

NEHRU & INDIAN COMMUNISM

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[This important article by Ajoy Ghosh, general secretary of the Communist Party of India, appeared first in the weekly New Age of Delhi and is reprinted because of its interest for our readers.—Ed., L.M.]

SINCE his return from China, Pandit Nehru has made a number of speeches which have stressed the supreme need of Sino-Indian unity. In a forthright manner, he has declared his conviction that the Chinese people do not want war. He has been emphasising that the friendship between these two great neighbours, big and powerful, is a mighty bulwark for peace and freedom. Pandit Nehru has also paid a handsome tribute to the leaders of New China for the way they are striving to bring about a quick transformation of their country.

We Communists whole-heartedly welcome every one of these positions; they constitute an unanswerable reply to the imperialist warmongers who are dead-set on branding China as having aggressive designs on the countries of South-East Asia. Not only that, we hold that the initiation of the Five Tenets of the principle of peaceful co-existence, enunciated by the Chou-Nehru Declaration, has been a significant landmark in the annals of Asia. The clear and unequivocal pledge of friendship between these two great Asian neighbours is a matter of tremendous importance not only for the countries of Asia, but for the cause of peace and freedom in the whole world. It has dealt a big blow to the imperialist system, creating consternation in the entire imperialist camp, and jubilation in the camp of democratic States and among the people of every land.

It is, therefore, an imperative task of the democratic forces in India to mobilise our people behind these historic Five Tenets of peaceful co-existence, and the Communist Party takes an active part in this national task.

Coupled with these important steps furthering the cause of peace and of the democratic camp, Pandit Nehru has recently made quite a few attacks on the Communists, the peak of which was reached in the broadsides he fired in the public meeting at Delhi last week.* Coming as they do from Pandit Nehru, who holds a position of special eminence in the country, it is necessary to examine these points of attack upon the Communists. Pandit Nehru has stated

*The last week of November, 1954.

that the Indian Communists in the past had condemned his foreign policy and are now puzzled when his foreign policy has earned the praise of countries like the Soviet Union and China. There is no question of Communists being 'puzzled' by the present shift in Pandit Nehru's foreign policy. They welcome this shift. Let it be remembered that it is the Communist Party almost single handed that has had all these years since the advent of independence fearlessly and consistently called for orientation of India's foreign policy in a progressive direction and has campaigned for closer Indian ties with the countries like the Soviet Union and China that have rid their countries from the grip of imperialism and are on guard against its onslaughts.

For a party that has almost single-handedly warned our people against the menacing shadow of American imperialism over the countries of Asia, the present stand of Pandit Nehru's Government against the war-designs of American imperialism in Asia could not but evoke whole-hearted support.

But Pandit Nehru is right when he says that in the past we Indian Communists did attack his foreign policy as subservient to Anglo-American imperialist powers. But this is an issue which demands self-examination not by Communists but by Pandit Nehru himself. Can any serious student of Indian affairs deny that the foreign policy of Pandit Nehru's Government has undergone a shift in the last five years? Is it not necessary for Pandit Nehru to ponder and ask why was it that we Communists attacked his foreign policy, sharp and straight, in the past? In those days, the Government of India had over and over again proclaimed its close association in the world scene with the imperialist powers of Britain and America. Speaking at this very city of Delhi, five years ago, on March 22, 1949, Pandit Nehru declared:

At the present moment you will see that as a matter of fact we have far closer relations with some countries of the Western World than with others. It is partly due to historic and partly due to other factors, present-day factors of various kinds. These close relations will no doubt develop and we will encourage them to develop.

