that by *growth of influences of Communism* Dimitrov means the "*domination*" of the Communist Party over the Socialist Party. Distortion and misinterpretation cannot go any further.

Let us sum up:

According to Dimitrov

1. One cannot be a genuine Socialist unless one supports the Soviet Union where Socialism is being built up and which is the buttress of world anti-Fascist struggle, unless one condemns the activities of the Trotskyist wreckers and spies.

2. Socialist Unity can be based only on the growing influence of Marxism-Leninism or Communism in the ranks of workers. In the measure the Social Democratic parties break with their anti-revolutionary past and move towards the path of revolutionary struggle, in that measure will unity be facilitated.

Comrade Masani thinks that no self-respecting Socialist Party can accept these statements as correct and therefore unity has been made "doubly impossible" in France as in India.

We have seen that Comrade Masani expresses his own views and not those of the Congress Socialist Party nor of the overwhelming majority of Socialists in India.

In the next article we shall deal with the concrete methods by which Socialist Unity in India can be achieved.

III. SOCIALIST UNITY

A. K. G.

We have seen how baseless are Comrade Masani's apprehensions that Dimitrov's statements on the Soviet Union and on Socialist unity put obstacles in the way of unity among Socialists in India. We shall now deal with the question as to how Socialist unity in India is to be achieved.

Comrade Masani's answer to this question is as follows:—

The stage has not yet arrived for uniting all socialist groups and parties in India, in one single organisation. While we should keep a united Socialist Party before us as an 'ultimate ideal', for the present all that we should strive for is to establish united Front between these groups on specific issues. The Congress Socialist Party (C. S. P.) should have united front with the Reds but should not admit them in their Party as thereby the homogeneity of the C. S. P. would be destroyed.

In support of this thesis Com. Masani and those who agree with him say, "In other countries also efforts are being made to unite Socialists and Communists in a single Party. The first step in the direction has been the establishment of United Front on specific issues. When complete agreement on all fundamental matters is reached, the Socialist and Communist Parties will merge and form a single Party. Pending that consummation, the Socialists do not allow Communists to join their Party. The same procedure should be followed in India. The entry of the Reds in the C. S. P. would mean the planting of a Trojan Horse in the C. S. P. and would lead to its disruption. The Communists in India should

follow the same method that is being followed by their comrades in Europe."

At first sight Comrade Masani's thesis may appear to embody the only correct approach to the problem of Socialist unity. Nevertheless it is false and based on non-understanding of the *difference in character* of the disunity among Socialists in India and Europe. What he proposes is nothing but a mechanical transplantation of tactics.

Nature of the Split in Capitalist Countries & nature of unity

The political split in the International working class movement was brought about, as we have seen, by the betrayal of Social Democracy. Before the split, there were in all the major capitalist countries, Social-Democratic Parties—parties overwhelmingly proletarian in composition. On the question of imperialist war, the International Congress of Social Democratic Parties had thrice formulated the policy to be followed by Social-Democratic Parties. This policy accepted unanimously and binding equally on the Russian Social-Democratic Party, Socialist Party of France, Socialist Party of Germany etc. was this:

- (1) Utmost efforts must be made to prevent imperialist war.
- (2) If war nevertheless broke out, the crisis should be utilised for proletarian revolution.

When war actually broke out, all the parties except that of the Bolsheviks went back on the resolution and supported their respective capitalist Governments. The socialist leaders renounced revolution, renounced all socialist

principles and openly joined hands with the imperialists and war-mongers for suppressing the revolutionary wings of their own parties that had refused to be parties to the betrayal. They became the main props of capitalist rule during the extremely unstable immediate post-war period; they enabled the bourgeoisie to re-establish its shaken position by terroristic measures against the revolutionary sections of the working class movement on the one hand, and by deceiving their own followers with the false theory of 'peaceful evolution to Socialism' on the other. They became champions of their 'own' bourgeoisie for drowning colonial revolts in blood.

This betrayal led to the split and the formation of the Communist International, uniting revolutionary parties of the proletariat—in overwhelming majority of cases Revolutionary Wings of the Social-Democratic parties that had broken away formed themselves into Communist Parties.

From this brief survey we can see that :—

(1) The Social-Democratic parties were *homogenous working class Parties* in their composition.

(2) The Split was THE RESULT OF FUNDAMENTAL DIFFERENCES—the socialist or reformist wing renouncing revolution and the Communist or revolutionary wing standing for revolution.

(3) The existing disunity in the Socialist ranks in Europe, i.e., the existence of TWO PARTIES OF THE PROLETARIAT, the socialist and Communist Parties, is the outcome of this split.

THE PROBLEM OF SOCIALIST UNITY IN EUROPE IS THEREFORE BASICALLY ONE OF HEALING THE POLITICAL SPLIT IN THE RANKS OF THE PROLETARIAT.

This can be achieved, only by liquidation of the causes that led to

the split, i.e. by the Socialist Parties growing revolutionary, by their rupture with their class-collaborationist past.

And if today the split is in the process of being healed, it is mainly because the Social-Democratic masses, and sections of its leadership are, taught by their own experience, moving more and more to the left—i.e. by the 'growing influence of Communism in working class ranks as Dimitrov puts it.

Nature of Socialist Disunity in India

Can we say that the existence of the Congress Socialists and Communists in India is due to the same causes that led to the split in the International working class movement and the formation of Socialist and Communist Parties in the countries of Europe and America?

Obviously we cannot.

The class basis of the Communists in India has been, from the very beginning, the working class. Even during the pre-Meerut days when leading Communists were in the A.I.C.C. and other Congress organisations, their main sphere of work was the working class. They gave the working class movement a distinct CLASS POLITICAL character: under their leadership rank and file workers learned to think in political terms and participate in political actions—political demonstrations, political strikes etc. They began to realise that for the satisfaction of their economic demands, struggle against foreign rule was necessary, that final emancipation was possible only through establishment of Socialism and Communism. Socialist cadres developed from rank and file workers, who had come to the forefront in the strike struggles led by Communists.

The chief success of the Communists has been the politicalisation of the working class movement and developing it as an independent political force.

Their chief failure has been in not linking up the working class movement with the broad national movement led by the Congress.

The Congress Socialist Party on the other hand sprung directly from the national movement led by the Congress. Gandhian ideology and tactics were realised by the most advanced sections of Congress-men to be inadequate for drawing the broadest masses in the national movement, for achieving independence. As the Meerut thesis of the C. S. P. puts it, "The Congress Socialist Party was formed at the end of the last Civil Disobedience movement by such Congressmen as had come to believe that a new orientation of the national movement had become necessary; a re-definition of its objectives and a revision of its methods." The left-ward swing of the rank and file Congressmen, brought about as a result of disillusionment with the compromising bourgeois leadership of the national movement, found expression in the Congress Socialist Party. Advanced Congressmen realised the need for organising the workers and peasants on the basis of their partial demands and thereby harnessing their revolutionary energies for the national liberation struggle. This in itself is not Socialism. But because the Congress leadership dominated by the bourgeoisie turned its face away from mass struggle, the new awakening of the rank and file took a socialist form.

Congress Socialism thus represented a socialist trend born out of the national movement. The Party was the Party of Congress-men who had come to accept socialism. It had no organic contact with the working class movement which had developed independently of the Congress. It did not have therefore a proletarian composition.

During the last two years the Communists have, to some extent,

overcome their isolation from the national movement. The Congress Socialists have been increasingly participating in the working class movement. But even today the Communists are MAINLY identified with the working class movement while the Congress Socialists are MAINLY active in the National Congress.

The existing disunity in Socialist ranks in India has therefore an entirely different character from that in Europe.

In India the Communists represent that Socialist section which has developed with the working class movement and has given it a political orientation.

The Congress Socialists represent that socialist section which has grown out of the national movement, which is predominantly petty-bourgeois in composition and has been striving to give the national movement a working class and peasant orientation.

THE PROBLEM OF SOCIALIST UNITY IN INDIA therefore is *not* basically that of healing the *political split in the working class* but of *unifying the two major socialist forces* that have developed with the national and working class movements and have remained a part because of the mutual isolation of these two movements.

Only when the character or the existing disunity among Socialists and Communists in India is clearly realised, and its basic difference with the disunity in Europe grasped, the correct way of achieving unity becomes clear. No thesis on Socialist Unity can be a correct guide to action which does not base it on this realisation. No wonder therefore, that Comrade Masani proposed a method for "uniting" socialists, which cannot but emasculate the C.S.P., disrupt it and weaken the Socialist movement.

