

STRUGGLE AND SEARCH FOR INDIA'S PATH TO NATIONAL REGENERATION AND SOCIALISM (1953-1961)

BASIC CLASS ALLIANCE AND THE SLOGAN OF POWER IN THE NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC REVOLUTION

Why was this Programme of 1951, and the Policy Statement which accompanied it, able to unify our ranks for the time being and to set us on the road of collective mass and Party work which enabled us to correct the mistakes of the Programme itself and advance further?

At the same time, despite the advance we made in the period from Madurai (1953) to Amritsar (1958) in arriving at a more and more correct understanding of the programmatic and policy issues of the present stage of our revolution, why did our differences on these issues erupt in a sharp form once again at Vijayawada and later? Why were we not able to use the generalisations of the 1960 Moscow Statement about the new path and possibilities of development which open up for the newly-independent countries in the context of the new epoch and the new stage of the general crisis of capitalism, for the purpose of solving our differences?

The author has given his answer in terms of his pet formula (of simultaneous and equal struggle against revisionism and dogmatism) to which we have referred to again and again. The author says, we (i.e. the majority) represent the successive corrections made by the Party of the wrong understanding of the 1951 Programme as a one-sided struggle against Left-sectarianism. That is why he thinks we fall into revisionist errors. He suggests, we are persisting in the non-class approach of June 1947 reso-

lution; we do not see that the conflicts in the present political situation arise from the fact of bourgeois nature of the government, and the capitalist nature of its economic and political policies which are being pursued in the third stage of the general crisis of capitalism when the utter bankruptcy of capitalism is working out to its logical conclusion. We look only at the progressive possibilities of the new epoch and over-rate the positive role of the national bourgeoisie and under-rate struggle of the masses against it and its government. Thus we tend to tail behind the national bourgeoisie and the government, tone down the mass struggles, fall into bourgeois nationalism and betray proletarian internationalism.

PARTY PROGRAMME OF 1951

Let us take up the first question. The author correctly points out that the "programme was permeated with a fundamentally dogmatic-sectarian outlook." He is right when he says that "It was a great improvement on the earlier ideological and political positions." It confirmed the correction we had already made about the stage and strategy of the present phase of our revolution in the June 1950 documents. While stressing the anti-imperialist and anti-feudal character of our revolution, it called for the creation of "a single democratic front" of the working class, the peasantry, the toiling intelligentsia, the middle-classes as well as the national bourgeoisie interested in the independence of the country and the development of prosperous life.

But when the Programme put forward as 'quite mature' the task of replacing "the present anti-democratic and anti-popular government", it characterised it further as "a government of landlords and princes and big business, collaborating with the British imperialists." It said the government was "tied to the chariot of British capital." It said the government was incapable and unwilling to take

up real industrialisation, incapable of carrying land reforms. It said the Republic was established to hoodwink the people. Actually it was establishing a sort of "a police state." It characterised the foreign policy of the government—the policy of non-alignment which was evolving then—as one of "spurious play between the two camps," as one of "flirting with USA," as one "facilitating aggressors' struggle against peace-loving countries."

In this characterisation of the government, the Programme did not differ at all from our June 1950 position and also not much from the position of the 2nd Congress thesis except that the latter ascribed this policy to the entire national bourgeoisie.

The author says it "rejected the non-class approach to the transfer of power made in June 1947 resolution." If by this he means that the Programme emphasised the struggle against the government and called it anti-popular, he is right. But then the former two policy shifts took the same position as the Programme.

BASIS OF UNIFICATION

If this is so, where lay the superiority of the formulations of the Programme and the Policy Statement over the former two positions? It lay in correctly defining the stage of the revolution and the strategic class alliance, says the author. Correct, but the position of the June CC was about the same. On this point, the June CC had correctly applied the teachings of Comrade Mao Tse-tung referred to by us earlier: so this is not a sufficient explanation why the Programme and the Policy Statement were able to unite us at least for the time being. The real reason for this is to be found in the fact that while the Programme gave us in general a correct strategy and a correct class alliance which corresponded with the actual phase of our revolution, the Policy Statement, brought us down to a sober appraisal of the actual political situation in the country, and settled

for once the debate between the "Russian path" and the "Chinese path." *It put us on the rails of building a mass movement and democratic unity fully utilising democratic possibilities which had arisen, to work out the specific path of Indian revolution by integrating Marxism-Leninism with the practice of our revolution and the concrete conditions of our national life.*

Unless we see this, it would not be possible to understand how a document "permeated with a fundamentally dogmatic and sectarian outlook" was able to take the Party out of the rut of utter Left-sectarianism itself. The explanation that "even the most sectarian formulations contained in the Programme did not appear at the time so unrealistic as they did subsequently", which the author gives, is negative. It is necessary to see the positive features of the Programme and Policy Statement which stood the test of practice and were developed by us further.

The great merit of the Policy Statement was that it stated clearly that the specific path of achieving proletarian hegemony in the democratic revolution, the path of unleashing anti-feudal land revolution, through armed partisan warfare and liberated bases, was not applicable to conditions that obtained in India after the transfer of power. This is explained in the Policy Statement on the basis of showing the difference between the concrete conditions of the two revolutions (*cf. also India Today and Tomorrow*, by RPD. PPH, 1955, p. 297-98). The Policy Statement also pointed out how a mechanical application of the "Russian path" which led to "the previous line of reliance on the general strike in the cities", neglected the "role of the peasantry."

STRUGGLE FOR INDIA'S PATH

It is necessary to emphasise here that the "Russian path" cannot be counterposed to the "Chinese path." Both are based on the Leninist principles of worker-peasant alliance

and the struggle for the hegemony of the working class in the democratic revolution. But these principles have been applied in different ways due to different features of the national situation in the two countries. Thus in the one the role of the general strike of the workers in the cities coupled with armed insurrection of the soldiers is dominant, while in the other the main reliance had to be placed by the working class on developing peasant partisan warfare and liberated bases through unleashing feudal revolution for land. In our case, we sought to mechanically apply first the former and then the latter path, in total disregard of the actual conditions in the country. That is why in our case

both the lines in practice meant ignoring the task of building the alliance of the working class and the peasantry as the basis of the united national front, ignoring the task of building the united national front, ignoring the task of putting the working class at the head of this front in the liberation struggle." (*Policy Statement*, May 1951)

Thus the Policy Statement took us away from the mistakes of mechanically applying either the Russian or the Chinese path and put us on the rails of struggling to work out "a path of Leninism applied to Indian conditions." It summed up the discussion thus:

Such an understanding of our perspective gives us a new outlook on how to build our mass movement, our trade unions, kisan sabhas and also a new way to build the Party. (*ibid*)

Regarding the stage of the revolution, the class alliance needed for it and about the slogan of power, the Programme cleared the former confusion and made formulations which could be developed further in the light of future experience and developments. It said:

While adhering to the aim of building a socialist society the Communist Party is not demanding the establishment of socialism in our country in the present stage of our development.

It said the pre-conditions for carrying out socialist transformation are not yet present in our country. But it regarded as 'quite mature' the task of replacing the present government by a new "government of people's democracy" created on the basis of a coalition of all democratic, anti-feudal and anti-imperialist forces in the country, which will carry out the tasks of democratic revolution and of national regeneration. It put forward the corresponding programme for this purpose and gave a call for building a People's Democratic Front, uniting workers, peasants, middle-classes, intelligentsia and the national bourgeoisie.

