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for defence of motherland T. U. unity and socialism

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S. A. D A N G E

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FOR DEFENCE OF MOTHERLAND T. U. UNITY AND SOCIALISM*

The situation which we have to discuss today is an extremely serious one. The seriousness is evident from the fact that the state of national emergency is already declared and the normal functioning of social, economic and political life is completely upset.

The national emergency, of course, means that most of the ordinary constitutional rights are also suspended. Only one thing has not been suspended which under such conditions, generally, becomes the first casualty. And that is Parliament. It still functions. In spite of conditions of war and declaration of national emergency, Parliament did meet and did have deliberations.

Now, when the national emergency is declared, it must affect the working class which is most vitally concerned with the national emergency and which has a difficult role to fulfil. I want to discuss that in brief. I say, 'in brief' because I would like to discuss it better when we have had the reports from the States and your experiences.

But certain things are already plain and on them, I shall put down certain of my thoughts in brief.

What is the nature of the national emergency and from what does it arise? That question has to be answered by the AITUC as a trade union organisation. It has been answered by political parties. But we also must speak on it. The AITUC as such will have to define its attitude in relation to events which led to the declaration of national emergency.

And that issue is the India-China border, aggression on the border, violation of our territory, the question of invasion of

* Text of Report to the General Council of the All-India Trade Union Congress (Delhi, 16-18 Nov. 1962) by S. A. Dange, General Secretary, AITUC.

our territory and conditions of near-war. Officially, war is not declared but everything which follows from a situation of war has taken place in this country.

Conditions of war have arisen because of what we call Chinese aggression. Do I need to go into all the discussion? I do not think. The AITUC last year had adopted a Declaration on this question in its General Council. From that Declaration to the present stage, lots of things have taken place.

The Basic Issue

The question is: has this country of ours a border or not in the north at all? Because, some other country—whether capitalist, socialist or communist—says that ‘we don’t accept your border’? Therefore, do we in India say that because somebody does not accept that border, we have no border in the north? This is a fantastic position to take.

What follows if you do not hold that we have a border of our own? If you do not accept a border of a country even for yourself, then there cannot be a crossing of the border, and if there is no crossing of the border, there is no violation of territory, and if there is no violation of territory, there is no question of defence, and national emergency does not exist at all.

One cannot accept national emergency and accept fulfilment of tasks in relation to national emergency unless the basic cause of the emergency is accepted.

The fact that the Government of India has laid down the cause of the emergency need not make it binding on the AITUC to accept it as such. The need for defence cannot be admitted unless and until you admit that you are attacked. Otherwise, there cannot be any defence.

And you cannot be attacked unless there is a point which, you say, has been crossed by the attacker.

So you have to admit there is a border. So whether you start from border to aggression or *vice versa*, the border and aggression become the main point. If that is not so, all your

other obligations in relation to defence of the country, etc., clearly do not exist.

Therefore, the second question of acceptance of tasks in relation to defence can only follow from certain preliminary positions. If those positions are not acceptable, then all 'truce' resolutions should be thrown out and you must censure any leadership which accepts this industrial truce.

Some people may say that emergency for the national bourgeoisie which rules the country is not necessarily and compulsorily an emergency for the working class. True. But the nation does not belong to the national bourgeoisie but to the people and the working class as part of the people.

It is not from opportunistic considerations that I accept industrial truce. You have to come to the position of industrial truce from the logic of your class. If the working class does not accept that its interests in relation to the nation today coincide with the interests of the other classes also, you cannot have industrial truce.

A Peep into History

In 1948, an industrial truce was accepted by the AITUC representatives and those who accepted got hell for it from those who objected to it in those conditions.

Twenty years ago, in 1943, the AITUC was faced with a similar situation—question of war, support to war efforts, question of production, no strike, etc. At that time, the AITUC was a united organisation in the sense that Communists were not in a majority nor were others in a majority and all circles were in the fold of the AITUC. And the AITUC at that time, officially, could not adopt any resolution of support to war. Because, there was only a 60 per cent majority for the resolution and the constitution said that the majority should be 75 per cent for passing such a resolution. But each union was free to follow its line on this question. And unions led by Communists supported war efforts, even refused to put forward demands for bonus when the bourgeoisie was making unheard of profits.