He believes that the immediate restoration of the 'homogeneity' of the

C.S.P. is necessary, and for this the "Reds" who have "burrowed in" should be expelled.

The task of Socialist unity in this country is, as we have seen, that of *uniting* two major socialist forces. Comrade Masini hopes to achieve this unity, by not merely not bringing them nearer but by widening the existing breach. How thereby the national and proletarian movements will be linked up together, how thereby the socialist movement will gain, he does not tell us.

The way to Unity

The Socialist movement in India is weak. It is yet in its formative stage. Its influence is yet mainly agitational. We have neither a mass Socialist Party, nor mass Trade Unions and Peasant Unions linked up with it. The working class movement has not yet become an integral part and the driving force of the National movement. Communists linked up with the working class have no organic contact with the Congress Socialists.

The immediate step towards ending this mutual isolation of the national and proletarian movement (and therewith of Socialists and Communists) and towards *laying the foundation for a United Socialist Party* must be the unification of all Socialists and Communists within the framework of the organisation. In the specific situation of today, this means the Congress Socialist Party itself must become the form of Socialist unity, uniting within its framework *all* the Socialist forces born out of and active on all Fronts—Working class, Peasant, Student, Congress.

The apprehension that thereby the homogeneity of the C.S.P. would be destroyed is baseless. The C.S.P. because of its historic origin, could not have and has not today the homogeneity of a one class party

like the Socialist Parties of Europe. Within the Congress there are various trends of socialism—ranging from fully developed Marxist-Leninist at one end to vague, Jawaharlalists at the other. All these socialist trends are present within the C.S.P., today. By drawing the Reds in the Party, the non-existent homogeneity would not be destroyed, but on the contrary the foundation would be laid for achieving real homogeneity.

Counterposing united action to united Party is based on abstractions. United action between Socialist and Communist Parties of Europe is, above all, *united proletarian action*. Both parties are mass proletarian parties. The C.S.P. has yet to be given a proletarian orientation. It must *become a mass proletarian party* if it has to develop as a Socialist Party. The *first step* towards this must be the absorbing of the *existing socialist cadres* in the working class movement. The C.S.P. today, inspite of having within its ranks, a number of Trade Union leaders, has no roots in the working class, no organic contacts with the working class movement. Only a proletarian socialist cadre can overcome this isolation of the C.S.P. from the working class. United action remains an empty slogan unless both parties to the united front have active and effective socialist cadres. In the chief industrial centres where the Communists are active—Bombay, Sholapur, Cawnpore etc. the C.S.P. has practically no cadres, no rank and file that can develop the United Front movement, that can transform United Front action into mass action. This weakness of the C.S.P. is a result and also a cause of the weakness of the Socialist movement in the country. The *overcoming of this weakness* is the immediate task.

The fundamental differences between Socialists and Communists that led to the split in Europe and that even today stand as obstacles to unity,

are far less acute in this country. Both the Socialists and Communists in India have rejected constitutionalism. Both accept revolutionary struggle as the only way to Independence and Socialism. Both recognise the leading role of the proletariat in the national struggle. Both stand for independent working class and peasant organisations and their collective affiliation to the Congress. Both realise that the building up of the United National Front on the basis of the Congress, the convening of the Constituent Assembly, the establishment of a Democratic State are the immediate tasks, and lastly that the revolutionary struggle will have to be continued even after the overthrow of Imperialism for the establishment of a Socialist Society.

On the character of the national revolution and the united National Front, on the character of its leadership, there is thus a fundamental agreement. This agreement is sufficient today for Socialists and Communists to unite in one organisation. As the national and proletarian struggle sharpens, the issues will become clearer and clearer and the existing differences will be liquidated. But the struggle cannot develop automatically. It requires a centralised, purposeful lead and for giving this very lead, developing the struggle and through struggle resolving the differences, immediate unification is necessary.

The Socialists in India are faced with gigantic tasks. The Right wing leadership of the Congress is attempting to swerve the Congress from the path of struggle. Its drive against the Kisan Sabhas and militant trade unions threaten to disrupt the national front. Its refusal to organise mass resistance against the Federation is

spreading demoralisation and confusion in anti-imperialist ranks.

In such a situation the task of instilling revolutionary vigour in the national movement, the task of developing and politicalising the working class and peasant movements and linking them up with the national movement, the task of organising pressure to prevent the Right wing from following a capitulatory and disruptive policy—in brief, the responsibility of building the joint front against Imperialism devolves upon the left forces and above all on the Socialists.

Can the socialists fulfil these tasks without achieving immediate unity? They cannot. The situation demands the Congress Socialist Party's becoming a mass political force, active and vigorous on all fronts, uniting the most effective and honest socialists of all trends, resolving all mutual differences in a comradely manner within the framework of one organisation, giving a purposeful centralised lead on all living problems of the day.

This of course does not yet mean the realisation of Socialist Unity. On many day-to-day issues differences will arise—differences due to ideological differences at bottom. The difference between various trends that exist in the Socialist movement—from Communism to Jawaharlalim cannot be liquidated by force. Within the C.S.P. the exponents of each trend must have full democratic rights to freely express their views and influence others.

Through joint struggle and joint work, through the growing influence of Marxism-Leninism in the Socialist ranks, will ultimate unity be achieved.

THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION AND THE REVISIONIST ROY—III

(By Bholanath Bhoumik)

The proletariat in Russia formed a minority while the peasants formed the overwhelming majority. The peasantry as a whole supported the proletariat when it captured power in November 1917. In the Soviet Congress the peasants and soldiers who were mostly peasants formed the majority. These are facts in themselves; but are they sufficient to prove that the November Revolution was NOT a proletarian revolution and that the state it created was NOT the dictatorship of the proletariat? M. N. Roy thinks that these things are quite sufficient to prove his THESIS.

The November Revolution was carried through with the support of the peasantry as a whole, because ONE of its chief aims was to complete the bourgeois democratic revolution. The peasantry as a whole supported the revolution because they wanted landlords to go, because they wanted peace. But the March revolution was also carried out with the support of the peasantry as a whole. Where then lies the difference between the two? According to Roy the difference lies in the replacement of the leadership of the imbecile bourgeois democrat Kerensky who failed to give land to the peasants and stop war, by the leadership of the "Jacobians" presumably the Bolsheviks plus left social revolutionaries. In other words, Roy's 'thesis' would amount to this: that THE CHIEF AIM of the November Revolution was the completion of the bourgeois revolution and it was carried through with the support of the pea-

santry as a whole and resulted in a state which was the revolutionary alliance of the workers and peasants and not the dictatorship of one class.

Not An Original Thesis

This "Thesis" of Roy is not an original one. It appears to have been put forward by some comrades in Russia in 1917. Stalin has polemised against this in an essay entitled "Three basic slogans on the peasant question" (Leninism part I, American Edition) Stalin tells us that the whole peasantry supported the proletariat only inasmuch as it completed the bourgeois revolution; but the November Revolution had other points on its agenda which went beyond the confines of the bourgeois revolution. That is why Stalin raises the following questions.

"How can you assert that the Kulaks (who of course are also peasants) could support the overthrow of the bourgeoisie and the transfer of power to the proletariat? How can it be denied that the decree on the nationalisation of the land, the abolition of property in land, the prohibition of the purchase and sale of land etc., in spite of the fact that it cannot be regarded as a socialist decree, was carried out by us in *struggle against* the Kulaks, and not in alliance with them? How can it be asserted that the Kulaks (who are also peasants) could support the decrees of the Soviet power regarding the expropriation of mills and factories, railways, banks, etc. or the slogan of the prole-

tariat regarding the transformation of the imperialist war into civil war? How can it be asserted that it was not these and similar acts, not the overthrow of the bourgeoisie and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat, that represented the FUNDAMENTAL feature of October, but the completion of the bourgeois revolution?"