There is no gainsaying the fact that the 'Western Powers' referred to above are in the main the British and American imperialisms. We have also to note that India spectacularly sided with the Anglo-American bloc in the Security Council when on June 27, 1950, was passed the infamous resolution which branded North Korea as an aggressor and thereby gave the passport of the United Nations for the American invaders of Korea, who brought the world to the very

verge of war. Who the real aggressor was has been revealed since by the utterances of Syngman Rhee and his American masters. As late as March, 1951, when India put her signature on the American offer under the Mutual Defence Assistance Pact, Dean Acheson, the U.S. Secretary of State, made it quite clear that the aid given under the pact was 'required by the Government of India to maintain its internal security, its legitimate self-defence or permit it to participate in the defence of the area of which it is a part', and it stipulated that our Government, in case of transfer of the articles obtained under the aid, 'will obtain the consent of the United States of America': while it permitted the U.S.A. to retain 'the privileges of diverting items of equipment or of not completing services undertaken if such action is dictated by consideration of United States national interest. . . .' When, later on, U.S. imperialist circles clamoured against India taking the first initial steps marking herself apart from the imperialist bloc, Mrs. Pandit as a spokesman of Pandit Nehru's Government, tendered India's *bona fides*, as it were, to the Anglo-American bloc when she beseechingly said:

In the recent sessions of the General Assembly, we voted as you did 38 times out of 51, abstaining 11 times and differing from you only twice.

It is thus clear that it is not the Indian Communists who deserve to be criticised for attacking Pandit Nehru's foreign policy in those days, but it was Pandit Nehru's foreign policy in those days which deserves to be criticised for in the main, being influenced by Anglo-American imperialists.

The Communists have nothing to regret for having warned all through against India being guided by British advice in the matter of Kashmir; it is not the Communists but Pandit Nehru himself who on the advice of Lord Mountbatten took the Kashmir question to the Security Council, and agreed to abide by the protracted imperialist manoeuvres under the aegis of the United Nations. Not till December 1952, did Pandit Nehru's Government stand up against the offensive and dangerous moves of the Anglo-American bloc in the Security Council with regard to Kashmir. And it was not until the beginning of this year that Pandit Nehru came forward against the American agents in Kashmir masquerading as U.N. observers—about whom the Communists had warned from the beginning.

The Communists have nothing to regret for protesting against Pandit Nehru's attack on the heroic fighters for Malayan freedom during his trip there in 1949, an attack which could only be of advantage to the British butchers who have been perpetrating horrors in Malaya.

The Communists have nothing to regret for having unearthed the sinister arrangement by which Britain was allowed to recruit Gurkha troops on Indian soil for despatch against Malayan patriots. Pandit Nehru after having denied it in Parliament in 1952 had to admit it when the Communists brought it to light with unanswerable evidence. We can understand Pandit Nehru's embarrassment over the issue, but it does not behove him to attack the Communists for having condemned this sordid episode of his foreign policy. Equally sordid was the exposure of the transit facility that the French imperialists were enjoying, on the sly, at Indian airports for despatching troops to defend their empire in Indo-China. In this case too, right this year, Pandit Nehru's denial in Parliament was followed within a few weeks by the exposure by the Communist Party which compelled the Government to stop the practice.

Are we Communists to be blamed for having criticised this part of Pandit Nehru's foreign policy? Rather we are proud to have done it as a national vindication of India's refusal to help imperialists to crush other countries, striving like ourselves, to be free.

Right today, the Communist Party warns the Government and the country against the danger of accepting U.S. aid and points to the bitter fruits of abject subservience that came to the lot of many a free country in Europe after accepting the tempting aids that American imperialism had been offering them for years. We have no hesitation in saying that we Communists are still opposed to the various U.S. aids being accepted, coming as they do from an imperialist power which has proclaimed in no uncertain terms its objective of world conquest in the name of fighting Communism. We have warned and shall not cease warning against this danger to our sovereignty, drawing lessons not only from distant lands but from the fate of the neighbour at our doorstep, Pakistan, which starting from economic aid has sold her pass to U.S. imperialism. In his last speech in Parliament before leaving for China, Pandit Nehru while denouncing the South-East Asia Treaty Organisation war-combine, stated:

I realise that the motives may be and are good. I repeat that countries in Asia, as well as those outside have certain fears and those fears may have justification. . . . Most of these countries are afraid not of what Governments do officially, but what they might do *sub rosa* through the activities of the Communist Party in these countries. This is one of the serious difficulties that have arisen in international affairs.

