

COMMUNISM IN INDIA SERIES NO. II

NETAJI
and
The CPI

SITA RAM GOEL

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SOCIETY FOR DEFENCE OF FREEDOM IN ASIA

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THE CPI**

Sita Ram Goel

**SOCIETY FOR DEFENCE OF FREEDOM IN ASIA
CALCUTTA**

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Preface

This pamphlet is mainly an inventory of abuses and calumnies heaped by the Communist Party of India and Moscow on one of the most illustrious sons of Mother India. The readers may ask a question : Why should I dig up the past and rake up all this mud which was, perhaps, thrown about in the heat of a world war when passions ran high and the stakes were inestimable? I may assure them that the past has absolutely no interest for me if I find that the present has irrevocably turned away from it. But what I have depicted in this pamphlet does not really belong to the past.

The other day, Moscow shocked the Indian people by heaping abuse on the Father of the Nation in the pages of the *Great Soviet Encyclopaedia*. Sometime earlier, a newspaper in China had described Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru as “the running dog of American imperialism”. The Soviet weekly *New Times* dated January 1, 1950 wrote an article on Sri Jai Prakash Narain calling him “ *An Indian Agent of Transport House* ” who is “ *in charge of the Indian branch of the British Labour Party* ” and who “ *slavishly apes the manners and methods of his London bosses* ”. *New Times* dated January 24, 1950 attacked Sri Pattabhi Sitaramayya, then President of the Indian National Congress, as a “ *notorious person* ” and “ *a big-time profiteer* ” who “ *exploiting his high station made a good thing out of several carloads of goods which he bought in the state of Bikaner and resold at jacked-up prices in Pakistan* ”. *New Times* dated July 19, 1950 attacked Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia, “ the leader of the *so-called Socialist Party of India*”, as an “ Indian

pseudo-socialist now endeavouring to *smuggle through Washington's schemes under the flag of Socialism* ” and whose “ program for this ‘third camp’ shows that the latter is in fact nothing other than the aggressive Pacific Pact which the American imperialists have so long been trying to engineer ”. Moscow did not spare even the head of the Indian Republic, Dr. Rajendra Prasad. Commenting on ‘Events in Nepal’, *New Times* dated November 22, 1950 observed : “ Speaking on November 14, at the opening of Parliament, India’s President, Rajendra Prasad, stressed his solidarity with the king of Nepal who is staying in Delhi as a guest of honour. He took the occasion to make the *hypocritical assertion* that the Indian Government ‘respects the independence of Nepal’ although the facts show that it is interfering in Nepal’s affairs and *helping to consolidate Anglo-American control in that country*. At the same time he had the *effrontery* to denounce the Government of the Chinese People’s Republic for liberating Tibet”.

It would be folly to dismiss all this abuse and slander as a mere outcome of bad polemical habits which the communists have inherited from Marx and Lenin. Its intent and purpose can be grasped only if we undertake a thorough and serious study of communist scriptures and, thereby, acquire a knowledge of India’s place and role in the strategy of world communism—the ideological label under which Russian Imperialism stalks the world today. The road which Russian armies must follow in order to reach Paris still passes through Calcutta. The Russian war-lords are still maintaining a big corps of sappers and miners, the Communist Party of India, for clearing that road. So long as these sappers and miners find a place in this country, Moscow will never cease conspiring against our sovereign independence, our democratic way of life, our cultural heritage—in short, against our nationhood. If we allow the CPI to exist and grow in this country, we may sign any number of *Panchsilas* and exchange any number of “ cultural missions ” with Moscow

and Peking, our defeat and destruction is inevitable. The signing of non-aggression pacts did not save Finland, Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia, Poland and China from becoming victims of Russian aggression. All these countries except Finland are today helpless satellites of Moscow. Only Finland escaped that fate because she had never allowed the communist trojan horse to plant its feet on her native soil.

The fact that the CPI reacted so violently against Netaji is a significant pointer. Other people in India, notably Mahatma Gandhi and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, had differences with Netaji, But they never doubted or questioned Netaji's patriotism. It was the CPI alone which called him a "stooge", a "puppet" and "a running dog". Why?

The answer is very simple. The CPI cannot understand patriotism when it is directed towards a country other than Russia. Those who have doubts on this matter may read one little pamphlet, *Patriotism and Internationalism*, by the Russian writer S. Titasenko, available for about one anna from any communist bookstall. It says : "Love of country, native land, we call patriotism. But not every one speaks of the concept of patriotism in same way. In our times only the Communist and Workers' Parties, adhering to the platform of Marxism-Leninism, cherish and give expression to patriotic ideas. A patriot is one who exposes the aggressive plans of the Anglo-American imperialists and their accomplices. Proletarian internationalism not only does not deny patriotism but, on the contrary, is indissolubly connected with it. An internationalist is one who always and under all circumstances subordinates the national interests to the interests of the struggle for victory of the working class over the bourgeoisie. Internationalism places above everything else the interests of international proletarian solidarity. *The Communist and Workers' Parties regard the fostering of love for the U.S.S.R.—the fatherland of the working people—as one of their cardinal tasks. Devotion to the Soviet Union, the true place of socialism, a determined struggle against any anti-*

Soviet machinations by the enemies of the working class is the touchstone, the criterion of true proletarian internationalism. As early as 1927, the great leader of the peoples, J.V. Stalin said that an internationalist is one *who is ready to defend the Soviet Union unreservedly, unhesitatingly and unconditionally.* In fighting for the ideas of proletarian internationalism the Communist and Workers' Parties are at the same time fighting to foster among the working people love for and devotion to the Soviet Union."

Or read the pamphlet, *Are You For or Against the Soviet Union*, by Otto Kuusinen. He says : "The Soviet State not only differs radically from all previous states. It represents the materialisation of a great historic aim which the finest progressive minds of mankind had cherished for centuries. Politically conscious workers in all countries are aware that Soviet State is the first Socialist State in the world, the vanguard of the progressive forces of humanity. *That is why their deep devotion to the cause of Socialism and Communism is inseparable from an equally profound devotion to the Soviet Union. The need for solidarity with the Soviet Union is not a debatable question.* For the situation all over the world is such that without solidarity with the Soviet Union there can be no loyalty to Socialism."

So, that is the test. Netaji was bound to fail in that test because he loved his own country and his own people above everything else.

Calcutta
January, 1955

Sita Ram Goel

I

THE INDIAN SCENE

An important statement of CPI's faith was published in *Pravda* and the Comintern Weekly, *International Press Correspondence*, in the year 1930. Entitled 'Platform of Action of the Communist Party of India' it said: " The most harmful and dangerous obstacle to victory of the Indian Revolution is the agitation carried on by the 'left' elements of the National Congress led by Jawaharlal Nehru, *Bose*, *Ginwala* and others. Ruthless war on the 'left' national reformists is an essential condition if we are to isolate the latter from the workers and mass of the peasantry and mobilise the latter under the banner of the Communist Party. "

The communist press had, however, acquired a new attitude to Subhash Chandra Bose by the time he was elected President of the Indian National Congress in 1938. The January-March, 1938 issue of *Indian Student*, a communist quarterly magazine published by a Comintern front organisation, the Federation of Indian Student' Societies in Great Britain and Ireland, proudly front-paged a *Message From Subhash Chandra Bose*. Its editorial contained the following words: " By the time this issue is in the hands of our readers, Bose would have left England for India, where he has been chosen to succeed Nehru as President of the National Congress. We have no doubt that all of us in this country, both students and others will find in Bose a leader capable of inspiring the confidence of his countrymen. It is well-known

that he is greatly admired and respected by all the younger people in India, and those of us who have not met him before would now have had the opportunity of judging for ourselves why Subhash Bose is so *universally looked upon as one of those destined to lead India to freedom.* ”

In August 1938, *Ganashakti*, a Bengali monthly published by the CPI, forecast a struggle between the Congress Right and the Congress Left and exhorted Subhash Bose to inflict a crushing defeat on the Rights. The editor observed: “ Subhash Chandra is the Congress President. The popular notion that he is President of the Congress due to Mahatma Gandhi’s support is a half-truth. Subhash Chandra is the Congress President because the burning desire of our people to be free is symbolised in him. If Subhash Chandra renounces that will to freedom and submits to the constitutionalists, he will remain a Congress President only in name. Any future conflict between Subhash Chandra and the constitutionalists in the Working Committee will be a conflict between the freedom loving loving people on the one hand and the Constitutionalists on the other. The conflict can be resolved only by inflicting a crushing defeat on the Constitutionalists.”

Welcoming the Bose Plan announced by Subhash Chandra Bose on the eve of Tripuri Congress, *New Age*, monthly organ of the Communist Party of India, commented editorially in its issue of January 1939, that “ the Plan of Sjt. Subhash Bose means a complete reorientation of the Congress policy and organisation ” and that “ it would undoubtedly receive the backing of the entire left. ” The Communist Party of India was determined “ to carry it through at Tripuri. ”

The Communist Weekly *National Front* dated February 12, 1939 exhibited a message under Subhash Chandra Bose’s signature on its front page. Writing his ‘Notes on Bose’s Plan of Action,’ in *New Age* of February, 1939, Comrade B.T. Ranadive observed : “ Subhash Bose’s

plan constitutes the first attempt of a National leader to replace criticism of the present policy by a concrete and alternative *line of action*. The Left must welcome it as such and recognise in it the initial step to depart from the present policy of constitutionalism and compromise on all fronts. It has an added significance since it comes from one who is not only a left leader, but also a *national leader*. Rejection of Bose's plan will mean rejection of struggle in the most important period of our national policy. " Ben Bradley, the British boss of the Indian comrades, came out with another article—'The Congress Must Decide'—in the next issue of the *New Age* i.e. March, 1939. He wrote : " The significance of the re-election of Subhash Bose as President is not lost upon us. The coming year will be a year of upheaval ; under President Bose we are stepping forward to challenge imperialism. "

The *National Front* brought out a special issue on March 12, 1939, the eve of the Tripuri Congress. The first page displayed a statement—'Indian Communists Call for All Round Unity, All round Advance'—issued jointly by P. C. Joshi, A. K. Ghose, G. Adhikari, R. D. Bharadwaj, Muzaffar Ahmed, Somanath Lahiri, B. T. Ranadive, S. S. Batliwala, S. A. Dange, S. V. Ghate, S. G. Sardesai, Bankim Mukherjee, S. S. Yusuf, S. S. Mirajkar, J. Bukhari and Abdul Halim. They declared : " President Bose has given us a plan. Rejection of the policy embodied in President Bose's plan means to wait for imperialism to make the next move, to disown the existing struggle of workers and peasants, to isolate the State people's movement from the general struggle against imperialism. The path can only lead us to disruption and defeat. "

But as soon as the Communists found that Subhash Chandra Bose had suffered a reverse in the Tripuri Session, they turned against him. Blaming Subhash Chandra for the defeat at Tripuri, *New Age* of April, 1939 wrote editorially : " With Bose as the President, the Left was in a position

to sieze the initiative. This was not to be. The proposal of the Communists was not liked by the Rashtrapati, probably under pressure from the left-nationalists. The failure of Bose to take the initiative left the field free to the Right and they were not slow to take advantage of the situation. ”

And when Subhash Bose resigned the Presidentship of the Congress on April 29, 1939, the Communists discovered that he and his followers were “ objectively ” playing the role of British agents ! R. D. Bhardwaja wrote in *New Age* of May, 1939 : “ The greatest and the specific danger of the period, *within the ranks of the Left*, comes from the disruptive, provocative tactics of the ultra-left sectarians. It objectively amounts to the same result which Imperialism is frantically attempting to bring about, by its policy of trying to disrupt the national front. It is thus a gratuitous gift to imperialism in the form of helping it to wean the reformists with their mass basis to itself. It is the line of complete disruption, the line of giving up the fight for realising the revolutionary possibilities of the specific situation to-day, when the entire national forces including the national reformist bourgeoisie can be won over to struggle against imperialism. In this connection we must deal with the theory of ‘alternative leadership’*, the theory of fighting for a ‘consciously revolutionary leadership as a precondition of the revolutionary struggle’* on the part of the Congress. To speak of a consciously revolutionary leadership coming into existence as a precondition of such struggle, as it were from nowhere and being installed into leadership by a magic wand, can only be the dream of romantist babblers and talkers and not of serious revolutionaries. *Hence the necessity of carrying on a consistent theoretical*

* These were the slogans of Sri Subhash Chandra Bose before and after Tripuri, in fact, ever since his thought-provoking book *The Indian Struggle* was published in 1935.

and practical struggle against the mechanical theory of 'alternative leadership'. ”

Nevertheless, the CPI did not break immediately with Subhash Chandra Bose and formed a 'United Front' with him as soon as the Forward Bloc was formed. We do not possess any communist documents pertaining to this period i.e. from June to December 1939 when the Communists were collaborating with Subhash Chandra Bose under what was called the Left Consolidation Committee. So we cannot directly quote what they were writing and saying during that period. We have, however, a statement by Subhash Chandra Bose included in his long essay, *Forward Bloc—Its Justification*, written by him in Kabul during February-March 1941, and published as an Appendix in his book, *The Indian Struggle, 1935-42*. After telling us how the Left-Consolidation Committee was formed in Bombay in June 1939 and how the Radical League led by M. N. Roy defected from it on July 9, 1939, Subhash Chandra Bose writes on page nos. 89-93 :

“ The next-blow struck at the Left-Consolidation Committee was in December, 1939, when a breach between the Forward Bloc and the National Front took place. The relations between the two had hitherto remained close and cordial. For instance, when the Anti-Imperialist Conference was held at Nagpur in October, on the eve of the meeting of the Congress Working Committee at Wardha, the National Front enthusiastically participated in it, along with the Forward Bloc, Kisan Sabha and others, though the Congress Socialists from other provinces outside C. P. and Berar did not. And after the Congress Socialists withdrew from the L.C.C. later in October at Lucknow, the Forward Bloc and National Front continued to collaborate. It was, however brought to the notice of the Forward Bloc that the National Front had been carrying on propaganda against the former while outwardly collaborating on Left Consolidation

Committee. What is more, it appeared that in an official journal of the National Front, an official article appeared painting the Forward Bloc as a counter-revolutionary organisation and adversely criticising it in many ways. This matter was brought up at a meeting of the leaders of the Bloc and of the National Front held in Calcutta in December 1939. The latter refused to disown the above article or to withdraw it. There-upon they were told by the Forward Bloc leaders that a 'counter-revolutionary' organisation could not collaborate with the National Front on the Left-Consolidation Committee.