Class Structure of the Peasantry

The Peasantry is not a homogeneous class. It is a pettybourgeois class which even in the semi-developed capitalist countries occupies a place intermediate between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. It has lower, middle and higher sections. The overwhelming majority of the peasantry consisting of semi-proletarians and poor peasants being directly exploited by moneylending and merchant capital, will ultimately side with the proletariat. This section is still a property owning class, but its dominant trait is that it lives by its own labour and does not exploit the labour of others. Sections of it have very often to hire themselves out as wage-labourers to the richer sections. The poor peasantry has live bonds (family ties) with the industrial proletariat in the city. In fact the industrial worker in the city today is the poor peasant of yesterday. This is the reason why this section of the peasantry is capable of forming a homogenous class uniting with the proletariat. That is why this unity can become the basis of the dictatorship of the proletariat as in Russia. The richer sections of the peasantry (the Kulaks) though they may sympathise with the sentiments of the peasantry as a whole against the big land-lords, will always support the bourgeoisie because they themselves are linked up with rural capital. The middle sections vacillate until the decisive victory is won either by the proletariat or by the bourgeoisie. But the bourgeoisie will never be able to guarantee security and a good standard of life to the middle peasants AS A

WHOLE. The proletariat in power alone will be able to do that. It is the class structure of the peasantry which must determine the tactic of the proletariat and its party to the peasantry in the various phases of the revolutions. The revolutionary alliance of the proletariat with the peasantry assumes different forms in these different phases. It has the character of a multi-class alliance ONLY in the period in which the bourgeoisie is yet with the revolutionary front of popular democracy. But as soon as the power of the bourgeoisie is overthrown by the revolutionary alliance of the proletariat and THE POOREST PEASANTRY, this alliance ceases to be a multi-class alliance. It becomes a form of the dictatorship of the proletariat itself.

Relations with the Peasantry-The Two Slogans

This is one of the most important lessons which we have to learn from the 3 successive revolutions which Russia underwent. This is the lesson which Lenin taught us almost as a running commentary on these three revolutions. In drawing these lessons Lenin is but continuing the work of Marx and Engels. Marx told us in the second half of the last century that the proletarian revolution will not succeed until it is joined by the chorus of the peasant wars (introduction to 'The Peasant wars in Germany'). Engels on the basis of analysis of the class-structure of the peasantry taught us which section of the peasantry will side with the proletariat in its decisive battles with the bourgeoisie and the landlords. Lenin applied these teachings concretely to the experiences of the Russian revolution. But the conclusion reached has nothing in common with the jumble which Roy is presenting us in these articles.

Already in 1902 Lenin differentiated in the character of the revolutionary

alliance of the proletariat and the peasantry in the two phases of the revolution. Speaking of the then immediate phase when the main aim of the struggle was the overthrow of the Czarist autocracy, Lenin said:

"The proletariat must carry out to the end the democratic revolution, and in this unite to itself the mass of peasantry in order to crush by force the resistance of the autocracy and to paralyse the instability of the bourgeoisie. (Two Tactics) Herein we have that slogan—together with the whole of the peasantry against the autocracy, with the bourgeoisie neutralised—for a democratic revolution.

Was this also the slogan for the second phase? No, it was not. In the same place Lenin says:—

"The proletariat must accomplish the socialist revolution and in this unite to itself the mass of semi-proletarian elements of the population in order to crush by force the resistance of the bourgeoisie and to paralyse the instability of the peasantry and the petty-bourgeoisie." (Two Tactics 1902).

This very formula of Lenin appears in a more concrete form when Russia was actually on the eve of the third revolution. In his April Thesis, Lenin calls for the second stage in which the power must pass "into the hands of the proletariat and the POOREST strata of the peasantry." In August 1937 again Lenin stressed this difference. In February and March 1917 "the fundamental statement of our class policy was that only the proletariat and the PEASANTRY can over throw the monarchy...only the proletariat, leading the poorest peasantry (semi-proletarians as our programme calls them) can end the war with a democratic peace, can heal its wounds, can begin to take the absolutely necessary steps towards socialism—this is the present statement of our class policy" (quoted by Stalin. Leninism Page 339.)

With the Poorest Peasant Against the Bourgeoisie

Power to the Proletariat and the POOREST peasantry was the main slogan which guided the Bolsheviks during the whole period between April and November. This little phrase of the famous April thesis sums up a period of struggles—struggles which the Bolshevik party carried out against the vacillations of the middle peasants within the Soviets and on the battle fronts of the struggles against the social-revolutionaries and the Mensheviks who were allying with the forces of counter-revolutions to isolate the Bolsheviks. Without this struggle the Party of the Proletariat would not have been able to win over the majority in the Soviets. Without this struggle November itself would not have been possible.

In the extremely unstable and highly revolutionary situation which existed in Russia between April and November, the bourgeoisie, the mensheviks and the social revolutionaries were relying on a SECTION of the peasantry to carry through their policy of postponing the agrarian revolution, in continuing the war. Number of peasant Congresses were taking decisions "to wait with the solution of the agrarian question till the convocation of the constituent Assembly." This, Lenin knew, was already a victory of the well-to-do peasants who were leaning towards the bourgeoisie. At the same time a new phenomenon was developing and that was "the deeper chasm between the agricultural labourers and the poorest peasants on the one hand and the peasant owners on the other." (Lenin) The peasants had already begun to seize the land but the initiative in the actions was coming from the semi *proletarian* sections of the peasantry. Lenin not only grasped the NEW situation already in April but also conceived the NEW slogan which was to transform it in favour of the proletariat and against the bourgeoisie.

By firmly allying itself with the semi-proletarian sections of the peasantry, by neutralising the middle peasants the Party of Marx and Lenin, won the support of the peasantry as a whole for carrying through the bourgeois democratic revolution (Land and Peace) and at the same time created the dictatorship of the proletariat, the revolutionary instrument for carrying forward the revolution, for achieving the measures requisite for building socialism, against the resistance of the rich sections of the peasantry.

The Royist Jumble

All this does not find place in Roy's articles. Roy, the original Marxist, is not an "uncritical admirer" of Lenin. Why should he fill the pages of his Independent journal with the repetition of the out-of-date analysis of Lenin? Instead he gives us rapid vulgarisations. The revolutionary seizure of the land which was carried out after the fall of Kerensky, he compares to the Jacobinism of the French revolution, but entirely suppresses the new class character of this Jacobinism. It was the initiative of the semi-proletarian strata of the peasantry supported by the proletariat in power which was carrying through the process. He tells us that "the forces fighting for the ideal of socialism were limited to a small part of the country, while in the rest of the country the revolution was of a predominantly bourgeois democratic character." By this strange formulation he is suppressing the tremendous activity developed by the Bolsheviks in the villages amongst the agricultural workers and among the poor sections of the peasantry. The November Revolution was not a juxtaposition of a proletarian revolution in the cities and an agrarian revolution in the countryside as Roy attempts to vulgarise it. It was a process unifying the both and the motive power behind it was the revolutionary proletariat in alliance with the poorest peasantry. It is only by ignoring this

fact that he arrives at his wonderful discovery that the state created by the Revolution "was not a proletarian dictatorship in the strict sense of the term".

The Proletarian Dictatorship— a Form of Class Alliance

What is the dictatorship of the proletariat in the strict sense of the term? According to Roy it is *not* a relation between the working class and the peasantry but the dictatorial power exercised by the proletariat in relation to the bourgeoisie. Does this mean that the peasantry or its sections comes nowhere in the picture? Does this mean that the entire peasantry has to be converted into agricultural proletariat before the dictatorship of the proletariat in the strict sense is established? Has not the proletariat to enter into some relation with sections of the peasantry in order to be able to exercise dictatorial Power over the bourgeoisie? These questions do not arise in the mechanical conception which Roy is attempting to substitute for the Marxist-Leninist concept.

It is Lenin who first gave us a precise and popular definition of the concept on the basis of actual experience of the role of the Soviets in the November revolution. The dictatorship of the proletariat, Lenin taught us, was "a special form of class alliance between the proletariat, the vanguard of the toilers, and the numerous non-proletarian strata of toilers, (the petty-bourgeoisie, the small masters, the peasantry, the intelligentsia etc.) or the majority of these, it is an alliance against capital, an alliance aiming at the complete overthrow of capital at the complete suppression of the resistance of the bourgeoisie, and of any attempt on their part at restoration, an alliance aiming at the final establishment and consolidation of socialism." (quoted by Stalin, Leninism part I P. 109) While it is a dictatorship of ONE class namely the indus-

trial workers, it must not be forgotten that it is this class alone which is "capable of leading the whole mass of toiling and exploited people against capital. It is exactly for this reason that Lenin lays the emphasis on the ALLIANCE with non-proletarian toiling classes. It is exactly this part of the concept which Roy suppresses and vulgarises. Trotsky in those days formulated that during the further course of the revolution, the proletariat "will come into *hostile collision*" not only with the sections of the bourgeoisie

"but also with THE BROAD MASSES OF THE PEASANTRY". This logically leads to his opposing the alliance with sections of the peasantry to the reputation of the tasks to consolidate and build the dictatorship of the proletariat. Roy taking his "review" twenty years after, recognises the fact of the alliance but on its basis denies the existence of the proletarian dictatorship itself. Roy is presenting us with a posterior justification of Trotskyism. That is why I call these articles inverted Trotskyism.