This was, in a way, giving almost a justification to the imperialists for hatching such a war plot, and it was hailed precisely for this

very reason by the entire imperialist press. What was expected of Pandit Nehru, who has refused to be drawn into such a plot, was to show up that the talk of Communist menace was just a cover by the imperialists for their designs on the countries of Asia. Nor can we overlook the fact that although Gurkha recruiting centres have been closed down, after mass protests were voiced, transit facilities through India are still being afforded to the British Government for despatching Gurkhas to Malaya.

Pandit Nehru is irritated by the Communist warning against staying within the British Commonwealth. We make it quite clear that our stay inside the British Commonwealth goes against our independent defence. We need not go very far but quote from *Economist* (London) which is the voice of British finance. Referring to the visit of the British Chief of Staff Harding who is just now visiting our country, the paper says:

His journey is unusual in that it is the first time since 1950 that a British Chief of Staff has set foot in India or Pakistan; the fact that he was invited by the Commanders-in-Chief of both the Pakistan and the Indian Armies, who delivered their invitations when they attended Commonwealth Staff exercises in London in August, shows how close the professional relationship with the British Army remains even now that nearly all the British officers who were left behind in 1947 to train their successors have returned home. (November 20, 1954.)

Today Winston Churchill has openly bragged about his fiendish designs even during the war of using the Nazis against the very ally, U.S.S.R., that saved Europe from Hitler slavery. This has sent a wave of horror and revulsion among all the decent sections of world public. And yet, Pandit Nehru agrees to go to the Commonwealth Conference over which Winston Churchill presides. Not only that. The men with whom Pandit Nehru will confer there, the bosses of the British Dominions, are the very people who are actively building the S.E.A.T.O. war bloc, which he has himself denounced.

For a statesman of Asia whose advocacy of Sino-Indian amity has won the ready approbation of the entire peace-loving mankind, to sit at the same imperial table with men who parade their perfidy brings neither glory nor honour to India but provides a respectable alibi to those who are plotting to build up new armies for another world war. It is this aspect of India's foreign policy—the aspect that follows directly from our links with the British Commonwealth—that the Communists have never hesitated to attack. But despite these links with the British imperialists, which we want to be broken, whenever and wherever Pandit Nehru has taken a definite stand that

has helped the cause of peace and curbed the imperialists, the Communist Party has come out in whole-hearted support of each and every one of such moves.

Even in the days when Pandit Nehru's Government was trying to suppress the Communists with armed violence, his demand for the seating of People's China in the U.N., his warning against the crossing of the Yalu river by American troops, his move to stop the war in Korea and refusal to sign the San Francisco Treaty—all these brought forth the support of the Communists, though his Government was doing its best to stifle their voice. In the recent past, every one of his moves in the direction of peace—whether against the H-bomb, the presence of U.S. observers in Kashmir, the signing of the Sino-Indian Treaty on Tibet, the Chou-Nehru Declaration, the Geneva Agreement, the denunciation of S.E.A.T.O. or his visit to China—received the whole-hearted support of the Indian Communists. Not only that: on many of the issues the Communists strove to mobilise the people, as against the U.S. observers in Kashmir, the U.S.-Pak. Pact, or for the popularisation of the Five Tenets of the Chou-Nehru Declaration.

At the same time where we did not hesitate to criticise—and do not hesitate even today—is precisely where there is attachment to the Anglo-American bloc, particularly to the link with the British Commonwealth, because it is clear that these attachments and links with imperialist powers undermine the very position of eminence that India has won today in the international field by siding with the forces of peace and refusing to be towed into the imperialist bloc for war. If India is to play her rightful role as a consistent defender of peace and freedom, it is essential that she breaks away from those very links with imperialist powers.

It is thus the Communists who can claim to follow a consistent line in foreign policy, for the touchstone of every one of their stands is whether a particular move strengthens India's position or throws her into the band-wagon of imperialism. Pandit Nehru has talked about the half-hearted support of the Communists for his foreign policy. But there is no half-hearted stand in the dictionary of Communists. They come out in unequivocal support for what they think is correct. What they consider is wrong, they oppose equally unequivocally.

(In the second part of his article, which will be printed next month, Ajoy Ghosh deals with the internal situation in India and answers Jawaharlal Nehru's criticisms.)