The third important thing which the two documents did is to turn our minds to a sober appraisal of the situation in the country. While the Programme stated that the task of replacing the government was mature, the Policy Statement simultaneously stated that the government is "not yet thoroughly isolated." It said:

But it would be gross exaggeration to say that the country is already on the eve of armed insurrection or revolution, or that civil war was already raging in the country. If we were to read the situation so wrongly, it would lead us into adventurism and giving slogans to the masses out of keeping with the degree of their understanding and consciousness and their preparedness and the government's isolation... We have to lead the struggles of the people in the context of a sober evaluation of the situation. (*Policy Statement*, May 1951, p. 9.)

The Policy Statement correctly warned that "the growth of mass movement has not kept pace with the growth of discontent against the present government and its policies and methods." This, it said, was due to the weakness of

the Party and to the division in the camp of progressive forces. So it advised:

The Party, therefore, must strive to overcome this division and must stress the supreme need for unity of all progressive forces, build this unity in action and itself grow into a mass Party by drawing into its fold the best elements from the fighting masses.

We must fight the parliamentary elections and elections in every sphere where the broad strata of the people can be mobilised and their interests defended. We must be wherever the masses are and would like us to be. (*ibid.*, p. 10)

Thus we see that the 1951 documents, though their outlook was fundamentally dogmatic and sectarian as we found later, were able to unify the Party and help us forward because they made positive contribution in correcting our blind Left-sectarianism on the question of strategy, class alliance and the programme of the present phase of the revolution on the one hand and on the question of the appraisal of the state of the movement and on the correct approach to take it forward. *They put us on the road to work out the specific path of the Indian democratic revolution and its transition to socialism by integrating Marxism-Leninism with the experience of our national life and people's struggles. At the same time, it left many problems unsolved. It had given wrong answers to many problems.*

UNSOLVED PROBLEMS

Some of the unresolved problems were: Class-character of the government; the role of national bourgeoisie as the ruling class in consolidating national-political independence and realising economic independence of the country—raising living standards of the people; lastly, the question of the path of the working class in the struggle to

achieve hegemony so as to direct the whole development to the completion of the national-democratic revolution and to its going over to socialist revolution.

All the same, the documents, helped us to unify the Party, revived the mass movement, gathered new strength and forces in the process and won a creditable place in the political life of the nation.

In this process of struggle, while grappling with the problems of economic and political development of the nation under the rule of the bourgeoisie and of the conflicts created by that development, we found that the understanding of the Programme was at crass variance with the reality. We began to change our understanding step by step, pragmatically and empirically. Some of the positions of the Programme regarding the role of the national bourgeoisie and its leadership in India were incorrect even at the time they were made.

Later, when the new world situation, new balance of forces between the socialist system and the imperialist camp—which was taking shape since the emergence of the people's democracies in Europe and Asia, developed further, it had profound influence on India. New possibilities opened up for India's independent economic development which could be made use of by the bourgeoisie as well as by the proletariat. It was necessary to make an appraisal of the consequences of the new development on our country, of the experience of the conflicts and struggles that were growing in the country, with an eye for the new and with a boldness to discard old modes of thought and work.

DIFFERENCE AT MADURAI AND AT PALGHAT

It was in the course of the struggle to shape new policy in this setting that differences arose amongst us again. These differences were not unnatural. The new world situation that was taking shape, the new balance of forces between the socialist system and the forces of national-

liberation on the one hand and world imperialism and capitalism on the other, which was making itself felt, required reappraisal, first of the national bourgeoisie and of the economic and political development taking place in the country under its rule, and second, of the paths of struggle which the proletariat and the democratic forces have to adopt in order to swing the development in its favour and in furtherance of its goal. This meant certain old positions which we held axiomatic had to be given up because they no more corresponded to reality; new paths and slogans of struggle corresponding with those new positions had to be found out to move forward. There was a resistance to move out of old outmoded positions. There was often a lag in finding new paths and slogans of struggle corresponding to these new positions. There were charges and countercharges of dogmatism and revisionism. But in the Party Congresses at Madurai (1953), at Palghat (1956) and at Amritsar (1958) agreements were reached and we moved forward.

The author accuses us of representing the process as one-sided process of correcting Left-Sectarian understanding and not as one simultaneous struggle against both revisionism and dogmatism. Actually, the main content of our moving forward was coming step by step to the understanding that, even in countries where the national movements headed by the national bourgeoisie wrest political independence from imperialism, either by military or non-military means, the possibility of consolidating that political independence opens up because of the new world situation, which is characterised by the crisis of the colonial system.

Similarly, as the world situation developed further, when the socialist system began to become the determining force of the epoch, then a further new possibility opened up before such countries viz., the possibility of advancing towards economic independence.

These two understandings were the main basis of our policy shifts from Madurai to Amritsar and they meant giving up certain old theoretical positions which no longer corresponded with practice and reality. In working out the programme and policy on the basis of this understanding, of course, both the deviations had to be equally fought. But making this basic shift meant a break with certain sectarian positions of the past, which we inherited from the distorted understanding of the Sixth World Congress thesis and from our own mistakes in the pre-independence periods.

This point will be clearer when we examine the questions of controversy that arose at Madurai and between Madurai and Palghat. They arose as we began to find that certain positions of the 1951 Programme were at variance with practice and actual development. They were bitterly fought then. Some of them were temporarily settled at Palghat and some at Amritsar. They have come up again in the context of programmatic discussion.

1. Has India achieved complete national independence and sovereignty? When? In 1947 or in 1955, when *we* agreed to recognise it? In this context, comes up again the question of the nature and class character of the transfer of power on August 15, 1947.

2. What is the class character of the Congress government that came to power? What is its relation to imperialism, British and American?—its relation to big monopoly groups?—its relation to landlords?—its attitude to anti-feudal tasks?

3. How do we appraise the economic development and planning—industrialisation and agrarian reforms—taking place under this government? Is it progressing in the direction of strengthening national economic independence though in a capitalist way under the present world situation? Is independent capitalist development possible in

India in the existing situation? What conflicts and contradictions it generates and their effects?

4. The Programme had correctly put forward the task of building the national-democratic front, including the national bourgeoisie, to carry forward the struggle for the completion of the democratic revolution, to carry out the programme of national regeneration. What was to be the attitude of the Party to the Congress which was the ruling party and to the other opposition parties? What were to be our tactics vis-a-vis the government in our fight against imperialists and reactionaries?

WAS INDEPENDENCE REAL?

Let us take up the first question. In the Third Party Congress at Madurai where we adopted the 1951 Programme in a proper Congress, two questions were hotly debated. One was the question of the foreign policy of the government, which no longer agreed with the description given in the Programme. Is it becoming independent of British and American influence, is it not one of peace and against aggression? Another question was: who is our main enemy—British or American imperialism? Madurai answered these questions by making a partial turn. It greeted the new positive features of government's foreign policy—initiative for peace on Korean War and for banning the atom bomb, but refused to change the Programme formulation saying that it was not yet a consistent policy of peace. To the second question, no direct answer was given but it was understood that the struggle for peace and struggle for democratic revolution could not be counterposed but are parts of the same struggle.

These controversies were connected with the key questions: Had India attained political independence? And what is real nature of the transfer of power in August 1947? In the pre-Congress discussion in preparation to Palghat this question was debated in 1955. We were then

discussing the draft resolution for that Congress and the draft amendments to the Party Programme. It appears strange now that such questions were at all discussed as late as in early 1954-55 when India's independent and peace policy had become clear (signing of panchsheel with China, etc.). But it is a fact. Questions whether to observe August 15 as a day of protest, whether to put up the national flag on that day were also discussed. But we have to realise that the question was discussed from a theoretical angle. India has not won complete economic independence from imperialism, how can it be free politically? Lenin was quoted to show how imperialism bestows varieties of "independence" on their colonies in order to hoodwink the masses and to retain their economic grip. Examples of Egypt and Philippines before the Second World War were there.

