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The Communists' Contribution to the Theory and Practice of Indian Politics

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It was in the early 1920s that the national revolutionaries of India who had come into existence before the First World War were converted into Communists. They were influenced by two factors which inter-acted with each other:

Firstly, the experience of the struggle inside the National Movement, between the Moderate leaders and the Revolutionary ranks which came to the fore just before and during the First World War.

Secondly, the Russian Proletarian Revolution of November 1917 which inspired the Indian revolutionaries as did the revolutionaries all over the world. Many of the Indian revolutionaries made almost a pilgrimage to the land of the first proletarian revolution in the world. Those who did not undertake such a difficult venture formed small communist groups in Bombay, Calcutta, Madras and the U.P.-Punjab region.

1.0.1 CPI formed in Tashkent

The Indian emigrate revolutionaries who had gone to several European countries, to the United States, Canada etc. were also influenced by the Russian Revolution. Some of them took the initiative in the Soviet City of Tashkent in organising what was called the Communist Party of India. Although formed outside India, this new organisation did a lot of work to educate (the young Indian communists at home. That organisation gave the first theoretical and practical education in Marxism-Leninism to the scattered groups of communists living and working in their homeland. The Tashkent Committee may therefore be considered the original foundation of what subsequently became the Communist Party of India.

This however had a major drawback although calling itself the Communist Party of India, it had its office outside the country. For this reason, a section of Indian communists did not consider the formation of the Tashkent group as the foundation of the Communist Party of India. They therefore decided to hold an open conference of Indian Communists in the City of Kanpur in U.P. ;

a legally-working Communist Party of India was also formed in Kanpur. This, according to some, was the foundation of the real Communist Party of India, since it was formed and functioned inside the country.

Neither the Tashkent organisation nor its Kanpur successor however could work legally due to intense repression resorted to by the British Rulers. The leading comrades of the Kanpur Communist Party of India, together with a large number of communist fellow travellers, were involved in the Meerut Conspiracy Case which lasted from early 1929 to the end of 1934. Only after the accused in the Meerut Conspiracy Case were released could a formally-constituted, though illegally functioning. Central Committee and Polit Bureau of the Communist Party of India started working. The Tashkent Committee and the Kanpur Committee were thus the fore-runners of the continuing leadership of the Communist Party of India.

The work turned out by the Tashkent and the Kanpur Committees, as well as the countrywide organisation of the Workers' and peasants' Party of India (a broader set up than the Kanpur-formed Communist Party of India), were thus the organisational foundation in the 1930s for the All India Centre of the Communist Party of India formed in 1934.

It is thus over six decades since the continuing leadership of the Communist Party of India has been functioning. During the fairly long period, the Party has made enormous strides. Today, though divided into the CPI(M), the CPI and various other political groups considered Marxist-Leninist, the Communists are a force to reckon with in Indian politics.

Three of the 25 States-Kerala, West Bengal and Tripura are having governments led by the CPI(M), the CPI and other Marxist groups like the RSP and the Forward Bloc. At the Centre too, a Government is in existence in which the liberal bourgeois and Marxist-Leninist groups are co-operating with each other with a view to keep the two major bourgeois formations, the Congress (I) and the BJP, out of power.

Apart from the Centre, this combination is leading also the State Governments of Tamil Nadu, Andhra, Karnataka, Bihar, Assam and Jammu and Kashmir. Nine out of 25 States in India thus have governments in which Marxist-Leninists are participants. The general political influence of Indian Communists over the Central and State administration is therefore unmistakable.

Although numerically the Marxist-Leninists are a small minority in the Indian political scene, its influence in Indian politics is far more than the electoral strength wielded by the Indian Marxist-Leninists. For, unlike other political groups, the Marxist-Leninists have made a distinct contribution to the theory and practice of Indian politics. It is attempted in this article to explain how this influence of Marxism-Leninism on the theory and practice of Indian politics has arisen.

1.0.2 The great heritage of early ideological work

As early as in the beginning of the 1920s, the leaders of the Tashkent group which called itself the Communist Party of India made big contributions to the study of the economy, polity, philosophy, etc. of India. In a series of articles written in the periodical journals brought out by the Tashkent group, current major political developments were subjected to Marxist-Leninist analysis.

M. N. Roy, the former Indian national revolutionary who became a communist, wrote a series of articles in the journal of the Tashkent group, subjecting current political developments in India to Marxist-Leninist analysis. His contributions to the discussion of the communal problem and the analysis of the Mahatma Gandhi phenomenon were greatly rewarding to the Indian Communists.

His analysis of the communal riots that were breaking out after the withdrawal of the Non-Cooperation-Khilafat Movement constituted a great contribution to the study of a major socio-political problem. His analysis contained in the book *India in Transition* was, in fact, the first beginning of Marxist-Leninist analysis of the Economy, Polity and Ideology of India under British Rule.

Another foreign comrade who did the same work was Rajani Palme Dutt, the British Communist who wrote *Notes of the Month* which were a month-by-month analysis of international developments as well as national political developments in India. His book under the title *India Today* was a sister publication to Roy's *India in Transition*. The two together constituted text books applying Marxist-Leninist theory to the basic socio-economic, cultural and political problems of India.

Such ideological work carried out by Roy and Dutt together with the day-to-day political and organisational work turned out by the comrades in India, gave an ideological basis on which the finally-organised and centralised Communist Party of India with its Central Committee and Polit Bureau came into being.

This tradition of ideological work, applying the theory of Marxism-Leninism to Indian condition and enriching the theory of Marxism-Leninism with the experience of the political-organisational revolutionary work turned out by the Marxist-Leninists, was carried forward by Indian communists from 1934-35 (when a Central Committee and Polit Bureau came to be formed and were able to work continuously). This is the great heritage that we of the CPI(M), the CPI and other Marxist-Leninists proudly cherish and carry forward.

It is proposed in the following paragraphs to explain what are the major contributions made by the Indian communists in this long period, stretching from the formation of the Tashkent group which called itself the Communist Party of India down to the present times.

As early as in the beginning of the 1920s, M. N. Roy in his writings had drawn attention to the problems of communal riots, relating it to class struggle. He pointed out that the only antidote to communal division is class unity which means the bringing together of the working people belonging to all castes and communities in the struggle against imperialism and the rich belonging to all castes and communities. This principle is even relevant today, more than seven

decades after Roy wrote his articles. Class unity through struggles against the oppressing classes is the only solution to the communal problem.

As opposed to the Hindutva, Islamic Republic, Christian rule and so on, as well as to the rule of particular castes should be projected the democratic republic in which men and women born in every caste, believing in every religion and so on should be brought together in the struggle against the exploiting classes cutting across all caste and communal differences among the ruling classes.

This was the basis on which, two decades later, the communists joined other secular forces including the Congress in opposing the two nation theory of Mohammed Ali Jinnah on which the demand for Pakistan was propagated. The Congress however projected, the communists pointed out, their idea of a single nation State of India ; they rejected the idea that India is inhabited by crores of people who are divided on the basis of language and culture and that the area inhabited by a single linguistic- cultural group is a *nationality within the greater unity of the Indian Nation*. We on our part pointed out that the political unity of India can be preserved only if the linguistic cultural groups inhabiting a particular State is considered a distinct nationality within the indivisible Indian State. It was in this sense that the communists in the 1940s called India a multi-national State. Multi-national India defined by the communists is, in other words, supplementary rather than contradictory to the unity of India as a nation.

That was why the Programme of the united Communist Party of India adopted in 1951 and the Programme of the CPI(M) and the CPI adopted in 1964 demanded maximum possible State autonomy for every cultural- linguistic group like the Malayalees, the Bengalis, the Tamils, the Andhras, the Kannadigas, the Punjabis etc.

This was the distinct contribution made by the Indian communists to the nature and content of Indian politics. India's unbreakable unity can be safeguarded only if the multiplicity of linguistically-culturally defined States are considered distinct nationalities within the united Indian State. No other political party has been able to put forward such a clear idea. This therefore is a valuable contribution made by the Marxists-Leninists to the theory and practice of India's political thought.

1.0.3 Agrarian Revolution - Before and After Independence

The first Programmatic statement of the illegal Communist Party of India issued in 1930 drew attention to the inter-relationship between the National Revolution and the Agrarian Revolution. Indian freedom can be won only through the revolutionary means in which the multi-million peasantry are drawn into a militant movement headed by the working class.

This was opposed to the ideas of the bourgeois leadership of the national movement led by Mahatma Gandhi, such as non-violence, the landlord-bourgeois classes being "trustees" of the people for their property etc. The Communist Party of India therefore was enjoined to carry on an ideological struggle against

these Gandhian concepts, as well as socio-political struggles by way of organising the industrial and agricultural workers, working peasants and all other sections of the working people against bourgeois-landlord oppression. This was the dividing line between the bourgeois-sponsored right leadership of the Congress and the mass of Congressmen and women.

Within the Congress organisation, a clear left group emerged in the mid- 1930s. Its struggle against the right leadership reached its climax in the election to the Congress Presidentship in 1939. The left candidate fighting that election, Subhash Chandra Bose, issued a statement in which he alleged that the right-wing leadership of the Congress was trying to enter into negotiations with the British Rulers on transfer of power to India. This, he said, is contrary to the national interests. What is required is mass national struggle against British Imperialism for which policy he was fighting the election.

The line advocated by the left candidate in the Congress Presidential election had the support of a majority of ordinary Congressmen. Bose therefore was elected President of the Congress. The bourgeois leadership however manoeuvred him out of the Congress Presidentship, going to the extent of personally expelling him from the Congress. This was the background against which two forms of anti-imperialist struggle were organised in the 1940s - the Quit India struggle led by the Congress headed by Mahatma Gandhi and the Indian National Army movement led by Subhash Chandra Bose. The former was apparently a militant struggle which drew millions of Indians into militant forms of action. The latter resulted in the formation of the Indian National Army headed by Subhash Chandra Bose which had an agreement with the military Rulers of Japan who extended support to the I. N. A.

The Communist Party of India could not support either of them because the Quit India struggle organised by the Congress leadership was the preparation for a move to put pressure on the British Rulers to open negotiations with the bourgeois leaders for transfer of power. As for the INA, the Communist Party of India considered that, despite the genuinely anti-imperialist sentiments of its leaders, it was a movement directed by the Japanese imperialist power which had its contradictions with the British Rulers.

The Communist Party of India therefore kept away from both the movements but, after the end of the war, it engaged itself in mighty militant mass struggles like the strike wave of the industrial workers and militant peasant movements like the Tebhaga movement in Bengal, the Punnapra Vayalar struggle in Travancore, the Telengana struggle in Hyderabad and peasant out-breaks in various parts of the country like the Telegu districts and Malabar in Madras, the district of Thane in Maharashtra, several districts in Punjab and so on. Together with the strike wave of industrial workers, middle class employees including government employees, students, youths, women etc. this was a mighty revolutionary upsurge in the post-war months. Despite its isolation from the anti-imperialist masses because of its opposition to Quit India and INA movements therefore, the Communist Party of India came out as the leader of revolutionary movements in the post-war years.

However, the Communist Party of India was an extremely weak force in the

anti-imperialist movement which by and large was led by the Congress. The latter therefore used the enormous prestige which it enjoyed thanks to its leadership of the Quit India and INA movements, to direct the immense mass upsurge as the basis on which negotiations could be opened between the Congress and the Government as well as between the Congress and the League. These 3 way-negotiations ultimately enabled the British rulers to put into practice the slogan given by the Muslim League to “divide and quit” India. The negotiations ended in the transfer of power to the Congress leaders in the Hindu-majority Indian Union and to the League leaders in the Muslim majority Pakistan. The militant mass actions, to some of which the Communist Party of India gave effective leadership like the Telengana struggle which lasted for 4 years and the Bombay revolt of the personnel of the Royal Indian Navy, were thus betrayed by the bourgeoisie because the proletariat and its party had not become powerful enough to develop the militant mass struggles into a revolutionary all-India upheaval.

1.0.4 Nationalism and Internationalism

The Congress which led the Quit India struggle and the Subhash Chandra Bose leadership which gave leadership to the INA movement were two forms in which the bourgeois leadership tried to use the situation created by the Second World War for throwing the British out. The Congress leaders, used the Quit India struggle to initiate negotiations with the British Rulers, while the Subhash Chandra Bose leadership depended upon the anti-British faction of imperialist powers for winning freedom. Both were sincere in their desire to win freedom for India—the Congress leadership through negotiations with the British Rulers and the Bose leadership through direct military and financial assistance from the fascist powers to throw the British out of India. Both however were contrary to the interests of the Indian people who wanted to carry out an anti-imperialist and anti-feudal agrarian revolution. The CPI’s opposition to the Quit India and INA movements therefore was, in the last analysis, correct. However, the CPI was a minor force in the political scenario, unable to meet the onslaught of Gandhian ideology in the Quit India movement and the left bourgeois, pro-fascist ideology of the INA movement.

The same difficulty had been faced during the years of the anti-fascist war by our comrades in several foreign countries, particularly in China, Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia as well as Korea. They too had to face the ideological and political offensive of the bourgeoisie. But, unlike us in India, they were far stronger, far more powerful in their respective national movements. They could organise a wide national revolutionary movement which was anti-fascist as well as directed against the ruling imperialist power in their respective countries. They therefore could come out of the war period much stronger than we in India.

The Chinese comrades could throw the Kuomintang, reactionaries out of power, making China People’s Democratic Republic. In Vietnam too, at the end of the war, half of the country was liberated where a People s Democratic

Government headed by Ho Chi Minh was established. The same thing happened in Korea where the Communists could establish themselves as the ruling party in the northern part of the country, while the south remained under the leadership of the reactionary bourgeoisie. That was how the end of the anti-fascist war saw India divided on communal lines, while China, North Vietnam and North Korea had People's Democratic Revolutions.

China, Vietnam and Korea were thus examples of the successful carrying out of the programme of anti-imperialist agrarian revolution, while in India the process of agrarian revolution was disrupted by the manoeuvres reported to by the British Rulers, together with the two (the Congress and the League) wings of the Indian bourgeois leadership.

It however goes to the credit of the CPI that, during the two bourgeois-led movements of the Quit India and the INA, the Party could successfully steer clear of bourgeois ideologies and keep the flag of proletarian internationalism afloat. The Party stuck to the principle of proletarian internationalism, declaring that the anti-fascist war waged by the Soviet Union, China, Vietnam and Korea was as much a People's War for India as it was for those particular countries.

The CPI pointed out that active participation in the international People's War against Fascism and the organisation of the anti-imperialist agrarian revolution were the two factors that would liberate India from British rule. Braving against the attacks from the misguided national bourgeoisie, the party held aloft the flag of resistance to fascism as an integral part of India's freedom struggle. That was why, after a short period of complete isolation from the anti-imperialist masses (1942-45), the Party could gather the patriotic forces and give effective militant leadership to the post-war revolutionary upsurge of 1946-47.

However, because of the organisational weakness of the CPI, the Congress and the League leadership could come to a negotiated settlement with the British Rulers for transfer of power to the Congress in the Indian Union and to the Muslim League in Pakistan. But the very role played by the CPI in leading the post-war revolutionary upsurge made the party a significant force in Indian politics.

The result was that, in the first general elections which took place in 1952, the party came out as the major party of opposition both in the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha. The roles played by A.K.G. in the Lok Sabha and Sundarayya in the Rajya Sabha, together with the work of the Communist and allied groups in Travancore-Cochin, Madras, Hyderabad, West Bengal and Tripura enabled the Party to become a force to reckon within Indian politics, although, in electoral terms on the national scale it was a small minority.