(Continued from page 450.)

Immediately after the victory of the socialist revolution, this programme was made law by the "*Declaration of National Rights*," signed by both Lenin and Stalin. This declaration contained the four following points in particular:

(i) Equality and sovereignty of the Peoples of Russia.

(ii) The free right of self-government of the Peoples of Russia including that of secession and the establishment of an independent state.

(iii) The abolition of all national and national-religious privileges and limitations.

(iv) Free development of the national minorities and ethnographical groups that inhabit Russian territory.

This right of self-government, this complete equality of rights of all nations is reflected to a greater degree in the new *Constitution* of the Soviet Union. The legal guarantees of this equality of rights are partly contained in the (federative) structure of the Soviet Union, which is dealt with in detail elsewhere, and partly in Article 123 of the Soviet Constitution:

"The equality of the rights of citizens of the U.S.S.R., irrespective of their nationality or race, in all fields of economic, state, cultural, social and political life, is an irrevocable law.

"Any direct or indirect restriction of these rights, or conversely the establishment of direct or indirect privileges for citizens on account of the race or nationality to which they belong, as well as any propagation of racial or national exceptionalism or hatred and contempt, is punishable by law." That is one aspect of the task of national emancipation.

(2) Friendship between the Peoples

Does this perhaps mean the shattering and destruction of economic and state forms brought into existence during the course of history? Or does it mean that the ideal of socialism is to be realised by small confederate states?

On the contrary, the right of self-government, including that of secession, the complete equality of national rights is not a separating but the most effect-

ive connecting element between the nations.

And that was how the socialists conceived it before the revolution, too. The socialists would materialise this right after taking over power. Lenin said in 1916 :

"On no account to 'recommend' a secession: but on the contrary, to facilitate and hasten the democratic approach and amalgamation of the nations."

The practice has entirely conformed to the theory. For this reason the authority of the Russian people over the peoples at one time held in bondage by Tsarism, was never as great as after the socialist revolution. They used to consider them the slave owners, now they see them as the liberators, now they see them as the liberators, now the powerful friend, helper and teacher.

All the consequences of the Tsarist national incitement have disappeared. The Armenians and the Turks, whose only encounters were with daggers in their hands, now live next door to each other and collaborate in productive work. The "Jewish problem" is no longer a problem. Anti-semitism is considered, using Stalin's apt words, as being a survival of cannibalism, and is severely punished where it occurs. Instinctively one has to think of the barbaric racial politics of Fascist Germany. But this comparison would be one-sided if we did not at the same time mention that the *German population* of the Soviet Union not only enjoy all the political and social advantages of the socialist society, but have taken over the cultivation of those national, cultural treasures of which fascism has robbed the Reichs German people. The works of the classical writers prohibited by Fascist Germany, as well as the contemporary German authors and poets exiled from Germany, are nowhere studied and cultivated so zealously, nor on such a mass scale as among the German population of the Soviet Union, especially in the schools (and not only the German ones) of the Soviet Union.

(3) The Development of national Economy and National Culture of the Soviet Peoples

The political equality of rights and the guarantee to the nationalities of national liberty could not, quite naturally, create at one blow the equality of living conditions between the relatively highly cultured Russian people and the nomad Kazahks, or the Northern peoples living under very primitive conditions. That is why the Soviet power set itself the aim, from its first days, of caring for the speedy economic and cultural development of the previously oppressed nations, in order to catch up with the peoples with a highly developed culture. The following are only a few of the practical results of the policy.

Highly developed industries in the national border provinces of the Union that had previously never seen an industrial concern apart from a few small workshops. Let us take the Kazak S.S.R. as an example. In 1913 industrial production on its present territory amounted to 50 million roubles. In 1935 (the date of the latest official statistics on the individual national republics) it had already reached the sum of 606 million roubles; it is to-day, of course, much more. Tens of thousands of tractors, thousands of harvester-combines and about 10,000 lorries are to-day working on this nation's collective fields and Soviet estates: a nation which only recently led a mainly nomadic life. A similar, and in parts even quicker, development is shown by all the other national republics. From their own ranks a national intelligentsia has evolved.

A Close Network of Schools of All Grades

Let us take another Republic, the Azerbaijan S.S.R., as an example. The extremely interesting statistics given below gives us a clear picture of the cultural attainments of the socialist revolution.

Proportion of Elementary and Secondary School pupils Compared with the Total Population.

Azerbaijan in 1914-15	...	3 %
do in 1935-36	...	17.7 %
British India 1929-30	...	3.3 %
France do	...	11.2 %
Austria do	...	11.5 %
England do	...	15.1 %
Germany do	...	13.3 %
U. S. A. do	...	21.9 %

Thus, before the revolution, Azerbaijan was below the standard of the colonial countries in this respect, yet it is to-day *above the standard of all the civilised countries in Europe.*

Nationalities that before the socialist revolution did not even have their own literary language to-day possess an extensive literature and are developing their national culture, letting their children study at the universities. The instruction in the elementary schools is given in the pupils' mother tongue. The same applies to the universities in the same proportion as the respective nationalities develop their own professor cadres.

Books, Papers, Periodicals in the native language

It is well known what a devastating policy of Russification the Tsar pursued among the non-Russian nationalities who were only allowed to publish books in exceptional cases, and then usually only on religious subjects.

A striking contrast to this is provided by the, 2,858 different books, 135 periodicals, and 1,969 newspapers published in the Ukrainian language in 1935. In the same year 501 books, 9 periodicals, and 70 newspapers were published in Germany.

Rise of National Art

The socialist revolution set free the artistic talents of all the nations of the Soviet Union. Literature, the Art and the Theatre reach the remotest villages. The classics appear in languages which hardly anyone could write a few years ago. Instead of

giving a long list of statistics we just want to refer to the fact that the first performance of Shakespeare's "Hamlet" was recently given in the *Uzbekian language*. The part of Ophelia was played with great success by the daughter of an Uzbekian agricultural labourer, the actress Ischanturajewa.

We find an extremely rapid development in the spheres of economics, culture, social life, sport, etc.; the mode of living, the style of living, of the once oppressed nationalities changed beyond all recognition.

The effects of National Emancipation on the Russian Nation

The rulers of the Fascist countries attempt to persuade the people that colonies, territorial conquests, the subjugation of "lower" races and peoples are essential, as their own people would otherwise have no "Lebensraum" (room to live), no raw materials, and insufficient markets for their trade. But there are even doubts raised among certain groups who think progressively on other subjects in the democratic countries, which include more or less oppressed national minorities; is not the emancipation, the bestowing of complete equality of rights to the previously oppressed nationalities too great a sacrifice for the ruling nation? That is why they put the question: we know that the emancipation of the Ukrainian, Tschadik, Turkmentan and other nationalities has given these nationalities undisputable and wonderful achievements. But what effects has this emancipation had on the fate of the previously ruling Russian nation?

We only need to glance at the economic and cultural development of the R.S.F.S.R., whose population is mainly composed of Russians (c. 75 per cent.), at the same time basing our argument on the complete general statistics of the Soviet Union for 1935, although present figures are 50—60 percent, higher.

The industrial production of the same areas of the Tsarist Russia of 1913 totalled 7.25 milliard roubles (reckoned according to the index figures of 1926-7). The industrial production of the R.S.F.S.R. in 1935, reckoned according to the same figures, totalled 42.9 milliard roubles. Russia's most important coal-mining area was in what is to-day Soviet Ukraine. Before the war 22.8 million tons were obtained; from what is to-day part of the R.S.F.S.R. only 6 million tons. The same applies to iron ore (Ukraine 6.4 million tons, R.S.F.S.R. 2.8 million tons). And after the emancipation of the Ukraine? The output of coal and iron ore increased rapidly in the Ukrainian Socialist Soviet Republic. In 1935, 61.5 million tons of coal and 16.5 million tons of iron ore were extracted. And in the R.S.F.S.R. the extraction of coal rose from 6 to 44 million tons. In neither of these two districts have any marketing difficulties been experienced.

But this is perhaps not a very good example. The R.S.F.S.R. was "lucky" because it possessed coal and iron ore. What is the present position of the textile industry? Cotton is one of the raw materials mainly grown in the old Asiatic colonies, which are to-day the Socialist Soviet Republic of Uzbek, Turkmenistan, Tajik, in Azerbaijan, in certain parts of the Ukraine, but only in small quantities in the R.S.F.S.R. But in the national Republics mentioned the textile industry has grown considerably since the revolution and with it the cotton consumption. The cotton production of Uzbek alone rose from 0.2 to 21.3 million roubles (1913-35). Yet the textile industry of the R.S.F.S.R. suffered no losses on this account.