Some unions of the AITUC, holding that a socialist country, i.e., the Soviet Union, had been attacked by fascism

and it was the duty of the international working class to defend it, took the position of supporting war efforts, for greater production and the no strike line. I am not going to discuss whether that position was right or wrong. In principle it was right but in practice it went wrong. I am only reminding you that this is not the first time in our history of the TU movement that we are faced with the question of support or no support to war, national emergency, tasks of working class therein, etc.

At that time, it was British imperialism which ruled the country. The national bourgeoisie and the working class—the whole nation, was in conflict with that Government and its war efforts. Now the situation is different. The national bourgeoisie has the government and the country is free.

A Complicated Question

So twenty years after, the question of war is posed before us in quite different conditions. Moreover, the question is complicated by the fact that the conflict has arisen with a country which is a socialist country.

There may be people and there are people who say that calling that country socialist is wrong. I do not accept that. It is a socialist country, for the simple reason that the means of production are not owned by capitalists and the fundamental relations of production in that country are socialist. The question whether a socialist country can or should commit aggression or not, has to be separated from the question whether that country is socialist or not.

Socialist economy does not require aggression to build itself. Because of the fact that the relations of production which exist in such an economy do not create crises, do not hamper production and consumption in the way in which capitalist relations do, the driving force of such an economy is not aggression. It does not have any need for it, i.e. grabbing territories and population for garnering wealth taking surplus value out of the conquered for enrichment of its economy.

But I am doubtful whether a socialist government may or may not trip itself into aggression. The government of

socialist country is one thing and socialist economy is another. But this is a thing which we need not discuss just now.

Now the question posed by some people is: can the working class of a country like ours, taking note of its international relations with the working class of other countries, refuse to defend our country because a national bourgeois Government exists? Does the working class fighting for socialism change its fundamental relation of opposition to the national bourgeoisie because an aggression is taking place?

Direction of Development

In our view, we were undergoing a certain direction of development and suddenly the direction changed. What is the change?

The direction of development before this 'war' started was a normal struggle—between the exploited and the exploiters. Normal struggle means, what happens in a capitalist country. This is a developing capitalist country which has become recently independent; therefore, our economic tasks are for strengthening independence. That strengthening is taking place on the basis of the development of the state sector of economy, as well as private sector and so on. But we have stated in the resolutions of the AITUC that the total development is towards capitalism.

We did not say, it is socialism. But in spite of the fact that it is a bourgeois development, the working class organisation took up certain positions with regard to that very capitalism, with which we are in contradiction. We agreed to give certain support to the national bourgeoisie in certain lines of development.

So we had a peculiar position which is not the same as in a purely classical capitalist or imperialist country. In an imperialist country, all these problems do not arise for the trade unions. There cannot be any question of co-operation with the bourgeoisie there because it has ceased to be national bourgeoisie; it has become imperialist, an exploiter and enslaver of colonies.

Therefore, these relations which obtain in a newly liberated country, developing itself independently, are different. Such a country's growth is an anti-imperialist factor. Even the growth of its national bourgeoisie is an anti-imperialist factor. Therefore, with such a national bourgeoisie, the trade unions established special relations—relations which should exist in a non-aligned, newly independent developing country.

The second aspect is that just because you are developing capitalism, while that development is welcome, as trade unions defending the interests of the workers, within the framework of capitalism, we have to defend the working class from attacks of the bourgeoisie.

While supporting independence and its consolidation, supporting the Five-Year Plan and the state sector of economy, we defend our working class from the very attacks of intensified exploitation. Exploitation can be abolished only when socialism is established. They attack the working class to realise greater and greater surplus value: our effort is to give less and less and improve our standard of living. This is the relation in a *normal period*, in a newly-developing country which is still discharging its anti-imperialist role.

This relation now undergoes a sudden change because a new problem affecting the whole nation has arisen.

Change in Our Approach

An under-developed country which does not want war, not only for itself but anywhere in the world, a country of the peace camp, not aligned with imperialism, developing towards capitalism—such a country is involved into a dispute with a socialist country. Instead of getting settled peacefully, the dispute flares up into conditions in which the socialist country's armed forces cross over the boundaries of our country and conditions of war are created.

So when such conditions are created, the working class is forced into the problem: what shall be our relations with the national bourgeoisie which is the ruling class, in conditions when the country as a whole is in a certain situation

of war. We have to redefine our attitude to the bourgeoisie and the new national problem.