Mention may, in this context, be made also to the role played by the then left in the united CPI on the question of India-China dispute in 1959-1962. As in the days of the Quit India and INA movements, in the days of the India-China dispute too, the CPI as a whole, particularly the left in the CPI, was relatively isolated among the anti-imperialist masses. The stand adopted by the left in the CPI however made it clear that, as opposed to the line of war with China adopted by all the bourgeois parties and the right wing in the CPI, the left in the

CPI advocated peaceful negotiations for settlement of the India-China dispute which was proved correct in subsequent years when the Government of India itself had practically to admit that it was foolish on its part to have gone to war with China on the border question. Not only the then right in the CPI but even such parties as the Congress and the subsequent BJP had to admit that the border dispute between India and China has to be settled through negotiations with China and not through war.

The three decades that elapsed since the beginning of the organised work of the CPI's leadership in 1934 to the split of the party in 1964 was thus the period in which the united CPI made big advances but during which serious differences arose within the CPI — between the right and the left wings in the Party.

1.0.5 Right and "Left" Opportunism in the Pre-split CPI

Although it witnessed big advances made by the Party from 1934 to 1964, its leadership was a victim of right and "left" opportunism. In the 1942-1946 period, the Party leadership was the victim of right opportunism. This was corrected at the Second Congress of the Party held in 1948, but the leadership switched over from right to "left" opportunism.

The left opportunism which made its first appearance at the Second Congress of the Party, repeated itself in a new form at the 1950 May meeting of the Central Committee. Both however were corrected, after serious discussions with the leadership of the CPSU, at a Special Conference held in October 1951.

The common mistake of the right and "left" opportunism was the failure to realise that, if the programme of carrying out the anti-imperialist agrarian revolution is to be implemented, the Party has to base itself on the militant struggles of the working people led by the working class, combined with the tactics of revolutionary use of elections and legislatures under the bourgeois constitution. Out of this common failure arose the two deviations of (a) the bourgeois right opportunism and (b) the petty bourgeois "left" opportunism. These were subjected to serious self-criticism which ended in the formulation of a new Party Programme and Statement of Policy.

The Programme stated that the immediate objective of the Communist Party of India is not the introduction of socialism in India which is impracticable since the objective conditions are lacking and the necessary subjective forces are not developed. The Programme however pointed out that the crisis of the system in the post independence period had brought to the fore-front the possibility of bringing about a people's democratic revolution out of which will arise a people's democratic State and Government. It was on this basis that a Programme of people's democracy was adopted at the Calcutta special conference of the party in October 1951.

Having thus spelt out the objective of the people's democratic revolution which was incorporated in the Party Programme, the Statement of Policy discussed the tactical line. Considering the objective situation and the

maturity of the development of the subjective forces, the Statement of Policy, adopted along with the Party Programme, made two points:

Firstly, post-independence India having established a bourgeois democratic system with its elected legislatures to which the executives are responsible, it is necessary for the Party to go into the electoral battle, secure as many electoral victories as possible since all electoral battles are the concrete manifestations of class struggle.

Secondly, struggle on the parliamentary arena is only an important aspect of the struggle for People's Democracy. As important as the struggle on the electoral arena is the struggles of the working people outside the parliamentary arena. Any neglect of the struggle on the parliamentary arena will no doubt amount to failure to use the immense possibilities of gathering the revolutionary forces under the leadership of the working class.

There should however be no illusion, spread by the right wing Social Democrats, that merely through the struggles on the parliamentary arena, the struggle for people's democracy will end in success. On the other hand, the very use of bourgeois parliament for preparing people's democracy should be subordinated to the extra parliamentary struggle. Non-use of the revolutionary potentialities of the struggle on the parliamentary arena and subordinating the mass struggle to parliamentary work are the "left" and right forms of opportunism against which the Party should guard itself.

The Statement of Policy, adopted along with the Party Programme, had visualised a situation where the Party will have to adopt the tactics of waging peasant guerilla war as was done in Telengana. Actual experience however proved that, if the bourgeoisie resorted to the method of sabotage against People's Democracy, that situation has to be faced by mobilising more and more masses of working people led by the working class against the bourgeois-landlord Government.

That was why the Party did not have any hesitation to form its own government in Kerala in 1957 and use that opportunity to mobilise the people around the programme of agrarian reforms and other measures which would bring more and more people to the cause of People's Democracy.

The major contribution made by the pre-split CPI in the 1950s was the successful use of the parliamentary arena-membership of the two houses of parliament at the Centre and State legislature everywhere as well as the Kerala Government without slipping into the right opportunist "Parliamentarism" of the social democratic type.

The left-wing in the pre-split CPI which converted itself into the CPI(M) made a concrete analysis of the rise and overthrow of the Kerala Government on the basis of which the newly emerging CPI(M) wrote paragraph 112 in the 1964 Programme. While drawing attention to the possibilities of forming left-led governments in various States, that paragraph warned against the illusion that the governments formed on that basis would be able to solve the basic problems either of the country as a whole or of the State concerned.

It was on the basis of this understanding, further strengthened by the formation of two left-led governments (Kerala and West Bengal) in 1967 that the

CPI(M) formulated the idea that the left-led governments should be considered as “instruments of struggle for winning more and more popular masses, more and more political allies, to the cause of People’s Democracy”.

One consequence of this understanding of the relation between the parliamentary and extra-parliamentary struggles was the fact the CPI(M) came to the conclusion that, while it should take initiative to form and lead its own State Governments wherever possible, it would not join governments unless the Party is sure that it can influence the policies of the Governments.

That was why, in 1967, the non-left governments in Punjab, U.P. and Bihar were supported by the Party, though it did not join them. The same policy was adopted by the CPI(M) in relation to the Janata Government in 1977, the National Front Government in 1989 and, finally, the United Front Government in 1996.

1.0.6 In the Post-split CPI and the CPI(M)

The Struggle between the right and the left in the pre-split CPI ultimately led to the 1964 split. This was based on 3 ideological-political issues and one organisational issue. The ideological political issues were:

(a) The attitude to the Congress and its Government: The right in the pre-split CPI and the post-split CPI looked upon the Congress as a “progressive national organisation” with which the Communists should collaborate. The CPI(M), on the other hand, stood for uncompromising struggle against the Congress, even though, from issue to issue, the Party was prepared to cooperate with the Congress. (At the Fourth Congress of the pre-split CPI, the right in the Party had called for such unity with the Congress as would eventually lead to the formation of a Congress-Communist coalition government.) Defeated at that particular Party Congress, they did, after the split, implement the line in practice in Kerala and West Bengal: the CPI leader in Kerala (Achutha Menon) headed the anti CPI(M) Government of which the Home Minister was the notorious Karunakaran; in West Bengal too, the post-split CPI extended full cooperation to the semi-fascist terror regime of the early 1970s and subsequently to Indira Gandhi’s Emergency regime.

(b) On the India-China border dispute, the post-split CPI extended full support to the campaign for the anti-China War. The CPI(M), on the other hand, fought for the Government of India entering into negotiations with China and settling the border question through talks. The post-split CPI joined not only the Congress but even the Jan Sangh in carrying on a chauvinistic campaign against the Chinese and against the so-called “pro-China” CPI(M). It was from this campaign that the bourgeois politicians and the bourgeois media took courage to characterise the CPI(M) as “pro-China” and the post-split CPI as “Pro- Russia”.

(c) On question of ideological dispute between the Soviet Party on the one hand and Chinese Party on the other, the CPI fully sided with the Soviet position, while the CPI(M) opposed the Soviet line, even while entertaining reservations on some aspects of the Chinese line.

Together with these major ideological and political issues was the question of inner-party unity on which too pre-split CPI was sharply divided. The left in the pre-split CPI demanded that all ideological and political questions in dispute between the two sides should be discussed at a special party conference convened on the basis of party membership existing at the previous party Congress. This was not acceptable to the right in the pre-split CPI. Based on this accidental majority of members of the leading bodies of the pre-split CPI, they demanded that their political and organisational position should be accepted by the entire party. The accidental majority enjoyed by them in the leading bodies of the pre-split CPI emboldened them to start taking disciplinary actions against those who differed from them. All the appeals made by the left in the pre-split CPI for finding democratic solutions to the political and organisational problems were rejected. The left in the pre-split CPI therefore were forced to organise themselves separately, forming a new separate party called the CPI(M). The ideological, political and organisational struggle between the post-split CPI and the CPI(M) was thus a continuation of the struggle that went on in the pre-split CPI. Considering the fact that, on all the 3 issues on which the right and the left fought each other in the pre-split CPI—approach to the Congress and its Government, the India-China border dispute and the crisis in the international communist movement—subsequent history has proved that the post-split CPI had adopted a wrong line while the CPI (M) had a correct line. Any attempt at re-unification of the communist movement should therefore begin with a serious self-criticism on the part of the post-split CPI.

Before closing this subject, it is necessary to note that the CPI(M) had to fight and defeat the "left" and right opportunism which raised its head in the Party, as for example:

(a) There was a trend in the Party leadership in the 1970s that, in view of the semi-fascist terror in West Bengal and the Emergency regime at the national level, the Party should organise itself for a Telengana type struggle ;

(b) This found expression at the 10th Congress (Jalandhar) where a minority of delegates opposed the line of supporting the Janata Government ;

(c) There was a strong opposition at the Salkia Plenum for the proposition that the Party should develop itself as a "a mass revolutionary party of the working class". The argument was that a revolutionary party can never be a mass party.

(d) When the Party decided to break with the Janata Government for its links with the RSS, there was opposition to it from a minority.

(e) On the eve of the formation of the United Front, a view was expressed in the PB and CC that we should join the government, even leading it.

It is thus obvious that the post-split CPIM) has to fight and defeat the manifestations of "left" and "right" opportunism. The post-split CPI, Naxalites and other groups that consider themselves communist will therefore have to undertake a serious self- criticism of their ideology, politics and organisation.

1.0.7 Re-Unification of Ideology and Politics before Organisational Re-Unification

Three decades after the formal coming into existence of a regularly functioning CPI, the party got divided into the CPI(M) and CPI; from within the CPI(M) itself, the Naxalites and other “Left Communists” also came into existence. Furthermore, certain other -left parties like the Forward Bloc and the RSP are today in the field.

After a decade and a half of the separate existence of the CPI(M) and the CPI, they started working together in struggle against the Congress on the one hand and certain other bourgeois parties (including caste and communal parties) on the other. These united actions gradually developed into a more stable united front of left parties which allied itself with certain other secular democratic parties.

That was how the two Left Front Governments of West Bengal and Tripura as well as the Left Democratic Front Government in Kerala have come into existence. The constituents of these left and democratic fronts have come together also at the national level to form the United Front Government.

This United Front Government at the Centre and the left coalition governments in the 3 States have raised the question whether the time has not come for all parties and organisations which consider themselves Marxist-Leninists to merge themselves in a single party. It was the CPI which raised this question first. But the sentiment has spread in other left parties as well.

The CPI(M) however considers it impractical and undesirable at present to have a single united Communist Party of India. The organisational coming together of various Marxist-Leninist groups should in its view follow, not precede, the unification of an ideological and political character.

Unless the question of why the pre-split CPI was divided into the CPI(M) and the CPI and why other left groups calling themselves Marxist-Leninists have come into existence is addressed properly and answers given, it will be ridiculous to think of organisational unification of all existing Marxist-Leninist groups. That is why the CPI(M) suggests:

(a) Unity in action to develop the emerging unity of left, secular and democratic forces ;

(b) Continue with fraternal discussions of the ideological and political questions which divide various groups with a view to arriving at a common understanding on the international, national, political and organisational questions. As pointed out by Lenin, ideological and political unity is an essential precondition for organisational unity.

The emergence of a united movement of left, democratic secular and federalist forces is a great achievement of the more than 7 decades of the existence of India’s Marxist-Leninists. In the course of this work of 7 decades, while the Indian communists have made tremendous advances, they have also committed some serious mistakes. These should be subjected to serious self-criticism (by all Marxist-Leninist groups) with a view to consolidate achievements and correct the mistakes. Only such a self-criticism, undertaken by all Marxist-

Leninist groups, would prepare the ground for the organisational unification of all communist parties and groups into one single united Marxist-Leninist Party in India.

While the time has come for us to keep that objective, it is pre-mature to give the slogan of a merger of all Marxist-Leninist groups. The essential pre-condition for the subsequent re unification or merger of all Marxist-Leninist groups is the development of the emerging unity in action among all left groups on the basis of a critical and self-critical analysis of the 7 decades of the development of India's Marxist-Leninist movement.

Early Contacts of the Indian Revolutionaries with the Leaders of October Revolution

2.1 Indian Revolutionaries in Moscow*

On the eve of my departure from Tashkent, Abani Mukherjee arrived from Moscow. I had no news of his coming. He had no business there. I had sent him to the Baku Congress on the understanding that, on return to Moscow, he would leave for Western Europe to take up his headquarters in Holland with the object of establishing contact with India through the intermediacy of sailors. So his sudden arrival was not only a surprise, but it also turned out to be an embarrassment. He readily volunteered to take over charge of the Military School during my absence. He was also an ardent advocate of developing the Communist Party of India and increasing its membership. Because of his previous record with the Tcheka, Peter came to know of his arrival instantly. He had never got over the disappointment of having had to let him go out of his bloody clutches owing to my intervention, backed up by Lenin's benevolence. Given his ambitious and stormy character, Abani Mukherjee was sure to get into some trouble before long. Who would protect him this time against Peter's vengeance? Safarov disliked him heartily. Before leaving, I saw Peter to plead with him to be more lenient. He growled at me : Why did I bring Mukherjee here? He was sure to create trouble, and in that case Peter would take him without fail. The meaning of Peter taking anybody was quite unequivocal. I was frightened and told him that Mukherjee had promised to behave properly and there were a dozen intelligent Indian revolutionaries who would keep a check on him. I was surprised that Mukherjee had left Moscow just before the Third World Congress, and that he willingly agreed to stay away. I came to know the reason as soon as I returned to Moscow.

1

When I reached there, several Indian revolutionaries had arrived from Berlin as representatives of the defunct Indian Revolutionary Committee. On my way to Moscow, I had pleaded with the leading Indian revolutionaries in Berlin to proceed to Russia, which at that time offered them the only safe asylum and promised to be a reliable base for work to promote revolution in India. At

¹* Taken from Memoirs of M. N. Roy, 1964 Publication, Pages 477-485

that time, they did not seem to believe that the Russian Revolution would last; and Communism did not find favour with them. So, when at last they changed their mind and turned towards the base of world revolution, I was naturally very glad. But to my great surprise, the few representatives of the Berlin Revolutionary Committee who had already reached Moscow were rather cool in their response to my friendly attitude. However, I learned from them that they had come only as a vanguard of the Revolutionary Committee, which would before long reach Moscow in full force. I hoped that on the arrival of veteran revolutionaries like Virendranath Chattopadhyaya, Bhupendranath Dutta and others, the relation would change. I eagerly looked out for the arrival of men who with their revolutionary devotion and long experience could be expected to be good comrades and willing collaborators.