“ The attitude of the National Front leaders showed that they wanted to use the platform of the L.C.C., for popularising their organisation, while carrying on reprehensible propaganda, both secret and open, against a component unit of the Committee.

“ This breach was further accentuated by a conflict between the Bengal Branch of the Forward Bloc and of the National Front over some other issues.

“ Even before the Left-Consolidation Committee was started there was in operation something like a L.C.C. in Bengal. As a result the Leftists were in an overwhelming majority in the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee, the dominant partners in the Leftist Combination being those who later on joined the Forward Bloc when it was formed. The Leftist Combination naturally became stronger when the Left Consolidation Committee was started on an All-India Basis.

“ After the 9th July 1939, disciplinary action was taken against the President of the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee (i.e. myself) by the Congress Working Committee for participation in the All-India Day. This was resented by all the Leftists in the B.P.C.C. including the National Front and a united protest was made by them. It soon became apparent that the above action of the Working Committee

was but the beginning of a long chain of unwarranted interference and persecution on the part of that Committee. All the Leftists in the B.P.C.C. then resolved not to submit meekly to the Working Committee but to continue their protest. After a few months, it became evident that the Working Committee was determined to go to any length, including the suspension of the valid B.P.C.C., and the setting up of an Ad Hoc Committee instead. At this stage the National Fronters in the B.P.C.C. began to show signs of weakness as well as reluctance to continue their attitude of protest against the high-handed action of the Working Committee. This was regarded by the other Leftists as something like an act of betrayal in the midst of a grim fight and it looked as if the National Fronters were frightened at the prospect of disciplinary action. But the National Fronters wanted to cloak their real motive and they tried to side-track issues by saying that instead of engaging in an organisational conflict with the Working Committee, the B.P.C.C. as a Leftist body should launch a struggle against the government on the issue of civil liberty. The other Leftists were quite prepared to do this but they wanted to continue their organisational protest against the Working Committee simultaneously. Ultimately, after a period of tension, an agreement was arrived at between the National Fronters and all the other Leftists in January, 1940, whereby the B.P.C.C. was to launch a struggle on the issue of Civil Liberty and the National Fronters were to join other Leftists in continuing protest against the Working Committee. Towards the end of January 1940, the B.P.C.C. launched the movement as agreed upon and public meetings began to be held in defiance of the official ban. *But after some time it was noticed that when the National Fronters held any public meeting, they did so after obtaining the permission of the authorities.* In July, 1940, when the B.P.C.C. launched the Holwell Monument Satyagraha, not only did the National Fronters not join it—but some of them actually opposed it.

Further-more, after the All-India Anti-Compromise Conference at Ramgarh in March, 1940, when the Forward Bloc announced the launching of a nation-wide struggle, the National Fronters did their best to resist that move as well.

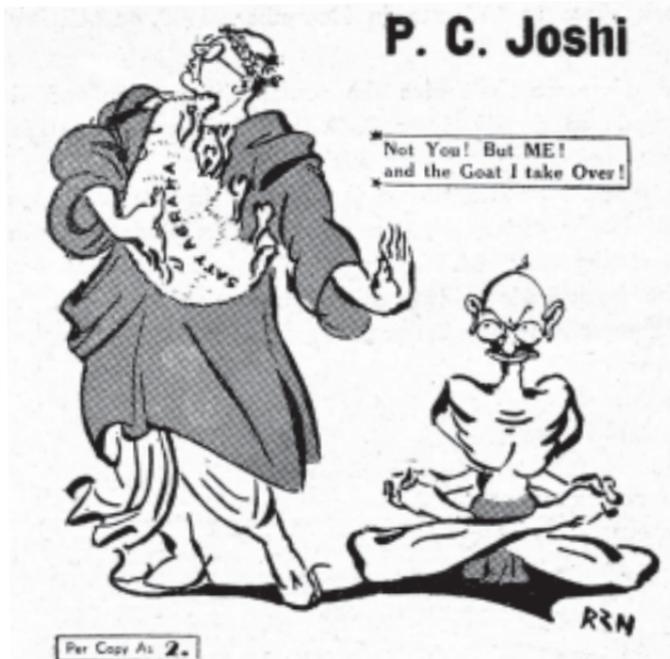
“ So much about participating in a struggle. With regard also to joining in the protest against the Congress High Command, the National Fronters did not fulfil their part of the agreement and they began to drop off. When the Working Committee in an unwarranted and illegal manner suspended the valid B.P.C.C. which had been dominated by the Leftists and set up an Ad Hoc Committee instead, the National Fronters quietly parted company with the other Leftists. The latter decided to ignore the fiat of the High Command and the valid B.P.C.C. continued to function. The National Fronters at First made a show of neutrality by declaring that they would not join either side. A little later, however, they began to apply to the Ad Hoc Committee for the recognition of their membership. Today they have cast off all sense of shame and openly declare that they cannot sever their connections with the Congress Working Committee.

“ The behaviour of the National Fronters in Bengal towards the Forward Blocers and other Leftists there, had repercussions in the All-India field and served to widen the breach between the two organisations which took place at Calcutta in December, 1939, on All India issues. ”

Now we shall give the communist version of this episode as described by P.C. Joshi in his article, *Whom, How And Why Does Bose Fight*, issued by the CPI in March 1940. The article is included in the book *Unmasked Parties and Politics*,—a severe denunciation of Gandhism, the CSP, M.N. Roy and Subhash Chandra Bose. The book had an interesting cartoon on its cover. We are reproducing below :



The article on Subhash Chandra Bose was also illustrated by the following cartoon :



Joshi argued : “ From its very inception Forward Bloc as an organisation was a flop. To support Bose politically tens of thousand came. Inside his organisation were a handful of disgruntled elements from Dr. Kar’s supporters to renegade communists like N. Dutta Mazumdar. Coming events were casting their shadows before.

“ There was surging atmosphere of struggle. Left had been campaigning for a nation-wide struggle, under the Congress, for achievement of national freedom. When war broke out, the question of national struggle became an immediate issue, a practical question.

“ The national leadership did not pursue the path of struggle but of settlement. The Working Committee would not give a call for struggle. ‘Let us demand a national struggle from the national leadership’, said the Forward Bloc, ‘but we must be prepared to start a struggle on our own.’

“ The Communists argued that a national struggle today was a practical possibility only through the Congress. The Congress had to be led into action. To think otherwise was to be blind. The course of action the communists suggested was an immediate organisation of local mass struggles against the economic and political effects of the war. *The Congress must unify all these struggles as people’s united organisation for an immediate national struggle. Through struggles to a national struggle. This was our line.*

“ The situation in Bengal since the very outbreak of war had become intolerable. Huq through an ordinance of his own had sought to make Bengal proof against struggle. A province-wide mass struggle in Bengal would have transformed the situation. Bengal Congress was under Left leadership and a struggle through Bengal Congress would have shown the path of struggle to millions of Congressmen. *A province-wide struggle in Bengal would have rendered a national struggle inevitable. These were the great possibilities. Their successful realisation depended particularly upon Bose. He was the unquestioned leader of Bengal Congress and the*

Forward Bloc was the strongest single group inside Bengal Congress. Bengal was the strongest sector of people's front of struggle. Exactly for the same reason Bengal invited the wrath and special attention of the anti-struggle national leadership.

“As a part of their general drive against the Left, they imposed the three years ban on Bose. The first reaction of the Forward Bloc was to defy it. We counselled against it on the ground *that a defiance of the Working Committee on the organisational issue would be playing into its hands.* Then came the trouble over the Election Tribunal. Once again we took our stand against those who suggested a revolt. Blows from the right came raining in.

“ There were two ways of fighting the offensive from the Right—the bourgeois and the proletarian. The bourgeois way meant making constitutional arguments against the unconstitutional acts of the Working Committee. The bourgeois leadership could not be fought in the bourgeois way. The proletarian alternative was not a constitutional but a *Political* alternative ; it was based not on demonstrating a lawyers' skill but initiating a people's struggle. To adopt the bourgeois way meant creating Left disruption against Right disruption, not avoiding a split but creating a split and rendering a struggle itself more difficult thereby.

“ Rapidly marching events left no choice for Bengal Congress. In December we communists broke with the Forward Bloc. Bose wanted to give a call for national struggle for Swaraj and was against an immediate struggle for civil liberties and against a call for satyagraha for Swaraj either through the Forward Bloc or the Left. Bengal Congress under *Left* leadership had stomached more imperialist terror than the Congress had ever done under Right leadership. What was such Leftism worth ? Was it Leftism? Was it not just using Left slogans to escape struggle ?

“ After the appointment of the Ad Hoc Committee the B.P.C.C. had to choose its course of action finally. The Forward Bloc sought an agreement with us. We agreed

to defy the Ad Hoc Committee *provided* the existing B.P.C.C. launched a struggle for Civil Liberties beginning from 26th January—Independence Day. No preparations for struggle were made. The Central Council of Action was hardly functioning.

“ What would we say of a Congress leadership that attacks the Working Committee for being anti-struggle and does not itself launch a struggle ? Is it actual struggle or a paper resolution that related an immediate struggle to the ultimate struggle? To refuse to launch an immediate struggle when it would have brought the ultimate struggle itself nearer is to refuse to be serious about any struggle at all. *Promise* of struggle in the future and *immediate* disruption. Bourgeois politics produces the same result—whether it works its way from the Right or the Left.

“ We would whole-heartedly participate in any call for satyagraha given by the Congress. *We would oppose, if it ever gave, the Forward Bloc call of satyagraha for Swaraj* because it would be *qualitatively* a different thing. Workers, peasants, students have already adopted the proletarian technique of struggle—mass action. They have already come under the influence of Socialism. The effort of the Forward Bloc to win over these movements for its satyagraha or political policy has to be resisted as the infiltration of bourgeois influence over the masses. Before the working class, Kisan and student workers, the Forward Bloc has to be opposed not as being too Left but as *being the disruptive agency of the bourgeoisie*. In fact the Forward Bloc exactly does what the Right wants done—remove their fear of the growing unity of the working class and kisan movements with the Congress.

“ One can tear off the hair of one’s head looking for some scientific system in Bose’s politics. He is happy without it. Gandhi relies on his ‘inner’ voice—Bose goes by intuition. We get behind Messiahs who are prepared to lead provided we

follow them in their blindness. Such is the debacle to which bourgeois leadership, whether Right or Left, is reduced.

“ Left nationalism, organised under the Forward Bloc, was born as an *independent* political force five months before the war. Five months of rapidly marching events after the outbreak have turned it into its very opposite and left it neither as genuine leftism nor good nationalism. It acts not as a progressive but as a retrogressive force. Its words are Left, its practice is anti-struggle, anti-unity, its aim remains settlement with imperialism.

“ For a national struggle, Bose wants another Congress. In the name of struggle he disrupts the very organ of struggle and thereby renders struggle itself impossible. He only scatters to winds the achievements of the past struggles—the national unity they created and which is today embodied in the Congress. To raise the slogan of another Congress is not to be pro-struggle but just a disruptor, pure and simple. The slogan of another Congress is not only a cover for an anti-struggle policy, is not only disruptive of national unity but is an alternative road to compromise.

“ He does not struggle against compromise ; he seeks to canalise the anti-compromise feeling towards himself. Instead of fighting against compromise he is only waiting to take advantage of it. On the basis of neo-Swarajyism, Bose cannot create a breach between the bourgeoisie and the existing bourgeois leadership, nor can he win the abiding loyalty of the masses. He can only shoot a racket and see it going up, in smoke. ”

The number of contradictions contained in this statement is really amazing. The different sentences cannot be reconciled with each other unless one takes refuge in *dialectics*.