The answer to this question has got to be: yes—these normal employer-employee relations of class struggle have got to be modified.

Does the AITUC accept in principle that modification of these fundamental class relations becomes necessary in certain national situations? This was answered 20 years ago by the majority of the unions of the AITUC—and affirmatively and in a national situation which raised serious doubts about the scope of those modifications.

And the modification of class relations that is required is called industrial truce. In industrial relations, the projection of a political position translates itself into an industrial truce, if we accept that modification of our relations with the bourgeoisie is necessary. This is the logic of our position.

And therefore we say that under conditions of the national emergency, defence and near-war conditions require that the trade unions of the AITUC do modify temporarily their normal relations with the bourgeoisie, their functioning and approach to the questions of the working class. We agree to modify and we then decide as to how we modify. To what extent does the modification go?

Some people put the question thus: does the national emergency eliminate questions of exploitation, competition, burdens on the working class and profiteering? Does the national bourgeoisie declare that all profits are extinguished or that all profits belong to the nation? No, it does not. Since they have not accepted that condition, I cannot accept the condition of not protecting myself as a worker from the attacks of the exploiters, which must be modified by them also. They also have to modify.

Our Fundamental Task

But there is a difference in their modification and ours. After all, it is the bourgeoisie. The question of national obligation is more fundamental and real to the exploited classes than to the exploiters. In conditions of war—the working

class, the peasantry and the middle classes behave differently from the established exploiting classes. We do not lay down conditions for defending our country. Because the country belongs to the people. I do not hold the view that in a condition like ours, we should decide our behaviour by asking whether the country is ours or of the national bourgeoisie. The country belongs to the people.

In the present conditions, the country has to be defended —because it is not an imperialist country, fighting a war to enslave others. It is not tied up with imperialism and is not such a capitalism that has suppressed all democracy and has built itself as fascism, for world domination. When such conditions exist, the people share the responsibility and the tasks of defence of the country because the country is theirs and in such conditions, defence of the country becomes a moral political duty for the working class despite its quarrel with the ruling bourgeoisie.

So, if war is imposed on us, it is the task of the Indian working class to consider it as a national war, whoever may be the attacker, whether it is Pakistan or China, whether it is pro-imperialist or socialist. In such conditions, all classes must defend the country, and we as an exploited class, accept our national duties and obligations.

That can be so only if the war is a just war. At present, it is not a war as such and government does not call it a war. But even in near-war conditions, when a whole front is flaring up, in that case, we accept the obligations because we consider the country is ours, it has to be defended, it is not a counter-revolutionary or pro-imperialist government we are defending, nor a bourgeoisie which has surrendered to imperialism.

We say we defend, because the cause is just, because the wrong is on the other side.

Therefore, the working class accepts modifications of class relations with the bourgeoisie in relation to the defence of the country and therefore comes to an industrial truce which of course, is a temporary thing.

Obligations are Mutual

However, within the framework of the truce, we argue: you are not going to cease making profits, nor control the price line; so we, as the main force of defence, must also guard our conditions. Does Government accept this obligation or not? We do not expect the Government to abolish exploitation. That is socialism. But we ask them to control the national bourgeoisie and also control us, if we are endangering defence.

So, even to fulfil the tasks of defence, a certain defence of the workers will be necessary.

Industrial truce is, in a sense, "class collaboration". But it is consciously accepted because both classes are faced with a situation when a developing, peace-loving free nation is in danger. Unless this understanding is there, we cannot work and we cannot understand our tactics.

The Government of the bourgeoisie is more than the bourgeoisie because the bourgeois government can understand the total class relations while each bourgeois section understands only its own sectional interests. Therefore, the national bourgeois government sometimes has to hit some sections of the bourgeoisie also. As we have seen, they have banned forward trading in gold. This is not foolproof action against speculation but they are taking some steps at least.

Take-over of Banks Necessary

The actions taken by the bourgeois government against sections of the bourgeoisie should be taken advantage of by the working class and we should press for more such actions. For instance, we should ask for take-over of the banks. Price line can be controlled only if the total volume of money in circulation and the direction of spending and investment is controlled through take-over of all banks. That cannot be controlled only by the Reserve Bank. Take-over of the banks is not nationalisation but only taking over for the limited purpose of controlling investment and prices in the national interest.

Similarly, we should ask for converting the secret reserves of banks into defence bonds.