Within a short time, they all arrived to announce that the Indian Revolutionary Committee of Berlin, which alone had the authority to speak on behalf of India, had decided to shift its headquarters to Moscow, if favourable conditions were offered. Although the declaration insinuated that I had no right to speak on behalf of India, I made no secret that the plan of the Indian revolutionaries shifting their headquarters to Moscow would have my fullest support; and there could be no doubt that nowhere in the world could better conditions be obtained than in Moscow; But surely enough; the newcomers not only tried to avoid me but some of them actually took up an openly hostile attitude.

The Indian Revolutionary Committee of Berlin was then a thing of the past. Irrespective of whatever might have been its achievements in the earlier days, during the closing years of the war it was a divided house and had practically disintegrated. Instead of working on the authority of that legend, it would have been wiser to have made a new beginning under different circumstances. But it seems that the news of the formation of the emigrant Indian Communist Party at Tashkent had frightened the old nationalist revolutionaries, who regarded the new body as a challenge to their authority. If I had had the opportunity to meet the leaders of the delegation from Berlin, I could have explained the situation to their satisfaction. I did not approve of the formation of the emigrant Communist Party, and I did not believe that it had any right to speak on behalf of the workers of India, not to mention the Indian people as a whole.

The delegation of Indian revolutionaries from Berlin was composed of fourteen people, including Virendranath Chattopadhyaya, Bhupendranath Dutta, Virendranath Das Gupta, the Maharashtrian Knankhoje, Gulam Ambia Khan Luhani, Nalini Gupta. The driving force of the delegation however was Agnes Smedley, an American by birth. I had met her in America. Then she was an anarchist-pacifist. Working as private Secretary of Lajpatrai for some time, she seemed to have developed a great sympathy for India. Having learned that famous Indian revolutionaries were living in Berlin, at the conclusion of the War she came over there and became a very active member of the Indian group.

But the delegation which came to Moscow was evidently not the original Indian Revolutionary Committee of Berlin. Hardayal and Chattopadhyaya had been the two dominant figures of the Berlin Committee and as such they had clashed before long. No less ardently anti-British, Hardayal however was taken

prisoner in Germany and detained on the suspicion of enemy espionage. When Germany surrendered, he escaped to Stockholm and wrote a book describing his experience in Germany. Evidently, the experience had embittered him. He appeared to be an apologist of the British rule, in India and advocated Dominion Status as against complete independence. He actually wrote something which, though true, ought not to be said by a revolutionary Indian nationalist. Pointing out the fact that the fighters for Indian freedom had learned their political lesson from Britain, Hardayal made the declaration that, if India was the mother, Britain was the grandmother. That naturally scandalised all Indian nationalists. It was alleged that he had written the book with the object of getting the permission to return to Britain and subsequently to India. But evidently he did not get the permission. He stayed on in Sweden and during the last years of his life taught Indian philosophy in the old University of Upsala. That was a recognition of his learning and intellectual calibre.

The chairman of the Berlin Committee, Mohammad Hasan Mansoor, had gone to Turkey in the earlier years of the War. He returned from there to Berlin disillusioned and disgruntled and declared himself to be a Communist. The professed conversion to communism isolated him from the old colleagues. He did not join them when they came to Moscow, but later on came there alone and lived quietly for a couple of years. I have already referred to my experience with him. When in 1919 I reached Berlin, Bhupendranath Dutta was the only original member of the war-time Indian Revolutionary Committee living there. All the others had dispersed. Virendranath Chattopadhyaya himself had gone to Stockholm to plead the case of India's independence in the International Socialist Conference there.

Feeling that the Indian revolutionaries from Berlin were not very kindly disposed towards me, I left them alone so as to obviate the impression that I was trying to influence them or to stand in the way of whatever plan they might have had. But I could not help being puzzled and pained when most of them would not even speak to me. It seemed they had the entirely groundless misgiving that I might stand in their way to seeing various Russian leaders and plead their case. Curiously enough, they were very eager to see Chicherin in the first place. He was still Commissar of Foreign Affairs, but wielded no great political influence. Moreover, he had just received the British note about the activities of Indian revolutionaries in Central Asia and naturally did not think that it would be very wise to receive well-known Indian revolutionaries in Moscow. Nevertheless, as a polite man, not willing to offend anybody's feelings, he did have a short meeting with a few of the Indian revolutionaries. It seems the latter were disappointed with the meeting. Then they demanded an interview with Lenin himself. They made a great secret of the move, most probably believing that I might stand in their way. But I got the news from Lenin himself. He telephoned to me and asked me to come and see him. He enquired about the Indian revolutionaries who had come to Moscow, and if it was necessary for him to see them. If they had come to discuss any plan of revolutionary work in India, they should address themselves to the Communist International. Lenin was surprised to hear that the Indian revolutionaries were

not at all well disposed towards me. Nevertheless, I suggested that he should see them and hear what they had to say. Lenin remarked that I was in a minority of one against fourteen. I replied that he knew that I did not claim to represent anybody but myself. So, as far as I was concerned, there was no conflict between the Indian revolutionaries and myself. Lenin enquired if I had discussed matters with them, and was surprised to hear that they would not even speak to me. Evidently in exasperation he sat back in his chair and said : "Well, select three of them to come and see me." I told him that I could not do that, he would have to contact them directly.

In the next days there was a great flutter in the Indian delegation. Lenin had agreed to grant an interview. The Indian revolutionaries had been informed that Lenin would receive three of their representatives chosen by themselves. There were differences as regards the choice. Everybody considered himself to be more entitled to the honour and privilege than the others. I could get all this information through Nalini Gupta, the only one who did not share the general hostile attitude towards me. He was also the only one among the Indian revolutionaries in Europe who maintained some connection with the revolutionary organisations in India by frequently travelling back and forth secretly. He had met some of my friends in India and learned from them about the mission with which I had gone abroad in the beginning of the War. During his last visit to India shortly before he came to Moscow, he was instructed to contact me. So from the very beginning my relation with him was of mutual trust and confidence. He gave me the information that, although among the Indian revolutionaries there was a dispute about the selection of the three to see Lenin, there was a general agreement about the case which was to be presented on that occasion. A long thesis was being prepared under the guidance of Chattopadhyaya and Agnes Smedley to contradict my thesis adopted by the Second World Congress of the Communist International the year before. Luhani, a North-Bengal Muslim, who had come to Britain to study law, was a clever man and an accomplished speaker. But not being one of the senior members of the Berlin group, he was not chosen as one of the representatives to see Lenin. The thesis to be presented by the representatives, however, was drafted by him. The others could not prepare a well argued document.

Agnes Smedley, backed by Chattopadhyaya, wanted to be one of the representatives to see Lenin. Her claim was opposed by all the rest of the Indians. Finally. Chatto and Dutta, as the senior-most members, were chosen by general consent. I have forgotten who was the third one; most probably it was Knankhoje, who was chosen to obviate the allegation that the delegation was purely Bengali.

Having given them a polite and patient hearing, Lenin advised the representatives of the Indian revolutionaries to see the Secretary of the Communist International, and remarked that the Soviet Government could not actively take part in any plan for promoting revolution in other countries. The Indian revolutionary representatives returned from the coveted interview thoroughly disappointed and even angry. Dutta blurted out that Indian revolutionaries could expect no help from the Bolsheviks because they were eager to make peace with

British Imperialism.

However, they saw Radek, who was then General Secretary of the Communist International. When they came to his office, I was in another room in the same building. In their presence Radek spoke to me on telephone. I begged to be excused with the remark that he would presently learn why I could not come. Lenin had passed on the thesis submitted by the Indian revolutionaries to Radek. He informed his visitors that in its activities to help the national movements in colonies, the Communist International was bound by the thesis of the Second World Congress. But, he added, if the new Indian comrades disagreed with that thesis and wanted the Communist International to alter its attitude and policy, they would have an opportunity in the near future, when the Third World Congress would meet; the Indian revolutionaries could stay on and attend the World Congress, not of course as delegates with votes, but as visitors. But if they submitted their thesis, the Secretariate of the Communist International would recommend its consideration by the World Congress.

The Indian revolutionaries were impatient. They would not waste time in Moscow. They were eager to return to active work which had been interrupted after the War. They had come to Moscow expecting to receive help so that they could go back to West Europe and resume revolutionary activities. Radek informed the Indian revolutionaries that the Second Congress of the Communist International had set up its Central Asiatic Bureau as the instrument to promote revolutionary activities in the countries of the East. Pending any new decision all plans of revolutionary activities in India should be prepared in consultation with the Central Asiatic Bureau of the Communist International. Radek informed the Indian revolutionaries that I was a member of that Bureau and had just come to Moscow. He advised them to get in touch with me and discuss their plans.

The meeting with Radek was even more disappointing than that with Lenin. In order to assuage the feelings of the Indian comrades Radek promised to ask the Executive Committee of the Communist International to set up a small commission to hear the case of the Indian delegation and to investigate the whole situation. But that did not satisfy all, and soon thereafter, most of the members of the delegation left Moscow, one by one. Chattopadhyaya, Agnes Smedley, Bhupendranath Dutta, Luhani, Nalini Gupta and a few others stayed behind.

The Commission to hear the Indian revolutionaries and to examine the Indian situation was composed of August Thalheimer, the leader of the German Communist Party, Tom Quelch of the British Communist Party and Borodin. Chatto was the obvious leader of the Indian delegation. But he was a poor speaker, and Agnes Smedley was anxious to deputise for him. But a non-Indian would not be the right person to open the Indian case, which was done by Luhani. He gave a very good performance. After he had finished, Thalheimer enquired whether the new Indian comrades had any objection to work in co-operation with me. On enquiry, I frankly said that I would be only too glad to have the co-operation of the newcomers. I further added that I did not claim to represent India. If the new Indian comrades would agree on a programme of

work, and decide to stay in Moscow to take over the responsibility of guiding activities, I should place myself at their disposal. That brought Chatto to his feet. With great indignation he interjected : "We have nothing against you, but we cannot have anything to do with you so long as you are associated with a known spy who has been responsible for the death of many revolutionaries in India." The Commission was taken aback. Borodin suggested that Comrade Chattopadhyaya should be a little more explicit about his allegation, if he wanted it to be taken seriously. In any case, who was the British spy he had just mentioned? Chatto signalled Luhani to answer the question. The accused was Abani Mukherjee, and the allegation was that, on his way back to India from Japan in 1916, he was arrested at Singapore and imprisoned. He did not escape from prison, as he had pretended, but was released by the British police because he had given out information about the underground revolutionary movement in India. On his information, a number of people were arrested in India and sentenced to death and long terms of imprisonment.

In reply, I informed the Commission under what circumstances I came to know Abani Mukherjee and said that his behaviour had also made me suspicious; but as long as there was no evidence to bear out the serious allegation against him, it would not be fair to penalise him, and the penalty would be the maximum, if I withdraw my protection. I would not take such a responsibility merely on vague suspicions.

In order to put an end to the unpleasant subject, which could not be settled there and then, Thalheimer suggested that we should revert to the discussion of any political differences the new Indian comrades might have had with me. On behalf of the delegation, Luhani replied that they disapproved of the formation of the Indian Communist Party in Tashkent and demanded its dissolution as the condition for any co-operation with me. I again explained the situation which was forced on me, and pleaded that the Communist Party of India was formed on the initiative of a number of others who would certainly not agree to the dissolution of the party, even if I recommended it. But the Indian delegation was equally adamant also on this question.

Chattopadhyaya, on behalf of the delegation, gave an ultimatum to the Commission. If their demands were not accepted, they would forthwith leave Moscow, fully convinced that Indian revolutionaries could not count on any help there.

2.2 The Emigrant Section of the Communist Party OF India and the Communist International*

The muhajir youths who, on Manabendranath Roy's inspiration, came to Moscow in different groups, entered the 'Communist University of the Toiling East' immediately on its foundation. The University was founded on April 21, 1921. Many of them joined the Communist Party of India after their arrival in Moscow. The emigrant section of the Communist Party of India was granted recognition by the Communist International in 1921. There are instances of Communist

Parties, formed with a very few members, becoming affiliated to the Communist International. The Communist Party of China held its first Congress with only twelve delegates, representing about fifty members. The delegate of the Communist International also was present at the Congress of the Chinese Communist Party, affiliated to it.

2

In the Communist Party in India, there were — perhaps there are still now — members who would not believe that the Party was founded abroad. How could they, therefore, reconcile themselves to the fact of its becoming affiliated to the Communist International. These members of the Communist Party of India were still under the spell of nationalism. It is true that Sripad Amrit Dange, one of the first batch of members to join the Party in the 1920's, accepted that the Party was founded abroad; but he too refused to acknowledge that the Party had been affiliated to the Communist International. He sent this opinion of his in writing to me after the publication of my book *The Communist Party of India and Its Formation Abroad*. I am presenting here some facts and proofs regarding the affiliation of the emigrant section of the Communist Party of India to the Communist International in 1921.

I

Some Indian nationalist revolutionaries, led by Virendranath Chattopadhyaya, came from Western Europe to Moscow at the invitation of the Communist International. They were :

- (i) Virendranath Chattopadhyaya
- (ii) Bhupendranath Datta (not a Ph.D. yet)
- (iii) Birendranath Dasgupta
- (iv) Syed Abdul Wahid
- (v) Prof. Pandurang Sadashiva Khankhoje
- (vi) Herambalal Gupta
- (vii) Ghulam Ambiya Khan Luhani
- (viii) Agnes Smedley
- (xi) Nalini Gupta

During World War I all except the last-named three had come to an understanding with imperialist Germany. It had been agreed that imperialist Germany would supply the Indian revolutionaries liberally with arms and money with the help of which the Indian revolutionaries would organize widespread uprisings in India. Imperialist Germany helped the Indian revolutionaries with money, but I do not know whether this help was liberal or not. However, it is a fact that Germany could not supply arms. The Indian revolutionaries were grateful to Germany for helping them with money. We learn from the autobiography of Raja Mahendra Pratap that the Indian revolutionaries received help

²*Excerpts from Muzaffar Ahmad's Memoirs : "Myself and the Communist Party of India", Pages 57-70

from the German Government even after the fall of the Kaiser Government.

Anyway, the Indian revolutionaries, led by Virendranath Chattopadhyaya, went to Moscow to negotiate with the Communist International. As a nationalist revolutionary, Chattopadhyaya was not in favour of a Communist Party being formed in India at that time. What is strange is that Chattopadhyaya himself was then a member of the Anarchist Party. Before a Commission, appointed by the Communist International, Chattopadhyaya proposed that a Revolutionary Board be set up to carry on work in India through its agency and that the Communist Party — if it is to be formed at all — be formed only after the British had been driven out. Chattopadhyaya was a well-educated, erudite person, but, it seems, he was a bad speaker. He, therefore, submitted what he had to say before the Commission through Ghulam Ambiya Khan Luhani, a finished speaker and a good writer.

It is with a view to making things clear for everybody that I have tried so long to give some preliminary facts. Now let me state my main point in the words of Dr Bhupendranath Datta :

“I want to state here that one morning some days ago it appeared suddenly in a Moscow newspaper that an Indian Communist Party had been formed and become affiliated to the Communist International. Who were the members of this Communist Party ? Roy with his wife, Mukhopadhyaya with his wife, and the muhajir youths. Talking of this Party at a meeting even before the Second Commission had begun its sittings, Luhani said, ‘It is a bogus party’ . Again, while reading their thesis during the second sitting of the Commission, Luhani observed, ‘*Let the name of this party be struck off the rolls of the Third International*’ and that help to the Indian revolutionary movement be given through their projected Revolutionary Board.”* (italics mine)

This extract proves that the emigrant section of the Communist Party of India became affiliated to the Communist International at that time. What should be noted here is that it was Ghulam Ambiya Khan Luhani who presented before a Commission, appointed by the Communist International, the demands of the nationalist revolutionaries who had come from Berlin.