Finally, the CPI discovered the class-roots of Forward Bloc “adventurism” and consigned it to their Marxist limbo. The secret letter of the Party—*Our Tasks*—issued in

September 1940 defined the programme and practice of the various leftist parties. Coming to Forward Bloc it stated : “ Programme—Fight against compromise, National struggle, Anti-imperialism, Opposition to war ; Practice—Factional opposition, Disruption, Kowtowing to communal reactionaries, National Government and National Defence.” Tracing the “ class roots of this collapse ” the *letter* observed : “ What is the class base of the Forward Bloc ? Oppressed and impoverished Bengal petty-bourgeoisie was further reduced to extreme straits by the collapse of the Permanent Settlement. Disillusioned with Gandhism in the crisis of 1929-32, it turned to terrorism and turned its back upon bourgeois reforming. But unable to come over to proletarian revolutionary position, it fell back into the clutches of an alternative bourgeois reformist line (Bose) masquerading as left. This is the base of the Forward Bloc.”

How to explain these contradictions in the various statements of CPI ? There was nothing in the background of the Indian national struggle which could explain this communist zig-zagging regarding Subhash Chandra Bose. Right from 1930 to 1941 Sri Bose was consistently advocating one policy—no compromise with British Imperialism and all-out struggle—violent, non-violent or combined—to oust the British rulers from India. It was in pursuit of this policy that he argued with Mahatma Gandhi, challenged the Congress Right in an open election, tried to consolidate the Congress Left for providing an alternative leadership, launched the Forward Bloc, suffered expulsion from the organisation in which he had worked for years and finally left the country in search of allies and aid. All these years, the CPI also advocated no-compromise, all out struggle, Left-consolidation and an alternative leadership etc. Apparently, there was no ground for CPI's conflict with Sri Subhash Chandra Bose. Why, then, did the CPI behave so shabbily towards a great leader?—the CPI whose stalwarts could not mobilise even the tiniest

village against the British, not to speak of organising “revolutionary battles” in terms of which the Joshis, Adhikaris and Ranadives constantly bragged.

The explanation is provided by Sri Subhash Chandra Bose himself. Analysing the “possibilities for developing an alternative leadership” that existed in India during the period under reference, he wrote: “These was an opportunity for the Communist Party—then functioning under the name of ‘National Front’—to come to the forefront. But the Communist Party, besides being numerically small, *lacked a proper national perspective* and could not develop as the organ of national struggle. *Not having its roots in the soil*, this party very often erred in estimating a particular situation or crisis and consequently adopted a wrong policy.” (*The Indian Struggle, 1935-1942* by Subhash Chandra Bose, Pp.25-26).

In the next chapter, we shall develop the background of Russian foreign policy which ultimately directed the policies of the CPI. It will be seen that the CPI’s statements immediately fall into a consistent whole as soon as their Russian alignment is dragged into light.

II

THE RUSSIAN BACKGROUND

The Sixth Congress of the Communist International which met in Moscow in 1928 adopted a detailed *Programme* and a *Thesis* on the *Revolutionary Movement in the Colonies and Semi-Colonies*. Defining the role of Social-Democrats the *programme* laid down as follows : “It is capital’s herald and organiser of the struggle against the dictatorship of the proletariat in the U.S.S.R. In its systematic conduct of counter-revolutionary policy, social-democracy operates on two flanks; the right wing of social-democracy, avowedly counter-revolutionary, is essential for negotiating and maintaining direct contact with the bourgeoisie; the left wing is essential for the subtle deception of the workers. The principal function of social-democracy, at the present time, is to disrupt the essential militant unity of the proletariat in its struggle against imperialism. International social-democracy of all shades have thus become the last reserve of bourgeois society and its most reliable pillar of support. ”

Applying this basic approach to the colonial question, the special *Thesis* of the Comintern instructed its cohorts in India to “ utilise the connections of the existing workers’ and peasants’ parties with the toiling masses for strengthening *their own party* ” and to “ mercilessly expose the nationalist-reformist leaders. ”

It was, therefore, inevitable for the CPI not only to denounce the Indian National Congress as a whole, but also pay special “ compliments ” to the “ left elements of the National Congress led by Jawaharlal Nehru, *Bose*, *Ginwala*,

and others. ” although, at this time, the leftist leaders of the Indian National Congress were moving heaven and earth to defend the “ vanguard ” of the CPI whom the British Government of India had arraigned in the Meerut Conspiracy Case.

The Communist Party of India, however, was, too insignificant and too isolated from the Indian masses to have any decisive influence on the course of *our* national history. In Europe, on the other hand, the Communist Parties were important and, by directing all their hatred and fight against the Social Democrats, they became accomplices of Fascism and Nazism everywhere. The greatest disaster took place in Germany where Hitler exploited the split in democratic and socialist ranks, created by the Communists, and rose to supreme power in a span of five years.

The significance of Hitler’s triumph was at first lost on the communist leaders in Moscow and their Comintern subordinates. Neither the Comintern nor The German Communist Party (KPD) would admit that the German working class had suffered a disaster. On 15th February 1933, Radek wrote : “ A party that receives six million votes, deeply linked with the whole history of the Germany working class, cannot be dismissed from the balance-sheet of history. ” The Comintern organ *Rundschau* declared on 1st April 1933: “ The momentary calm after the victory of fascism is only a passing phenomenon. The rise of the revolutionary tide will inevitably continue. The resistance of the masses against fascism will inevitably increase. The open dictatorship of fascism destroys all democratic illusions, frees the masses from the influence of the social-democrats, and thus accelerates the speed of Germany’s march towards the proletarian revolution. ” This eloquent April-foolery was poor consolation to the communist leaders in Hitler’s prisons and concentration-camps. The Reichstag fire, the expulsion of the communists from the cowed assembly, the mass arrests and the Brown Terror made little impression on the Comintern.

Refusing to admit defeat, Moscow ordered the party to ignore the terror and act openly, to hold street demonstrations and distribute leaflets as if a revolutionary situation still existed. Thus hundreds of party organisers who might have been saved for underground work were exposed and arrested. Within a few months the once impressive KPD ceased to be a force of any importance. Small illegal groups continued to exist under the Nazi regime, but their efforts, however heroic, had not the slightest effect on German policy.

Communist policy changed only after the policy of the Soviet government had changed. This did not happen for some time. Hitherto it had been a dogma in Moscow that the only kind of German government it need fear was one friendly to the Versailles victors. Hitler was clearly hostile to the West : therefore Hitler, for all his persecution of communists, might be useful to Moscow. During 1933 public speeches and newspaper articles in the Soviet Union stressed the desire for friendly relations with Germany. During 1934, however, relations deteriorated. Soviet hopes received a shock when Hitler made a non-aggression pact with Poland. In view of the traditional Soviet view of Poland, and especially of Marshal Pilsudski, it was not surprising that Moscow should believe—though wrongly—that these two states could only have come to terms at the expense of Russia. Hereafter it seemed probable that Hitler was even more hostile to the Soviet Union than to the West. Soviet policy kept the same aim—to exploit the hostility between Germany and the West. But whereas hitherto its method had been to encourage Germany to resist the Western Powers, it was now to encourage the Western Powers to resist Germany. Bolshevik blandishments were now addressed not to Berlin but to Paris. Meanwhile in France, not only on the Left but among the disciples of Poincare, alliance with Russia became attractive. In May 1935 the French Foreign Minister, Louis Barthou, suggested that the U.S.S.R. should join the

League of Nations. Moscow decided to agree, and on 10th September was formally admitted. In the following year Soviet collaboration with the west formally reached its climax with the signature of the Franco-Soviet Pact (2nd May, 1935) and the Soviet-Czechoslovak Pact (16th May, 1936).

The new course in Soviet foreign policy required a new 'line' for the Comintern. This was provided at the 7th Congress, which met in Moscow in July-August 1935. It proclaimed the tactic of the Popular Front, the most perfect form yet devised of the 'united front from above.' In order to resist the threat of fascism at home and abroad, and especially the threat of fascist Germany to the toilers' fatherland, the U.S.S.R., communists were to combine not only with the masses but also with leaders, not only of the social-democrats but also of any non-socialist or even right-wing groups that were opposed to the fascists and to Nazi Germany or Japan.

In a speech delivered in 1935 before the May First Delegation of Foreign Workers visiting Moscow, Comrade Georgi Dimitrov, General Secretary of the Comintern stated : " When the reactionary Social Democratic leaders say and write—'we do not want to enter into a united front with the communists because we do not want to receive orders from Moscow' they only prove that they are against the state of the proletariat To every sincere worker in France or England, America or Australia, Germany or Spain, China or Japan, the Balkan countries or the Canary Islands—to every sincere worker, Moscow is his own Moscow. The Soviet Union is his own state. Our opponents very often set up howl about 'orders from Moscow.' To receive orders from Moscow means salvation to the world proletariat." (G. Dimitrov, *The United Front*, 1938 p. 143).

Delivering his *Main Report* at the Seventh World Congress of the Communist International on August 2, 1935, Comrade Dimitrov, explained the new line to delegates from all over the

non-communist world. Asking the question : “How can fascism be prevented from coming to power and how can fascism be overthrown after it has been victorious ?”, he advocated : “ The first thing that must be done, the thing with which to begin, is to form a united front, to establish unity of action of the workers in every factory, in every district, in every region, in every country, all over the world. Unity of action of the proletariat on a national and international scale is the mighty weapon which renders the working class capable not only of successful defense but also of successful counter-attack against fascism, against the class enemy.” (Ibid, p. 30).

Referring to India Comrade Dimitrov advised: “ In India the communists have to support, extend and participate in the anti-imperialist mass activities, not excluding those that are under national reformist leadership. While maintaining their political and organisational independence they must carry on active work inside the organisations which take part in the Indian National Congress, facilitating the process of crystallisation of a national revolutionary wing among them for the purpose of further developing the national liberation movement of the Indian peoples against British Imperialism.” (Ibid, p. 68, 69).

The report on the colonial countries including India was submitted by the Chinese Communist, Wang Ming under the title, ‘The Revolutionary Movement in the Colonial Countries.’ It tendered the following sharp note to the Indian communists : “ Our comrades in India have suffered for a long time from ‘left’ sectarian errors; they did not participate in all the mass demonstrations organised by the National Congress or organisations affiliated with it. At the same time the Indian communists did not possess sufficient forces independently to organise a powerful and mass anti-imperialist movement. Therefore, the Indian communists, until very recently, were to a

considerable extent isolated from the mass of the people, from the mass anti-imperialist struggle. The toiling masses of India could not be convinced of the fact that the communists not only desire really to struggle themselves, but can also lead the millions in a struggle against the principal mortal enemy of the Indian people—British Imperialism. In this connection, for a long time the small scattered groups of communists could not become a united, mass all-India communist party. By their sectarian policy and isolation from the mass anti-imperialist movement, these small communist groups objectively helped to retain the influence of Gandhism (the theory of Gandhi, who preaches passive resistance to British Imperialism and who is actual leader of the National Congress in India) and national reformism over the masses...

“ It was only recently that the All-India Communist Party, which has already taken shape, began to rid itself of its sectarian errors and made the first step towards the creation of an anti-imperialist united front. Nevertheless, our young Indian comrades, having taken this road, showed a great lack of understanding of the united front tactics. This may be borne out even by the fact that our Indian comrades in attempting to establish a united anti-imperialist front with the National Congress in December of last year put before the latter such demands as ‘the establishment of an Indian Workers’ and Peasants’ Soviet Republic’, ‘confiscation of all lands that belong to the zamindars without compensation,’ ‘a general strike as the only effective programme of action,’ etc. Such demands on the part of our Indian comrades can serve as an example of how not to carry on the tactics of the anti-imperialist United Front. True, the Indian communists somewhat corrected their line later on and achieved, on the one hand, the unification of the revolutionary and reformist trade unions and, on the other hand, an agreement with the so-called Congress Socialists for struggle

against the new slavish constitution. ... The Indian Communists should in no case disregard work within the National Congress and the national revolutionary and national-reformist organisations affiliated with it, maintaining at the same time their complete political and organisational independence. Both within and without the National Congress, the Indian communists must consolidate all the genuine anti-imperialist forces of the country.”

The Comintern line was interpreted for the Indian communists by their British bosses, R. P. Dutt and Ben Bradley, who addressed to them a directive on ‘Anti-Imperialist People’s Front in India.’ They wrote : “ Every Indian patriot will recognise that the first need for the powerful advance of the Indian national struggle, the key need of the present situation, is the unity of all the anti-imperialist forces in the common struggle. This is the indispensable condition for the successful fight against the existing and ever sharpening reaction and oppression...It is evident that all elements, including from among the Liberals, who are prepared to break with the co-operation with imperialism and accept the programme of the national struggle, are welcome to the common front...”

The Politbureau of the CPI welcomed this statement. Recommending the new line to the Party members the Politbureau resolved : “ No political document has created so much stir in recent times as Dutt and Bradley’s article, *The Anti-Imperialist People’s Front in India*. No political document has evoked such unanimous and enthusiastic response from all the anti-imperialist elements.....Comrade Dutt and Bradley’s article successfully applies to the actual circumstances prevalent in India the policy of united front adopted at the Seventh Congress of the Communist International and the decisions arrived at in that World Congress. It is generally recognised that the Seventh Congress was no mere Party Conference of the communists alone but which had blazoned the path of heroic struggle and

of certain victory for the entire world revolutionary movement of to-day. The concrete application to the present stage of the anti-imperialist movement in our country of the line of the Seventh Congress is a historic affair. ”

So the comrades donned Khadi and Gandhi caps to infiltrate our premier national organisation. According to R. P. Dutt the “communists were elected to important executive posts in various Congress Committees and there were no fewer than 20 in the All India Congress Committee.” (*India To-day*, People’s Publishing House Ltd., Bombay, 1949, p. 397).