Whereas the textile industry of

Tsarist Russia (apart from Poland and the Baltic States) amounted to 2.9 milliard roubles, it amounted to 6.2 milliard roubles in R.S.F.S.R. territory alone in 1935. Further, whereas the old Russian textile industry had to import 50 per cent of the cotton it used, the U.S.S.R. only imported 7 per cent. of its greatly expanded cotton requirements. The secret of this development is that the socialist revolution did not only set free the nations, it also released the means of production and raised the standards of living, or, expressed in economic terms, it released the buying power of all the nations, and, of course, that of the Russians as well. At the same time as the Russian people emancipated the oppressed nations, they emancipated themselves from the yoke of exploitation and oppression.

The fascists promise their people that the conquest of foreign lands will result in the decrease of their own unemployment. But we see that the Russian people which helped the oppressed nations to free themselves of the Russian exploiters do not only suffer unemployment but have also fought for and won the guaranteed right of work, of education, recuperation, etc., and a continual improvement of their material and cultural standards of living. The socialist revolution's task of emancipating the nationalities has not only freed the previously oppressed peoples, it has also emancipated the old ruling people.

In these twenty years of the Great Socialist Revolution the Lenin-Stalinist policy has celebrated unheard-of triumphs. The fraternal bond between the peoples of the different nationalities can never be severed. The bond of Socialism, Peace, and Liberty, unites them all.

HEALTH IN INDIAN PRISONS

N. Dutt Mazumdar M.L.A. (Bengal)

The countrywide movement for the release of detenus and political prisoners has thrown some light on the conditions of health in Indian prisons. Within the prison walls is another forbidden region where the rule of British Imperialism is more autocratic, more ruthless than it is outside these walls. Once a prisoner crosses the jail gate, he is no longer looked upon by the guards of British Imperialism as a human being, either morally or physically. It is not at present possible to narrate the gruesome story of the veritable hells that are enclosed by the high stone walls of the Indian prisons. It is, however, possible to get some idea from official data about the appalling conditions of health which exist in the prisons. For this purpose we have to depend mainly upon sickness and mortality statistics of Indian prisons published by the government. It would be well to bear in mind that although sickness and mortality are the results of bad health, the latter may not always lead to the former. McNally had aptly remarked in his brilliant book *Public Ill Health* that "Health is not so much a question of absence of disease; it is only when the balance of the body is disturbed so far, and symptoms of this upset are so pronounced as to be readily diagnosed, that there is reached a state called by the name of a particular disease."

Prison for Eight Lacs of People.

On an average about eight lacs of people are sent to prisons every year. About 90 per cent of them are below the age of 40 and a majority of them come from the cultivating and labouring

classes. 60 per cent of the prisoners are released within six months and 20 per cent of them are released within one year. The floating population of the prisons is maintained at the daily average strength of about a lac and a half.

Prisons are Overcrowded.

The large population of prisons has been the cause of serious overcrowding for some years past. Of course, overcrowding has always been a permanent feature of Indian prisons, because the accommodation authorised by the government is far from being adequate even in ordinary times. Within recent years, the increase of crimes due to the economic depression and the attempt of the government to suppress the political movement by throwing ever larger number of people into prison have been the chief causes of inflating the number of jail inmates. The extent of the overcrowding can be judged from the following figures for 1935:—

Province	Daily average	Maximum on any one day
Punjab	46	71
Bengal	32	76
N.W.F.P.	24	39
Assam	12	not available

Disease Infested Prisons.

The large number of prisoners who fall sick every year is a fair index of the bad prison conditions in India. On an average 80 thousand sick prisoners are admitted into jail hospital every year. This is more than half the number of the daily average population of jails. Moreover, nearly 3½ thousand pri-

soners are constantly sick throughout the year. The worst condition is to be found in the prisons of Bengal where, in 1935, on an average 800 prisoners were on the sick list every day and more than 750 prisoners were constantly sick.

Food, accommodation and sanitation are the three main factors which count for health. If these three factors are bad their effect will be reflected in the incidence of diseases associated with them. Large incidence (1) of dysentery and diarrhoea will be caused by bad food; (2) of influenza, pneumonia and respiratory diseases will be caused by overcrowding; (3) of abscess, ulcer, boil and hookworm will be caused by bad sanitation. The following table gives the annual number of sick prisoners under these three heads:—

Cause	Average no. of sick per year
Overcrowding	11,000
Bad food	8,000
Bad sanitation	6,000
Total	25,000

We have of course taken only the major diseases which can be directly traced to the causes given here. They account for 30% of the total number of sick prisoners per year. *Bengal is again the black spot with regard to effects of overcrowding and bad food.* In 1935, Bengal alone was responsible for 58% of the total influenza cases, 52% of the total diarrhoea cases and 31% of the total dysentery cases in the Indian prisons. The conditions are getting worse every year in Bengal, as may be seen from the following table of hospital admission rates per 1,000 of average daily jail population of Bengal:—

	1932	1933	1934	1935
Influenza	106	107	116	113
Dysentery & Diarrhoea	118	121	129	139

The main cause of sickness in prisons is malaria. Nearly 20 thousand prisoners suffer from malaria every

year. This roughly works out as 25% of the total cases, whereas the ordinary hospitals in India recorded 14% malaria cases in 1935. The actual incidence of malaria inside the prisons may be a little less than the incidence outside, but if the prison conditions were better than what they are at present, there would have been a substantial reduction in the incidence of malaria inside the prisons.

Death plays Havoc in Prisons

The gross mortality rate of the prisons is much below the gross mortality rate of the general population over age 16. For example, in 1935 the jails recorded a death rate of 11 per 1,000, whereas in the general population the rate was nearly 18 per 1,000 among persons over 16 years of age. The Government and its hired health officers often pat themselves on the back on this score. Such a great divergence seems almost unbelievable and one is suspicious of some snag somewhere. The fact is about 90% of the total jail population are between the ages 16 and 60, and about 90% of the total deaths occur between these two ages. The following table compiled from the only available figures for Burma in 1933 clearly shows the real state of affairs:

	% of pop. bet. 16-60	% of deaths bet. 16-60
Jail population	98	94
General „	91	70
	Death rate bet. 16-60	Death rate over 16
Jail	9	11
General	11	15

If we consider the mortality between ages 16 and 60 and allow for the abnormally high malaria mortality in the general population, which is mainly due to the great dearth of medical assistance, it would appear that the great majority of the prisoners experience higher mortality than those who are outside the prisons and are getting some sort of medical assistance.

We can further examine this point from another angle. In 1934 the death rate among prisoners who had spent not more than six months in prisons was as high as 18 per thousand. If we assume that most of them were between the ages 16 and 60 then this death rate is double that of the general population for six months. This clearly shows how adversely the prison conditions affect the ordinary man as soon as he is put behind bars.

The largest number of prisoners die from pthisis, pneumonia and dysentery. Let us compare the pthisis deaths in prisons with those in Bombay which has got the worst experience of pthisis.

(i) Percentage of total deaths.

	Jails	Bombay Prisonary
1933	15	4
1934	18	4
1935	19	4

(ii) Death rate per 1,000

	Jails	Bombay City
1933	1.7	1.2
1934	2.2	1.4
1935	2.2	1.0

Hardly any comment is necessary on the appalling prison conditions which can lead to such high incidence of pthisis compared to the worst province in India. Every year about 800 prisoners suffer from pthisis and nearly one third of the pthisis patients die within prison walls. It is clear from the above tables that the condition in prisons is becoming worse every year. It is no wonder that the official report says in 1935 that "this infectious disease (pthisis) must remain a source of anxiety to jail medical officers."

An almost similar story can be told about pneumonia and dysentery. Death rates in prisons due to these causes are almost double the provincial rates for the general population. In some of the provinces, including Bengal,

Pneumonia mortality is increasing, while in others dysentery mortality is increasing. Typhoid also takes a heavier toll inside the prisons than outside.

With the above mentioned fatal diseases playing havoc within the prison walls, it is the very height of hypocrisy for the authorities to say in their report that "medical administration (in prisons) has been maintained at a satisfactory level of efficiency".

Insanity Manufactured in Prisons.

The unnatural environment of Indian prisons and the abnormal conditions of living which they provide are bound to drive prisoners mad in large numbers. About 130 to 150 prisoners are transferred to mental hospitals every year. A still larger number suffer from various mental diseases. The annual rate of admission to mental hospitals is about 100 per lac of jail population. Compare this appalling figure with the admission rate of the general population, which is barely 2 per lac of the total adult population, and we see the prison system under British Imperialism in all its nakedness. *The prisons in India are literally manufacturing insane people year after year.*

Food not Fit for Beasts.