We give these suggestions from the trade unions in the matter of economy, so that the economy can be controlled in the national interest. And as a counter-obligation, *viz.*, smooth functioning of production, we do guarantee. Interruption of production on questions of disputes, etc., should not take place as in normal times.

But what is the obligation from the other side? It should be that real wages shall not fall and that all those practices which provoke the workers should not be resorted to. We fulfil our obligations and you fulfil yours. This is the essence of the Industrial Truce Resolution which we have accepted, subject to your sanction.

The formulation of that resolution is done in a usual bureaucratic, bourgeois way. As you have seen from my letter to the Labour Minister, the whole procedure was of that type. The INTUC and HMS were refusing to sit with us. The conference was called on our initiative. I had written to the Prime Minister about this, stating that defence at the front must also mean defence of the people. For the bourgeoisie, war is an opportunity to enrich itself. That is its fundamental law. But they have to control it....

Tripartite Conference

The conference was held on November 3. Sri Nanda made a speech about the situation and said 'this is the resolution which we all have accepted'. And then the conference ended in ten minutes. There were no speeches or amendments. So we put our view on record that though it was a good resolve in principle, in working out the resolution, we will face tremendous difficulties.

The first difficulty is that our rivals are more worried about our existence than about national defence. They say this is a god-sent opportunity to finish us off. If we accept industrial truce, provoke us; if we don't, condemn us.

There will be two kinds of arrests—one for certain views and then there will be arrests of trade unionists on allegations of sabotage, etc. Certain elements in the country will

want to provoke us and thereby eliminate the trade unions of the AITUC. In that the employers also will help.

Accepting the industrial truce will increase our difficulties. Without certain safeguards on wages, dismissals, etc., 'no strike and fulfil production at any cost' will not work for long for the simple reason that it will at first embolden the employers to attack and exasperate the workers. It will tempt them to take revenge for past struggles. So production and elimination of disputes will have to be done in such a way that the working class understands that its interests are not totally attacked.

Certain interests are bound to suffer. A war cannot be fought without affecting the people. But there must be a limit to it.

Let us not do it in a hypocritical manner. I am for a straight understanding. Do I accept a wage-cut? No. But that does not mean that tomorrow I take up all the outstanding wage notices and agitate and start a strike.

Also there should be no over-enthusiasm. In those days of 1944 there was the example of a carpenter in the old GIP workshop in Bombay, during the last war, who fulfilled his entire quota of work for six months in six weeks. He thought he was faithfully implementing the production line, and never bothered to find out whether his output will be absorbed in other departments or will fit in with the production pattern in the workshop.

I am not making my support conditional. I unconditionally accept my obligation but at the same time, request others to accept theirs. Fortunately, the Government of India has not denied its obligations and has accepted some of them. When we point out to the question of fall in real wages, they have said that all wage claims are not and cannot be barred.

Yesterday, I got the news that the Wage Board for Iron and Steel has announced an interim award. That shows that the Government is not going to shut its eyes to the demands of workers on the grounds of national emergency. There is some balance.

Let us try to evolve that balance to protect our rights. I

do not expect real wages to rise. But protection of existing real wages has to be envisaged. So the interim award of the Iron and Steel Wage Board is a very welcome thing.

And I don't think it is a bad award. In the present conditions, I would say it is a good award. I do not, of course, give the guarantee that the bourgeoisie is not going to try to freeze wages and paralyse the working class in the matter of its claims.

Problems of Functioning

Now about some problems of functioning of our organisation.

In this period, functioning will have to be changed, quite a lot. One thing which I would request all comrades to do is to give us quick and correct information about what happens. Then we can help the State Committees and they, in turn can help us to evolve a proper line. We will be side-tracked and harassed; our opponents will try to weaken us. So central functioning is all the more important. I mean by central functioning both at the all-India centre and State centres also.

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CONCLUDING REMARKS*

I had tried to put down certain lines of approach which the working class and the trade unions should adopt in the present context of the conflict or the near-war condi-

* After the General Council of the AITUC had heard reports from various states and industrial centres concerning the activities undertaken by the trade unions in the emergency, S. A. Dange on November 18 summed up the discussions. This is the text of his observations.

tions that have arisen. The trade unions, as already stated, cannot avoid taking political positions. So long, as you know, attempts have been made to see that the trade unions do not dabble in politics.