The question now arises : Did the communists accept the goal of the Indian National movement as their own goal ? Was their slogan of ‘United National Front’ geared to the achievement of complete independence for India? There was quite an acute controversy on this question between the communists and Subhash Chandra Bose. Subhash saw very clearly that Europe was drifting towards a war in which Great Britain would be totally involved and he wanted Indian nationalism to strike a blow at British Imperialism in India at the right moment. He, therefore, raised the slogan : ‘Britain’s difficulty is India’s opportunity’. He did not want Indian nationalism to get dragged into the international controversy between Fascism and Communism or Fascism and Democracy ; his sole criterion in choosing his international allies—if a choice was to be made at all—was the complete freedom for the Motherland and he was not averse to seeking and obtaining the help of Axis powers if it was available on his terms. The communists could never accept this analysis and this policy because to them the interests of the Soviet Union came foremost and, in their opinion, could be served only by serving the Soviet Fatherland “ unhesitatingly, unconditionally and under all circumstances.”

Applying the ‘United Front’ line to Great Britain, Comrade Dimitrov had given a clear directive to the British Communist Party in his *Main Report*. He had advised :

“ At the present stage, fighting the fascist danger in Great Britain means primarily fighting the ‘National Government’ and its reactionary measures.” And the Communist Party of Great Britain wanted to use the national movement in India for bringing about the fall of the Chamberlain government and the formation of what they called a “ Popular Government ” which would be willing to sign a military pact with Soviet Russia and against the Axis Powers.

When the Communist Party of India proclaimed their support to Subhash Bose in a ‘common’ struggle against British Imperialism in India, they did not want their rank and file to get confused and accept Subhash Bose’s slogan : ‘Britain’s difficulty is India’s opportunity.’ Therefore their organ, *National Front*, came out with a clear exposition of the communist position on the eve of the Tripuri Congress. Ben Bradley wrote an article—‘What Britain’s Popular Front Would Mean For India’s National Front’—in *National Front* dated 12th March 1939. He wrote : “In England to-day we believe that Chamberlain and his fascist friends can be swept aside by the formation of a people’s front against fascism and reaction. What does this defence of democracy in England mean to India? The Communist Party has been accused of advocating some sort of neo-imperialism, of asking the colonial people to fight for a Popular Front in defence of democracy in England but without any guarantee of the grant of democracy and freedom to India. We are accused of advocating some sort of liberal imperialism, a better and a more humane exploitation of the colonies.

“ Frankly, we do not expect a popular government to come to power on a programme of complete socialism or the grant of independence to the colonies. It would be absurd, however, to regard the defence of democracy as an isolated, something that was entirely unconnected with the other vital struggles taking place in England and the Empire. In order to develop the true democratic forces we are prepared, on conditions, to support a real popular front ; in order to develop the same

forces it is the duty of the Indian people to carry forward their struggles for democratic liberty. In this process it is not simply possible, but certain, that such immediate and important reforms could be at once gained by India and the colonial people as would enormously strengthen their position and weaken that of the Imperialists. This is of immense importance not as an alternative to freedom but as an armoury to win it.

“ We believe that in the course of this struggle and the dangerous situation created it would be possible to convince all sections of anti-fascists of the necessity of granting democratic rights to the colonies and India as a bulwark against Fascism. *As far as the Communists are concerned this would be the maximum concession attainable at the particular moment without disruption of the popular front. The Indian people are merely asked to consider whether the development of this objective situation is not one that is more advantageous to them than the supposed weakening of imperialism under Chamberlain.* ”

The same issue of the *National Front* carried another article by another British Communist writing under the pen-name of ‘Vigilantes’. He stated : “ In England the dominant section for the ruling class and their henchmen are more and more becoming the pimps and toadies of the Fascist powers. It is this situation which is driving those working class parties and leaders who really want power in order to fight Fascism to rally behind them and to lead all who believe in democracy. The policy of a Popular Front in the Western democracies and of Peace Alliance between the Western democracies and the Soviet Union are merely the Western and world equivalents of what is taking place in India. You, our Indian Comrades, know that in the world of to-day *patriotism is not enough* and that our creed of brotherhood of men requires a new and deeper and tragically urgent significance, *that part of the mission of a free India will be to join hands with us in the West in building up a World Peace Union strong enough to end the existing aggression and to*

arrest the drift to war. We socialists know it is a stark necessity, the ultimate goal for which we must live and if necessary die, for we are of one faith and brothers, whatever our race or tongue. ”

This gospel from British communists was paraphrased by the Indian communist S. V. Ghate in his article ‘India and the World’ appearing in the same issue of the *National Front*. Ghate wrote: “ The great decision we are about to take at Tripuri has to be reviewed against the background of the maturing world war crisis. India’s struggle for freedom cannot be viewed in isolation. It is a part of the great fight which the peoples of the world are beginning to wage against war and fascist aggression. *The slogan ‘Britain’s difficulty is India’s opportunity’ is no longer enough to indicate the interconnection of our national struggle with world politics.* There is a tendency to over-simplify the relation between our struggle for freedom and the coming war crisis in Europe. It is argued that what is happening after all is the sharpening of the inter-imperialist conflict between two groups of world monopoly capital. In this conflict the USSR would have to take sides as determined by the need of self-preservation, but that would not alter the character of the war. What India should be concerned about is how to take advantage of the war situation and the difficulties of Britain.

“ This is what we would call banal analysis which entirely ignores the changes that have taken place in the world since 1917. We have firstly the emergence of the mighty Socialist State of the U.S.S.R. which is on the one hand a powerful factor for peace. Secondly, we have a giant proletarian movement which is capable of leading the popular forces for the struggle for peace and against fascist aggression. Thirdly, we have the growing revolutionary movement in the colonies and the subject nations fighting for freedom and democracy against their imperialist rulers.

“ Significant development followed as a reaction to the rise of Hitler. First, the people’s counter-offensive against Fascism

in France and Spain and second, the Franco-Soviet Pact together with other peace pacts aimed against Hitler's aggression. Against the Peace system of the U.S.S.R and rise of the Popular movement in France and Spain, Britain has pursued the policy of siding with Hitler and Mussolini, of conniving at Japanese aggression against China. The aim of the policy is to direct German aggression against the Soviet.

“ The democratic peoples of the world and the forces of anti-fascist unity cannot afford to wait till war actually breaks out. They have to act here and now and prevent the rulers of their own countries from pursuing the ruinous policy which promotes fascist aggression and brings war nearer. *The fight for peace demands a frontal attack upon Chamberlain. If we in India deliver the blow now, we facilitate a similar action on the part of the people of Britain. British imperialism is more vulnerable in India than it is in England.* A struggle in India in the present situation would give a push to *the world forces of peace and democracy* and be the signal for the overthrow of Chamberlain. ”

So, the anti-imperialist struggle in India was, for the CPI, an adjunct of the British Communist Party's struggle against Chamberlain government ! It was implied in the communist stand that if Chamberlain government fell and was replaced by another government ready to reach an understanding with the Soviet Union or if the Chamberlain government itself became an ally of the Kremlin, the CPI would withdraw from the anti-imperialist national front unless other elements in our national life were also prepared to toe the Comintern line. In fact, that is what had happened in the French colonies after the emergence of a “ Popular Front ” government in France. We have the testimony of George Padmore, the Negro leader of French colonies in Africa, and member of the Comintern Executive since 1934. He writes : “ I was at the time the Secretary of the International Trade Union Committee of Negro Workers, the anti-imperialist centre of the African liberation movement. I continued to carry on my work from Paris, but the

Comintern, having decided to change its line in conformity with the foreign policy of the U.S.S.R., instructed me to change my attitude in relation to France. I was told to boost the League (of Nations) and to stop all criticism of French Imperialism—especially its militarisation of subject peoples. I declined to agree to this betrayal of my people and requested that a delegation of Negro Communist Leaders should be received by the Comintern in order to present our views on this new policy. The Comintern declined and I had no alternative to resignation. Immediately the usual campaign of slander began in which the communists characterised me as a disruptive element and an agent of British imperialism.”

The same logic worked itself out in India when the Soviet Union was invaded by Hitler and the British Government become an ally of the Soviet Union. But of that later.

The communists denounced Subhash Chandra Bose after Tripuri because he had failed to capture the Congress. The CPI had no ideological affinities with Subhash Chandra Bose. They wanted to capture the Congress organisation through a ‘united front’ with Subhash Chandra so that our national movement could be used for supporting the foreign policy of their Fatherland, the Soviet Union. After Tripuri, Subhash Chandra was no more useful for that purpose. By siding with the anti-Subhash leadership of the Congress, they wanted to retain their places inside the national organisation. Their eyes were fixed on Jawaharlal Nehru who had all along shown a great weakness for the Soviet Union and who could be depended upon ideologically.

Then one fine morning in August 1939 the communists all over the world were surprised to know that it was not Chamberlain but their own boss, Stalin, who had been cooking a deal with Hitler and who had now signed a pact with Nazi Germany. Drinking a toast in honour of Hitler on August 22, 1939, Stalin declared : “ I know how much the German nation loves its Fuehrer, and thus I am happy to drink

to his health.” Moscow’s acceptance of a treaty with Nazi Germany was described as a “ non-aggression pact ” but was in fact an aggressive arrangement directed against Poland and the Baltic states.

This new twist in Soviet foreign policy was quickly made binding on all communist parties. There was not even the formality of a Plenum of the Comintern Executive Committee, let alone a Comintern Congress to reverse the decisions of the 7th Congress of 1935. The new line was simply given out by the Soviet Government and the CPSU (B). All communists were to praise the ‘peace policy’ of the Soviet Union which had ‘prevented an extension of the war’. The British Communist Party now intensified its war against Chamberlain Government not because Chamberlain was ‘*appeasing*’ but because he was *fighting* Hitler ! That was a difficult role to play because every patriotic Briton turned against the communists for their treachery in a grave national crisis.

The Indian Communist Party, however, was placed in a different situation. The British Government of India had dragged India into war against her will and every Indian political party—the National Congress, the Congress Socialist Party, and the Forward Bloc—was opposed to this high-handedness. So the CPI issued a call for an immediate and all-out struggle against the ‘war-mongering’ British Government. We do not possess any communist documents pertaining to this period and are, therefore, not in a position to quote them verbally. The communist position was, however, summed up by P. C. Joshi in his introduction to the Communist publication *Unmasked Parties and Politics*. He stated : “ With the outbreak of the war, the world seems to have turned upside down, slogans changed sides, friends became foes and so on. Ours is a colonial slave country. The fundamental contradiction is between imperialism on the one hand and the entire nation on the other. The very outbreak of the war deepens this antagonism. National struggle

becomes a practical proposal. But it is an explosive struggle with gloves off. The division between the Indian people becomes between those that stand for struggle and those that don't. We do not have a national struggle because the bourgeoisie is at the top of the national movement. The obvious course would be to free the national front from the influence of bourgeois reformism and develop the political strength of the proletariat within the common front so as to develop the forces of struggle in a manner so as to make a national struggle inevitable and *overwhelm and isolate the cowardly bourgeoisie.*”

Practically the Communists had moved nearer to Sri Subhash Chandra Bose because the “ fundamental contradiction ” was now no more between “ World Fascism ” and “ World Democracy ” but between Indian nationalism and British Imperialism. But, theoretically, the ‘United Front’ with the ‘cowardly bourgeoisie’ had broken down under the hammer blows of the Stalin-Hitler Pact. How could the CPI keep up with “ bourgeois reformist ” like Bose when their comrades all over the world were coming forward in all their proletarian purity. It was no more a question of striking a ‘United Front’ with this or that section of the bourgeoisie; the whole ‘cowardly’ class had to be thrown into the ‘ dustbin of history’. And so the comrades deafened themselves with their own war-drums till Hitler rolled up the Iron Curtain on June 22, 1941 and Stalin cried out to Britain for help.

III

THE 'PEOPLE'S WAR'

When Hitler, rejecting Stalin's last attempts at conciliation and flattery, invaded the Soviet Union, the imperialistic war was changed overnight into the Great Patriotic War of the Soviet Union, and the duty of every communist everywhere was to contribute to the war effort of Soviet Russia or, if geographical conditions made this more possible, to the war effort of the Soviet Union's allies. The communists, therefore, made great efforts to organise resistance in occupied countries or to assume the leadership of those movements which had begun without them.