NEW WORLD SITUATION MISSED

Comrade Ajoy Ghosh gave a clear reply to this poser. Referring to the Marxist thesis that independence is never complete and secure until anti-imperialist, anti-feudal revolution is carried to completion, he said before the Second World War when imperialism wielded a decisive influence over the world, "independence" granted to many colonies by imperialism was of a formal character. He added

But today, the possibility has arisen even for a country with a backward, dependent economy to assert its sovereignty and act as a free country, because of the weakening of imperialism, and the existence of a powerful socialist world and an alternative socialist world market. India is not the only example. We can see what is happening in Egypt, Burma, etc. *Such things were inconceivable in the past, but they are happening today.* (emphasis added)

(Some Questions of Party Policy, PPH, Nov. 1955)

In the same speech, Comrade Ajoy Ghosh tried to give a reappraisal of the transfer-of-power in 1947. He said the national bourgeoisie compromised and got state power not in order to retain the colonial order but to use that power for struggle against it.

Comrade Ajoy Ghosh rightly said, "Such things were inconceivable in the past." If the national bourgeoisie of the colonial countries, which is incapable of completing anti-imperialist, anti-feudal revolution, comes to power, it cannot be political independence. This flowed from the analysis of the Sixth World Congress thesis and was valid in the era before the Second World War. But in the new stage of the general crisis of capitalism which spread with the victory of the Soviet Union and the emergence of the people's democracies in Europe, new conditions arose. Thus when our June 1947 resolution saw the dual nature of the transfer of power—both a retreat and a counter-offensive as far as imperialism was concerned and both a compromise and an advance as far as the national bourgeoisie was concerned. We were reflecting a real state of things. But it was in conflict with a theoretical proposition considered valid, thus and so we later declared it as nothing but revisionism in the Second Congress and even later.

Exactly same position was taken on this question in the circles of the international communist movement. E. M. Zhukov who toured in India in May 1947, writing in July 1947 about the Mountbatten award stressed only the betrayal by the big bourgeoisie of India with whom he identified the leaders of the National Congress. When the scholars of the Pacific Institute of the Soviet Academy of Sciences held a conference to study the factual data of the post-war national-liberation upsurge in the countries of South-East Asia in 1949, i.e., after the first Cominform meeting in September 1947, they too came to the same conclusion. They by and large took the same position as we did in our Second Congress. E. M. Zhukov in his report

of June 1949 wrote of "the metamorphosis of Nehru"—that he has now become "a servant of two masters—both Britain and USA...an ally of the Indian princes and landlords... a strangler of progressive forces in India."

The same writer in another pamphlet published later (1950) shows how fake independence is being forced by the imperialists in countries like India and Burma. In articles by Balabushevich and Dyakov our analysis of the Second Congress is repeated. Dyakov, following our Second Congress, criticised our June 1947 stand as Right-opportunist and said that "the acceptance of the Mountbatten plan was the greatest treachery on the part of Gandhi and the entire leadership of the National Congress." Such wrong formulations were made about Burma and Indonesia as well in these Academy reports and articles of 1947-50.

This wrong understanding was corrected both in the international movement and by us by about 1955. This is a case of dogmatic refusal to give up a theoretical proposition which is no longer fully valid in the context of the new balance of forces after the Second World War. This led to an incorrect understanding of the national situation. On its basis correct tactics of achieving proletarian hegemony in the struggle for consolidating national independence could not be worked out.

CLASS CHARACTER OF THE GOVERNMENT

Let us take the second question. What is the class character of the government? What is its relation to imperialism and the big monopoly group, to landlords and to anti-feudal tasks?

From the Second Congress Political Thesis (1948) to the Party Programme of 1951-53, we gave different definitions of the class composition of the national government formed by the Congress. In the 1948 Political Thesis, we said imperialism put the bourgeoisie into power as "junior part-

ner" to "guard the colonial order" (*Political Thesis*, p. 31). Later we said it was imperialist-bourgeois-landlord combine in which the bourgeoisie was the leading force.

In June 1950 we said it is big bourgeois-landlord government collaborating with imperialism which oppresses the national, i.e., the middle bourgeoisie. In the 1951 Programme we said it was "a government of landlords, princes and the reactionary big bourgeoisie collaborating with the British imperialists." The common feature of all these formulations was that the government of the National Congress was collaborating with imperialism, particularly British, incapable of consolidating independence, has no independent foreign policy and cannot carry out real industrialisation or radical agrarian reforms.

When at Madurai we began to see that the foreign policy was becoming one of peace and later in 1954-55 the trend got confirmed and further when in the context of the formulation of the Second Five-Year Plan progressive economic policy began to be formulated, then we began to re-examine the class character of the government.

Here again, Comrade Ajoy Ghosh, expressing the CC point of view showed the way to make a correct formulation. Recalling the basic analysis of the Sixth World Congress, Comrade Ajoy said that the government headed by the Congress represents the national bourgeoisie including the big bourgeoisie. He added: "No *section* of the bourgeoisie could be said to have *gone over* to imperialism though individuals might have. Contradiction between imperialism and the bourgeoisie as a whole remained... in that sense no section of the Indian bourgeoisie is interested in the *preservation* of the colonial order." (emphasis Ajoy's.) Stressing the dual role of the national bourgeoisie, he said, "it pursues policies of struggle with imperialism as well as compromise with it, all in the interest of strengthening its own position..." The discussion on this question was conducted in the pre-Palghat *Forum*

through which in all 10 discussion documents were issued, one of these documents was draft amendments to the programme prepared by the then CC. In these amendments the class character of the state was defined as follows:

State of the capitalists and landlords headed by the monopolists linked with foreign imperialist interests, mainly British.

This discussion was summed up in the Palghat Congress Political Resolution.

It is a bourgeois-landlord government in which the bourgeoisie is the leading force. Its policies are motivated by the desire to develop India along independent capitalist lines.

The resolution further says that with this aim in view, the government strives to weaken the position of British capital in India, curb feudalism to develop capitalism in the countryside, and develop the public sector. These measures brings the government into conflict with imperialism and feudalism.

Comrade Ajoy Ghosh in his speech at the Vijayawada Congress, which was adopted unanimously, gave an explanation of the 'new and richer' understanding which Palghat gave us, which must be borne in mind. He said:

The dual role of the national bourgeoisie was brought out clearly. While not minimising the compromising role of the bourgeoisie Palghat recognised the growth of 'conflicts and contradictions' between imperialism and feudalism on the one hand and the needs of India's economic development on the other, which was reflected in the growth of conflicts and contradictions between the Government of India and imperialism. Has this contradiction vanished?... No it has not. It has sharpened further... as a result our national independence rests today on a firmer economic foundation than before.