It was the attempt of the Government and the employers that the trade unions should only deal with conditions of work and wages. Politics were to be admitted only insofar as helping the Government to implement the Five Year Plan was concerned. Other politics the trade unions were not to concern themselves with.

Today, the position has changed. Since there is a common national danger and since the country is involved in more or less a war with another country, the trade unions as a whole have to participate in the war effort, which means, actually in politics.

Because war effort is not limited to production only. The question of approach and ideology, understanding of class relations, relations with Government, etc.—all these are involved when you decide either to support a war or oppose a war.

War is not such a thing that it only limits one's attention to the questions of production and strikes. Our approach to strikes and production can only be conditioned by a political approach to the problem of war. Therefore, it becomes positively a political question.

Therefore, the question is put: do we support the defence of the country or no? Do the AITUC and the working class under its banner accept the responsibility of defending the country—or no? It has been stated that there is aggression against our country and that aggression has to be stopped and defeated. War arising out of it has got to be fought and in that fight, the working class and the AITUC are on the side of defence of the country.

Let us define our attitude. Do we consider there is aggression, that we have to defend the country and that the AITUC and the working class should participate and take sides? It is necessary to state clearly because we are confronted with a socialist country.

It is not a simple problem. Complications have arisen. Confusion of understanding is quite legitimate. If somebody gets confused, he cannot be just condemned that he has ceased to be a patriot. If a man, the moment conflict arose, vacillates, has doubts, has questions, then those questions should be considered legitimate. It is not as if Britain or Japan or America is attacking India.

Nationalism and Internationalism

After all, we do accept, as trade unions, that there are three sets of countries in this world. There is the socialist set-up of countries, there is the imperialist set-up of countries and then there is the third, newly-liberated, non-aligned group of countries. So the questions of war and peace between these countries have to be discussed on the basis of the question—between whom the conflict is and for what purpose?

Therefore, we as trade union leaders belonging to the WFTU which all along debates the question of war and peace and discusses relations of trade unions in terms of internationalism, cannot avoid these questions.

If we avoid them, we become people who have no politics, who have no class standpoint, and we become opportunists who may do one thing today and another tomorrow. So we are not raising these questions as academic questions. Strike or no strike is an essential part which follows from the concrete application of the general line to the concrete situation.

So at the very beginning of this session I had raised this question of theory and politics. Because even as a trade union organisation we cannot go without theory, without certain principles on such vital questions of war and peace relations between States of differing social order and the duties of the working class and its trade unions following from our principled positions on these questions.

Now, therefore, to put it again in short, the AITUC does accept that there has been aggression. The AITUC has

to state that it is an aggression which was totally unexpected from a socialist country.

The AITUC cannot give the reasons why a socialist country behaved as it did. We do not know. It should not have behaved as it did. But it has.

But workers will ask: will you people tell us why they have done it? There are some people who might say that the Chinese were attacked by India and therefore they defended themselves and came down on us. That means there was aggression from the Indian side and therefore counter-aggression from the Chinese! This is false and double-dealing. Facts speak otherwise.

There was no aggression from Indian side. I do not want to go into details. China has published a political pamphlet saying that India's leaders from the very beginning, before and after independence, have been aggressive and aggressors.

This pamphlet, "*More on Nehru's Philosophy*", etc., should be read by all. It serves to convince us of the correctness of our stand. In this pamphlet, there is a statement that Nehru was an expansionist from the very beginning. Of course, Jawaharlal Nehru since he was born, was an expansionist since he never ceased to grow!

One wonderful thing I found in the pamphlet was a total twist of quotations from Nehru—that Nehru was long ago thinking of India as a great power, controlling the whole of Asia, etc. The position taken in the pamphlet is that the Indian bourgeoisie is aggressive, it has gone into the imperialist camp, has tied itself with all sorts of imperialists.

I did not expect profound, good leaders of socialist China to write that stuff. It is a rather very unfortunate situation and you cannot avoid dealing with it by remaining silent on it, saying that it is socialism that is confronting capitalism in India. Indian capitalism is capitalism but it is not expansionist and it was born as an anti-imperialist force. So its description on those lines is totally wrong and misplaced.

The increase in foreign capital in India is stated in that pamphlet to show how India is in the clutches of imperialism even after 1947. As if, after that nothing has changed in

India. So it is a good pamphlet, it convinces you about your case. How right we are can be found from that pamphlet written to show how right they are! It is something like "teaching by negative example", as the Chinese say.