The *Programme* of the Communist International had clearly laid down : " In view of the fact that *the USSR is the only fatherland of the international Proletariat*, the principal bulwark of its achievements and the most important factor for international emancipation, the international proletariat must on its part facilitate the success of the work of Socialist construction in the U.S.S.R. and *defend her against the attacks of the capitalist powers by all means in its power.*"

It was, therefore, the duty of every Communist Party, as a section of the International, to live upto its obligations towards the Soviet Union. The Communist Party of India could be no exception, whatever the local situation in India and whatever India's attitude might have been towards the war in which Soviet Russia got involved. Nonetheless, there was violent confusion in communist ranks till the CPI received a letter from Harry Politt, Secretary of the British Communist Party. The letter was

delivered to the communist leaders in detention by the courtesy of Sir Reginald Maxwell, the then Home Secretary of the British Government of India. The immediate change that took place in the CPI line is described by P.C. Joshi in his pamphlet *Communist Reply to Congress Working Committee's Charges* published by People's Publishing House Ltd. Bombay in December, 1945. We shall here quote only those passages which are relevant to the theme in hand. P.C. Joshi explained:

“ Hitler's aggression against the USSR immediately upset the balance of forces in the Allied camp; *the isolation of the Soviet Union was replaced by the Anglo-Soviet and the American-Soviet alliance* (p. 42). All open-eyed and serious people saw the change but there were two groups in our country who did not—the Congress Socialists and the Forward Blocists (p. 40). We took time to discuss the new world situation. The result of our discussion and collective opinion was embodied in a resolution of the Politbureau of our Party and a booklet by P.C. Joshi, *Forward to Freedom*. We came to the conclusion that *it was an entirely new situation, demanding a new Policy, new strategy*. We said: ‘We are a practical party and in a new situation it is our task not only to evolve a new form of struggle for it, but also to advance new slogans appropriate to the new stage, suiting the new form of our national movement. The key slogan of our Party which guides all our practical political activity is : *‘Make the Indian people play a people's role in a People's War.*’ The second feature in the new situation was the entry of a *new Power* in the war, a power of a new type, a *People's Power*, the Soviet union. *We saw the new prospect for humanity that opened through the Soviet entry into the war* (Pp. 44-45). We called it a *transformation in the situation and not a mere change of degree*. We said that the war which was so far an imperialist war now became a people's war because of the changed re-grouping of forces, changed prospects before the world (p. 49). ”

The British Government of India lifted its ban on the Communist Party of India on July 26, 1942, on the eve of the historic All-India Congress Committee meeting in Bombay on August 8, 1942. The *People's War* dated July 26, 1942 cried out : “ Our Party has been legalised. *We Communists vow to hurl our bodies against the Fascist invaders* to halt them on our borders as long as we can. ” According to the same issue of *People's War*: “ Comrade P. C. Joshi, General Secretary of the Communist Party gave the following statement to the Reuter and Associated Press Representatives immediately after the latter brought news of the lifting of the ban to him :— ‘We are the Indian Party of Lenin and Stalin, the great leaders of the people whose teaching and work finds living expression in the epic resistance of the Soviet people which the peoples of the world seek to emulate in their own lands’. ”

Forthwith the Communist Party organ *People's War* launched a campaign against ‘Quit India’ proposal of Mahatma Gandhi. *People's War* dated July 26, 1942 came out with an ‘Open Letter to the Working Committee from the Indian Communists’. The Letter thundered : “ You have called upon the British bureaucrats (the British were no more Imperialist ! –ed.) to go home and leave our country alone. You plan to launch the traditional type of struggle. The sort of ‘struggle’ Gandhiji is visualising and in which the rest of you have acquiesced is not a plan of struggle but a gamble; it is not fighting for freedom but escape into jails ; it is not leading the people but forsaking them. Such a ‘struggle’ will not get us Freedom but Fascism. ” In the same issue P. C. Joshi shed crocodile tears while writing editorially: “ On our young shoulders to-day has fallen the great task of upholding the noble heritage of the Congress. It is the policy of our national leadership which would break this up and scatter it away. ”

Not only that. The communists felt thoroughly ashamed of India before the bar of world opinion. *People's War* dated July 26, 1942 noted: “ There is jubilation in the Axis Camp because of the Wardha Resolution. The progressive and

freedom-loving people in *England and America* will no doubt be dismayed at the Working Committee Resolution. The national leadership has indeed set the course of the ship of the nation towards disunity and disaster. ” Rushing forward to defend our national honour, P. C. Joshi cabled to Earl Browder, the General Secretary of the Communist Party of U.S.A: “ Gandhi’s pacifism—exception. Nehru and rest national leadership completely anti-Fascist in the best tradition of world democracy, willing to lead armed united resistance to Fascist invasion. ” (*People’s War*, August 2, 1942). But it was a gross lie. *People’s War* dated July 9, 1942 had reported: “ Pandit Nehru burst out—‘Let the country, its independence, everything go to hell, I shall not forsake my principles. I shall not cooperate with Britishers. When did democracy exist in Russia ?’ In the same fit he declared that the utility of Congress defence organisations lay in their use against the Communists. Revered national leaders like Panditji have nothing better to offer in the face of men who are seriously thinking and acting upon a line which millions in the Soviet Union and China call their own. To such a pass has the disastrous trend of the national leadership at the top brought our prominent men. ”

The communist delegates to the All India Congress Committee meeting in Bombay raised their new slogans inside the national forum. “ Gandhiji spoke in the language of an anointed Messiah,” reported P. C. Joshi in *People’s War* dated August 16, 1942. The report continued : “ He propounded the anarchist conception of the State. He said ‘there is no democracy in Russia.’ He had been rattled a lot by the hostile comments of the foreign press and muttered his usual *mantrams* which I doubt if a single foreign correspondent understood at all. His speech fell flat. Sardar Patel rose to second the resolution. Sardarji’s speech was one of sustained sarcasm. The iron had gone deep into his soul. He had reduced reality to a ridiculous over-simplification. The communists dragged out the carcass of disunity and in ringing tones gave the obvious solution. The only serious criticism of the

Working Committee lead, the only alternative policy was put forward by the communists. Comrade Ashraf went straight at the Working Committee : ‘You have reduced the nation to utter helplessness. You are in the grip of panic. *The lead you have given is not national struggle but National Suicide.*’ Comrade Zaheer moved another amendment. He emphasised that *in the attitude towards the war and its relation to Indian freedom the Congress and the communists stood closer than ever before. The Congress President himself had stated that this war must be a war for the freedom of every nation. It could only be won as a people’s war i.e. as a war after the model of Russia and China.** Communist speeches were heard with rapt attention and *mildly* cheered. They made the delegates think though *not change their views*. Nehru wound up the debate. He cursed all round and bucked himself up by recreating the image of the medieval Rajput warrior going into battle from which there was no retreat. He felt sorry for the communists that they were committing suicide. He was delightfully oblivious that it was he who was calling upon the Nation to commit suicide. Here was a leadership in desperate mood. The Working Committee had tied a rope round the neck of the Nation. This was the lead that was being glorified as a ‘national struggle’.”

And when the August Revolution broke out, the Communist Party sided with the British Government of India. The *People’s War* dated August 16, 1942 boasted “ The Government of India’s Press Communique lifting the ban on our Party is at once a triumph of the people. *The Government is prepared to give facilities** to the Party to carry out its Policy*

*An example of Communist casuistry. They identified the struggle of enslaved nations for freedom with the struggle of the Soviet Union to avert defeat in a war which she had done her utmost to bring upon the world, but which also descended on her.

**Meaning police protection against the patriots and ample money with which the communists could mount propaganda and run their party brothels for the Anglo-American soldiers.

of helping the People's War. The Government of India has lifted the ban of 'National Front' and 'New Age'. " The same issue of *People's War* exhorted editorially : " Brother Workers ! To-day nationwide provocation is on. Beware of provocateurs. Resist panic. Discount all rumours. *Stick to your jobs. No political general strikes. Every hour that you work is for the nation's defence and the people's needs.* Student Patriots ! Get ready to shed your blood to save the motherland from the fascist invader. Remain peaceful. You will soon be wanted to show your heroism with arms in hand. Do not participate in acts of violence. No permanent hartals and idling at home. *India needs you as soldiers and officers at the front.*"

The co-operation between the CPI and the British rulers of India was manifold. The full story was told in February, 1946 by Comrade S.S. Batliwala, a former member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of India. Referring to a confidential file of correspondence during the years 1942, 1943 and 1944 between P.C. Joshi and Sir Reginald Maxwell which he had seen, Batliwala stated that " an alliance existed between the Politbureau of the Communist Party of India and the Home Department of the Government of India, by which Mr. Joshi was placing at the disposal of the Government of India the services of his Party members. " In a letter to the *Bombay Chronicle Weekly*, dated March 17, 1946, Batliwala revealed that P. C. Joshi had " offered to help retain the morale of the Indian soldiers by performances staged by the Indian People's Theatre Association in the front lines in Burma and Assam—'when sons and daughters of the soil will sing, dance and recite in the language of the sepoy himself with the aid of folk-music—so that he will be convinced that he is fighting a patriotic war. "

Joshi himself admitted this co-operation with the Government in the pamphlet referred above. He wrote : " We summed up the entire task of our People in three simple slogans : *Smash the stalemate, assert national unity, mobilise the masses for defence* (p. 49). Through the People's Defence Committees we, of course, kept contact with government

officials. We formed representative People's Food Committees and kept contact with the Government machinery through them. Later on when the economic crisis worsened we permitted our comrades to join the Advisory Committees on food, cloth etc. *Cooperation or non-co-operation with the Government was to us secondary* ; we went to the Government officials when we found it necessary to go (p. 55). ”

Batliwala also accused P. C. Joshi of having “ detailed certain Party members without the knowledge of the Central Committee or the rank and file of the Party to be in touch with the Army Intelligence Department and supply the CID chiefs with such information as they would require against nationalist workers who were connected with the 1942 struggle or against persons who had come to India *on behalf of the Azad Hind Government of Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose.* ” This charge is directly supported by what appeared in *People's War* in July 1943. Reviewing the war, G. Adhikari wrote in *People's War* dated July 18, 1943: “ Hitler has sent Bose to Tojo. Tojo has made the ‘Deshagaurab’ (Sic.) the Commander-in Chief of a fifth-column Indian Army. Bose is *screeching* every day over the Singapore Radio. The significance of Hitler-Tojo-Bose conspiracy is clear enough. *We can and must smash it in the interest of our brother of China.* ” *People's War* dated July 25, 1943 warned about ‘*Traitors from the Air*’ with the following appeal: “ Bose recently announced over the Singapore Radio about the formation of an ‘Independence Army’ with himself as its ‘Commander-in Chief’. The first act of this Independence Army formed under the aegis of Japanese militarists will be to drop parachutists in India. These *traitors from the skies*, though they may be of Indian origin and dressed in some kind of national garb, are not messengers of freedom but of slavery. They come to reinforce the *despicable* fifth-column in India—the Forward Blocists and Congress Socialists. The call to shelter these agents is a call for treachery; it is a call to act as the Asiatic Quislings to handover India to Tojo and Co. They are incendiaries coming to set our country on fire ; *they must be overpowered as soon as they are*

sighted and handed over to the nearest civil or military authority. Their friends who harbour them must be given the same short shrift.

Later on Joshi admitted this accusation indirectly in his above pamphlet. He wrote very clearly; “ The defeat of Nazis at Stalingrad had made it clear that Hitler could not come to India. In May-June 1943, Subhash Chandra Bose left Berlin and came to Singapore (p. 158). We discussed the new situation. We called for fight against sabotage. We named the Congress Socialists, the Forward Bloc and the Trotskyites as groups that made the fifth-column, the agents of the Jap invader (p. 159). ”

The British Government of India also testified to his traitorous role of the CPI in a circular issued by the Government on September 20, 1943. This circular is quoted in the charge-sheet sent by the Congress Working Committee against the Communist Party of India, on September 21, 1945. Joshi’s pamphlet reproduces this charge-sheet and the existence of the circular has not been denied. We, therefore, quote from Joshi’s pamphlet. The Government circular stated: “ In the Party Congress held in Bombay from May 23rd to June 1st, 1943, there was an attack on the negative policy of the Congress and the resolution openly identified for the first time the Congress Socialists and Forward Bloc with the fifth-column elements who are accused of taking advantage of the Congress resolution of August 1942 to lead the country to the brink of disaster. Not only are the Communists almost the only Party which fought for victory; they alone have criticised the Congress defeatism from a political point of view as opposed, for instance, to the fundamentally communal criticism of the Congress policy by the Muslim League etc., and *have openly attacked as traitors the off-shoots of Congress, the Forward Bloc and the Congress Socialists Party (p. 11).* ”

This was the background which led the CPI to print those cartoons and calumnies against Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose which we reproduce in the next chapter.

IV

SLANDER AGAINST NETAJI

People's War, Vol.I No.2 dated July 19, 1942 came out with front page cartoon sharply indicating the new line of the CPI vis-a-vis Sri Subhash Chandra Bose. We are reproducing the cartoon with the masthead of the *People's War* on the next page.