It was not easy for us to come to this conclusion at Palghat (1956). Some of us were sticking to the formulations of the Party programme to the last. "That India is a semi-colonial and dependent country continues to be valid since India's economic, financial and military dependence on imperialism—mainly British—continues." 'Re. the character of the government, we have to reiterate that it is a bourgeois-landlord government, headed by the big bourgeoisie collaborating with British imperialism.' (Note on CC Resolution and Com. Ajoy's explanation document by P. Sundarayya, M. Basavapunniah and M. Hanumantha Rao in *Forum*, 4th Party Congress Document No. 2, Oct. 1955)

This lag existed because of the resistance to break with the old understanding which the developments in the world situation had rendered invalid. We always recognised that the national bourgeoisie is interested in and struggles for both national political independence and economic independence from imperialism. But because of the new world situation real possibilities have arisen for the national bourgeoisie to use the state power to consolidate national independence and to advance toward economic independence; and it uses the state power for that purpose. That means we have to recognise that the national bourgeoisie in power moves forward liquidating the vestiges of colonialism, mainly to serve its own class interests and not in a revolutionary but reformist way—using both pressure and compromise against imperialism and feudalism.

TACTIC OF UNITY & STRUGGLE

It is only in terms of making this basic shift in understanding that we can work out our tactics of advancing the movement, building the democratic front, shifting the balance in favour of the proletariat—uniting with as well

as struggling against the bourgeoisie and the government—avoiding both reformist and sectarian deviations.

The author puts the matter differently. He says, dogmatism arises out of our failure to see that in the period of the most advanced phase in the general crisis of capitalism, bourgeoisie is bound to come into conflict and clashes with imperialism. On the other hand he says revisionism arises if “we ignore the reality that the bourgeoisie fights imperialism and feudalism precisely because it wants to strengthen itself economically and politically—strengthen its class rule.” (see pp. 74-75.)

The author says the national bourgeoisie is plagued with two major conflicts—conflict with imperialism and feudalism and the conflict with the mass of the Indian working people. If the former grows it adopts progressive policies; if the latter grows it adopts reactionary policies. So at different times according to circumstances the policy of unity and struggle has to be implemented.

Out of such a poser, we do not get the answer to the question: What is the general trend? Which conflict is tending to sharpen more—the first or the second? The fact is that the new world situation creates new opportunities and possibilities for the entire nation and people of consolidating national independence. Another fact characteristic of the new situation is that there is “a mass urge for consolidation of national freedom and national economy,” which Comrade Ajoy Ghosh rightly emphasises in his Vijayawada speech (p. 14).

Only in the context of this understanding can the proletariat and its Party correctly conduct the struggle to dislodge the national bourgeoisie from its position of wide influence on the masses. Where the national bourgeoisie uses the state power in the interest of the nation and the people, we support it. We oppose and struggle against it where it uses it against the people. But this tactics of unity and struggle has to be carried out not in a reformist way—

emphasis being not on cooperation but on struggle against the government, not on building up its prestige but demolishing it, leading the masses step by step to the realisation that the government behaves generally in this anti-people manner because of its bourgeois class character, rallying them further for the task of replacing the government.

THE TWO DEVIATIONS

But the setting in which the tactics of unity and struggle vis-a-vis the national bourgeoisie are to be carried out in the post-independence period is entirely different from that in the pre-independence period. Then the state power was in the hands of British imperialism and the united national front of the people stood against it and fought. National bourgeois leadership stood at the head of the front. The proletariat and its Party were in the front, pursuing the tactics of ‘unity and struggle’ with the leadership *within the front* in order to strengthen the revolutionary trend and counter the compromising trend.

In the post-independence period the situation is entirely different as pointed out by the author: the bourgeoisie is in possession of the state machine which it can use to further its own class interest. The old united national front was broken. The National Congress, which was the expression of a united anti-imperialist front was converted into a political party. The proletariat and its Party are now faced with the task of re-forming the united democratic front to complete the unfinished national-democratic revolution, to achieve proletarian hegemony in the same and march forward.

But the peculiar position now is that the masses and the class forces that are interested in carrying through this part of the revolution are divided: Some are under the influence of the Congress—the ruling party, while the others are under the influence of the opposition parties.

Besides, some of the opposition parties are more reactionary than the ruling party. It is in this complex situation that the task of building the new democratic front has to be performed. As we are dealing with only the general aspect of this task, it is enough to state here that this proceeds, in the main, in struggle with and in opposition to the government and the national bourgeoisie—while at the same time uniting with them when they facilitate anti-imperialist anti-feudal tasks. Here both deviations can arise: Left-sectarianism, when exclusive stress is laid on struggle neglecting unity, and reformism, when exclusive stress is laid on unity neglecting struggle.

Stalin has somewhere said that when the proletariat and its Party are in a united front with the national bourgeoisie, the main likely deviation is tailism—reformism. When the united front is broken and we are struggling to rebuild it anew in that phase the most likely deviation is Left-sectarianism. Something of that sort has also been our experience. The main conclusion that has again to be stressed—and this is the running thread of this presentation—is that only in the context of a correct understanding of the national task and situation of the period can we develop a correct class approach enabling us to fight both the reformist and Left-sectarian deviations equally.

CHARACTER OF ECONOMIC PLANNING

Next we come to the characterisation of the economic development and planning. The author (pp. 76-80) correctly sums up the discussion which took place in the Party in the period between Madurai and Palghat. He points how we criticised the First Five-Year Plan and gave an estimation that it would change nothing—it would meet with crisis after crisis. At Madurai we said that the country was going through “a maturing economic crisis and the initial stages of a political crisis.” This appraisal was made in the framework of the 1951 Programme which said that the

Congress government being in the grip of the imperialists and landlords would do nothing to alter the semi-colonial status of the country: so, according to us, the perspective was the crisis of the semi-colonial system.

PALGHAT ANALYSIS

The First Five-Year Plan was not a plan of industrialisation, no proper plan at all, as Jawaharlal Nehru himself admitted later. All the same its three main projects—Bhakra-Nangal (irrigation and hydro-power), Sindri (fertiliser) and Chittaranjan locomotive works—showed its character. It was to increase somewhat, India's irrigation and hydro-power potential, raise fertiliser production and begin rehabilitating our war-worn railway transport system. It resulted in some increase in food production, some rise in cotton and jute production which was hit by partition, and some rise in industrial production.

Our Palghat resolution noted this strengthening of the national economy, though it did not result in any change in the condition of the vast majority. The resolution also examined the plan-frame of the Second Five-Year Plan which put forward proposals for building heavy industry in public sector and for certain measures of land reform.

As stated earlier, our Palghat stand enabled us to break with the 1951 understanding and to come to the realistic appraisal that the government was pursuing policies of developing India's economic independence on capitalist lines. The proposals for industrialisation and land reform were supported; at the same time, the typical ‘capitalist way’ of implementing the same by making concessions to monopolies, by heaping burden on the people, leaving loopholes in the agrarian legislations in favour of landlords were to be fought. The dangers of this type of development were pointed out: “it would be of a slow and halting character making twists and turns giving rise to sharp conflicts and profound contradictions, they retard the sweep-

ing away of obstacles that stand in the way of India's development. They impose colossal burdens on the people, impoverish them—prevent expansion of internal market." (*Political Resolution*, 4th Congress of CPI, p. 23). On the basis of this analysis a practical line of support and struggle on the economic front was outlined.

The general understanding was enough in the beginning, when the progressive *basis* of the economic development proposed by the Second Five-Year Plan was first put forward. But various conflicts and contradictions soon arose. In our Amritsar Congress resolution, we noted that in the third year of the Second Five-Year Plan, the tempo of development had slowed down, food deficit had grown, production declined, there was foreign exchange crisis, burden of taxes and rising prices pressed heavily on the working people—while private sector reaped fabulous profits, and some states' plans began to be pruned down.