You might say that all these things are not relevant for our purpose. It is relevant in the sense that all that follows in our resolution will become meaningless unless we take a stand on principle. And that principle is not chauvinism but nationalism of the anti-imperialist progressive type.

Positions of Progressive Nationalism

The AITUC while taking its stand on the internationalism of the working class, harmonises the progressive anti-imperialist nationalism of a non-aligned independent country with the internationalism of the working class.

The WFTU says we are faithful to the principles of proletarian internationalism and if the AITUC deserts proletarian internationalism, it is the duty of the working class to desert the AITUC.

So within the framework of our principles we have to be clear whether what we are doing is chauvinism or whether it is on the basis of progressive nationalism which is never inconsistent with internationalism.

It is not that we are going to teach the working class opportunism. From the beginning, my standpoint is that if you want to do it for opportunism, let us not do it. I would prefer to be illegalised. Our trade unions have been illegalised so many times, and we are not afraid.

Therefore, our nationalism, defence of the country and support to the Government in face of an attack, whether ever may be the attacker, does not cease to be progressive nationalism because the attacker is a socialist country. It means that the government of a socialist country has gone wrong, though it does not mean that socialism has gone wrong.

Can there be such a thing as government of a socialist country going wrong? On how many counts, can it go wrong? Both on internal and external and foreign policy questions, it can go wrong. There is always that possibility. Being socialist does not confer on anyone the quality of being infallible. And the possibility has become a fact, that a socialist government has gone wrong in relation to the government of a country which is not in the imperialist camp.

If the India Government tomorrow takes a position in the imperialist camp and establishes a fascist rule, gives up peace and non-alignment and goes in for a policy of armaments and war of conquest or aggression, our nationalism will cease to be progressive.

Therefore, today, I am right in my progressive nationalism. Some people ask,—if tomorrow, something happens, are we going to change? "Tomorrow it happens" means, what happens? That means, India gives up non-alignment, joins the war bloc and takes all the necessary steps which follow from that line. But it is useless and harmful to speculate on such things. That is fatalism. What is required is for all progressive forces to prevent such things happening. That is the task.

India is today a progressive, anti-imperialist nation, in which nationalism is still progressive and anti-imperialist—and coincides with internationalism in the sense that all its positions on the advocacy of peace and peaceful coexistence are positions of internationalism. All positions of opposition to settling problems between two countries by war are positions of internationalism.

All positions of non-alignment, being in essence anti-imperialist, are positions of internationalism. So you will see from this that in our case, nationalism does not cease to be progressive, and secondly, is not in contradiction with internationalism.

Our working class and the AITUC will have no place in the WFTU, in the international working class movement and in socialism as such, if it supports its national bourgeoisie in committing aggression and war against another country and in imposing a fascist rule on the people.

Our positions are right and any attempt to counterpose the nationalism of the Indian working class, as defined by us, with what is called the internationalism of the working class as defined by our critics and to say that the two are contradictory would be to indulge in misrepresentation and perversion.

So you will have to argue with the working class and our own people as to what is the difference between nationalism and chauvinism, What is healthy nationalism, in what conditions does it harmonise with internationalism? Is our nationalism today in contradiction with internationalism?

Attacks are coming on us from all sides. Reactionary critics are asking us to give up internationalism if we are true nationalists. They say, if you are an internationalist, you are bound to agree with China or anybody who supports China, that therefore your talk of nationalism is only a ruse and a tactic and that you are doing that to cheat the people and to save yourself from prison.

We have to be clear on this question. We are internationalists and as internationalists we have definite principled positions on war and peace, positions on peaceful co-existence, positions on newly-liberated countries and non-alignment, positions according to which a socialist country can become dogmatist and sectarian and endanger and threaten world peace as China is doing today. If a country does that, our internationalism is to oppose that.

If an integrated understanding of nationalism and internationalism is not made, we shall be confusing ourselves and drowning the working class also in the process. The moment we assume that the two are contradictory, we are immobilised. We become thorough opportunists.

You will ask whether this is a standpoint of trade unionism or of a political party. Take the resolutions of the WFTU which base themselves on positions of proletarian internationalism and discuss questions of war and peace.

Let us take the positions of the WFTU, say on peaceful co-existence and on disarmament, etc. On the question of disarmament, China has taken the position that disarmament

is not the most important and major question today. They reject the positions with regard to peaceful co-existence, and the role of non-aligned countries.