It may be noted that Sri Bose had not yet arrived in the Far East. But the British allies of the CPI's Russian masters were faced with a Japanese threat ; and because, of Britain's fight against Stalin's enemy, Hitler, the British Army of occupation in India had become a 'People's Army fighting a 'People's War'. Joshi wrote editorially : " The Army is the one instrument that stands between our unarmed nation and the Fascist invaders. Fraternal relationship between the Army and the people, in all threatened zones, is the need of the hour. To-morrow, when actual invasion begins, the army will have to reap the harvest ; it will find that the apathy of the kisan has turned to hostility, his patriotic will to resist broken by defeatist Gandhian phrase-mongers, the flames of his grievances fanned by *the Fifth-Columnists, by the traitor Forward Blocists.*"

People's War dated August 2, 1942 provided a communist formula for destroying the Forward Bloc. " The only effective way of overcoming the Forward Bloc leanings of a section of the Bhadrak of Bengal is for the masses of people to rise against, Fascists ", wrote a reporter from Calcutta. " The Forward Bloc has ", he continued, " recently issued two leaflets

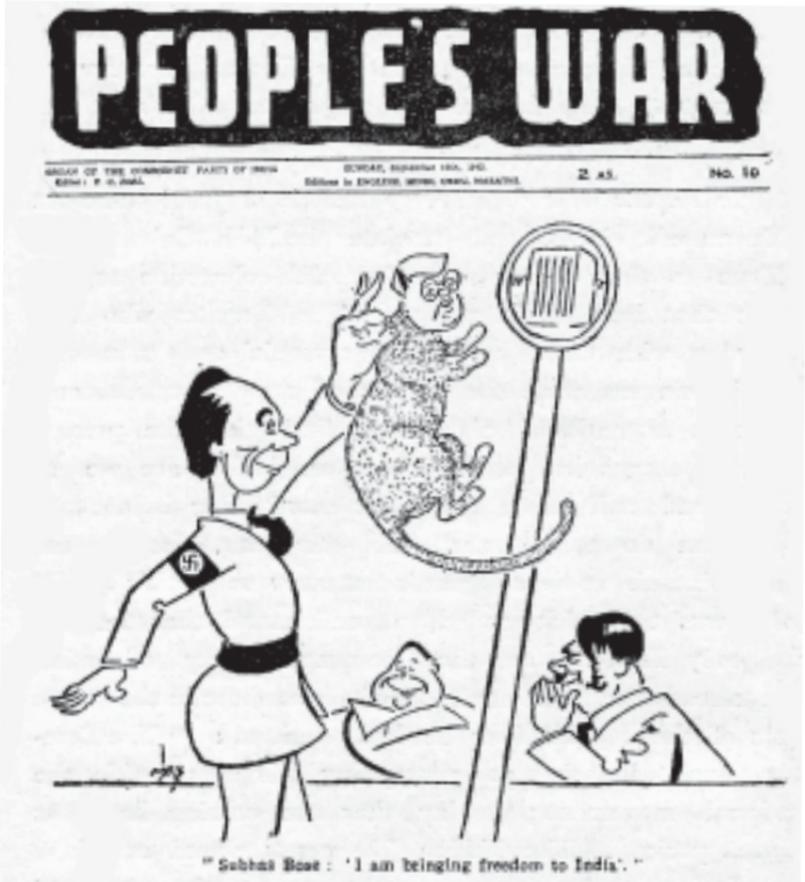


calling upon the people to rise against the British. The leaflets summarise the speeches of the representatives of the 'Freedom League of India' at the recent Bangkok Conference and give a resume of activities of Bose to 'liberate' India. *But the Forward Bloc has no mass support. They have to rely on gangster methods and stab in the dark tactics.* ”

In *People's War* dated August 23, 1942 Joshi came out with an editorial appeal—'Isolate the Fifth Columnists : “ True to their black role, the Fifth-columnists suggest blows that help their masters. The Boseites who till yesterday with their 'nation wide struggle' and 'non-compromise' slogans were the objects of every Congressman's contempt as national disruptors, find that the present situation means half their job done. How are we to isolate and nail down this *black crew*? For isolate and nail them down, we must. *Keep the peace.* Isolate the Fifth-columnist as *the arch goonda that trades on people's blood.* ” Joshi was too thick-headed to understand that the one and only Fifth-column, the Communist Party of India, had already been isolated, though elsewhere in the same issue of the *People's War* he had admitted: “ The Boseites stood isolated as *unscrupulous disruptors* inside the national movement ; to-day they are coming back as 'honest patriots'. The hidden *Jap agents* dared not show their faces ; to-day they are active among the patriots !” Of course, the Russian agent could see nothing but agents all around himself !

After the August Revolution started, the attack moved from the Boseites to Sri Subhash Chandra Bose himself. *People's War* dated September 13, 1942 came out with another front-page cartoon and a long article by S.G. Sardesai, We are reproducing the cartoon on the next page.

Admiring the past record of Subhash Chandra, Sardesai wrote: “ Subhash was a patriot *once*. India did him the unique honour of electing him twice to the presidentship of the National Congress. For years he was the adored hero of Indian youth. Many times has his head been bruised and battered by British batons. ” Then denouncing Subhash Bose's politics, the Russian hireling burst out : “ It is not well-known that



Subhas Babu based his policies not on patient work for unity and organisation of the people but rather on rackets in 'power politics' ? It is this kind of politics which has driven him to-day to the *contemptible and miserable position of a marionette* in Axis hands ! And now *this puppet* has the temerity to insult our patriotism and intelligence by attempting to persuade us from the Berlin radio ! We are asked to assist the arrival of the great Deshgaurab at the Gateway of India ! But such, indeed, is the inexorable logic of life. One false step leads to another. " Finally Sardesai bewailed the Gandhi-Subhash combine : " Not for nothing does Azad Hind Radio shout 'Hail' to Gandhi and Subhash together. The logic of Gandhi's line inescapably leads us into the arms of Subhash—a *hangman* at

the head of a life-saving mission ! What a picture! ” Moscow patriot Sardesai could not understand that, inspite of all their differences and quarrels, Mahatma Gandhi and Subhash Chandra Bose were bound together by a commonly shared loyalty to Mother India.

As the Quit-India movement forged ahead the CPI trained all its propaganda guns on Subhash Chandra Bose and the Forward Bloc. *People's War* dated September 20, 1942 wrote : “ The actual programme of this upsurge, sabotage of nation's defences, has brought *out of their wretched holes* the entire *Forward Blocist gang*. From Berlin their master Bose gives the call. Everywhere when this movement is wide-spread, *we find the Forward Blocist traitors in the lead, to do the dirty job of their foreign masters.* ” Bhowani Sen barked in *People's War* dated September 27, 1942 : “ Who exploits the situation ? None but the *anti-national* Forward Blocists, none but those adherents of the *traitor* Bose ! ”

But inspite of CPI's mad howls more and more patriots found their unity with Subhash Chandra Bose. *People's War* dated October 18, 1942 carried a report from Rajkot : “ The local CSPers are functioning underground, they and the Boseite *traitors* work hand in glove. Even a few staunch Gandhiites have become active agents of the Forward Bloc. Congress leaflets arrive here from Calcutta containing posters welcoming the arrival of *traitor* Bose. ” E.S. Namboodripad bewailed from Kerala in *People's War* dated October 25, 1942: “ Anti-communist *goondaism* has led congress circles right into the camp of the Forward Bloc *traitors*. In Kakkoti, they organised a students' meeting with the *treacherous slogan* ‘Subhash Bose ki Jai.’ The Congressmen have entirely coalesced with Forward Bloc *goondas.* ” A Communist reporter from Bombay wrote to *People's War* dated November, 1942 : “ The Congress in Bombay at present is controlled by the CSP. The official Congress mouthpiece persistently refuses to demarcate itself from the Forward Bloc and Fifth-column propaganda. They want to sidetrack the growing urge for unity by raising the slogan Gandhi-Bose

unity. It is not a surprise that the local Boseites and the paid agents of the enemy should carry on such treacherous and villainous propaganda. ”

People's War dated December 6, 1942, appealed for unity in Bengal. Its editorial ran : “ The proud sons and daughters of Bengal to-day form the grim background to the imminent march of the Japanese army into threatened Bengal. They alone can checkmate the fifth-columnist followers of Bose. Bengal is the bastion of Indian freedom. It can and must act despite Bose's fifth-column legions. ” In the same issue B.T. Ranadive thundered : “ A final showdown is obviously in sight. This had led to hectic activity on the part of Japanese agents in India. ‘The guerrillas are working destruction to Government property and railways. I now appeal to my countrymen to join the war of Independence with heart and soul, we shall help in all respects,’ declares Subhash Bose, the *henchmen of Japanese Imperialism*. And what help is promised by *this future dictator by the grace of Tojo and Co.* An army of rapine, loot and murder. The Communist Party will rise to the occasion and give the only reply which *traitors and Quislings* have got from honest patriots. Bose's mercenary army of ‘liberation’, of rapine and plunder will feel the wrath and indignation of our people if it dares set its foot on Indian soil to enact acts of pillage and robbery. ” The hybrid R. P. Dutt had to lie to Britain regarding Subhash Chandra Bose. His statement is reproduced in *People's War* dated December 13, 1942 : “ The Indian people are no allies of Fascism. With the exception of an insignificant minority represented by Bose in Berlin, they no less passionately hate Fascism; *their sympathies are with the Soviet people, with the Chinese people, with the cause of the United Nations.* ”

But the Indian people did not take these communist slanders against Sri Subhash Chandra Bose lying down. The CPI boys found it impossible to sell their rag on the streets without police protection. And the CPI had to withdraw its campaign against Sri Subhash Chandra Bose in the first half of 1943. But Bose's appearance in Singapore again gave them

the creeps. P. C. Joshi wrote in *People's War* dated July 18, 1943 : “ The Axis Radio reports that Bose is no more in Berlin but has reached Singapore. On July 6, Bose himself announced that he has been appointed the ‘Commander-in-Chief’ of ‘Indian Independence Army’ and is coming with the Jap invasion force. The *arch-traitor* to India’s freedom and independence calls upon Indian patriots to open a ‘Second Front’ against British, to intensify ‘struggle’ and start a ‘Revolution’ in India while he, the ‘Commander in-Chief’ with Tojo’s grace, marches in with Japanese invading forces to ‘liberate’ India. But his lieutenants here in India know that here is no ‘struggle’ to be intensified and so they are making a trial start for this game on August 9. Their programme for August 9 must be looked upon as a dress rehearsal for the ‘Revolution’ which has to be started when ‘Commander-in-Chief’ Bose comes to liberate India with the Jap Army. It will be suicidal blindness to celebrate August 9th as we do any protest anniversary, e.g. Jallianwalah Bagh Day. ”

The communists started losing their nerve as the Azad Hind Fauj marched towards India. G. Adhikari wrote in *People's War* dated July 25, 1942 : “ General Tojo’s latest slogan is ‘total mobilisation to make our defences impregnable and at the same time to prepare for the final offensive deliverable at any time.’ He has brought Subhash Chandra Bose to Singapore and made him Commander-in-Chief of an Indian Fifth column army which is to be recruited out of the million Indian inhabitants of Malaya and Singapore. His preparations to strike at India’s disunited rear through Bose’s fifth-column army, are dangerous indeed. ”

People's War dated August 1, 1943 appeared with another cartoon on its front page. We reproduce the cartoon on the next page.

Addressing the ‘patriots’ Joshi appealed : “ August 9 is coming again. Memory inevitably goes back to August 9 last year. Shame overwhelms one when one remembers that from that day the fifth-column spoke and acted in name of the Congress. To celebrate August 9 is to hand over the initiative

to the fifth-column. Subhash Bose is already in Singapore, the Japs have made him Commander-in-Chief of their 'Indian Independence Army.' 'Marshal' Bose is looking to India to see what happens on August 9. It is for him a test of the mobilising capacities of his own gang and its links with the patriotic masses. If any widespread demonstrations take place or any serious disturbances start, 'Marshal' Bose will report to Tojo, his master, that India is rotten ripe for invasion. There is no time to lose. Last August Bose was in Berlin. This time he is much nearer, at Singapore. The *traitor Bose* will never touch the golden soil of Bengal if we make up our mind about August 9."

PEOPLE'S WAR

Vol. II, No. 5

SUNDAY

August 5, 1945

ORGAN OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF INDIA

Editor: G. ADHIKARI

As, 2



"Marshal" Bose is looking at India to see what happens on August 9.

People's War dated August 8, 1943 came out with yet another cartoon showing that Subhash Bose was only a mask which the Japanese militarists were wearing. We reproduce the cartoon below:—

PEOPLE'S WAR

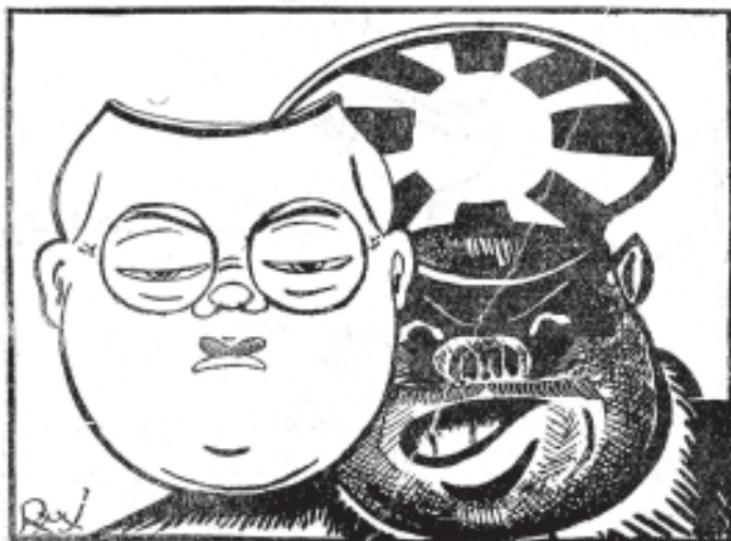
Vol. II. No. 6

SUNDAY
August 8, 1943

ORGAN OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF INDIA
Editor: G. ADHIKARI

As. 2

Why is Bose in Singapore?