There is no reference at all to dates in Dr Bhupendranath Datta’s writings. However, it can be seen that Dr Datta and his friends came to Moscow early in 1921. I thank Prof. Khankhoje, for he has at least written that they were in Moscow for three months. Taking everything into account, we find that they left the Soviet Union even before the commencement of the Third Congress of the Communist International. The Third Congress started on June 22, 1921, and concluded on July 12, 1921.

Dr Datta further says that on the question of forming the Communist Party of India, he, Syed Abdul Wahid and Birendranath Dasgupta were not unanimous with Virendranath Chattopadhyaya, the leader of their group. Dr Datta held that the right also to form a Communist Party was exclusively theirs, and they had already written to India in this matter. Who were these upstart muhajir youths to form the Communist Party of India abroad? But, even after a lot of investigations inside India, we have not been able to find out who were the persons to whom Dr Datta here wrote letters with the purpose of forming a

Communist Party. About this, neither did he say anything to us nor did he write anything in his book. Dr Datta returned to India in 1925 and died in 1961 : he had time enough.

Agnes Smedley was an American woman and a friend of India. She also held anarchist views. She married Virendranath Chattopadhyaya. It is not necessary to give any account of Nalini Gupta here. I shall discuss him in detail later.

II

The emigrant section of the Indian Communist Party extended its activities to Germany, where the first organ of the Party was brought out on May 15, 1922. Its name was the Vanguard of the Indian Independence. Needless to say, this first fortnightly organ of our Party was published in English language. The paper was edited mainly by Manabendranath Roy and his first wife, Evelan Trent Roy sometimes contributed articles to Indian journals under the pen-name of Shanti Devi. Packets of the Vanguard of the Indian Independence were received at different addresses supplied by us, and we distributed them among different persons. We would also put copies of the paper into the letter-boxes at certain addresses in Calcutta. Further, only individual copies were sent to certain addresses. This was a comparatively safe method to ensure delivery. The paper did not bear the declaration that it was the organ of the Communist Party of India, a branch of the Communist International. When we realized that the police had become very much aware of the existence of the Vanguard of the Indian Independence and had also started seizing packets bearing certain addresses, I wrote to Manabendranath Roy, "Now it is time to change the name of the paper. It may make things a bit easier." I do not know whether anyone else from any other province made the same suggestion, but Roy wrote in reply that he would change the name of the paper. Thereafter, the paper was named the Advance Guard. The Advance Guard also did not carry any declaration that it was the organ of the Communist Party of India, a branch of the Communist International. But we found some time later that, like its predecessor, the Advance Guard also had roused the suspicion of the police. It was then decided to revive the former name of the paper, but it was discovered that Dr Datta and others, i.e. the nationalist revolutionaries who had returned to Germany from Moscow had in the mean-time taken possession of a half of the former name and had themselves brought out one named Indian Independence with Prof. Binoy Kumar Sarkar as editor.

The Vanguard of the Indian Independence and the Advance Guard between them covered a period of one year. The first issue of the second year appeared on May 15, 1923, as simply the Vanguard. There was no hide-and-seek affair this time. In clear language it was stated that the Vanguard was the organ of the Communist Party of India, a section of the Communist International. Lest anyone should entertain any doubt about this, I am reproducing here the block made from the photostat of the first issue of the second year (May 15, 1923) of the Vanguard. The message, sent by the Presidium of the Communist International to the Vanguard on its first anniversary, was also printed on the

first page of the issue. Can there be any evidence more incontrovertible even than this?

I had not seen this issue or the subsequent issues of the Vanguard previously, for I was arrested and imprisoned on May 17, 1923. But Sripad Amrit Dange and Sachchidananda Vishnu Ghate were then free, and they saw and read this issue of the Vanguard of May 15, 1923, and the subsequent issues. Dange was not arrested before March, 1924. After Dange's arrest, i. e. from 1924, Ghate became active in the Party. Yet both supplied wrong information on the basis of which the Right Communists of India observed the fortieth anniversary of the Party in 1966. They have taken 1925 — the year of the Kanpur Communist Conference — as the year of the foundation of the Party.

Although the Vanguard and other papers had from the beginning been printed in Germany, the names of different cities of India also appeared in the paper. The names of Bombay, Calcutta and Madras appear in the block printed here. There is no doubt that the name of Lahore was usually printed in the paper. As far as I can remember, the name of Kanpur also appeared some time or other. We had contacts more or less with all these cities.

III

The historic Seventh Plenum of the Communist International was held in Moscow from November 22 to December 12, 1926. The stenographic report in Russian of this Plenum was published in two volumes in Russia. The report is entitled in Russian *Puti Mirovoi revoliutsii* (Paths of World Revolution). Drawing upon the account given on p. 8 of vol. I of *World Revolution*, Robert C. North and Xenia have written in the book, edited by them, *Af. N. Roy's Mission to China: Communist- Kuomintang Split of 1927* :

"During the first session of the Seventh Plenum, November 22, 1926, Roy as the representative of the Communist Party of India had been elected to the Presidium of the Comintern and to the Chinese Commission." (p. 43)

It is written in quite clear language that it was as the representative of the Communist Party of India that Roy was elected to the Presidium of the Communist International and to the Chinese Commission. This Party was the Communist Party of India founded abroad. No application for affiliation of the Communist Party was sent from within India to the office of the Communist International in 1926.

IV

On November 30, 1927, M. N. Roy wrote a long letter on behalf of the Communist International to the Central Committees of both the Communist Party of India and the Workers' and Peasants' Party. The letter became known in India as 'Assembly Letter'. It was stated in the letter that every Communist Party must become affiliated to the Communist International. But from India no application for affiliation to the Comintern was ever sent by the Communist Party. In fact, "Up till now Communist International has acted upon the

affiliation of the Emigrant Section of the Communist Party of India.”

It is now proved that the Communist Party of India was established on October 17, 1920, in the city of Tashkent, capital of the present Republic of Uzbekistan.

It is also proved beyond dispute that the emigrant section of the Communist Party of India was affiliated to the Communist International.

In his Memoirs M. N. Roy writes : “To challenge my representativeness was pointless. I did not claim to represent anybody but myself, and held my position in the International as an individual (p. 301)”. The facts I have presented in the foregoing pages, the extracts I have reproduced from the book M. N. Roy’s Mission to China and Roy’s letter— all taken together — go to prove that Roy’s pretension was entirely false. He had represented the Mexican Communist Party in the Second Congress of the Communist International. Thereafter, he had always represented the emigrant section of the Communist Party of India. None but representatives of the Communist Parties of different countries could hold any office in the Communist International. M. N. Roy was elected to the Presidium of the Communist International as representative of the Communist Party of India in the same way as Stalin, Bukharin and Manuisky were elected to the Presidium as representatives of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. Even Lenin had he been alive then, would have had to get elected in the same way.

2.2.1 Who are The Founder-members of the Party?

I hope that I have been able to clarify a number of points for future writers of the history of the Communist Party of India. Now that these points are clarified, those of us who are called the founder-members of the Communist Party of India can no longer find, I believe, much strength behind that claim of ours. The real founder-members of the Communist Party of India are those who joined the Party in Tashkent and Moscow in 1920-21. We can never forget the fact that the Communist International granted affiliation to the emigrant section of the Communist Party of India in 1921. Some of the members of the emigrant section of the Party went through great sufferings and hardships in order to return to India and, even after undergoing imprisonment here, did not give up serving the Party. It was with us that they worked. We could have, if we wanted, regarded our Party as an affiliate of the Communist International, but the idea did not occur to us at that time.

Towards the close of 1921, we also began to move to some extent. We became quite active in 1922. Prison life also began for us in 1923. Everybody knows that prison life was inevitable for the revolutionary workers of India. But notwithstanding all this, can we claim to be the founder-members of the Communist Party of India? As for myself, I cannot find much conviction to make this claim; we can, however, claim, that we only paved the way to the building of the Party.

2.2.2 A few words about Muhammad Shafiq

I have already said that Muhammad Shafiq was elected the first Secretary of the emigrant section of the Communist Party of India and was — by virtue of his position — the first Secretary of the Communist Party of India, for no Communist Party had been formed in India in 1920-21. Everyone will naturally ask who this Muhammad Shafiq was. If I want to say anything about him, however insignificant, I shall have to depend on secret police reports and the reports of the proceedings at the court of law. I never knew Shafiq personally. My account, therefore, is based mainly on the material I have collected from police reports and court documents.

Muhammad Shafiq was a resident of Akora in the tehsil Nowshera of Peshawar. In 1919, he served as a clerk in the irrigation office at Peshawar. In his judgment, delivered on April 4, 1924, in the case against Shafiq, Mr George Connor, Sessions Judge of Peshawar, observed that during the anti Rowlatt Act movement Shafiq went to Kabul in May, 1919, without giving any notice to his office. Again it was in May, 1919, that Afghanistan attacked British India; and as a result of this war (the Third Afghan War) Afghanistan won the status of a fully independent state. Shafiq must have gone to Kabul as a muhajir (self-exiled), but it should be remembered that he did not belong to the muhajirs of 1920. The Hijrat (flight from persecution) movement was yet to start when he left India. The Hijrat movement of 1920 originated from the Khilafat agitation and only the Muslims participated in it - but the movement against the Rowlatt Act was a broad-based political one, cutting across the barriers of nationality and religion. The tragic incidents, which took place in Jalianwalla Bagh in Amritsar on April 13, 1919, arose from the anti- Rowlatt Act movement, which the British Government in India wanted to suppress ruthlessly.

In course of his judgment the Sessions Judge observed, "His intention in going there (Kabul) was soon made apparent for he at once got into touch with Bolshevik agents who were then at Kabul." If the Judge's observation is correct, then Shafiq, possibly, got into touch with the Bolsheviks before reaching Kabul.

On December 10, 1923-after his arrest-Shafiq made a statement before Khan Muhammad, Additional Magistrate of Peshawar. To make a statement like this before a Magistrate is a sign of great weakness; but Shafiq made it. A man making such a statement is never entirely truthful; on the he fabricates a lot of things. Therefore, to get at the truth one has to read the statement between the lines. Shafiq says that it was in Kabul he met Raja Mahendra Pratap, Abdur Rab and Acharya: they had just returned from Russia. To the muhajirs who were in Kabul at the time, either Abdur Rab or both Rab and Acharya said that the Russian Government looked upon the Indian muhajirs with respect and also helped them. As soon as Shafiq heard this, he started for Russia via Mazar-i-Sharif. He was accompanied by Ahmad Hassan, and Abdul Majid and Muhammad Sadiq of Kohat. Ahmad Hassan was probably Muhammad Ali alias Khushi Muhammad. Shafiq's statement points to the existence of factionalism among the Indian muhajirs in Kabul. Shafiq belonged to Moulana Obaidullah Sindhi's group. At the time of his departure for Russia, he had seen

Abdur Rab having a quarrel with Moulana Obeidullah over extremely petty personal interests. The subsequent activities of Abdur Rab showed him to be a cantankerous and factious sort of person. Shafiq and the others reached Tashkent safely. It seems that they reached Tashkent some time towards the end of 1919. As it was not possible to stay idle there, they brought out a paper named *Zamindar* in Urdu and Persian. In the Punjab and the North-Western Frontier Province *Zamindar* means 'peasant'. Only one issue of the paper came out. When making his statement before the Magistrate, Shafiq, probably, thought that the single issue of *Zamindar* had not certainly reached India. He, therefore, said that it was on the ideals of Islam that the paper had been based. The issue of *Zamindar* was not just another exhibit in the case; it was exhibit No. 2. The judgment contained many extracts from the issue, but there was no evidence of anything Islamic in them. Shafiq, perhaps, spoke of the Islamic basis of the paper in order to minimize his offence. Some three months (three, according to Shafiq's estimate, which, however, does not tally with my calculation) after Shafiq's arrival in Tashkent, Abdur Rab and Prativadi Acharya came there with a party of thirty muhajirs. The mass Hijrat movement of 1920 had already started in India.

Some days later Shafiq received the invitation to attend the Second Congress of the Communist International, which was to be held from July 19 to August 7, 1920. With the purpose of minimizing his offence, Shafiq told the Judge that they had gone to Moscow under orders from the Soviet Government. Factionalism had already started in Tashkent also. Shafiq states, "Acharya went to Moscow for the Second Congress on behalf of the revolutionary committee of Abdur Rab, and I went on behalf of our group". The expression 'our group', perhaps, means the group opposed to Abdur Rab. It was in Moscow that Shafiq first made the acquaintance of Manabendranath Roy and Abani Mukherjee. Roy, Mukherjee and Acharya attended the Congress as delegates; Shafiq had an observer's ticket. It is difficult for me to say whether Shafiq was really an observer or told the story of the observer's ticket in order to minimize his offence.

However, Roy alone had the right both to participate in the deliberations and to vote. The other Indians could only participate in the deliberations.

One thing, however, strikes me as very strange. Why did Manabendranath make no reference to Prativadi Acharya and Shafiq in his Memoirs! How could Roy forget that both Prativadi Acharya and Muhammad Shafiq had attended the Second Congress of the Communist International? I cannot believe that any revolutionary could ever forget an incident like this in his career. Roy writes that it must have been a very strange thing that he should represent Mexico and Abani Mukherjee should represent India (although without the voting right) in the Second Congress of the Comintern. The names of Prativadi Acharya and Shafiq should have been specially mentioned; but Roy did not mention them.

When the question arose of sending back home the young Indian muhajir students of the Communist University of the Toiling East, attempts were made to procure by various means passport for them. Those who failed to procure passports for themselves reached India across the nearly impassable and insurmountable Pamir and the Hindu Kush. From the documents of the Moscow

Conspiracy Case in Peshawar it appears that Shafiq Muhammad was very lucky in the matter of passport. What we had so long referred to as the Peshawar Conspiracy Case (1922-23) is now found to have been described as the Moscow Conspiracy Case in the relevant records. With the help of a false British passport procured for him, Shafiq returned to India by sea from a certain port in Holland. Fida All Zahid, an approver in the Moscow Conspiracy Case, said that he had heard from the Russian instructor in the Military Academy that from Europe Shafiq went to Lahore but then for fear of being arrested he fled to Kabul in panic. Abdulla Qadir Sehrai(Khan) said that Shafiz had visited India secretly several times. He said further that with the help of a false British passport Shafiq had returned to India by sea from a port in Holland in November, 1921, but he had gone to Kabul, fearing arrest.

It seems that the latter is the correct information. In a letter sent from Kabul to M. N. Roy on August 29, 1922, there is a reference to one 'S'. This 'S' probably is Shafiq. The author of this letter said that 'S' was trying to deliver him up in the hands of A.G. (the Afghan Government). Was Muhammad Ali the author of the letter? If all this be true, then it must be admitted that Shafiq had degenerated.

What followed was that towards the end of 1922, when the Afghan Government asked the Indian revolutionaries to leave Afghanistan, Shafiq also had to leave with them. Many of the Indian revolutionaries went to Moscow, but Shafiq no longer had the face to go there. He went to Seestan, where he gave himself up to the British Consul, praying to be sent to India. I cannot understand why Shafiq went to Seestan to surrender. Seestan today is not a big province; a third of it is in Iran, the rest in Afghanistan. Shafiq, however, was arrested as soon as he reached the Indian border, and proceedings (the Second Communist Conspiracy Case) were started against him under sec. 121-A of the Indian Penal Code. George Connor, Sessions Judge of Peshawar, sentenced Shafiq to three years' rigorous imprisonment on April 4, 1924.