It is well known that the food given to prisoners in Indian prisons is notoriously bad. We shall, however, try to show the abominable state of affairs that still exists with regard to the jail diets. The following table gives the per head cost of food of prisoners in 1932-35) estimated from the reports of the Public Health Commissioner) of bullocks used for cultivation in the Punjab (estimated from a recent government enquiry) and of workers of Ahmedabad (estimate of the Bombay Labour Office from 1932-35 enquiry).

Annual cost of food per head.

Prisoner	Rs. 32
Bullock	Rs. 43
Worker	Rs. 58

Thus we see that *the food of the Indian prisoner is not even fit for cattle*. We have to remember further that the prisoners are forced to work as hard as the beasts of burden. Within the prison walls the prisoner replaces the bullock on the *ghani*.

The appalling story of the prison diet will remain incomplete without a reference to the government policy of reducing the standard of the jail diet. Since 1927 the per head annual cost of prison diet has been falling steeply. The authorities would have us believe that the *whole* of this reduction has been due to the fall in the price of food. But let us look at the facts.

Per head annual cost of food

	Ahmedabad	Prisoner in	
	worker	Bombay	India
1926	Rs. 69	Rs. 64	Rs. 56
1933-35	Rs. 58	Rs. 37	Rs. 32
Decrease	16%	42%	43%

Thus the fall in price can, at the utmost, explain a 16% fall in the cost of the prison diet. But the major fall of the remaining 27% means that there is an actual reduction in the standard of the prisoner's diet.

Andamans-Heaven or Hell?

The Andamans have been described by a staunch champion of British Imperialism as "Heaven on earth." Let us glance at some of the official figures which describe this "heaven". During the period 1930-34, the mean rate of admissions to hospitals was 738 in the Andamans as against 586 in the Indian prisons; the mean rate of mortality was 29 per 1,000 in the Andamans as against 12 per 1,000 in the Indian prisons. The percentage of prisoners released in 1934 who had lost

weight was 41 for the Andamans, 14 for Bengal and 7 for Madras. The vindictiveness of the authorities in the Andamans is increasing every year. The number of punishments inflicted, relative to the daily average population, increased steadily from 19% in 1925-26 to 39% in 1933-34. These few facts show the utter falsehood of the statement of the lackey of British Imperialism mentioned above. The plain truth is *British Imperialism has created in the Andamans the worst hell on earth in order to crush humanity*.

Fight for Prison Reforms.

The main object of our present struggle for the release of political prisoners is to restore the elementary civil liberties of our people and to get back the valiant fighters for freedom's battle who are rotting behind prison bars. But how can we allow even the ordinary convicts to live and rot in the veritable hells we have described above? The ordinary convicts are, to a great extent, the victims of a vicious social system. Destroy Capitalism and along with it will be destroyed the soil on which criminals are bred. It is only in the Soviet Union, the home of Socialism that humanity is being reformed, criminals are turned into first rate citizens to help and build up Socialism. The great majority of the criminals in this country come from the producing classes. We can and we must rescue them by fighting for an independent India and establishing Socialism in this country. But today we can help them by providing better conditions of life within the prison walls. Let us then demand the immediate introduction of far reaching reforms in the Indian prisons.

A PAGE FROM THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF MAO-TSE TUNG

As Told to Edgar Snow

Mao-Tse-Tung the Chairman of the Chinese Soviet Government, one of the most outstanding generals of the Chinese Red Army, sums up in the following paragraphs (which we reproduce from "Asia") an account of the five campaigns which Chiang-Kai-Shek conducted against the Chinese Soviets since 1930 and the 1,500 mile march of the Chinese Red Army into Szecheschwan.

To day Nanking is under the hands of Japanese Imperialism. The tragic fruits of the policy of Chiang Kai-Shek of allying with foreign Imperialism, of using German planes, Japanese and British machine guns against the revolutionary army of Chinese workers and peasants, are being reaped.

As far back as in 1932 the Chinese Communists and the Red Army called for a United Front with the Kuomintang against the aggression of Japanese Imperialism. Revolutionary students and workers of Nationalist China joined in the demand. But Chiang-Kai-Shek did not heed. Under the guidance of the fascist German general Von Seeckt, he launched another monstrous campaign for the extermination of the Reds. Five costly campaigns exhausted the resources of the Nationalist Government. But they failed to achieve their object.

It is the Chinese Communists, who ultimately took the initiative in beginning, (in deeds,) the war against Japan. They made a formal declaration of war against Japan in 1932. They decided to clear the southern

Chinese area where there were frequent clashes with the Chinese Nationalist Army. They undertook the famous *Trek* into Szecheschawn and successfully completed it in spite of being pursued and attacked by the planes and armies of Chiang-Kai-Shek. The Chinese Red Army entrenched itself in this North Western province where it borders directly on the Japanese controlled area of the northern provinces and Manchuko. Chinese Reds proved in action that they were the most consistent and courageous fighters against Japanese aggression, the courageous defenders of China's independence, China's integrity. By deeds they won the sympathy and support of the anti-Imperialist masses in Nationalist China.

In the autumn of 1929 the Red Army moved into northern Kiangsi, attacking and occupying many cities and inflicting numerous defeats on Kuomintang armies. When within striking distance of Nanchang, the Red army troops turned sharply west and moved on Changsha. In this drive they met and joined forces with P'eng Teh-huai, who had already occupied Changsha once, but had been forced to withdraw, to avoid being surrounded by vastly superior enemy troops. P'eng had been obliged to leave Chingkan-shan in April, 1929, and had carried out operations in southern Kiangsi, resulting in greatly increasing his troops. He rejoined Chu Teh and me at Juichin in April, 1930, and after a conference, it had been decided that he should operate on the Kiangsi-Hunan

border, while Chu and I moved into Fukien. It was in June, 1930, that we re-established a junction and began the second attack on Changsha. Our armies were combined into the First Front Army, with Chu Teh as commander-in-chief and with myself as political commissary. Under this leadership we arrived outside the walls of Changsha.

The Chinese Workers and Peasants' Revolutionary Committee was organised about this time, and I was elected chairman. The Red Army's influence in Hunan was widespread, almost as much as in Kiangsi. My name was spread among the Hunanese peasants; because, big rewards were offered for my capture, dead or alive, as well as for Chu Teh and other Reds. My land in Hsiang T'an, the rent from which I had used during the Great Revolution to organise peasant insurrections in Hunan, was confiscated by the Kuomintang. My wife and sister, as well as the wives of my two brothers and my own son, were all arrested. My wife and younger sister were executed. The others were later released.

The prestige of the Red Army increased among the peasantry, far and wide. It even extended to my own village, Hsiang T'an; for I heard the tale that the local peasants believed I would be soon returning to my native home, and when one day an airplane passed overhead they decided it was I. They warned the man who was then tilling my land that I had come back to look over my old farm to see whether or not the trees had been cut down. If the trees had been cut, I would surely demand compensation from Chiang Kai-Shek, they said!

But the second attack on Changsha proved to be a failure. Great reinforcements had been sent to the city, and it was heavily garrisoned; besides, new troops were pouring into Hunan in

September, to attack the Red army. Only one important battle occurred during the siege, and in it, the Red army eliminated two brigades of enemy troops. It could not, however, take the city of Changsha, and after a few weeks withdrew to Kiangsi.

But Nanking was now thoroughly aroused to the revolutionary potentialities of the Soviets in Kiangsi and at the end of 1930 began its first extermination campaign against the Red army. Enemy forces totalling one hundred thousand men began an encirclement of the Red areas, penetrating by five routes. Against these troops the Red army was then able to mobilize a total of about forty thousand men. By skilful use of manoeuvring warfare we met and overcame this first campaign, with great victories. Following out the tactics of swift concentration and swift dispersal, we attacked each unit separately, using our main forces. Admitting the enemy troops deeply into Soviet territory, the army staged sudden concentrated attacks, in superior numbers, on isolated units of the Kuomintang troops, achieving positions of manoeuvre in which, momentarily, we could encircle them, thus reversing the general strategic advantage enjoyed by a greatly superior (numerically) enemy. By January 1931, this first campaign had been completely defeated. I believe that this would not have been possible except for three conditions achieved by the Red army just before its commencement: the consolidation of our forces under a centralised command; the liquidation of the the Li Li Lisan line; and the triumph of the Party over the anti-Bolshevik faction and active counter-revolutionaries, within the Red army and in the Soviet districts.