CONFLICTS & CONTRADICTIONS

Taking advantage of these difficulties, extreme reactionary forces in the country began to raise slogans directed against the progressive features of planning: curtail the public sector, give more concession to monopolies, adopt open door policy towards US monopoly capital, oppose radical land reforms. Our Amritsar resolution pointed out that these reflected the pressure which US imperialism was putting upon India demanding just these very things and a change in our foreign policy. This anti-national line the resolution said was reflected in the utterances of TTK, in the report of the Birla Mission and in the resolutions of the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry. These reactionary forces were identified as "holding strong positions in our economic life, controlling monopoly press, and having representatives in the Congress governments, etc."

The emergence of the Right-reactionary trend in the

political life of the country, which was discussed for the first time in Amritsar raised basic policy problems which became the subject in the sharp controversy at Vijayawada. At our Amritsar Congress in 1958, we were reviewing the national scene as it was emerging out of 10 years of economic and political developments after independence. Three main trends appeared to take shape in our national life.

On the one hand, the Communist Party and the democratic movement generally had registered a great strengthening in the last five years. Our participation in anti-imperialist struggles (Goa), in mass democratic struggles for the formation of linguistic states, our leadership of big working-class struggles, finally our coming out with an alternative line of economic development—all these resulted in the Party coming forward as a significant political force capable of mobilising and uniting the democratic forces to bring about a Leftward turn in national policies. This was reflected in our significant victories in 1957 general elections, of which the victory in Kerala leading to the communist-led ministry was the high watermark. At the other end, the forces of Right-reaction began to crystallise, seeking to divert the growing discontent of the masses in anti-democratic, anti-national channels. In the middle stood the Congress government by and large taking the road of non-alignment and independent foreign policy, and of consolidating national political and economic independence of the country; but in implementing the same, making compromises with imperialism and feudalism, pursuing anti-people and anti-democratic policies.

AMRITSAR ASSESSMENT

At Amritsar the problem before us was how in our struggle to unite the democratic forces for Leftward turn in national policies, we coordinate our fight against the rising Right-reaction with our struggle against the Congress go-

vernment. On the one hand reaction had to be fought; on the other hand, it was recognised that it is the anti-people policies of the Congress government which give rise to and strengthen Right-reaction. So the Amritsar Congress came to the conclusion:

The extreme right, therefore, cannot be defeated without a simultaneous battle waged with determination and vigour to defeat the anti-people policies of the government. Without such a two-sided battle, it is impossible either to defeat Rightwing reaction or to realise the targets of the plan." (*Amritsar Resolution*, p. 10)

These contradictory and conflicting developments in the economic field continued in the period between Amritsar (1958) and Vijayawada (1961). Its features were: (1) Further strengthening in the direction of economic independence, growth of heavy industries—iron and steel, oil, coal, machine-tools, etc.; extension of public sector mainly due to aid from socialist countries; (2) further consequences of capitalist development—growth of monopoly, concentration of economic powers; growing burden of taxation, price rise and inflation on the common people; crisis of foreign exchange; (3) greater penetration of foreign capital in private sector, greater dependence on foreign loans and grants.

DEVELOPMENTS BETWEEN AMRITSAR & VIJAYAWADA

These economic developments were reflected in the political happenings of the period from Amritsar to Vijayawada and up to 1962 general elections:

1. The Communist Party and its mass organisations launched big mass struggles on the working class and peasant fronts; when the Kerala government was dismissed the Party launched a broad nationwide democratic campaign rallying democratic opinion against the same despite anti-communist campaign by reaction in the context

of India-China border tension rising, the Party retained its position in the general elections.

2. Forces of extreme reaction grew still further, established an open independent political party, with some monopolists, landlords, former princes and ex-generals; further rise of communal parties in the north; anti-communist, anti-democratic trend pushed ahead taking advantage of frustration of the masses with Congress policies. In general elections extreme Rightwing registers advance at the cost of mainly non-communist 'Left' and also of Congress.

3. The National Congress and its government join hands in Kerala with the Muslim League and Catholic reaction to oust communist-led government, working anti-communist-frenzy. In the context of India-China border tension rising, Rightist and imperialist pressure on Congress gives rise to shift towards Right on certain issues. But basic policies—pursuing non-alignment and economic independence continues. Concession to democratic forces—formation of Maharashtra and Gujarat states on the eve of the election, military action to liberate Goa, despite imperialist pressure, to clear the rear anticipating developments in the north.

Thus the new and complex situation, which began to take shape by the time of our Amritsar Congress crystallised out more clearly by the time of our Vijayawada Congress.

OUR DIFFERENCES SHARPEN

The differences that arose amongst us on the question of understanding this new situation began after Amritsar and sharpened immensely at Vijayawada. The uneasy settlement reached at Vijayawada burst open again into a breach after the massive Chinese armed action in October 1962. Since then, with the Chinese Communist Party going over to attacking the major Parties of the inter-

national communist movement, including the CPSU, as modern revisionists, etc., and to attacking our Party as a clique subservient to reactionary bourgeois leadership headed by Nehru, the differences have virtually assumed the character of an open split.

The differences did not remain confined to the appraisal of the new, i.e., to the appraisal of the Right-reactionary danger and to working out tactics of healing the same. These differences spread to ideological and programmatic issues.

At Amritsar, the question of appraisal of the new situation was settled by the formula of "simultaneous struggle" both against reaction and against the Congress government. But the direction of our struggle against the Congress was to bring about a policy shift to the Left, while our general perspective remained as at Palghat—fight for people's democracy under the leadership of the working class.

After the overthrow of our government in Kerala, and when the Right-reactionary offensive gathered strength, some shift to Right became apparent in the policy of the Nehru government and when the India-China border differences sharpened; the differences on appraisal of the situation, of the rise of Right-reaction—became differences on a re-appraisal of the Congress government, its class composition and its economic and political policies. A trend arose, which said, you are over-estimating the significance of the emergence of the Right-reaction which itself arises out of the anti-people and anti-democratic policies of the Congress government; the reality to be grasped is the decisive Rightward shift in the policies of the Congress government which arise from the growing grip of the monopolists on the government. This expresses itself in the refusal of the Congress government to settle the border dispute with China.

About this time, the Chinese Communist Party leadership was also making a complete turn and stating that

Nehru government's policy is becoming reactionary and expansionist. This they put forward in their first article on the *Philosophy of Jawaharlal Nehru* (1960). Our Central Executive Committee, then headed by Comrade Ajoy Ghosh adopted an inner-Party resolution which criticised the stand of the Chinese Communist Party and the PRC government towards the border dispute and also stated that their appraisal of the Nehru government was incorrect. This resolution was sharply opposed by comrades from Punjab and Bengal. But all the same that resolution of the CEC formed the brief for our delegation to the Conference of 81 Communist and Workers' Parties held in Moscow in November 1960. The speech of Comrade Ajoy Ghosh, the leader of our delegation, was made on the basis of that resolution and emphasised the points mentioned above.

The Statement unanimously adopted by the Moscow Conference of 81-Parties in November 1960 was of great significance for the controversies that were going on in our Party. First, it gave a more thorough-going characterisation of the new epoch and the new stage of the general crisis of capitalism than the 1957 Declaration. Second, it gave a penetrating analysis of the new opportunities that had opened up for the national-liberation movements and for the newly-independent countries as a result of the new world situation.