**CONGRESS LEADERS
Show You The Face**

The next cartoon appeared in *People's War* dated September 26, 1943. We reproduce it below:



People's War dated November 21, 1942 showed Subhash Chandra Bose as a bomb falling upon famished Bengal. The cartoon is reproduced on the next page.

Joshi wrote: "The Japs did not come last year because of Stalingrad. Kalinin, President of the Soviet-State, claimed that *the defence of Stalingrad was the defence of India* and Churchill in so many words admitted it. The Japs got Bose from Berlin to Singapore. The Germans had given up all hope of reaching India and Bose was no use to them. The Japs were

PEOPLE'S WAR

Vol. II No. 21

SUNDAY, November 21, 1943

No. 2

India; therefore, the Japs can't
go back into Burma, Malaya,
let to India what the British
defence of our country is in

Japs desperately tried a peace offensive;
they tried to get Chungking to walk out
of the camp of the United Nations into
their "unpopularity" sphere and to start
a war on Communists in North China; in
return the Japs would give back to
Chungking the occupied parts of China,
retaining the right to garrison some strate-
gical towns. This was a plan to split China
both internally and externally and
thus remove a six year-old thorn.

BOSE'S DECLARATIONS

In the South-West Pacific the Japs
have not been attempting the evacuation
of Australia but trying to close the island
windows that lead straight to their own
headland.

The Japs got Bose from Berlin to
Singapore. The Germans had given up
all hopes of reaching India and Bose was

Fascist Japan, Germany and their **OUR WEAKNESSES**



(1) The conquest of the invading
force will not be a foreign Jap but
an Indian army. For the first time
after 100 years Indian soldiers will
be called upon to fight Indian
soldiers; the British imperialists have
kept patriotism out of the Indian
army and Bose's Indians will be the
homework Indian soldiers or young
"patriotic" propagandists, coming to
India as the "liberators of the
motherland." It needs no guessing
whose morale would be higher. The
Jap army will follow Bose's army so
they did the Thakin army into
Borneo.

(2) The British imperialists have
kept the Congress leaders in jail.
The Jap ally is a one-time Congress
President, who has been one of the
most prominent national leaders.
The British have formed a National
Government, which he has won
"recognition" for a "Provisional
National Government" from Japan
and its allies. The Jap political



preparing the invasion of India. So Tojo asked Hitler to lend Bose to him to make the necessary political preparations so that the Jap Fascist invasion may be palmed off on the Indian people as India's national liberation. Let no Indian patriot ignore Bose as an adventurer. His adventure can become India's ruin. Let us set our own house in order before Bose sets it afire. All patriots! Rush aid to Bengal now, it has to fight Bose tomorrow. Let every Bengali feel that every

Indian is behind him while Bose is coming with rice which is not food for the people but snare for Jap slavery. All ! Help the Indian and Allied armies to hold the front. They will hurl back Bose's puppet army. ”

People's War dated December 19, 1943 front-paged a dirtier cartoon which we reproduce on the next page.

In *People's War* dated January 23, 1943, B. T. Ranadive burst out on Sri Jai Prakash Narain because the latter had a 'soft-corner for Bose.' After quoting Pandit Nehru in support of the communist stand, Ranadive wrote : “ What has Congress Socialist Jai Prakash to say about Bose ? On page No. 10 of his Second Letter, Jai Prakash recommends the dummy government of Subhash in the following words : ‘The first act of the Subhash Government has been to offer to send as much rice as may be required to feed the starving people of Bengal.’ Jai Prakash and the Congress Socialists uphold Subhash as a patriot, even though he has entered into a deal with the aggressor in China. ‘It is inconceivable,’ writes Jai Prakash ‘that he should ever be ready to sell his country’.”

By May 1944 the Communist Party of India had been completely isolated. Then suddenly Mahatma Gandhi was released. The communists ran to him for approval of their policy simply because Mahatmaji had shown dislike for August violence. So *People's War* dated May 4, 1944 came out with a portrait of Gandhiji * at prayer time. Its editorial was entitled ‘Welcome’. But the communist Nikhil Chakrabarty who went to interview Gandhiji on behalf of *People's War* was shocked because Gandhiji did not regard Subhash a traitor. He reported : “ Soli Batliwala came with the greetings from the Communist Party of India. *In the big drawing room of the Parnakuti there is a picture of Subhash at the time of his presidentship.* As I watched the picture I wondered what the reactions of the patriots present there would be to this picture

* In earlier issues of the *People's War* Gandhiji had been thoroughly abused for his Quit India proposal.

of a man who has betrayed his own people. Tough fights I have witnessed in Bengal between his followers and the true patriots. ”

PEOPLE'S WAR

Vol. 11 No. 79

FRIDAY, December 13, 1943

No. 2



In the same issue of *People's War* a 'Patriots Notebook' noted very sharply: " 'Netaji' Subhash Bose, I hear from a very reliable source, is living in sumptuous quarters in Rangoon. His cash comes from the notorious South Regions Development Bank which was established by the Japs to finance all the monopoly concerns that the invaders have established to exploit Burma. His agents, of course, have spread the rumour that he gets all his cash from the Indians of Malaya and Burma. But in fact, even the little he gets this way comes from 'contributors', big commercial firms who have been soundly threatened. 'If you do not give us cash, we shall let the Burmese get at you'—and the feelings of the Burmese towards the Indian moneybags in Burma are by no means too friendly. Bose has also confiscated all the properties belonging to Indians who evacuated. That too has brought *him* something. Another thing Bose is doing is to help the Japs to round up all Indian patriots in Burma and Malaya who have seen what 'independence' has meant for Burma and why the Japs must be fought. *Bose, in fact, has become the running dog of Jap Fascism.* Petain of France, Quisling of Norway, Wang Ching Wei of China and Bose are all members of the same family. Treachery does not stop at any frontier. "

The communist campaign against Netaji was rounded off by Moscow in January 1946 as it was started by Moscow in 1930. Writing in *Pravda* dated January 7, 1946 the Soviet journalist David Zaslavsky denounced as " a stupid fairy tale " the report that Subhash Chandra Bose was in Soviet Russia. He wrote : " The substance of the fairy tale is as follows. The notorious would-be quisling of India, Subhash Chandra Bose, who at first was in Hitlerite pay in Berlin and then in the pay of Japanese imperialists in Toyko, has allegedly fled to Russia and has been there since the unconditional surrender of Japan together with his soldiers of the Indian National Army who were taken prisoners by the Russian army. This *fascist rogue* is alleged to have freely travelled in Soviet countries

and inspected his 30,000 strong army. But the story does not end here. An unnamed soldier appears to know that responsible representatives of the Soviet Government conferred with Bose and gave this Indo-Fascist adventurer imaginary concrete promises. Such is the stupid fairy tale. In the interests of peace and friend-ship one must nail down newspaper lies. ”

Thus Russia and the Russian hirelings in India had descended into the gutter in respect of India Nationalism when the Grand Alliance started cracking and the Kremlin directed all its marionettes to indulge in a savage dance against “ Anglo-American Imperialism ”.

V

THE AFTERMATH

I

The defeat of Hitler in May 1945 brought about another shift in Russia's foreign policy. "Our Anglo-American allies" became once again "the Anglo-American Imperialists" against whom the "camp of Socialism" was engaged in a mortal combat. A scrutiny of the Moscow press clearly brings out the development of this shift between June 1945 and early 1943 when recognition of the increasing Soviet threat to Western Europe resulted in the signing of the North Atlantic Pact amongst the Western Powers.

During the Hitler-Soviet war Moscow used to publish a fortnightly magazine, *The War and the Working Class*, for the benefit of Russia's English speaking "allies". On June 1, 1945, this magazine was renamed *New Times*. The editorial of the first issue of *New Times* explained: "*The War and the Working Class* commenced publication at the height of the Great Patriotic War the Soviet Union was waging against Hitler's Germany. The further course of the struggle depended upon the practical implementation of the alliance of three great democratic powers—the Soviet Union, the United States and Great Britain. To secure the speediest and most complete defeat of the German fascist invaders—this was the thought that governed the minds and hearts of the Soviet people to the exclusion of all others. The period of war in Europe is over. A new stage of historical development is being ushered in. The new situation calls for a new approach, for new criteria. Fascism has been rooted out, but it is not yet entirely crushed.

The dark forces of international reaction of which fascism was the most hideous progeny, have not yet been dislodged from all their positions. The enemies of the peaceful intercourse of nations are now operating with greater subtlety and caution. The present-day disturbers of the peace come out under the most diverse masks, even under the mask of champions and advocates of democracy. ” The same issue of *New Times* mentioned the ‘Grim Spectre’ of unemployment haunting the United States of America, ‘anti-Soviet propaganda’ in France and ‘the colour bar in British colonies’—subjects which were unmentionable in the Soviet press as long as the war against Hitler lasted.

The Soviet insinuations against “ Anglo-American monopoly capitalism ” increased in volume and intensity as Britain and America resisted Soviet expansionism in Europe, Middle East and the Far East. The columns of *New Times* which became a weekly journal from January 1, 1947 are full of articles and notes discovering this or that ‘Anglo-American plot’ against ‘peace’, this or that ‘design against the peaceful Soviet Union’. The culmination came in the beginning of October 1947 when *Pravda* dated 7th October revealed to the world that a secret Conference of nine European Communist Parties met in Warsaw at the end of September, established the Cominform and accepted ‘Zhadanov’s report on the international situation.’ Commenting on the ‘uproar in the camp of reaction’. *New Times* dated October 15, 1947 wrote an editorial in which the word ‘imperialism was again applied to the Western nations—for the first time after Hitler attacked the Soviet Union in June 1941. Defending the Cominform the editorial stated : “ The Conference declaration calls upon all anti-imperialist, democratic forces ‘to unite, to work out a common platform of action, to work out their tactics against the principal forces of the imperialist camp.’ This Conference, as the Czechoslovak *Rudo Pravo* rightly says, ‘ushers in a new phase in which the democratic and progressive forces in Europe will wage an offensive against the schemes of the Western imperialists, headed by American reaction’ . ”

This Zhadanov 'report' was the notorious document which laid the basis of civil wars in Greece, China, Philippines and Indonesia, inspired a communist revolt in Malaya and Indo-China, and created the Telengana campaign of arson, loot, murder and rape in India.

II

As the Soviet policy changed regarding her war-time allies, Soviet publications again discovered the fact that India was a colony of Great Britain. The Soviet press noted for the first time that there had been a famine in India in 1943 ! *New Times* No. 1 dated June 1, 1945 observed : " In 1943 about a million and half persons died in Bengal from hunger and from epidemics associated with it. The authorities displayed inexcusable delay in organising relief for the population. " And then 'explaining' as to why the Soviet Union noticed this ghastly tragedy after two years, the article concluded : " Although the data cover the year 1943, they are of topical interest even to-day. The economic conditions of India have undergone no material change since then. Famine and epidemics continue to afflict one or another part of India. " The next issue of *New Times* (dated June 15, 1945) travelled still farther into the past and discovered that there had been a national struggle in India against British imperialism in the year 1942 ! Under the pretext of describing a journey which V. Mikheyev undertook to Australia in 1942, an article by the traveller pointed out : " We arrived in Bombay on the eve of the opening of the Indian National Congress. This large city was seething with strikes and meetings. Here and there materials for barricades and barbed wire entanglements were visible. The Congress ended late at night and next morning all its leaders were arrested. A wave of arrests and disorders swept over India. Martial Law was proclaimed in Bombay and other cities. Rumours of serious armed clashes in many parts of the country spread through the town. "

In *New Times* dated August 5, 1945 the Soviet expert on India, A. Dyakov, appeared on the scene. Reviewing the 'Failure of the Simla Conference' between Lord Wavell and the Indian leaders, he wrote : " The Simla Conference showed that the obstacle to the settlement of the Indian question is not so much differences among the Indian parties as *a certain definite policy conducted by influential circles in the metropolitan country.* " A few months later Dyakov went further. Writing in *New Times* dated January 15, 1946 he threatened : " The fact that the National Congress and other parties are participating in the elections to the legislative assemblies appointed by the British authorities is not symptomatic of any easing of the political tension in the country. Developments in that country may lead to a situation as acute as that which arose after World War 1. And in the present international situation this may very well result in far more serious and momentous consequences. "

After writing a 'Geographical Sketch'—'India and her People'—in *New Times* dated March 1, 1946 and a review—'Indian National Congress Leaders'—in *New Times* dated May 15, 1946, Dyakov observed in *New Times* dated December 15, 1946 : " The situation in India is fraught with serious menace. Internecine strife in so vast a country cannot be a matter of indifference to the rest of the world. History shows that the more British ruling circles interfere in Indian affairs, the more acute internecine strife in India becomes. Only grant of full independence to India can guarantee the settlement of her internal antagonisms ; only this can knock the ground from under the feet of those elements who on the instigation of reactionary forces from without and with the support of the metropolitan country, are, in furtherance of their own private interests, plunging the country into the maelstrom of fratricidal War. "

India was rapidly advancing towards independence. At the same time Soviet Union's relations with Britain were going from bad to worse. The prospect of better Indo-British

relations was a nightmare for the Kremlin. Moreover, it was impossible for Moscow to accept the fact of India's independence with 'reactionary bourgeois leadership of the Congress' at the helm of the Indian nation. Moscow wanted to use India's conflict with Britain to place her own communists in power. The new situation, therefore, had to be interpreted in a dialectical manner. So Dyakov wrote another article—'The New British Plan for India'—in *New Times* dated June 13, 1947. Commenting on the Mountbatten Plan he wrote: " Britain wants to perpetuate her rule in India by splitting her in pieces and converting her into a conglomeration of feeble and as far as possible, mutually hostile states. She is no longer in a condition to keep a United India. And so, in a new form, she is resorting to the old method of divide and rule. That is the whole meaning of the new British plan. Its purpose is to prolong British rule in India by hook or by crook. National Congress leaders have also approved the new plan. The popular movement, whose manifestations have alarmed the British Government, has also inspired fear and trembling in influential sections of India's propertied classes. *There can be no doubt that the top levels of India's wealthy classes are exerting strong pressure on National Congress leaders and compelling them to agree to a compromise.* The Plan was received with full approval by Churchill and his milieu who evidently look upon it as a direct continuation of Britain's former colonial policy in India. "

Moscow had treated India as a 'free' country when Russia's British " allies " were sitting on top of her. But now, when the British were preparing to leave, Moscow saw a 'new slavery descending on India.' Of course, there was a method in this madness.