After a respite of only four months, Nanking launched its second campaign, under the supreme command of Ho Ying-Ching, the present Minister of

War. His forces exceeded two hundred thousand men, who moved into the Red areas by seven routes. The situation for the Red army was then thought to be very critical. The area of Soviet power was very small; resources were limited; equipment was scanty; and the material strength of the enemy vastly exceeded that of the Red Army in nearly every respect. To meet this offensive, however, the Red Army still clung to the same tactic that has thus far won us success. Admitting the enemy, columns well into Red territory, our main forces suddenly concentrated against the second route of the enemy defeated several regiments and destroyed its vital offensive power. Immediately afterwards we attacked, in quick succession, the third route, the sixth and the seventh, defeating each of them in turn. The fourth route retreated without giving battle, and the fifth route was partly destroyed. Within fourteen days the Red Army had fought six battles and marched eight days, ending with a decisive victory. With the break-up or retreat of the other six routes, the first route army, of which Tsai Ting-kai was one of the commanders, withdrew without any fighting.

One month later, assisted by his three ablest commanders, Chiang Kai-Shek took command of an army of three hundred thousand men "for the final extermination of the 'Red-Bandits.' Chiang hoped to take the Red areas by storm, a rapid "wiping-out" of the "Red-bandits." He began by moving his armies eighty li a day into the heart of the Soviet territory. This supplied beautifully the very conditions under which the Red Army fights best, and it soon proved the serious mistake of Chiang's tactics. With a main force of only thirty thousand men, by a series of brilliant manoeuvres, our army attacked five different columns in five days. In the first battle, the Red army captured

many enemy troops and large amount of ammunition, guns and equipment. By September, the third campaign had been admitted to be a failure, and Chiang Kai Shek withdrew his troops in October.

The Red Army now entered a period of comparative peace and growth, and expansion was very rapid. The First Soviet Congress was called in December, 1931, and the Central Soviet Government was established, with myself as chairman. Chu Teh was elected Commander-in chief of the Red Army. In the same month there occurred the great Ningtu Uprising, when over twenty thousand Kuomintang troops revolted and joined the Red Army.

The Red army now began offensives of its own, attacking several crisis. From October, 1932, onward, and until the beginning of the long march to the Northwest, I myself devoted my time almost exclusively to work with the Soviet government, leaving the Military command to Chu Teh and others.

In April, 1933, began the fourth and, for Nanking perhaps the most disastrous, of its extermination campaigns. In the first battle of this period two divisions were disarmed and two divisional commanders were captured, along with thirteen thousand men. Another division, then Chiang Kai-Shek's best, was next eliminated, being almost totally disarmed and its commander seriously wounded. These engagements proved the decisive turning points, and the fourth campaign soon afterwards ended. Chiang Kai-Shek at this time wrote to Chen Cheng, his field commander, that he considered this defeat "the great humiliation" in his life. Chen Cheng did not favour pushing the campaign. He told the people that in his opinion fighting the Reds was a "life-time job" and a "life sentence." Reports of this coming to Chiang, he removed Chen Cheng from high command.

For his fifth and last campaign, Chiang Kai-shek mobilized nearly one million men and adopted new tactics and strategy. Already in the fourth campaign Chiang had, on the recommendation of his German advisers begun the use of the blockhouse and fortification system. In the fifth campaign, he placed his entire reliance upon it. Using his armies to enforce a severe blockade and to encircle the Soviet districts completely, he moved forward cautiously, building motor roads, forts and trenches, avoiding bringing his main forces into contact with the Red army and fighting only from behind forts, making only short advances, fully covered by air bombardment, artillery and machine-guns.

In this period, we made two important errors. The first was the failure to unite with Tsai Ting-kai's army in 1933, during the Fukien rebellion. The second was the adoption of the erroneous strategy of simple defence, abandoning our former tactics of manoeuvre. It was a serious mistake to meet the vastly superior Nanking forces in positional warfare, at which the Red army was neither technically nor spiritually at its best.

As a result of these mistakes, and the new tactics and strategy of Chiang's campaign, combined with the overwhelming numerical and technical superiority of the Kuomintang forces, the Red army was obliged in 1934, to seek to change the conditions of its existence in Kiangsi, which were rapidly becoming more unfavourable. The national political situation, also, influenced the decision to move the scene of operations to the Northwest. Following Japan's invasion of Manchuria and Shanghai, the (Chinese) Soviet Government had, as early as February, 1932, formally declared war on Japan. This declaration, which could not, of course, be made effective, due to the blockade and encirclement of Soviet China by the Kuomintang

troops had been followed by the issue of a manifesto calling for a united front of all armed forces in China to resist Japanese imperialism. Early in 1933 the Soviet government announced that it would co-operate with any White army on the basis of three conditions; cessation of civil war and of attack on the Soviets and the Red army; guarantee of civil liberties and democratic rights to the masses; and arming of the people for an anti-Japanese war.

Chiang Kai-shek's fifth and last campaign had begun in October, 1933. In January, 1934, the Second All-China Congress of Soviets was convened in Juichin, the Soviet capital, and a survey of the achievements of the revolution had taken place. Here I gave a long report, and here the Central Soviet Government, as its personnel exists today, was elected. Preparations soon began for the Long March, which was embarked upon in October, 1934, just a year after Chiang launched his fifth campaign.

By January, 1935, the main forces of the Red army had reached Tsun Yi, in Kweichow. For the next four months the army was almost constantly moving and the most energetic combat and fighting were taking place. Through many, many difficulties, across the longest and deepest and most dangerous rivers of China, across some of its highest and most hazardous mountain passes, through the country of fierce aborigines, through the empty grasslands, through cold and through intense heat, through wind and snow and rainstorms, pursued by half the White armies of China, through all these natural barriers and fighting its way past the local troops of Kwangtung, Hunan Kwangsi, Kweichow, Yunnan, Sikang, Szechwan, Kansu and Shensi, in October, 1935, and set up the present base, in China's great Northwest.

The victorious march of the Red army and its triumphant arrival in

Shensi with its living forces still intact were due first to the correct leadership of the Communist Party and secondly to the great skill, courage, determination and almost superhuman endurance and revolutionary ardor of the basic cadres of our Soviet people. The Communist Party of China was, is and will ever be faithful to Marxist-Leninism, and it will continue its struggles against every opportunist tendency. In this determination lies one explanation of its invincibility and the certainty of its final victory. The other reason for its invincibility lies in the extraordinary ability and courage and loyalty of the human material of the revolutionary cadres. Many excellent comrades, many who gave their lives for the revolution too all working together for a single purpose, have made the

Red army and the Soviet movement, and these will lead it to final victory.

Now we are endeavouring to form a united front in China, inviting all parties, groups of citizens, men of all professions and armies that are sincerely anti-Japanese to join with us in the common task of national liberation. In order to fight Japanese imperialism, and to save our country, it is necessary to form such a front, and it is also necessary to establish a thorough democratic government in China. My work and my objectives, like the work and objectives of the Party and the Red army, hereafter must be devoted toward the achievement of this end.

[The United Front has already been achieved and the United Chinese Nationalist Army has taken the field against the Japanese invaders. E.D.]

BOOK REVIEWS

The Revolution Betrayed—by Whom ?

(Anna Louise Strong)

It is difficult for a book to be both vituperative and dull, yet Trotsky's latest work ("The Revolution Betrayed," by Leon Trotsky, Doubleday Doran) has succeeded in being both. One plods through its pages with boredom touched with exasperation. What has become of the brilliance that once made Trotsky's pen a shining dagger? The will to destroy is still there, but neither the power nor knowledge. History has blunted his words, and against his will, he knows it.

Trotsky faces a difficult dilemma. Wishing to admire the Soviet Revolution from 1917 to 1923, when

he himself was part of it, he wishes no less to denounce its later phases. He starts with a real revolution in which workers had power and wielded it fearlessly and democratically. Then he must explain how steadily through a decade those fearless, democratic workers who overthrew a Tsar and defeated the armies of the world, meekly yielded their independence to "the faction, least rich in ideas and most burdened with mistakes" till politics became "the monopoly of an uncontrolled bureaucracy." It is difficult for him to explain this. It is, in fact, impossible.

The reason he gives is ingenious. The revolutionary workers died out in the war or grew tired. "A revolution is a mighty devourer of energy... The nerves give way... Bureaucracy triumphed over the masses; the mass soviets disappeared." The psychology of this is debatable; revolutions both devour energy and create it. The nerves of tired radicals give way; but other men no less revolutionary and with fresher nerves replace them. The political facts in the case are not even debatable. Every year the USSR has seen a wider participation of masses in government, both in the numbers of taking part and in the extent and variety of their participation.