I shall have to write about Muhammad Shafiq once again in connection with Shaukat Usmani.

2.3 Early Contacts of the Indian Revolutionaries with the Leaders of Bolshevik Revolution in Russia*

1919

INDIAN REVOLUTIONARIES IN RUSSIA: The following report was sent out from the Wireless Station of Bolshevik Government in the beginning of December:

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^{3*} Excerpts from ; "Communism in India : Unpublished Documents 1919-1924 . Edited by ; SUBODH ROY, Pages : 1-64 [The details given here are actual records of the Files of

"On November 25th Indian Delegation handed a memorandum to Sverdloff. President of the Central Executive Committee of the Soviets, in the name of the peoples of India. This memorandum gives an exposition of the long martyrdom of India under the yoke of England, which, although it has given itself the title of a democratic country, keeps a population of 325,000,000 of the inhabitants in slavery. The Russian Revolution produced an enormous psychological impression on the Indian people. In spite of England's efforts the principle of self-determination for the nations has penetrated into India, whose events have taken such a turn that the English Government was compelled on August 20th, 1917, to formulate in Parliament two principles of their Indian policy. Indian delegates wanted to explain the situation to the English public, but they could not obtain a permit to go to England. In the U.S.A. and in France, Indian delegates were imprisoned. They were driven out from Japan, Switzerland and Denmark under the pressure of the English diplomats.

"The memorandum further says that the liberty of the world will be in danger as long as the imperialists' and capitalists' power of England exists, which power is founded upon the slavery of a fifth part of the population of the globe. The memorandum ends with an expression of confidence that the days of England are numbered, that the Indians will rise and drive out the foreign domination, and that free Russia will stretch out a fraternal hand to them."

BOLSHEVISM. The following note on — by a military officer who has made a special study of Russia and the Russian situation will, I hope, interest the readers of this report. In this connection I may mention that the Daily Mail correspondent at Heisingfers telegraphed as follows to the Daily Mail, London on 18th January last:

"The Indian Centralisation Committee, which is now working at Petrograd under the Bolsheviks, is composed of the same members as the Berlin Indian Committee. It is stated by the Petrograd Journal *Krassanja Gazeta* in the special number devoted to British India and to formation of Indian centralisation Committee at Petrograd, that a large number of Indian Bolshevik propagandist have already been sent to India and that the power of Universal Bolshevism will soon be made known to the British Empire."

NARENDRA BHATTACHARJYA: who under the name of C.A. Martin and M.N. Roy played a leading part in the German plots against India has been living in Mexico for some time and appears to be carrying on anti-British propaganda in Spanish. A letter recently intercepted in the American Censorship contained a pamphlet entitled *La Voz de la India* (The voice of India) which bore the name of M. N. Roy as publisher. The pamphlet contained the usual calumnies of British rule in India and criticised a pro-ally pamphlet called *El Despartar de la India* (The Awakening of India), also published in Mexico.

From another source it is reported that Bhattacharjya, H. L. Gupta and the other Indians in Mexico have formed a League of Friends of India with the object of obtaining support for the Indian revolutionary movement among the

the Intelligence Bureau. Home (Political) Department. Government of India, compiled by Subodh Roy. from the Files maintained in the National Archives, New Delhi.)

South American republics. They have also addressed a letter to the diplomatic representatives in Mexico of several countries asking them through their governments to present to the Peace Conference the petition of the League for the release of India from British domination.

BOLSHEVISM AND INDIA

A Bolshevik agent named Carl Sandberg who had come to the United States from Christinia, was recently arrested by the American authorities. A considerable quantity of Bolshevik propagandist literature was found in his possession, some of it relating to India. Among it was a copy of a book issued by the Bolshevik government entitled "India for the Indians", which consisted of a collection of extracts from Russian official documents relating to India. The following passages are taken from the introduction:

"In closing there will be pointed out the role which the Russian Revolution can on its part play for the Indian Revolution on the ground of mutual struggle with world imperialism, which has assumed in England with regard to India such unusual forms of rapacious exploitation.

"For us Russians, who are ourselves threatened with the fatal danger of becoming a colony of Western Europe or may be of American or Japanese imperialism, it is very important to obtain in the face of the oppressed, and in many ways similar to us in India, a natural ally in India, a natural ally in the cause of the struggle with a mutual enemy.

"Then let this collection serve our Eastern friends for the present as a first modicum of all our sympathy to the much suffering Indian people, as a certain pledge that our revolutionary paths in the near future will joyfully meet not only on the ground of a struggle for mutual liberation from a foreign sovereignty but also on the broader basis of class struggle and social construction."

The book of course is in Russian and the translation of these passages was done in America. I take no responsibility for the grammar.

Several British and French subjects who have recently returned from Moscow state that there is an Indian Lawyer these (sic) named "Servadi" who is on intimate terms with Lenin and is running the India Department of the Bolshevik Ministry of propaganda. This obviously refers to Hassan Shahid Suhrawardy, a member of well-known Calcutta family, who obtained permission from the British Government to go to Russia from England in 1916. It is said that he has several Indian assistants working under him at Moscow but their names has not yet been ascertained.

BERLIN COMMITTEE

This is at present inactive and the German Government does not pay much attention to it. The German Foreign office continues to pay for the establishment of the Committee, and will pay 400 marks a month to every Indian Nationalist residing in Germany until peace is signed or free communication with India opened again.

RUSSIAN COMMITTEE IN MOSCOW

This, on the contrary, is showing much activity and is working to organise a new Russo-Indian Mission to Afghanistan.

It is reported—though it could not appear to be likely—Dr. Hafiz and Umrao Singh Majithia are in Moscow; in any event much mystery is made in Berlin as to the present whereabouts, which applies also to Sen (unidentified).

Das Gupta has recently received a letter from Dutt (Bhupendra Nath Dutt) informing him that the chief of the Moscow Committee has arrived in Switzerland.

All the members of this Committee are reported to have become Bolsheviks, and they all, on the suggestion of the Soviet Government, desire to turn their National Committee to Communism. Das Gupta is himself affected in this way. He states that the name of the Moscow chief has not been mentioned to him, but he has grounds for the belief that he is Umrao Singh Majithia.

INDIAN AGITATORS ABROAD

BARKUTALLAH:

According to a wireless telegram from Moscow Barkatullah had an interview with Lemn on 8th May.

HARDAYAL: It is considered by some well-informed Indians in London that Hardayal's sudden detestation of Germany and "fancy" for England is blind. They say that any one who knows his record before he became a politician knows that he was in effect a Bolshevik in the days when Bolshevism was not known. His pamphlet on the A Conquest of the Dravidians, written about 12 years ago, is instanced as a proof of this. He may, it is said, easily enough dislike the late German Government and the Kaiser and his entourage on account of the way he himself was treated by the German Foreign office, but he has no reason to hate the German people. Nor does it follow that he should have come to like England, any more than Germany does, though the Soviet has over-thrown Imperialism.

There are many who think that German penetration into India has in no sense been abandoned and "Hardayal is not a fool". He is on the contrary remarkably clever. Being a Delhi man he is able to exercise power and influence equally between Hindu and Muhammadan students; and as an Indian Nationalist he does not owe allegiance to anyone—he would use Russia, or Germany, or England to gain his object. He is believed to be in close touch with Russian Bolshevism in Stockholm; he knows the channels of communication from England and may be expected to arrange to correspond with Russians from India if he should be allowed to return there.

BOLSHEVIK PROPAGANDA

In paragraph 4 of my Weekly Report dated 31st March, 1919 it was stated that an Indian (Hassan Shahid Suhrawardy) was running the India Department of the Bolshevik Ministry of Propaganda. This is a Department of the Bolshevik Foreign office and is said to include men and women of every race.

Further reports have been received to the effect that Turkistan has been chosen as the main base for oriental propaganda. A special mission is said to have been sent to Tashkent for this purpose. A former Russian Consular Officer in Persia, one Bravin has been put in charge of this mission, and has been given full powers, large sums of money, and much literature and pamphlets.

A report dated 19th April, 1919, stated that Bravin accompanied by another Bolshevik emissary named Batavin has gone from Tashkent to Bokhara intending to proceed into Afghanistan. A quantity of propaganda specially directed against the British rule in India, was reported in March this year to have been sent into the Pamirs with a view to its being smuggled eventually into India through Chinese territory.

INDIAN REVOLUTIONARIES ABROAD

PROCLAMATION OF THE PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT OF INDIA: A lithographed circular letter has recently been found on the Frontier which purports to emanate from Provisional Government of India. It bears the signature of Obeidulla, Wazir an Zafar Hussain, Secretary to the Provisional Government of India. Obeidulla is a Sikh convert to Islam and was the signatory of the "Silk letters." He is the "officiating Salar of Kabul" in the "Army of God."

Zaffar Hussain was one of the Lahore students who fled to the Frontier in February 1915. He is a "Lieutenant Colonel" in the "Army of God." A translation of the letter is printed below;

"You have read the news of the Provisional Government of India in the Rowlatt Sedition Committee Report. This Government has been instituted in order to establish a better government in place of the present treacherous, usurping and tyrant Government. Your Provisional Government has been continuously struggling for the last four years. As soon as you determined to refuse to accept the oppressive law, the Provisional Government, too, succeeded in obtaining help then and there.

The Provisional Government has entered into a compact with the invading forces. Hence you should not destroy your real interest by fighting against them, but kill the English in every possible way, don't help them with men and money, and continue to destroy rails and telegraph wires.

Earn peace at the hands of the attacking armies and obtain sanads of honour by supplying them with provisions.

The attacking army grants peace to every Indian irrespective of caste and creed. The life and honour of every Indian is safe. He who will stand against them will alone be killed or disgraced.

May God guide our brethren to tread on the right path."

Sd/- Obeidulla.

Wazir of the Provisional Government of India.
Zafar Hussain
Secretary, Provisional Government of India.
Delhi.

RUSSIAN COMMITTEE: The India Committee in Moscow is busy in Russian Turkestan and Bokhara. It is said that there are about 60,000 Indians residing in Turkestan. A successful Bolshevik propaganda is carried on there through the Indian Committee. Several Indians in Turkestan have already joined the Committee in addition to six Indians from Afghanistan and India who have arrived.

PROPAGANDA IN THE EAST

A report dated 15th April, 1919 stated that there were many indications that the Bolshevik authorities have a special organisation for the encouragement of revolutionary movements in the orient and that they are engaged in turning out propagandist literature in Indian and other Eastern languages. It added that there was little doubt that many of the Indian revolutionaries and anarchists who formerly composed the Indian Committee under the German Foreign office have now taken service in Moscow.

A BOLSHEVIST MUHAMMADAN AGENT: It is reported from Helsengfors on 5th April, 1919 that Muhammad Bak Hajilachet corresponds with Bombay and is engaged in Bolshevik propaganda among the Mussulman population of India. The Training of Agitators : A report received in London on 25th April, 1919 states that very many agitators have been prepared for service in the East. A large number of these are to try to reach Tashkent and Persia. It is reported that a branch of the "League of the Eastern Freedom" is already working in Tashkent Natives are being trained as agitators. The "League of Eastern Freedom" has as its object the spread Of Bolshevism among the people of Asia. With this end in Courses" have been arranged in Moscow in Mussulman Workman's Hall (Asadoulev's house, Bolshoi Tartarski Street). Lectures are delivered on:

- (1) Economics of the East, by Suetloff.
- (2)
- (3) India, by C. D. Mstislavsky.
- (4) Imperialism in the East, by V. Kriajin.
- (5)
- (6) Socialism in the East.'by' Troanovsky.
- (7) Revolntion and the Mussalmans, by Cysoupoff.
- (8)
- (9)
- (10)

In addition to the above, periodical lectures on other subjects are delivered. The temporary bureau of the "League of the Eastern Freedom" is in Sivtsefvra-jka Street, House 14.

1920

DEFENSIVE MEASURES PROPOSED AGAINST BOLSHEVISM. APPOINTMENT OF A SPECIAL OFFICER IN EACH PROVINCE TO DEAL WITH BOLSHEVIK PROPAGANDA

Telegram P. No. M.D.O — 2616, dated 28th Nov. 1919. From : General Malleson, Meshed. To : The Chief of General Staff, Delhi. Priority : The following is a report from a British news writer, regarding the Bolshevik Mission.

1. It is difficult to give the exact composition of Suric's party as all intercourse with it is jealously guarded but the following is approximately correct : Suric : Russian Jew (other informants say he is an educated Kalmuck Muhammadan). A Russian Colonel formerly in Kurshk as Captain; speaks Persian and acts as interpreter. Russian doctor, Russian Secretary, Russian lawyer. Young German, Three Austrians, Fourteen Cossack, Maulavi Abdur Rab (also known as Abdur Auf), probably an Indian; said to have been in Kabul two years ago and gone thence to Bokhara. An India Rajah (Mahendra Pratap, Brahmin); said to be a converted Muhammadan; eats with Russians. Another Indian said to be a Madras Hindu. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. The news writer states that he is convinced that the object of Suric is to induce the Amir to renew the war with India-and the arrival of Suric in Kabul will be followed speedily by a fresh outbreak of war.

Telegram P., Nos. 116 — 8. Dated the 28th January, 1920. From— His Excellency the Viceroy (Foreign and Political Department), Delhi. To His Majesty's Secretary of State for India, London.

Anti-Bolshevik Measures in India : Please refer to my telegram. Home Department, No. 1022, dated the 18th October, work has now been commenced by officers specially appointed for counter-propaganda, coordination of intelligence, both internal and external, and organisational measures to keep Bolshevik emissaries and propaganda out of India. Conflicting announcements in Reuter's Telegram, however, regarding policy about to be adopted by His Majesty's Government towards Bolsheviks hamper them considerably. Similar embarrassment is felt by us when defining our attitude towards Afghan relations with Bolsheviks and a clear statement from you of British policy towards them would be of great assistance to us.

NOTES IN THE FOREIGN AND POLITICAL DEPARTMENT

A meeting was held on the 27th January, 1920 to discuss certain matters in connection with the defensive measures against Bolshevik propaganda outlined in the Home Department Letter No. 2483 dated the 25th November, 1919.

PRESENT:

• FOREIGN DEPARTMENT:

- The Hon'ble Mr. Dabbs.
- Lt. Col. O'Connor.

- Mr. Cater.
- Home Department:
 - The Hon'ble Mr. McPherson.
 - Lt. Col. Kaye.
 - Mr. Corbett.
- General Staff Branch
 - Lt. Col. Muspratt.
 - Maj. Lumby.
 - J- and P. (S.) 3716/20

As a precaution, the part I have underlined [*Italicised*] should be treated as confidential.

(Intld.) H. M.

INTERNAL

PRO-BOLSHKVIK INDIANS: A youthful apostle of Bolshevism has recently come to notice in Bengal in the person of Durga Das Chatterji, a 4th year student of the Bangabasi College in Calcutta. This young man has been going about under the wing of the wellknown Liyaqat Hussein addressing meetings. Several times he has alluded to Bolshevism pointing out its advantages and asking his audience to accept it if Government failed to take immediate action in the matter of high prices and profiteering. England, he pointed out, in the present state of affairs, would never be able to save India. If the Bolsheviks attacked from within and without and the only course left for them was to accept Bolshevism which he recommended them to do. Durga Das is a well known protegee of the well known extremist Jitendra Lai Banerjee who sends him to meeting as his deputy when he cannot attend himself.