III

The policy of the Communist Party followed faithfully the new shift in Moscow. The earliest communist document from post-war India in our possession is a pamphlet *Jobs For All*

written by B. T. Ranadive in November 1945. The country was preparing for general elections. Ranadive wrote : “ Before the elections are over and popular parties take power in provinces and at the centre, India will be in the midst of an economic storm, unprecedented in its intensity and magnitude. Thanks to the criminal irresponsibility of the bureaucratic Government, which has done nothing to meet this impending crisis, India is faced with unemployment, loss of jobs and incomes and destitution for not less than five million persons. They include demobilised soldiers, industrial workers, agricultural labourers and educated middle class. ” After hurling abuses at the Indian capitalists, the Congress and the Muslim League for their “ collaboration ” with the British Government to keep India backward Ranadive advocated : “ The *imperialist* policy of throwing India to the wolves can be defeated only by an all round attack against its *economic policy*. It can only be defeated by people’s unity, by the united demand of all political parties. ”

At about the same time P. C. Joshi published his pamphlet *A Free and Happy India—Election Policy of Indian Communists*, providing the political line. Joshi warned : “ In the world of to-day, with the great political awakening in India the British imperialists dare not directly and openly deny Indian freedom. Their present-day strategy is based on their firm belief that Indian parties will never come together and they will be able to impose their own plan for the future constitution of India. It is against this danger that our Party will rouse the people. In the extremely critical and difficult period that is coming ahead, we will ceaselessly work for Congress-League unity as also for Congress-Communist united front inside one joint front for India’s freedom. ”

The communist policy started getting more concretely anti-British and anti-Congress after the visit of R. P. Dutt in April-May 1946. In July 1946, the People’s Publishing House Ltd., Bombay published R. P. Dutt’s pamphlet, *A New Chapter in Divide and Rule*. Dutt argued : “ The Cabinet Mission’s Plan

for India is not a Plan for Indian independence. It is the continuation of the old method of divide and rule. British imperialism has not abdicated and transferred power to the Indian people. It has rather exploited all its ingenuity and age-old political experience to establish an elaborate, cumbersome, precarious machinery through which even behind the formal facade of Indian independence, it will be able to continue to manouvre and seek to maintain its essential economic and strategic domination. ”

In August 1946 the Central Committee of the Communist Party of India met and passed a Political Resolution. We quote from this resolution published in the pamphlet, *For the Final Assault* : “ The Indian freedom has entered into its final phase. The mounting mass battles against imperialism herald a period of the struggle for power by the people and the final liquidation of imperialist rule. The alternatives before the people are two : Either imperialism is able to crush this upsurge, thanks to the compromising politics of the bourgeois leaderships of the Congress and the League ; or the Party of the working people is able so effectively to intervene in the situation with correct political slogans, programme and strategy, as to transform it continuously in the direction of developing, extending and unifying these expressions of mass discontent, counteracting the influence of the bourgeois leadership, and thus setting the stage for the final struggle for power. The radicalisation of the Congress ranks and the growing disillusionment with the compromising policy of the Congress Right leadership is seen in the enormous growth of Left elements who honestly want to fight compromise and stand for struggle. The Communist Party appreciates the desire of Left elements to bring about the joint action of all those who want to fight compromise. The Communist Party makes this proposal for joint action because it wants all those who today fight compromise to join hands to rouse the entire people against the Imperialist Plan and speed up the building of joint freedom front that will rally the entire Indian people and unite their major parties for the final struggles for power. ”

People's Age dated August 4, 1946 wrote an editorial—'The Ninth of August'—completely forgetting what they had written about this date in the columns of *People's War*. The Party lords announced: " The 9th of August will be remembered by the heroic resistance with which the masses fought Government repression and the upheavals that followed. The Indian people, temporarily freed from the deadening grip and the emasculating politics of Gandhism, fought like men. The highest point of people's action was reached in the upheavals of Midnapore, Ballia and Satara where local authority was overpowered. Such was the wonderful skill and resourcefulness, courage and heroism shown by the Indian masses. They took the 'Quit India' resolution seriously and executed it with a revolutionary decisiveness unexpected by their leaders. " The communists thus began preparing for " mass upheavals " under their own leadership.

The entire communist apparatus was immediately geared for action. The communist controlled Girni Kamgar Union at Amalner formented violence as a result of which nine innocent workers were killed and more than 40 wounded in police firing on August 27, 1946. The communist controlled unions of the South Indian Railway served a strike notice. The strike was launched and police terror was invited leading to the death of five innocent workers at Golden Rock Workshop on September 5, 1946. The communist fraction working in the various princely States called for " struggle against compromising leadership of the State People's Congress ", and widespread trouble was created in Kashmir, Hyderabad, Travancore and Bharatpur. Bengal saw the Tebhaga movement and Hajang violence under communist leadership. But the country at large was too much torn by communal conflict to provide much scope for communist-sponsored " class struggle ".

The Mountbatten Award came in the first week of June 1947. India was to become a free (though divided) nation on August 15 that year. The Central Committee of the Communist Party of India met in Delhi from June 10 to June 20, 1947 and

resolved : “ The Mountbatten Award does not give India real independence but is the culmination of a double-faced imperial policy which sets in motion disruptive and reactionary forces to disrupt the popular upsurge, obstruct the realisation of real independence, throttle growth of democracy and destroy the unity and integrity of India. A grim future awaits our people if the fatal consequences of imperial manouvres, if the strong influence of compromising elements in our national political life are not realised. The Communist Party of India pledges itself anew to play its full part in carrying forward the battle for independence, democracy and unity to final victory in the new conditions. *The Communist Party appeals to all Left organisations and elements to forget the partisanship and differences of the past and come together to fight the dangers and realise the possibilities of the present.*

The basis was thus laid for a *volte face* on 1942-1945.

IV

As the communist policy “ evolved ” towards “ nationalism ” their attitude towards Netaji and the I. N. A. also showed a corresponding “ evolution ”. P. C. Joshi issues a statement on August 27, 1945, “ on the reported death of Subhash Chandra Bose. ” He said: “ *It is the British overlordship of our country that creates a Bose.* But much worse has happened. The severity of post-August repression and the continued denial of power to the people has to-day led a great majority of our political leaders and the press to glorify Bose as a patriot and martyr ; some, of course, qualify by stating that he was misguided. *To think only of his motives and forget the pro-fascist policy that he pursued is to lose the confidence and respect of the democratic elements abroad for the Indian freedom movement.* Our differences with Bose and his Forward Bloc have been political. But we are against a foreign Government keeping them in prison. *We demand and support the campaign for the release of his followers.* ” (*Communist Reply to Congress Working Committee Charges*, p. 298). On October 18, *People’s War* came out with the following

editorial on the Indian National Army : “ The trial of the Indian National Army Leaders is the centre of public attention. The British Government treats those who joined the I. N. A. as ordinary war criminals. The Congress leaders and the Nationalist Press are glorifying them as national heroes. If the legal quibbling of New Delhi seeks to hide imperialist vindictiveness, the glorification in the Nationalist Press is not a true expression but distorted reflection of national sentiment. Our Party demands the immediate release of all I. N. A. men and leaders. Let us not glorify them, but do our best to get them out, back to their own homes and farms, back to honest labour, back into the arms of their own people. This will really save them and reclaim them for the country’s battle for freedom. ” (*Ibid*, Pp. 298-301).

Very soon, however, the Communist Party realised that this sitting on fences about Netaji and the I.N.A. will not do. The whole country was seething with an upsurge about the I.N.A. prisoners. Rajani Palme Dutta was to record in July 1947 : “ Even the inverted example of the so-called ‘Indian National Army’ sponsored by Bose during the war from within the Axis Camp and the subsequent trials of the I.N.A. leaders kindled to white heat the flames of militant patriotism and the conception of armed conquest of power in place of the old non-violent struggles. The flame of national revolt spread not only through the civilian population, but extended for the first time to the armed forces, alongside the civilian mass unrest. In these strikes and demonstrations Hindus and Muslims, Congress and League followers were united. ” (*A New Chapter in Divide and Rule*, p. 6). So the CPI made a new gesture towards the nationalist ranks. Arun Bose and Khoka Rai of the CPI wrote out a pamphlet *Forward Bloc and its Allies versus Communists*, published by People’s Publishing House in December 1945. This was essentially an attempt to discredit the Forward Bloc leaders and to win over the rank and file—a tactic of communist ‘United Front from Below’. The communists argued :

“ To-day in 1945, the most outspoken charge against Bengal communists is that they stood against the invasion of India in 1944 by the Indian National Army.

“ Communist students were shot down and lathi-charged by the police in the recent I.N.A. demonstration at Calcutta. Under communist leadership there was a general strike of communist transport workers. But Sarat Bose and his men have attacked us as ‘fair weather friends’ of the I.N.A. who opposed them during the invasion in 1944. He, therefore, ran away from the place of firing, found time to meet the Bengal Governor and informed him of the ‘communist conspiracy’ behind the disturbances.

“ Anyone in his senses will admit that the bulk of the middle class to-day looks upon Sarat Bose and the Forward Bloc as ‘trustees’ on behalf of their leader, Subhash Bose. Bengal did not rise in 1944 to let the Indian National Army get into India together with the Japanese. But she is ready today to get them released, and wants Sarat Bose to lead the struggle for freedom in Subhash’s name. Sarat Bose and the Forward Bloc will have to decide whether they will justify this hope and join hands with the communists to lead a united struggle against the British or stick to their game of power-politics, slander and attack communists and allow, or even call in, the British to ‘hold the ring’. Newspaper columnists have been writing of Sarat Bose’s conduct during the Calcutta firing : ‘Sarat Bose is a crow in peacock’s hues and the first shower has washed away the paint’.

“ They have slandered and murdered us before, they are doing it with a vengeance today. If they don’t pull up, they won’t finish us, but only split the Bengal Congress again and make the common people lose faith in both us and them. We do not want this to happen because we do not want to be British slaves for ever. *That is why we want to wipe the slate clean and ask the Forward Block and its allies to stop indulging in the game of power-politics, break with profiteers and corrupt politicians and all together fight the British to win happiness and freedom for Bengal.* ”

The overtures of the Communist Party were accepted by a section of the Forward Bloc. So the CPI completely reversed its verdict on I.N.A. in early 1947. Reviewing Major General Shah Nawaz Khan's book, *I.N.A. and its Netaji*, Romesh Chandra wrote in *People's Age* dated April 6, 1947 : " The I.N.A. was the first embodiment of all the dreams and aspirations of all Indians at all times—a *National Army* which fought British rulers. General Shah Nawaz's book is an interesting documentary on a great chapter in India's struggle for freedom. " And finally *People's Age* dated May 4, 1947 flashed in bold letters a review of the film 'Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose'. 'Our Film Critic' wrote : " There is no doubt that all patriotic Indians will go and see this film—the first full length documentary of a chapter in the Indian struggle for freedom. The very production of this is a landmark in Indian film history. Our glorious national history must be immortalised through the film and 'Netaji Subhash' is the first step taken in this direction and every Indian must see this film for this if for no other reason. "

And when some puritanical Party enthusiasts questioned this complete change-over without any 'ideological criticism and self-criticism' they were informed confidentially, in secret *Party Letters*, that " both the INA and its Netaji are as dead as mutton, are absolutely beyond any mischief against the communist movement in India " and that " the legend that has grown round the I.N.A. and Netaji is : *objectively* playing a revolutionary role " !

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