MOSCOW STATEMENT ON NEWLY-FREE COUNTRIES

What is new in this analysis? First, it is a generalised scientific summation of the actual experience of the newly-independent countries—the new possibilities that have opened before them in the context of the new world situation. Second, it points out how the proletariat and its Party could utilise these possibilities in a *new way* to complete the national-democratic revolution and march forward to socialism. Both these features stand out in the main theses

put forward in the fourth chapter of the Statement of the Moscow Conference:

"The socialist system has become a reliable shield for the independent national development of the peoples who have won freedom."

"The existence of the world socialist system and the weakening of the positions of imperialism have provided the oppressed peoples with new opportunities of winning independence... The peoples of the colonial countries win their independence both through armed struggle and by non-military methods depending on the specific conditions in the countries concerned."

The threat of imperialists to re-impose their domination in new forms on these newly-independent countries is sharply underlined—*methods*: economic aid; military pacts; setting up military dictatorships and war bases; using such measures as bribing a section of the bourgeoisie, national strife and reactionary sections of exploiting classes. As against this the tasks of national regeneration are formulated on the basis of which the progressive forces of the nation in the newly-freed countries can and must unite, consolidation of political independence, uprooting imperialist economic domination, elimination of the survival of feudalism, development of national industry, improvement of living standards, democratisation of social life, independent and peaceful foreign policy, cooperation with socialist and other friendly countries.

What are the class forces and methods of carrying through these tasks to completion? First and foremost the *working class* which stands for complete and consistent carrying out of these tasks. *Radical agrarian reforms* in the interest of the peasants and the creation and extension of a *state sector* on democratic basis, in national economy particularly in industry—a sector independent of foreign

monopolies—gradually becoming a determining factor in the country's economy. These are the *methods*.

Means: Worker-peasant alliance and on its basis a broad national front. National bourgeois participate in this front; its participation because of the dual nature differs from country to country.

NON-CAPITALIST PATH & NATIONAL DEMOCRACY

In the newly-independent countries under the national-bourgeois leadership, as development proceeds on capitalist lines social contradictions begin to grow and the national bourgeoisie inclines to compromise with domestic reaction and imperialism. As against this another and a better path present itself before the people, i.e., the path of non-capitalist development.

How can people in the newly-developed countries switch over to this better path? By replacing the present bourgeois-democratic governments—or transforming them into independent national democracies. Independent national democracy is not bourgeois-democracy in which the leadership of the national bourgeoisie is decisive; nor is it people's democracy in which the leadership of the working class is decisive, that leadership having won the support of the overwhelming majority of the people. It is qualitatively different from bourgeois democracy because it is consistently anti-imperialist and anti-feudal, it rejects dictatorial and despotic methods of government—ensures broadest democracy and active participation of the people and their organisations in effecting social changes and shaping government policy. In such a state as distinct from bourgeois democracy the balance of forces is shifted in favour of the proletariat, in the sense that the proletariat shares power with the national bourgeoisie. That is why such a state becomes an instrument of promoting development along non-capitalist path.

How do Communist Parties in these countries work for

the setting up of national democracies in the newly-independent countries? By supporting those actions of the national governments for consolidating national independence and further undermining imperialist position; by firmly opposing anti-democratic, anti-popular acts of the ruling circles which endanger national independence; rallying all progressive forces to fight reaction which is tending to set up a despotic regime and which is seeking to break up national front under the slogan of anti-communism—exposing bourgeois politicians' efforts to cover up capitalist development and its evil consequences under the slogan of socialism.

Thus we see that in the theses put forward in the 4th chapter of the Moscow Statement, is summated in a generalised way the actual living experience of the last few years of the struggles and social developments in the newly-independent countries. But the summation is scientific and an attempt is made to indicate a new path of furthering the revolution utilising the new possibilities.

In the Programme and Policy Statement of 1951 our slogan of power was a people's democratic government based on a broad alliance of the patriotic forces including the national bourgeoisie and under the firm leadership of the working class. What was to be our path of struggle? In those documents we summed up and concluded our discussion on the Chinese or Russian path and said, "The grand alliance of the working class and the peasantry acting in unison, the combination of workers' and peasants' struggles under the leadership of the Communist Party, and utilising all lessons of history for the conduct of the struggles is to be the path for us." We also said that by "parliamentary methods alone" this government and the classes that keep it in power will never allow us to carry out fundamental democratic transformation, so the road for that has to be found elsewhere.

At the same time, as we stressed earlier these two

documents set us on the correct road of utilising fully the democratic liberties to build a mass movement of a broad democratic front.

SEARCH FOR INDIA'S PATH

Later as we advanced from Madura to Palghat and Amritsar, objectively evaluating the experience of mass movements and developments, understanding the impact of the new world situation on India, we came to a realistic appraisal of the class-character and the role of the national government. In this period we were evolving a path of struggle—combining the use of parliamentary institutions, with the development of mass struggles and a militant mass movement fighting against reaction to defeat its policies, developing tactics of unity and struggle vis-a-vis the national government and the national bourgeoisie—fighting against it to force it to change its policies in favour of the people, building a broad front of all patriotic forces with a programme of carrying to completion the national-democratic revolution.

While we were evolving this path of struggle and unity through practical experience, our slogan of power still remained people's democratic government as defined in our Programme (1951). But we soon began to feel the need of transitional slogan of power—which will be directly linked with the mass movement and the democratic front which we were attempting to build. So we put forward the slogan of a government of democratic unity for the states "where the democratic movement and the Party had attained sufficient strength." True, this was meant for some states where we were strong while for other states and on an all-India plane our slogan then was "a strong democratic opposition". This was put forward in May 1955 and later endorsed by the Palghat Congress as our slogan for 1957 general elections.

However there was a lot of discussion about this slogan

and no final clarity was achieved in shaping it as a general slogan. First, a government of democratic unity as conceived then—a government of Communist Party and its allies, which headed the unity of all patriotic forces which could be united to consistently carry out the anti-imperialist and anti-feudal tasks—was too narrow a conception in terms of the stage of the revolution. There was another slogan which came forward in the course of discussion—“the slogan of a national democratic coalition government, representing democratic elements inside and outside the Congress for carrying out agreed progressive policies.” Such a slogan had no reality because a division inside the National Congress and also in the national bourgeoisie was not an imminent possibility.

We have referred to this discussion to show that we were searching for a transitional slogan of power which would correspond to the path of struggle and unity which was being evolved—a combination of utilising parliamentary democracy with mass struggles—a path of building the broadest unity possible for completing national-democratic revolution.

POSSIBILITY OF PEACEFUL PATH

In 1958 at our Amritsar Congress we took one more important step forward in giving a scientific foundation to the path of struggle we were evolving. Taking our cue from the Declaration of the Communist and Workers' Parties of 1957, which defined how today in a number of countries opportunities have arisen for the working class and its party to create the necessary conditions for the peaceful realisation of the socialist revolution, we wrote in the preamble to our Party Constitution the following:

The Communist Party of India strives to achieve full democracy and socialism by peaceful means. It considers that by developing a powerful mass movement, by winning a majority in Parliament and by backing it with

mass sanctions, the working class and its allies can overcome the resistance of the forces of reaction and ensure that the Parliament becomes an instrument of people's will for effecting fundamental changes in the economic, social and state structure.

First, it must be clearly understood that the peaceful path defined here is not to be identified with “parliamentary path” of the reformist conception. In this bourgeois reformist conception of the parliamentary path masses are to be passive and democracy formal so what becomes decisive is not the will of the people but the power of the purse and its force. Peaceful path as defined in our Constitution is the most dogged fight by the majority of our people to utilise the democratic rights, freedom of speech, press and organisation, parliamentary democracy, won by our national-independence struggle, to enforce the will of the people in achieving the national and social objectives of today, it is a dogged fight of the awakened masses for the defence and extension of these rights against reactionary forces who would like to annul and curtail them, against such bourgeois ruling class which would like to reduce them to a formality.