M. C. RAJAGOPAI ACHARI: A High Court Vakil of Madras, holding extreme views is reported to be an ardent pro-Bolshevist, his idea being to attain the revolution he desires to see by fostering labour unrest. In this programme he is said to be assisted by a certain Sukhini Narayan Iyer, a young barrister, now in Guntur, who recently returned from Ireland where he was associated with Sinn Feiners.

These individual are being watched by the Madras Police. The former is touring the districts.

Jethmal Parsanam (notorious Sindh agitator) recently made a speech on 'Socialism' at Karachi the whole trend of which, in the opinion of the reporting officer, was calculated to encourage industrial discontent, and dispose the audience favourably towards Bolshevism. Bolshevism, he said, was nothing else than hunger, seventy-five per cent of Indians were poor and must starve if the bureaucracy retained the reins of Government.

The notorious Dr. Choitrannr Gidvani supported him.

S. P. Dave is now reported to have arrived in Bombay, unnoticed two months ago. He is stated to be living at Bhavnagar, Kathiawar.

Chaman Lal (see list of Pro-Bolshevik Indians) has come into prominence this week.

He is reported to have allied himself with Miller, the ex-guard of the N. W. Railway (vide last week's report) who is now the head of a rapidly increasing Labour Association composed principally of railwaymen. To this association he has been appointed Legal Adviser. Chaman Lal has also allied himself in Lahore to a certain Swami Wichara, Nand, described as lecturer of the Poona branch of the Indian Home Rule League. This Swami has recently established in Lahore a branch of the League with Gawardhan Das, noticed last week for his pro-Bolshevik utterances, as President. Swami Wichara Nand's scheme, it is said, is to obtain control over the labouring classes, form Unions, ally them with trade unions of foreign countries and then to strike at imperialism. It is said that Chaman Lal has invited Swami Wichara Nand to Rawalpindi where it is proposed to start a branch of this League.

Bepin Chandra Pal has renewed his anti-capitalist campaign. On 6th March speaking at the Surma Valley Conference at Sylhet on the subject of the rise in the cost of living he explained how India was being exploited by the foreign capitalist. His speech throughout can only be described as thinly veiled Bolshevism.

No man, Pal holds, has a right to that which he does not produce with his own labour, be the product material or intellectual. The only hope in his opinion is to form an open alliance with British Labour, which looks upon capital as its natural enemy.

KNOWN AND SUSPECTED BOLSHEVIK AGENTS: A Durani Pathan was recently found at Amritsar Station talking Bolshevism and praising the Bolsheviks, representing that if they came to India all wealth would be divided and there would be no more poor. He gave his name as Sardar Gholam Haider Khan and said he was a horse dealer and going to Bareilly. It appears that there is a man of this name resident at Kohat. Enquiries are in progress.

MUSLIM-BOLSHEVIK COMBINE: Information has reached the Allahabad C.I.D. that at the recent Bombay Khilafat Conference, Maulavi Mohammad Fakir, an Allahabad delegate, suggested to the subjects committee that owing to the recent comparison made in the British Press between Lenin and the prophet Muhammad, a resolution should be passed that it was not in the interests of Muhammadans to oppose Bolshevism in India or in any part of Asia. The resolution was disallowed but the information adds that most of the delegates present were in favour of using Bolshevism as a weapon against the British Government.

In conversation with an officer of the Government recently, Mushier Hossein Kidwai showed that he had a very high opinion of Bolshevik strength and spoke of their "Great Citizen Army." Bolshevik Russia, in his opinion is much more organic and therefore more powerful and dangerous than Imperial Russia.

AN INDIAN COMMUNIST MANIFESTO: In the issue of the Weekly Report of

July 19th mention was made of a manifesto published in the Glasgow Socialist. A copy of this curious document has now been received. It is an appeal to the British to join hands with the coming proletarian revolution in India against both foreign imperialism and the sentimental nationalism which would create a bourgeois democracy of Indian exploiters. Omitting verbiage the appeal runs thus:-

The time has come for the Indian Revolutionists to make a statement of their principles in order to interest the European and American proletariat in the struggle of the Indian masses, which is rapidly becoming a fight for economic and social emancipation and the abolition of class rule. The appeal is made to the British proletariat because of their relation to revolutionary movements in countries dominated by British imperialism.

The nationalist movement in India has failed to appeal to the masses, because it strives for a bourgeoisie democracy and cannot say how the masses will be benefited by the independent national existence. The emancipation of the working class lies in the social revolution and the foundation of a Communist State. Therefore the growing spirit of rebellion in the masses must be organised on the basis of the class struggle in close cooperation with the world proletarian movement.

But, because British domination deprives Indians of the elementary rights indispensable for the organisation of such a struggle, the revolutionary movement must emphasize in its programme the political liberation of the country. This does not make its final goal- a bourgeois democracy unless the native privileged class could rule and exploit the native workers in place of British Bureaucrats and Capitalist. All that the world is allowed to know of the Indian revolutionary movement is the agitation for political autonomy. This had naturally failed to enlist the sympathy of the working class in any country, which must always be indifferent to purely nationalist aspirations.

The idea of class conscious rebellion against capitalist exploitation has been gaining ground in India, immensely stimulated by the war. The quickened industrial life, the rise in the cost of living, the employment of Indian troops overseas and the echoes of the Russian revolution, have fanned the discontent always existing in the masses. The nationalist revolutionary movement, recruited from educated youth of the middle class, tried to turn the discontent to an armed uprising against foreign rule. Since the beginning of the present century, terrorism, local insurrections, conspiracies and attempts at revolt have become more and more frequent until at least practically the whole country came under martial law. These activities did not inspire the masses with lasting enthusiasm; the leaders failed to prescribe remedies for the social and economic evils from which the workers suffer. By dynamic economic forces, which are destined to cause a proletarian revolt in every country, have grown acute in India and hence the spirit of rebellion has grown more and more manifest among the people who are not moved by the nationalist doctrines presented by the revolutionaries. To-day there are two tendencies in the Indian movement, distinct in principles and aims. The Nationalists advocated an autonomous India and incite the masses to overthrow the foreign exploiter upon vague democratic programme

or no programme at all. The real revolutionary movement stands for the economic emancipation of the workers and rests in the growing strength of a class conscious industrial proletariat and landless peasantry. This latter movement is too big for the bourgeois leaders and can only be satisfied with the Social Revolution. This manifesto is issued for those who fill the ranks of the second movement. We want the world to know that nationalism is confined to the bourgeois, but the masses are awakening to the call of the Social Revolution.

The growth of class consciousness in the Indian proletariat was unknown to the outer world until last year, when one of the most powerful and best organised strikes in history was declared by the Indian revolutionaries. Though the Nationalists used it as a weapon against political oppression, it was really the spontaneous rebellion of the proletariat against unbearable economic exploitation. As the workers of the cotton mills owned by the native capitalists were the first to walk out it cannot be maintained that the strike was nothing more than a nationalist demonstration.

It is known in England how this revolt of the famished workers was crushed by British imperialism. But the British working class were misled into believing that it was merely a nationalist demonstration and therefore abstained from taking definite action according to the principles of class solidarity. A simultaneous general strike would have dealt a vital blow to imperialistic capitalism at home and abroad, but the British proletariat failed to rise to the occasion.

The only stem taken was very weak and of a petty bourgeois nature-the protest against the manner of crushing the revolt signed by William Lansbury and Thomas. This was not the voice of the revolutionary proletariat raised to defend the class interest.

The bourgeois nationalist movement cannot be significant to the world proletarian struggle of the British working class, which is learning the worthlessness of mere political independence and sham representative government under capitalism. But the Indian proletarian movement is of vital interest. The tremendous strength which imperialistic capitalism derives from extensive colonial possession rich in natural resources and cheap human labour must no longer be ignored. So long as India and other subject countries remain helpless victims of capitalist exploitation and the British Capitalist is sure of his absolute mastery over millions and millions of human beasts of burden, he will be able to concede the demands of British Trade Unionists and delay the proletarian revolution which will overthrow him. In order to destroy it completely, world capitalism must be attacked simultaneously on every front, the British proletariat cannot march towards final victory unless he takes his comrades in the colonies along with him to fight the common enemy.

The loss of the colonies might alarm orthodox trade union psychology with the threat of unemployment, but a class conscious revolutionary proletariat, aiming at the total destruction of capitalist ownership and the establishment of a Communist State cannot but welcome such a collapse of the present system since it would lead to the economic bankruptcy of capitalism-a condition necessary for its final overthrow.

To all possible misgivings of British Comrades we declare that our aim is to

prevent the establishment of a bourgeois nationalist government which would be another bulwark of capitalism. We wish to organize the growing rebelliousness of the Indian masses on the principles of class struggle, so that when the revolution comes it will be a social revolution. The idea of the proletarian revolution distinct from nationalism has come to India and is showing itself in unprecedented strikes. It is primitive and not clearly class conscious so that it sometimes is the victim of nationalist ideas. But those of the vanguards see the goal and the struggle and reject the idea of uniting the whole country under nationalism for the sole purpose of expelling the foreigner, because they realize that the native princes, landlords, factory owners, moneylenders, who would control the Government, would be not less oppressive than the foreigner. 'Land to the tiller' will be our most powerful slogan, because India is an agricultural country and the majority of the population belongs to the landless peasantry. Our programme also calls for the organization of the Indian proletariat on the basis of the class struggle for the foundation of a Communist State, based during the transition period on the dictatorship of the proletariat.

We call upon the workers of all countries especially Great Britain to help us to realize our programme. The proletarian struggle in India as well as in other dependencies of Great Britain should be considered as vital factors in the International Proletarian Movement. Self-determination for India merely encourages the idea of bourgeois nationalism. Denounce the masked imperialists who claim it and who disgrace your name (of British workers). The fact that India is ruled by the mightiest imperialism known to history makes any kind of revolutionary organization among the working class almost impossible. The first step towards the social revolution must be to create a situation favourable for organizing the masses for final struggle. Such a situation can be created only by the overthrow or at least the weakening of the foreign imperialism which maintains itself by military power.

"Cease to fall victims to the imperialist cry that the masses of the East are backward races and must go through the hell fires of a capitalists exploitation from which you are struggling to escape"- "we appeal to you to recognize the Indian revolutionary movement as a vital part of the world proletarian struggle against capitalism. Help us to raise the banner of social revolution in India and to free ourselves from Capitalistic Imperialism that we may help you in final struggle for the realization of the universal Communist State."

Sd/- Manabendra Nath Roy Abani Mukherji Santi Devi

This appeal, with its orthodox Leninism and its misreading of Indian politics woven into an incitement to rebellion, is reminiscent of a letter addressed by Lenin to the British Labour Party just before the Scarborough Conference. That letter turned the Conference against Bolshevism and all its works and led to a decisive repudiation of Third International. This appeal may well have a similar effect if it comes to notice in India. Still the writers' belief in indigenous Bolshevism in India is interesting, if not insignificant.

INDIAN REVOLUTIONARIES ABROAD: Some scraps of information are available regarding a few well-known persons, which indicate how they are working

together. Mohendra (sic) Nath Ray was received in Europe by Birendra Nath Das Gupta, who forwarded him to Germany on his way to Reval. Birendra Nath Ghosh, recently released from the Andamans and now in Calcutta, is corresponding with Das Gupta, but with what object it is not known. Das Gupta himself wishes to return to India, A. A. Mirza, so long identified with Islamic and Pro-Bolshevik agitation in England, has at last made his way to Rome. Italy has become a most important centre of revolutionary intrigue. Benoy Kumar Sarkar, an old associate of Lajpat Rai in America where he still is, has applied for a passport to France. Mrs. Naidu has been travelling in Europe to the great interest of the revolutionaries, of whom Das Gupta writing to a friend in Italy strongly advised him to get an invitation to Italy extended to her and to see himself. This same letter described the printing of propaganda in Italy and their distribution through Germany and America.

Chattopadhyaya remains in Stockholm. He is reputed to receive Bolshevik money, though he is often short of funds and is thought to supplement his own earnings with the help of Swedish friends. He receives anti-British literature from America and republishes it in Sweden. He, too, has a plan for a communist revolt in India and is confident of its success. He hopes to send it to India by hand in September or October.

These details have been given because it is believed that the Indian revolutionaries abroad are beginning to show a new activity. They have found new Allies and, it would appear, new plans. They are quite unpractical enough to build on the hope of a Communist revolution and they are just as ready as they ever were to be exploited by unscrupulous associates.

When the last mail left England the Third International was sitting in conference in Moscow.

The delegates of Asiatic countries, India, China and Korea etc. attended the preparatory Session of the Congress of the Third International and was warmly received. Royde (? Roy) who represented India declared that the flames of the social revolution were spreading and that Oriental people would soon follow the example of Russia. This Royde may be the ubiquitous N. N. Bhattacharjya. He was followed by other European speakers whose addresses were received with applause and are to be printed for propaganda purposes. Lenin is said to have announced (Figaro 22nd July) that Russia had no intention of pursuing the campaign against the West after Poland had been conquered, but that the world revolution would then extend itself to India where Irish Soldiers were distributing arms and munitions to the Hindus.

COMMUNIST PARTY OF INDIA: Some time ago it was reported that certain individuals in Calcutta had subscribed to and were receiving the Workers Dreadnought from England. The names of these individuals were given and enquiry was made about them in Calcutta. One of them only, Muhammad Yusha Knan, has been found to be receiving the paper; it could not be ascertained whether others were receiving or not. Mohammad Yusha Khan is a member of a big farm in Calcutta dealing in salted hides, he is Wahabi and a cousin of Mohammad Akram Khan, Khilafat agitator and editor of the Mohammadi. Yusha Khan helped Akram Khan with money to start this paper and supports

him generally in political matters. This paper describes itself as published by the C. P. (British section of the Third International) editor Sylvia Pankhurst.

Miss Pankhurst of course receives money from the Soviet Government and attended the recent conference of the Third International at Moscow.

Another Bolshevik production has recently been found in India. It is called Soviet Russia and is published by Maartene Bureau in New York. This particular copy was sent gratis to the editor of an Indian paper. The Soviet subsidised Daily Herald also appears to be received by every mail.

INDIAN REVOLUTIONARIES ABROAD

B. N. DASGUPTA: The most interesting news of him is that he presented a petition to the Secretary of State praying that the terms of Royal amnesty may be applied to him. He was, he says, a most loyal subject until the war broke out when by his youthful eagerness for democratic political progress and his then love for Turkey he was induced to help his Majesty's former enemies. He makes the usual promises to amend and devote his full time and energy to further the industrial and commercial development of His Majesty's Indian Empire.

This merely means that, as reported from another source, he is home sick and anxious to return to India. He is said to believe, probably rightly, that the development of Indian industries is a fundamental step towards revolution. There is certainly no evidence of the sincerity of his repentance in the record of his recent activities..... He has great faith in the Bolsheviks and says an agreement has been reached between them and the Indian revolutionaries. The main centre of work are, he says Moscow, Kabul and New York, San Francisco and small centre in England. Among the Indians in Moscow are Mukherjee, M. N. Roy and Haltsri (?) and Rash Behari Bose is according to him in Afghanistan along with Mahendra Pratap and Acharya.