Trotsky admits that "in the years a backward country has achieved successes unexampled in history." These, he says, are due not to extraordinary leadership but to the "conditions of socialists property created by the revolution." So what? Does anyone care to deny him his little fling at Stalin as long as he admits the successes of socialist property? In a following chapter, however, he qualifies this admission. By defining socialists as "Soviet" forms of property on a basis of American technique, he comes to the conclusion, or did he know it already?—that what exists in the USSR is not socialism, since its technique and productivity is inferior to that of America.

"The Soviet Union," he says, "is a contradictory society halfway between capitalism and socialism." The productive forces in it are still inadequate for socialism. "The social revolution, betrayed by the ruling party, still exists in property relations and in the consciousness of the masses." Where else, one wonders, should it or could it exist? But if the workers really want to go forward to socialism, they will have to "overthrow" the bureaucracy." This, of course, is the crux of the situation. Trotsky does

not want to reform Soviet power; he wants "a new revolutionary dawn."

The "betrayal of the revolution" consists, according to Trotsky, in many things; in the foreign policy of collaboration with the League of Nations, in the revival of the "family," in "inequality and social antagonisms," all of which are attributed to "the bureaucracy." Only after perusing several chapters does one learn what Trotsky means by this word. Emotionally he means Stalin and every one who admires Stalin. Statistically he includes (in chapter six) the civil service, the elected officials of village and city, the apparatus of trade unions, collective farms, cooperatives and Party, the administrators and specialists in economic enterprise, a total, which includes, he says, one-sixth to one-fifth of the population. This fraction of the people, he claims, has almost half the income of the country.

Even if his figures are correct—and there is no proof of it—need one worry so greatly about the democracy and inequality of a land whose ruling caste comprises one-fifth of the population? As long as there are so many capitalist countries to worry about where "two percent of the people"—you know the rest! Trotsky himself admits that the distribution of this earth's goods in the Soviet Union, is incomparably more democratic than it was in Tsarist Russia, and more than it is in the most democratic countries of the West." "That's really handsome of him; that one admission gives his case away."

In reading this book one is reminded of the distinction made in the U.S.S.R. between two kinds of criticism; the vital criticism of the constructive worker, who desires to improve the thing he criticises, and the enemy criticism which wishes only to destroy. Trotsky gives many "facts"; (why should it be otherwise,) since he can quote liberally from the "self-criticism"

of the Soviet press. But how does he use them?

The U.S.S.R. has not yet caught up with the foremost capitalist lands in technique and living standards, he says quoting Molotov as proof. But Trotsky concludes that it will take a "whole historical epoch" and another revolution for the U.S.S.R. to achieve socialism. Molotov and the other Soviet leaders deduce the other conclusion; "We must overtake and surpass".

Trotsky says that bureaucracy exists in the U.S.S.R.; Stalin says so too. But Stalin and the other Soviet leaders urge the masses to take constant part in exposing and cleaning out bureaucrats; Stalin praises the secret ballot as a "whip in the hands of the population against organs of government that work badly". Trotsky sneers at this admission by Stalin that any government organs work badly "A remarkable confession! And in a socialist state," he jeers. Then he proceeds to identify the "bureaucracy" with the whole of the civil service and calls for a revolution to overthrow it.

All of his criticism is designedly destructive. His principle is: attack Stalin, whatever he does. He attacks the Soviet leaders for not imposing industrialization in 1923, when war-ruined factories were not yet repaired; he attacks them no less for adopting in 1928 the rapid industrialization of the Five Year Plan. He denounces Stalin for permitting the Kulak to live in 1933, when kulak grain furnished the city's food; he denounces him equally for the "blind, violent and gambling methods whereby collectivization was finally carried through in a later period when the time was ripe. He attacks the low productivity of labour which prevents socialism from existing; but he betrays even more the Stakhanovites who are raising production, as "humiliating measures of a backward capitalism."

The purpose of the book is, in fact, unconcealed. Its goal is "to cause doubts and evoke distrust" of the pre-

sent leadership in the USSR among the workers of the world. Already excerpts are being distributed in free pamphlets by fascists in Austria as "an exposure of the social and moral bankruptcy of Marxism." Trotsky knew that this use would be made of his book; he says so in his final page. Does one need then his characterization of Kirov as "a clever, unscrupulous Leningrand dictator," or his allusion to the assassination as "an act of high significance," a symptom which foretells the beginning of an open political crisis" to underline Trotsky's conscious alliance with fascism in attacking the USSR?

"The National Front"

A Marxist Leninist Weekly
Published from Bombay (Annual
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Anna)

In the midst of a motley of weeklies of all sorts it is gratifying to have a really authoritative weekly paper voicing the opinion of the Marxists in our country. The Editorial board which consists of well known communists in this country should ensure the correct interpretation of all events from the Marxist leninist angle. We are sure that this weekly will be able to remove the lot of misconception and confusion that is prevalent in this country about the communists and their ideology and we are sure that it will give an effective reply to the slanders against the Soviet union which are becoming a fashion amongst certain socialist elements in this country...According to the Editors "The National Front is pledged to work for the Unity of the entire left, to develop the independent class organisations of workers and peasants and to preserve the unity of the National Front and the National Congress is the two fold task of the left today. In the process of realising this unity of thought and action, a united front will have to be forged...leading ultimately

to the building of a united working class socialist party." We wish the National Front every success.

"The Battle of China" or "the Lay of a Chinese Girl"

By Dr. K. R. Menon, Ph. D, Published by the School of Printing, Printers Association, Singapore (Price: 2 s 6 d or one Dollar)

THE ENTIRE SALE PROCEEDS OF THIS BOOK GO TO THE CHINA RELIEF FUND.

At a time when the world is being rocked into uncertainty by the thunderclouds of war, when Japanese Imperialism and Fascism is Ravaging China by bombing and murdering millions of innocent chinese people, the heroism, the courage and sacrifice of the chinese people stands in glorious contrast to the savagery of the bloodhounds of the Japanese Imperialists. Dr. Menon in simple verse has given us a picture of the Chinese people and China the "Mighty Confucian Home that was once vying with Madonna's and Caesar's Rome." The story of the heroic sacrifice of a chinese girl is given a most conspicuous place—a story of a Chinese damsel in Singapore who made up her mind to conduct a lottery with herself as the prize, and fixed five dollars as the price of each ticket, and leaving aside the whole proceeds of the sale of the tickets to the Red cross funds of China." We feel that though this is not a time for writing poetry and wring our hands in impotent ire and pessimism "When shall this conflict end" that this work deserves support as the author has set aside the whole of the Sale proceeds for the assistance of the suffering Chinese people. The poem is a living memorial to all the heroism

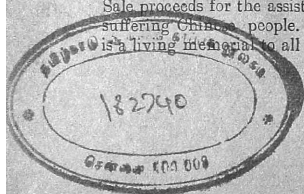
and sufrance and sacrifice of the Chinese in the midst of "Matsui on his March "bombing the country side" and an ironic thrust at the League as when he says "Brussels is still alive, with conferences loud". Buying this book is one of the many ways by which one can show his sympathy with China."

The Press Laws of India.

(By K. B. Menon, M.A., Ph.D., Secretary to the Indian Civil Liberties Union. Prices As. 4)

V. Sreenivasamoorthy.

This is the first publication by the Indian Civil Liberties Union Series and contains a vivid explanation of the chocking restraints placed in the way of the Indian Press progress. The author has taken pains not only to quote sections from Indian Press (Emergency Powers) Act but also other Press acts passed from 1878 onwards. The imperialist government has tightened the reins which were originally loose, by various enactments of 1910, 1922, and finally by the Indian Press (Emergency Powers) Act of 1931. To demand security from an innocent Press keeper who has to get a declaration from a Magistrate, is, the author says, a glaring violation of the basic fundamentals of Law; The Magistrate can demand security from Rs 500 to 1000 beforehand, and on forfeiting it, can demand upto Rs 10,000. It is interesting to note that during one single year, 1935, a security of Rs. 1,30,000 was demanded from 72 news papers while 15 news papers alone were able to pay, the rest losing their declarations. This booklet gives very valuable information on the gradual curtailment of civil liberties.



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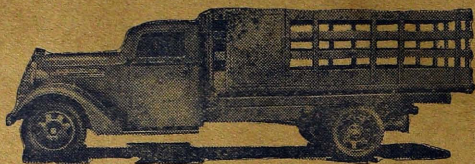
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