Is this not an overestimation of the existing democratic rights? And if the overwhelming majority rises in peaceful mass struggles using these rights, will not the ruling class thus threatened resort to armed force to suppress them, to protect its rule and its institutions of exploitation? Must we then not be prepared to use counterforce and be prepared for non-peaceful path?

Marxism-Leninism teaches us that the proletariat and its Party have to utilise whatever democratic rights the people have won through struggle—to awaken the broad masses, to unite them to build disciplined class and mass organisations, to utilise them with self-confidence and revolutionary will to fight for the urgent national and social aims....

“Leninism teaches and experience confirms that the ruling classes never relinquish power voluntarily” force will have to be used to bring about a social change. Whether the force of peaceful mass struggle as outlined in our preamble, when it is backed by the overwhelming majority of the people and isolating the ruling classes, compels them to surrender or instead they hit back with their armed might at some stage or other depends on them. The proletariat and its party must never lose sight of this possibility, and be prepared for it. And that preparation first and foremost is the use of the existing democratic freedoms to awaken the masses, to rally them to build mass and class organisations, to inspire in them self-confidence and the revolutionary will for social change. Given such a basic preparation—a switch-over to non-peaceful methods when required would not be difficult. Without such a basic preparation attempt to switch-over to non-peaceful methods will either remain mere talk or lead to adventurism.

FIGHT FOR PEACEFUL PATH—ITS MAIN CONTENT

The main content of the proletariat's fight for the peaceful path is the dogged fight for the use of the democratic rights won for the defence of democracy and its extension. This brings out its revolutionary essence and demarcates it from its reformist conception. Lenin taught us in his *Two Tactics* and other works, that the proletariat and its party in their struggle to achieve hegemony in the bourgeois-democratic revolution, must be in the forefront of all in the struggle for democracy. In the present situation in India, we have on the one hand, a national bourgeois government pursuing in general a policy of non-alignment, of economic independence and of ensuring some democracy, while pursuing anti-people and anti-democratic methods, developing capitalism and facilitating the growth of reaction; and on the other hand we have the rise of reactionary trend which is seeking to subvert the national policies and the

democracy that exists. In such a situation, the path of struggle and unity, the path of building the broadest front of patriotic forces to defeat reaction and to force a Leftward turn in the policies of the ruling class, is essentially a fight for allround democracy and for a consistent democratic development.

The democratic content of our path of struggle and unity has got two aspects, the national aspect and the class aspect. The national aspect consists in the struggle for the consolidation of national independence, for securing economic independence, for allround national regeneration for elimination of all forms of feudal inequalities and backwardness. The class aspect consists in the exposure of capitalism and capitalist path of development, showing how class aspirations of the national bourgeoisie conflict with the national aspirations, in the struggle for the non-capitalist path of development. It consists in the struggle for eliminating and curbing foreign and Indian monopoly in our economy, and asserting the role of the toiling masses, of working class, of worker-peasant alliance in the same. Both the aspects are closely interlinked. Together they emphasise the fact that it is a path of building the broadest unity of the patriotic forces as well as of bringing to the forefront the role of the working class and worker-peasant alliance in the same. As a whole it is a path of widening and deepening the conquests of democracy—the precious fruit of our national independence struggle—a path of peaceful mass struggle—combined with the use of parliamentary democracy—for an allround national regeneration and for socialism.

NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT IN VIJAYAWADA RESOLUTION

The slogan of power which corresponds to this path of struggle, and to the broad front of all patriotic forces which we are trying to build is the slogan of replacing the present

government with a government of national democracy—or as our Vijayawada resolution calls it, the government of the national democratic front. At Vijayawada Congress neither of the two draft programmes before us—one which put forward the slogan of national democracy and non-capitalist path and the other which put forward the slogan of people's democracy, was adopted, as the programme itself did not come up for discussion. But in the resolution we accepted unanimously the slogan of the government of the national democratic front was adopted.

This slogan is raised in the context of a countrywide mass campaign for the realisation of the objectives of national democratic front. The resolution says:

If such a campaign conducted in cooperation with patriotic elements in every party, is sufficiently broad-based, militant and powerful it will bring about changes in government's policies, defeat and isolate reaction and shift the balance of forces in favour of the democratic forces, then a situation may arise when it becomes a practical possibility to raise the slogan of the establishment of a government of the national democratic front—a government representing the fighting alliance of all democratic forces in the country and pledged to carry out a genuine national democratic programme.

First thing to note here is that our Vijayawada resolution, soberly appraising the path of struggle and unity we are following—fighting to defeat reaction, pursuing the policy of militant struggle vis-a-vis the national bourgeois government in order to effect a turn to the Left and striving to build a broad front of all patriotic forces for the consistent carrying out of national democratic tasks of the present stage—considers that the slogan of a government of national democracy is the correct slogan of power which corresponds to the concrete conditions in our country and the path of struggle we are following. It is not raised as a slogan of

action but as one for which conditions will be ripe as our struggle proceeds shifting the correlations of forces in favour of democratic forces.

Second thing to note is that in defining the character of this government of national democracy, it emphasises both of its aspects. On the one hand it is described as “an organ of struggle against reactionary forces” which are trying to subvert national policies and on the other it is defined as an instrument of carrying forward the development in a non-capitalist way—though the actual expression is not used in the resolution. Thus the national as well as the class aspect of the government is correctly stressed.

Third thing is that the slogan is put forward as a programmatic one: “The formation of such a government will enormously strengthen the position of the toiling people in all spheres and facilitate the transition to socialism.”

This means that this slogan is put forward not as a transitional stage slogan—to pass over to the state of people's democracy.

What is the difference between the state of national democracy and the state of people's democracy? The class composition of both the states is the same. The programme they pledge to carry out is also the same. The difference consists in this that in people's democracy the alliance of the patriotic class is already under the firm leadership of the working class. In the case of national democracy in the alliance of the patriotic classes the leadership is shared between the national bourgeoisie and the proletariat.

STRUGGLE TO BUILD N.D.F.

Under what circumstances will the national bourgeoisie, i.e., its truly patriotic sections be compelled to unite with the working class and the democratic forces? This will not take place easily. Under the stress of economic developments—growth of capitalism and growth of monopoly,—a

reactionary trend is emerging in the country, represented by the Swatantra Party and some other communal parties which embody the reactionary trend outside the national bourgeois government. This trend is openly demanding the reversal of national policies—of non-alignment, growth of public sector, radical agrarian reforms and democracy. This trend by itself is not strong though growing. Inside the Congress—the ruling party, there is a Right-wing which is sabotaging the national policies from within, while the Left-wing which is emerging wants a vigorous “go-ahead” implementation of national policies. A process of differentiation is taking place in the national bourgeoisie and inside the ruling party. It is not very advanced and is proceeding slowly. The Left inside the Congress is yet neither assertive nor strong.