It is perfectly true that M. N. Roy (N. N. Bhattacharyya) is in Russia and that Mahendra Pratap and Acharya are in Afghanistan. But nothing has been heard previously of Bose going to Afghanistan, a fact which would most probably have come to notice had it occurred. About Mukherjee there are excellent grounds for believing him to have stayed in Germany to watch the work there. M. N. Roy won a considerable reputation for himself among the Indians in America by his communism in Mexico, and since he has arrived in Europe he has set himself to work on Bolshevik rather than on nationalist line. His presence must tend to eclipse the old Indian Committee to whom by his Communist Manifesto he has declared himself antagonistic. But all the Berlin Indians are said to be anxious to join the Bolsheviks.

DIWANCHAND VARMA: This man claims for himself a considerable past as a revolutionary and to have been one of the first Indian "terrorists."

He is now a convinced Bolshevik and apparently in touch with some of the leaders, but he is rather out of touch with the Indian movement.

INDIAN COMMUNISTS

Reports about the following individuals have been received and are summarized below ;

DALIP SINGH GIL, described as the son of a peasant in Patiala State and brother of a dacoit who was hanged, arrived in Switzerland from America during the war. He was suspected by the German Government of being a British spy and was enticed into Germany and arrested. He remained in Jail, where he made acquaintance of Liebknecht, until the Revolution. He was set free with Liebknecht and was supported by him and his party, through whom he came to know German and Russian Communists, Radek being one of his intimate friends. From them he conceived the idea of trying to introduce Communism into India and himself became a Communist. His efforts to secure the support of other communists were failed by his ignorance of German. He therefore associated Mansur (Dr. Mansur) with himself and thus made his own progress easy.

Chattopadhyay is still in Stockholm and states that he too has hopes of obtaining Bolshevik money, with which he intends to start a paper called the "Indian Communist" to be distributed free all over the world. He has seen Kamenoff, who gives him a sham contract for purchasing chemicals in order to blind the police. He corresponds with Germany and Russia through Bolshevik couriers, is anxious to get B. N. Dutta from Berlin to help him and accuses Har Dayal of having been bought by the British Government..... His faith is entirely fixed on the Bolsheviks, who are said to be preparing for an Indian Revolution in March next year, and whose Bureau of Eastern Propaganda is working harder than ever..... Chatto also hopes to make Bolsheviks of all Indians and intends to start with Rabindranath Tagore, whom he expects in Stockholm in September and October and whose recent utterance have been such as to encourage Chattos's hopes.

Saklatvala has been in communication with Roy (N. N. Bhattacharji) whilst the latter was in Moscow through a delegate who attended the conference from Glasgow who has now returned. Roy wants Saklatvala to establish an Indian Communist group associated with the British Communist Party. He states he has been seeking to influence in the direction of improving conditions of Indian workmen, and is in thorough agreement with Saklatvala in despising the Indian National Congress, which he regards as "an illegal assembly of a few aristocratic gentlemen" called together in order to dominate the mass of the people.

Moscow Conference-Reliable information gives names of delegate who represented various sections of British India as: (1) Mahendra Pratap (2) Suhrawardy. (3) Martin. (4) Roy. (5) Mantu. (6) Barkatullah. (7) Unknown.

All these men are well-known ; Martin and Roy are two aliases of N. N. Bhattacharji. As far as their succeeding movements are concerned Suhrawardy is at present under examination at Constantinople where he went via Tiflis, which place he communicated with his family in Bengal asking for money and stating he was "quite well."

N. N. Bhattacharji is reported to be with Jamal Pasha's mission to Afghanistan and there is some reason to believe that he may attempt to enter India.

B. N. Das Gupta is going to Stockholm as soon as his brother arrives, but he expects to return in about a month. Rabindra Nath Tagore, Mrs. Sarojini

Naidu and B.N. Dutta from Berlin are also off to Stockholm. There is to be a meeting of the members of the Executive Committee of the Indian National Society as soon as everyone is assembled. Dutt has sent a wire in Cipher to Das Gupta to proceed to Stockholm at once.

INDIAN REVOLUTIONARIES ABROAD

The Berlin Hindu Group : B. N. Dutt's correspondence is still the main source of news of this dwindling body of the irreconcilables. He recently wrote that the "Traitors" had left Germany for London a few days previously; that some of them were approvers like Dr. C. Chakravarty and among them was one likely to keep his word and work furtively in India. Dutt remarked that he was delighted to have got rid of these useless persons and to be left with a clean sheet, though there were still some who would have to be removed. Now was the time, he said, to procure fresh blood from India to assist in the accomplishment of their heavy task. Accordingly he asked Das Gupta at least to induce Jatin Sette (?) and Fazlul Hak Hasrat Mohavi (an Aligarh graduate) to join him as soon as possible ; he added that he had addressed a similar request to Chattopadhyaya.

It is believed that Hasrat Mohavi (or Mohani) is identical with the individual interned in India for complicity in the silk letter case ; in short the individual now so prominent in the Khilafat agitation. Regarding Jatin Sette (?) Das Gupta remarked in conversation that he was an extreme revolutionary who had been interned but was now free. He is an M. A. of Calcutta whose real name may be Jatindranath Sen or Seth.

SOVIET DESIGNS ON INDIA: That the Bolshevik Government is thoroughly earnest in its hope to provoke revolution in India, as the best means of wrecking the British empire, as I think, been so proved as to leave not the slightest doubt in anybody who is open to conviction. Bolshevik speakers and writers have openly proclaimed their intentions and spread the announcements over the world. From every direction have come secret reports of plans and intrigues undertaken to give effect to these designs. Every revolutionary party or society seems secure in its hope of financial and other assistance from Lenin and his friends. The distinction, therefore, which is made for clearness in this report between revolutionary bodies and Bolshevik agencies is a false distinction, because now-a-days every revolutionary organisation whatever its origin seeks alliance with Bolshevism.

The important question then is by what methods the Bolsheviks can hope to execute their plans in India. They can rely either on an invasion from Central Asia of forces raised by themselves, or on indigenous agencies in India, or on a combination of the two. Indigenous agencies are certainly hard at work to promote disaffection against government. Their methods are certainly skilful and as such are likely to rot the core of Government's strength by disaffecting its servants, military and civil, and by destroying the influence of the more conservative elements of Indian Society through the promotion of a government of dictatorship of the proletariat. That their methods are disguised as Khilafat agitation or election campaign need not affect their result. As regards the likelihood of invasion this seems more remote.

INDIAN BOLSHEVIKS: A report from Geneva of the 18th February declares that Bravin, the Bolshevik emissary has made his way into India with three Indian assistants and that he is working round about Peshawar where a secret conference was to be held in February. This Conference was to have been of the greatest importance as it was to have united the islamic and non-islamic parties for the war against England; and one Nafis was anxious to attend at all costs.

Enquiry is made about Nafis who is said to be a native of Trans-Caspia, who was in Calcutta in 1902-05 and visited Persia, Moscow, Switzerland and Berlin where he was associated with Chempakaraman Pillai. He may possibly be identical with the notorious Abdul Hafiz of the Zurich Bomb case. But the report, so far as the object of the Peshawar Conference is concerned, is given with the greatest reserve.

Another report states that there are now 150 Indians in Moscow and Petrograd who are undergoing instructions in the art of propaganda. When qualified in these school Indians return to their native country. A German named Preetz or Praetz, long engaged in India as merchant or manufacturer in the textile trade and now in Berlin is declared to have stated that he had received from Lenin the enormous sum of 50 million United States gold dollars and I Milliard of Czarist paper roubles for the purpose of propagating the Bolshevik gospel in India.

IMPORTED BOLSHEVISM IN INDIA

The letters printed below have a peculiar interest as to whether they are explained as emanating from real Bolshevik emissaries or from Indians aiming Bolshevism. There is no foundation in fact for the widely spread rumour that Bravin has succeeded in entering India with two of his assistants. In fact he was superseded in Afghanistan by Suritz and is believed now to be in Caucasia. But this name may be a cloak for the emissaries who actually are in India.

MAHENDRA NATH ROY: This Indian revolutionary escaped arrest in the United States by fleeing to Mexico with his American wife. There he continued the production of pamphlets and literature attacking the British Indian Government. On one occasion, as reported at the time, he offered the fruits of his labours to the German embassy for any purpose for which they could be employed. It was there too that he was converted to the Communist Creed and associated himself with Lynn A. E. Gale and other Bolsheviks and eventually became the leader of the Mexican Communists. But for a brief appearance as a labour agitator at Tampico his Bolshevism found only a literary expression, so far as is at present known. It is now reported that he left Mexico on January 15th last and that he is believed to be on his way to Russia via Spain. Since his departure 'EL Communists' the organ of the Communist Party has not appeared and it is thought that lack of funds and lack of a suitable person to take direction of it will prevent its reappearance in future.

"LENIN THE STRATEGIST" — "Lenin has very good reason for the Indian, Egyptian, Persian and other Nationalist intrigues which he is promoting against Great Britain. He regards it as impossible to exercise and direct influence on the English workmen which lead them along the paths of communism. Con-

sciously or unconsciously, the English working of which Centre of an Empire, the prosperity of which depends on its colonies. He is thus too well off, and too deeply imbued with the idea of property and self-interest to be influenced by communist propaganda. The utmost of which he is capable is a progressive series of bargains with Capitalism and by that route communism will never be reached. But, if England were deprived of her colonies, then her industrial condition would be no better than that of the countries of the European mainland and her exchange would fall as there has done. The English workmen would then cease to be prosperous or contended, and England could be made as ripe for communism as France or Italy. Therefore, in so far as England is concerned, Lenin is devoting himself ardently to the destruction of her Empire and the liberation of her colonies."

BOLSHEVIK PROPAGANDA IN INDIA

BEPIN CHANDRA PAL, who had been on tour in East Bengal, and Sylhet, along with Srish Chatterjee, pleader of well-known revolutionary tendencies, had returned to Calcutta. Detailed report of his speeches during his recent tour show that they were of a more than usually objectionable nature. At Sylhet on 23rd September he delivered a speech obviously intended to excite the people of that district most of whom belong to the Baisnab sect. Universal brotherhood and self-reliance, he pointed out are the keynotes of the lives of both the Bolsheviks and the Baisnab, the only difference being in respect of violence to which the Bolsheviks are accustomed. Just as the Baisnab goes to Sri Brindaban, so the Bolsheviks, are also coming to India.

RASH BEHARI BOSE: A Report was received sometime ago that Bose was probably in Afghanistan in touch with the Bolsheviks. This has to some extent been corroborated by a confessing revolutionary in Bengal who reports that another absconder and associate of Rash Behari named Amarendra Chatterjee is in touch with the Bolshevik, through Rash Behari, while a different Calcutta Police source reports that Amarendra has recently been in Afghanistan.

A report has been received that Khalil Makdour, a member of the Egyptian party in Geneva, has been asked to join a Bolsheviks Party which left Berlin in March to stir up trouble on the Indian frontier.

It is noticeable that a good many rumours of imaginary Bolshevik successes are current in Northern India. These chiefly concern the relation between Bolshevism and Afghanistan, the intentions to the Amir to outwardly profess friendship and to suddenly descend on India at a favourable opportunity, and the spread of unrest among the frontier tribes etc. The return from Afghanistan of large numbers of ignorant Muhajirin is sufficient explanation in itself of the source from which these rumours originate, and there is no reason, on present evidence, to suppose that they are the work of Bolshevik agents who have penetrated India.

In one of the recent numbers of the India News Service issued by the Friends of Freedom for India an account is given of the part played by Roy (N. N. Bhattacharya) at the Moscow Conference. According to this he showed himself "plus

royaliste que le roi" in opposing Lenin, who wished to support existing Nationalist agitation in India as a means of overthrowing the present administration preparatory to the establishment of Bolshevism. Roy held that agitation in India was confined to the middle classes, and that the purity of Bolshevik ideals should not be sullied by any cooperation with the "bourgeois". He ultimately allowed himself to be convinced by Lenin-the whole affair was probably a move to gain notoriety.

THE BERLIN GROUP: It is reported from Berlin that Acharya who is now in Moscow, has written to Chattaopadhyaya in Stockholm informing him that the Russians are now concentrating their energies on rendering assistance to the Pan-Islamic Movement, as such, and as outside other political movement. This attitude, Acharya points out, must be strongly protested against.

Upon receipt of this letter Chatto decided to go at once in person to Moscow, it being felt that should this line be taken up and persisted in by Russia, it would be highly detrimental to the interest of Indian independence. Further it appears that Dutta has already sent an ultimatum on this subject to Lenin by the hand of a lady who has recently gone to Moscow, named Clara Szetky (jic). Das Gupta went to Berlin and from there to Stockholm, in order to join Chatto. Dutta was also to go, but had not, at the date of the report, obtained a passport. The three of them intend holding a conference in Stockholm and Chatto will then proceed to Moscow.

It is understood that should the negotiations with the Russian Government turn out unsatisfactorily, a violent anti-Revolutionary Propaganda will be started by the leaders of the Indian Revolutionary movement in Europe. At the moment they are at a loss to know how to act. Das Gupta (who is travelling under the name of Haider) will return from Stockholm to Berlin, in about a fortnight's time. Dr. Ghose, his wife and nephew have met Chatto but it is not definitely known where the meeting took place.

Chatto's intention of visiting Moscow has been confirmed from another source. It appears that he has received Bolshevik funds through Hellberg who is a prominent member of the Central Bolshevik Committee of Stockholm, and that he intends to accompany Litvinoff on his journey to Russia via Reval.

At the Baku Conference in September Enver Pasha proclaimed his agreement with the views of the Third International in the name of Algeria, Tunis, Tripoli, Egypt, Arabia and India.

Roy, representative of India, was apparently responsible for the statement that there were over 37 million landless peasants in India and that the entire land was in the possession of some six or seven hundred princely families. He regretted however to admit that the national India movement was being carried on by the middle classes. It is difficult to believe that even Roy would make the preposterous statement that all the lands of India in the hands of some six or seven hundred princely families, but his regret that the national India movement is being carried on by the middle classes is entirely in the strain of a letter he wrote from Reval at the end of May to a friend in America. In the course of that letter Roy said, "If the Nationalists leaders don't see our point of view we are determined to part with them and even fight them if necessary, and

it is inevitable that we must fight the Nationalists either now or later. Since we are convinced that the establishment of Nationalists Government would not emancipate the masses."

Roy is out for notoriety, and means to impress the Bolsheviks with his importance. It is difficult to estimate what influence he carries, probably it is not very great. From the latest report it appears that he has decided to remain in Tashkent for a few months and has abandoned his intention of proceeding to Kabul.

SNEEVLIETS, who was recently reported to be en route for the Far East, where he was to carry on Bolshevik propaganda, has suddenly returned to Holland. It is strongly suspected that his change of plans was due to direct orders from Moscow, in connection with Rabindra Nath Tagore's visit to Holland. The Soviet Government sometime back invited Tagore and Sir Jagadish Bose to a congress to be held in Moscow to discuss Orientalism and Internationalism, and Sneeveliet's mission was apparently to prepare Tagore's mind for the proposal which would be made to him at Moscow. The Communists in Holland watched Tagore very closely during his stay, and as a result an adverse report concerning him is said to have been sent to Moscow, as Tagore did not associate with communists, neither were his lectures appreciated by them.

PROPAGANDA IN INDIA; Many references have of late been made to Bolshevik plans for flooding India with agents and literature, and that such is their desire no doubt. But there is little evidence in India to show that these plans have ever been carried into execution.

It is possible that men have entered the country who have been supplied with money from Russian sources, on the understanding that they would carry on Bolshevik propaganda; but once in India their connection with Bolshevism, has gone no further than taking Soviet money. Probably most of these so-called agents had no intention of carrying out their contracts, they desired to return to India and had no objection to return with money obtained at the cost of promises which they knew it would be impossible to enforce.

So far as indirect methods are concerned, such as subsidizing existing agitation, it is not easy to appreciate the situation. The labour unrest in large industrial centres is an obvious instance where Bolshevik influence might be suspected. Of the prominent labour leaders, Lajpat Rai has Bolshevick leanings, Chaman Lai is in close touch with English Communists through Saklatvala in London. It is therefore not difficult to show a certain connection with Russian ideas, but up to the present no proof has been obtained of any Russian money behind the labour agitation. The rise in prices and economic causes generally are sufficient in themselves to explain the present epidemic of strikes.

BERLIN TO SWITZERLAND: Recent reports confirm the information given in previous weekly Report that the Berlin Committee are in communication with Ghadr Party in San Francisco and the Friends of Freedom for India in New York.

All communications between the Berlin Committee and the outside would appear to pass through the hands of Das Gupta in Zurich where he is known as M. A. Haider. This man has been recently described as the most active and

dangerous of the Indian conspirators and has recently replaced Prabhakar as the leader of these men. From his retreat at Zurich he is in touch with many phases of the great anti-British conspiracy.

A very optimistic letter reached him from B. N. Dutt in Berlin at the beginning of November. The writer asserted that the fight for India was about to begin and that Afghanistan would resume hostilities in six month's time. He alluded in cryptic terms to a most fortunate event which has just occurred and which made him feel sure that the days of British domination in India were numbered. He pleaded the attention of British spies as an excuse of not saying more about it, but promised full detail when he met Das Gupta at the Socialist Conference in Switzerland in January. He added that owing to the great responsibility of his work he had summoned Chattopadhyaya from Stockholm and was anxiously awaiting his arrival. In a letter Dutt gave Das Gupta news received 'at last and after great difficulty' from Indian Committee in Kabul. He described their activities in Afghanistan and their efforts to utilise Kashmir as a secret jumping-off place for work in India. He wrote hopefully of the progress made, but excused himself from giving details. (It is noteworthy that Har Dayal sometimes ago urged the desirability of making use of Kashmir, particularly for importing arm into India, and said he had a friend in Srinagar ready to help. In a third letter Dutt informed Das Gupta that Chattopadhyaya has sent Tarak Nath Das 5,000 Kronen through his attorney Gilbert E Roe (Roe is defending various Indians in deportative and other cases and was recently elected a president of Friend of Freedom for India).

Das Gupta has also received letters from Tarak Nath Das and Sailendra Nath Ghosh in America both appealing for funds from the Berlin Committee; Das on the ground that the work, he is doing benefits the Germans as well as Indians, and Ghosh on the ground that his work must be carried out on a far larger scale. Ghosh also said that he had received a very important message from India together with a letter from a certain Satu which is to be delivered personally either to B. N. Dutt or Das Gupta.

ACTIVITY IN CENTRAL ASIA: Fifty-four schools have been opened at Tashkent, mainly for propaganda purposes where oriental languages are taught and some Indians are engaged as instructors. Propaganda literature is also being prepared. As agents become proficient they are to be sent to India, China and all other countries having a Muhammadan population. Those for India will enter mostly by Afghanistan under Afghan auspices or by sea under various disguises.

The decision to concentrate all efforts on India was recently re-affirmed by the Tashkent Soviet, because it is hoped to decide there the destruction of the British empire and the future of the world proletariat. It is understood that centres where propaganda will be partly prepared are to be opened in India.

RECIPROCAL MOVEMENTS BETWEEN RUSSIA AND INDIA

The following was issued by wireless on December 12th: "Russian papers report that an Indian Bolshevik Commission is said to have arrived at Samara in order to enter into relations with Soviet Russia". The *Svenska Dagbladet* of

Helsingfors gave the following details about the same time;

“Indian Bolshevik Commission is actually in Samara. The chiefs have declared that 300 millions of Indians are awaiting a favourable occasion for rejecting the British slavery and that they want to join with Russia”.

From Sweden too comes the report that about 100 agitators have been sent to India from the schools in Moscow. I have received detailed reports about 3 such agitators have been sent to India from schools in Moscow.

Two are Finns who were expected at the beginning of January to leave Stockholm for India as propagandists. Their names are given as Issenivs and Karl Harrin; but they were expected to travel with forged or stolen passports as Harry Bennet American and Thomas Grieg, British. Issenius is believed to be identical with Allan Usenius an extremely is known for certain of Karl Harrin, but he is possibly Hurmev Aara, a Finnish Bolshevik of some importance in Stockholm.

The third man is Dr. Max Fischer. It may be mentioned here though he is not known as a Bolshevik, but he is employed by the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He was reported in December to be on his way to Trieste for India for anti-British propaganda. He possesses 5 passports, three in his own name as commercial agent, consular agent, and tourist and two under an assumed name. This man is perhaps identical with a man of the same name who was working with the Chinese revolutionaries in Shanghai in 1916.

A BENGALI BOLSHEVIK: The Intelligence Branch, C.I.D., Bengal has received the result of enquiries made with regard to Shaheed Suhrawardy, who was one of the first Indians to throw in his lot with the Soviet Government in Moscow. This man was a well-known revolutionist. His father Zahid Suhrawardy, a judge of the Calcutta Small Causes Court, has not heard of his son for a long time and is unwilling to talk about him. He believes him to be in touch with the Bolsheviks. An officer who knows the family recently ascertained from one of their relations that one of the members have gone to Russia via Afghanistan and been detained there. On inquiry whether any information could be obtained in Calcutta about Suhrawardy it was said that a Russian named Ivanhow could give information. This Russian was said to be a great Arabic and Persian scholar who had come to India to prosecute his studies and had been on friendly terms with Suhrawardy on account of the latter's knowledge of Arabic. No Russian named Ivanhow is known in Calcutta, but inquiries are made to trace him.

INDIAN REVOLUTIONARIES ABROAD

THE BERLIN INDIAN COMMITTEE: Information has come from Berlin regarding many Indian renegades in Europe. This shows that the community is considerably exercised in mind regarding the ultimate fate of its members, and that considerable friction exists between the Hindu and Muhammadan members. Details are given to illustrate the case with which individual renegades, even those who have not worked whole-heartedly with Germany, can obtain grants of money from the German Foreign Office. The active organisations of

the Indians at the moment are:

1. The Orient Institute. 2. The Indische Gesellschaft 3. The Hindustan Sabha

It is not very clear to what end these different organisation are directed. The first seems to be working to maintain the pro-German and anti-British feelings of the various orientals in the lately belligerent countries. The second of which B. N. Dutt is the head is reported to be directly under the German Foreign Office, and all the Hindus in Germany belong to it. The third is the Indo-German Bolshevik Society founded about 6 months ago by Dr. Mansur, Verma and Dalip Singh with the object of spreading Bolshevism in India. It is reported to be most flourishing. According to Dalip Singh it has members in Sweden, Russia, Austria, Egypt, Turkey and America and is much helped by the local communist party in Berlin.

PRESS AND PLATFORM BOLSHEVISM: The attitude of the Press towards Bolshevism is still following the lines indicated in a recent weekly Report. The opinion to be formed from a study of articles and speeches on the subject is that the extremist politician is becoming more and more inclined to dabble in extreme socialism. Whatever may be the individual view of socialism there can be little doubt that its doctrines combined with existing conditions in India form a dangerously inflammable mixture.

The chief exponents of Bolshevism in the press at the moment are the Hindu of Hyderabad (Sindh) and the small group of extremist journalists at Cawnpore who are connected with Pratap and the Prabhu. This group has been noticed in recent issues of this report. Now the Maryada has been inoculated with the virus. This paper belongs to Madan Mohan Malaviya whose nephew Krishna Kanto Malaviya is the editor. Its circulation is about 1,600 and it is printed at the same press as the Abhyudaya which has a circulation of 3,500. The United Provinces CID which reports these facts, has drawn attention to these articles in the Maryada for February. Of these two are written by Rama Shankar Avasthi, Assistant editor of the Pratap.

The first article asserts that people now realise that no amount of villification or denunciation of Bolshevism can check its onward progress. No one can be sure that it will keep within the boundaries of Russia. It has propaganda in most European countries and in America and is a great menace to capitalism and imperialism. Lenin and Trotsky are true patriots; they have crushed their enemies, improved the economic conditions of Russia and are carrying on the internal administration smoothly. Mr. Lloyd George is in favour of concluding Peace with them. They have had to go through a very difficult ordeal but have come out successful.

The Hindu of Hyderabad (Sindh) published on January 30th an article on the "Bolshevik danger to India" from which the following is taken :

"In our opinion whether the Bolshevik attack or preach their propaganda or not, if the grievances of the public against the Government continue and the quarrels between labourers and the wealthy go on, men themselves under similar provocations as have the Russians will be affected with Bolshevism;

and subsequently, if similar bloodshed and disturbances occur, it will not be surprising. If this danger is not attended with risk today, it will be to-morrow. Therefore, it appears to be our duty to oppose this danger and for this we should prepare now. We should improve the condition of our backward brethren, and having shown our sympathy to them, we should strengthen the nation. Otherwise if, like the rich people of Russia or England, we oppress the backward classes, their sorrows and grievances will re-act on this nation."

On February 2nd Jethmal Parsaram, a notorious Sindhi agitator, lectured on socialism to an audience of 300. The speaker's argument was difficult to follow, coloured as it was with facts distorted to suit his argument. He concludes by saying;

"We should get more rights of Home Rule. Officers, you are only a few. It is our country and you should give us the reins. India is not yours, seventy five per cent of Indians are poor, and if you have their reins they will starve. These poor men you should care for. When they get the votes they will trouble you very much. What you call Bolshevism is really hunger."

In reporting the lecture the Bombay Special Branch remarked that the lecture was significant for two reasons: "it shows how the extremists are deliberately fostering industrial discontent; and secondly how they or at any rate a section of them are prepared to welcome Bolshevism for the furtherance of their own ends. The reporting sub-inspector noted that the whole trend of the lecture was to dispose the audience favourably towards Bolshevism."

It is perhaps worth noting here the Gale's Magazine of Revolutionary Communism has been advertised for sale and actually obtained in both Karachi and Bombay. The magazine is published in Mexico by a disreputable individual named Lynn E. Gale who fled from the United States during the war to avoid the draft. His magazine is openly Bolshevist and advocates "New Thot". Gale himself is an associate of Narendra Bhattacharya alias C. Martin in Mexico.

SPECIMENS OF PRO-BOLSHEVISM AND OTHER SPEECHES IN INDIA

Speaking at a Khilafat meeting at Lahore on February 8th last, Gobardhan Das, ex-convict is reported to have praised the Bolsheviks and said that the rich had no right to live so comfortably when the poor were in trouble. He described Bolshevik principles as quite natural and praiseworthy and advocated them as worth following. He wished, he said, to see Bolshevism preached and acted upon in India.

INDIAN REVOLUTIONARIES ABROAD: Reliable information has been received to the effect that Mahendra Pratap, Abdur Rabb and Acharyya are in Kabul at the beginning of January last. They had previously spent two months in Moscow, and had passed through Turkestan on their way to Afghanistan. In January too, Barkatullah was in Moscow, but was shortly to have gone to Turkestan. Chattopadhyay in Stockholm was asked to communicate with him through the Moscow Foreign Office. The last named was also instructed that it was desirable that he, Hardayal and other Indians in Europe should get in touch with representatives of the Russian Republic in different places. Relations were

also to be established between Indian communities in all parts of the world and the Russian Government. Men of integrity and principles were to be sent to Russia for propaganda work.

From Christiana it is reported that the European Indian Committee is beginning an intensive propaganda in order to undermine the reputation of the British Govt. The general ignorance of Norwegians regarding India and their sentimental character are believed to favour the revolutionists. Otherwise Chat-topadhyay is reported to be following a law-abiding life, and his sister Mrs. Sarojini Naidu is said to be lecturing on Indian subjects without reference to politics.

THE SOVIET'S INTEREST IN INDIA

The Gazette de Lausanne of February 12th has contained a remarkable article by one Sergy Persky entitled "Lenin et les Indes Britanniques." This has been a stock subject with the French Press for sometime past, but most of the articles have been merely copied from English papers. That in the Gazette was of different calibre. The writer described the disillusionment which has overtaken the American politicians who in 1918 denied that Bolshevism has any interest for them; and the disillusionment which awaits the British premier if he imagines he can confide in Lenin's promises or trust him to abandon Bolshevik propaganda when the blockade is raised. While Litvinoff exchanged sweet words at Stockholm, Moscow worked hard to Bolshevise Afghanistan and the British colonies and awaited the moment for effective work in England... But it is India specially that they (Bolsheviks) attack."

In September 1918 the Council of Workmen and, Soldiers at Moscow received five Hindus "Messengers of Indian People", really creatures of Lenin, who picturesquely described the sufferings of their compatriots and the oppression of the English. "All our hopes", they concluded, "are based on you, our brothers". "Come and deliver us and we shall bless you."

The writer then described two copies of a curious book which he had received from Moscow several months before. One copy was in Russian, the other in Hindi, and it was called:

"India for the Indians, Blue Book; collection of secret documents. Edition of the Commissariat of Foreign Affairs, Moscow, 1st edition."

On the front page in large characters was printed:

INDIA FOR THE INDIANS.
DOWN WITH THE IMPERIALISTS.
LONG LIVE THE INTERNATIONAL.

The volume purports to be a collection of consular reports and letters from India received during the Tsarist regime and taken from the Archives of the Imperial Foreign Office.

Describing the periodical failure of crops, famines etc. the preface declares that it is the worst of the errors to attribute these entirely to natural causes. The only rational remedy is a complete change of the agrarian laws and the formation of a grain reserve. But England will not allow India to reserve the

grain which she requires for herself, since she lives by the exploitation of her colonies. English policy towards India, both economic and administrative, is despotic in a degree equal to that of the old Tsarist regime. Neither the divine will nor the Indian workmen — so hard working and so well endowed for work, is to blame for the famines; the guilty one is the Englishman, egotistical and ferocious, who for more than a century has sucked the blood of his unfortunate victim. "This abominable policy of England" is illustrated by descriptions of the army, the police and the system of taxation.

England this will be a terrible blow. England without India is of no account : for this reason she has always refused to lighten her yoke. It is fair to say that England only entered the World War for the sake of India and the routes to India. Seeing danger from Germany and Austria she did not hesitate to throw one-half of Europe upon the other and finally to drag the whole civilised world into the bloody conflict.

The importance of India to England is thus enormous; and the freedom of India is thus of vital moment, and every possible means of affecting it must be employed. An Indian revolution would cause a world-wide shock, and without an independent India there can be no general peace. We must therefore not only acclaim an Indian revolution, but with every means at our disposal we must work for it directly or indirectly. Let our Indian friends take this expression of our sentiments as a formal engagement to help them. In the not distant future we shall have the joy of seeing our two revolutionary roads meet and join, not only on the ground of national enfranchisement, but also on the yet more burning soil of the struggle of the classes and of the reconstruction of a new social edifice and order.

LENIN AND BENGAL

A report has been received which states that Lenin intends to form in Bengal an organisation based on the old Bande Mataram movement which is still vivid in the recollection of the natives. It also states that Lenin is the prime mover in the fabrication of paper money.