We have taken note of this differentiation in framing our policy at Vijayawada. This differentiation has not stopped but progressed further after Vijayawada, though the situation has been complicated by the consequences Chinese invasion and the intensification of the border conflict. At the same time US imperialist and neo-colonialist pressure on India is being stepped up. This is a further factor promoting the differentiation. At such a time the disunity of the democratic forces and the disunity in the Communist Party itself is a factor favouring the Rightward swing. But if this disunity can be overcome and a powerful national democratic movement gets going, then real possibilities will arise both for a differentiation in the national bourgeoisie and in the ruling party and for a shift in the correlation of forces in favour of the working class and the democratic forces. These then are the pre-conditions under which possibilities for the realisation of the national democratic front and subsequently of the slogan of national democracy arise.

The programme draft presented at Vijayawada by the majority stressed both these aspects. First, there is the

differentiation in the national bourgeoisie—between the reactionary monopoly sections of the bourgeoisie and other feudal anti-national groups and elements on the one hand and patriotic national bourgeoisie on the other. Secondly, under the impact of widespread broad national-democratic movement and struggles the reactionary anti-national elements are defeated and the Right-wing inside the ruling party isolated and the balance of forces shifted in favour of the democratic forces.

REVOLUTIONARY CONCEPT OF NATIONAL DEMOCRACY

Such is the revolutionary concept of a national democratic government. Such a government arises in the course of a bitter widespread national democratic struggle which brings about the isolation and defeat of reactionary monopoly sections of the bourgeoisie and other reactionary feudal elements. The unity with the patriotic national bourgeoisie is forged in the fire of the same struggle which is national in form and whose driving force are the worker-peasant and democratic masses. The government which arises on the crest of such a mass movement has no doubt contradictions within it—that between the national bourgeoisie and the common people; but under the constant pressure of the mass movement from below it is forced to act unitedly and implement the programme of national development, in the non-capitalist way, i.e., eliminating foreign monopoly, curbing Indian monopoly, carrying through radical agrarian reforms—extending democracy ensuring active participation of the toiling masses in the development. In this process the balance continuously shifts in favour of working class and of the worker-peasant alliance. This paves the way for strengthening the leadership of the working class in the state and thus creates the conditions for transition to socialism.

Such a revolutionary conception of national democracy is absent in the author's presentation. Why? Because he

does not recognise that in the context of the economic and political developments of the last ten years a certain differentiation in the national bourgeoisie—ruling class—is taking place. Reactionary monopoly groups, wielding economic power, are banding themselves with other reactionary feudal elements and are emerging as a distinct force seeking to subvert national policies and subvert democracy. Inside the national bourgeois government and in the ruling party, the Congress, there is a Right-wing which reinforces the compromising trend and prevents the consistent implementation of national policies. Because of these two factors and because of the division in the democratic forces and of the weakness of the Party—reaction as well as the Rightward trend in the ruling party is growing. If this situation continues to develop along these lines then we will have a reaction-Right-wing consolidation and anti-democratic subversion. If on the other hand the working class and the democratic forces pull up and forge unity to build up a broadbased mass movement spearheaded against reaction, at the same time waging a correct struggle against the national government, then conditions will arise in the course of the struggle for forging a national democratic front.

CRITIQUE OF AUTHOR'S CONCEPTION

Such a realistic appraisal of the present situation in India, which is posing two sharp alternatives before the democratic forces in India and which all thinking people recognise, is absent in the author's presentation. In his zeal to fight the revisionism of the majority which he thinks is exaggerating the reactionary danger because it wants to tail behind the national bourgeois government, he ignores or brushes aside the concrete and complicated features of the situation as is developing in our country. He no doubt sticks to the letter of the formulation of the Moscow Statement but does not imbibe its spirit and integrate it with

our actual experience and use it to perfect the path of struggle and unity which we have been trying to evolve from Palghat onwards up to Vijayawada.

The author is quite right when he says that the Moscow Statement teaches us "to acquire a militant attitude of exposing the capitalist path chosen by the bourgeoisie, without in the least forgetting the anti-imperialist and anti-feudal character of the revolution." But this exposure has to be concrete—showing how the development of capitalism is leading to the emergence of economically powerful monopolies groups—who are putting up their class interests against the interest of national development. Such an exposure enables us to evolve such slogans as nationalisation of banks, nationalisation of oil industry, nationalisation of export-import trade, and state trading in food grains and of commercial crops. These slogans are spearheaded against foreign and Indian monopoly groups and also against the Right-wing in the Congress government and party who support them. They are not directed against the national bourgeois as a whole. Their implementation would reduce the difficulties in the path of national development, reduce the burden on the common people, afford them relief. Explanatory campaign for such slogans in the course of the broad mass movement raised on this basis is the most effective and concrete exposure of the capitalist path.

The author quotes the Moscow Statement where it says that in newly-independent countries as social conflicts sharpen "the national bourgeoisie inclines more and more to compromising with domestic reaction and imperialism," and the common people begin to see "that the best way to abolish the agelong backwardness and improve their living standards is the non-capitalist path."

By sticking to the letter of these conclusions, he draws two conclusions. By one he makes the position of the national bourgeoisie in the national democratic front

problematic; and by another he visualises the national democratic front as rent with contradictions between the bourgeoisie and the common people, who confront each other with their respective paths—capitalist and non-capitalist. (See p. 94)

DIFFERENTIATION IN THE NATIONAL BOURGEOISIE

It is a fact that as social contradictions sharpen the national bourgeoisie inclines more and more to compromise, etc. At the same time the patriotic national bourgeoisie can be and had to be included in the N.D. front to complete the national democratic tasks. In such a situation as Leninists we have to address ourselves to the task of finding a way, in the given concrete situation, to stabilise the national bourgeoisie in the front, to neutralise its compromising inclinations. This can only be done by utilising the differentiation in the ranks of the national bourgeoisie. We have to defeat the reactionary monopoly groups and other reactionary elements, and to isolate the extreme Right-wing in the Congress and ruling circles, by unleashing a powerful democratic movement whose driving force are the working class and the peasant masses for consistent implementation of national policies. Such a movement can create conditions for uniting with the patriotic sections of the national bourgeoisie in the national democratic front.

Two conclusions emerge from this:

1. The national front against imperialism and feudalism is spearheaded against reactionary monopoly groups and other elements seeking to subvert national policies and democracy.
2. In the national democratic front thus formed there is sufficient unity of will and action to firmly and consistently implement national policies and advance forward to the non-capitalist path. There will be conflicts within the front but they will have to be solved

under the stress of the mass movement so that the unity of will and action remains unimpaired.

Such should be the general perspective and directions which we should have before us. Of course we cannot foresee now how exactly the differentiation in the national bourgeoisie will develop, how and under what circumstances the national democratic front will be formed, what exactly will be the form of our national democracy. These problems will be solved in the course of gaining experience of democratic mass struggles of the type of petition campaign and its follow up, our efforts to build broad unity for the slogans of the Great Petition which are spearheaded against monopoly groups and the Right-wing. Their solution will also need more painstaking studies of the various aspects of the economic development that is taking place under planning, of consequences of the development of capitalism that is accompanying it. This will need careful study of the differentiation in the national bourgeoisie, of the changes in the structure of the growing working class, of the class changes in the countryside as a result of whatever agrarian reforms which have been effected. This will need studies in the shifts taking place in political parties. Above all it will need a discussion of our line of work and tactics on the agrarian front taking note of the fact that the draft document on agrarian front and the controversial problems it raised have remained undiscussed at Vijayawada and ever since.

Having given our general understanding of the path of struggle and unity as formulated at Vijayawada, we now proceed to discuss the remaining issues raised by the author, viz., question of the state sector, consequences of capitalist development, character of different political parties and the tactics and problems of building up the democratic front, finally his summing on the alleged revisionism of the majority of the Vijayawada.