Therefore, as an organisation belonging to the WFTU, as an organisation which takes its stand on the basis of proletarian internationalism and in terms of accepted positions on war and peace, peaceful co-existence, disarmament, relations with non-aligned countries, the progressive role of the newly-liberated countries even where they are under the rule of the national bourgeoisie, I say, my supporting this national bourgeois government today is fully consistent with internationalism.

You might ask: is there any regressive nationalism? There is. Nationalism of an oppressed country and the nationalism of an oppressor country—both are nationalism but one is progressive and the other reactionary. Nationalism of the colonies who want to be free is revolutionary, progressive nationalism, even if led by Nehru or by Mahatma Gandhi or anybody.

That was the position when there were only two kinds of nationalism—that of the oppressor country and the oppressed country. But when an oppressed country becomes free, establishes capitalism, has not gone over to imperialism, then what is the nationalism of that country? This is a new problem.

This problem did not exist before the second world war,—nationalism of a country which has ceased to be oppressed, has not become an oppressor, but is a non-aligned, independent country trying to grow, not necessarily towards socialism—what is the nationalism of this country?

In relation to internal questions, we fight our national bourgeoisie. In relation to external relations, we are with the peace camp. We, as working class, are with the socialist camp but the Government and the country as such is in no camp.

A working class is never non-aligned. It is always aligned with the working-class of the whole world, of both the countries of capitalism and socialism. But a bourgeoisie

and its Government and the country ruled by it can be non-aligned as India today is.

In the trade union field also, many controversies exist, as was seen in the Fifth World Trade Union Congress. We take our standpoint on the basis of internationalism and our approach to the present problems of our country is guided by our progressive nationalism.

Our nationalist position harmonises with our positions of internationalism and we, as the working class of a liberated non-aligned country, are taking part in defence efforts on the basis of progressive nationalism and we are right.

This is the thing which I wanted to put before you to clear the confusion. Let us go before the working class with a clear mind.

Nationalism and Chauvinism

Then the question will come—can there be a chauvinistic approach to the problem? There will be, and in the trade unions, we should be on guard. Preaching hatred against the people of another country is chauvinism. In spite of attacks from reactionaries, we cannot preach hatred between two peoples.

What we should try for is a peaceful settlement. The standpoint of chauvinism is no settlement but prolonged war. Even sane bourgeois politicians do not do it. But sometimes some insane trade unionists might attempt to do it. Because once you start, that way, you start with the logic of nationalism not harmonised with internationalism. Therefore, preaching hatred between peoples should be avoided.

Secondly, a 'bitter war' means either you reach Peking or they reach New Delhi. Under the pressure of reaction, we sometimes are likely to forget that we should ask for a settlement. This is not a war which is going to finish off this or that country and prolonged war between two big countries means world war.

Therefore, even a country like Soviet Union, with its military might, is moving in terms of averting a world war as we have seen in Cuba. There are, of course, so-called uncompromising international revolutionaries who are oppos-

ing Khrushchov on the Cuban settlement. We are not concerned with them.

The question relating to Cuba was whether the USA will invade Cuba or not invade Cuba. They had to guarantee that they would not invade Cuba, and the entire settlement followed from this...

Attitude to Chinese Workers

What is our attitude to the Chinese working class? That it is building its socialist economy? Yes, a country where there are no capitalist relations of production is a socialist country.

That does not mean that whatever their government does is right. Because we know that certain parties can become "national-communists," sectarians and so on.

And when certain parties take that line, a whole State goes that way and its working class also goes that way.

We have to stand by our nationalism because the other people have deserted internationalism on the questions of war and peace and settling questions between two States by peaceful means.

Any "balancing" in the name of internationalism, on this question, is bankruptcy of thought and refusal to arrive at logical conclusions.

So we support the war effort, we are with the national bourgeoisie... Don't hesitate. The more you hesitate, the more you will be confused.

Pandit Nehru is not something by himself. He may not represent the bourgeois-landlord combine as the Peking Radio says. But the character of the State and Government has not changed. The class relations exist as they are, but we, today on a national problem, have kept aside the old form of the political class struggle, and temporarily there is a truce on that side and we are side by side with the national bourgeoisie on the question of defence and settlement by negotiations on the basis of the September positions.

In this alliance or Front, will the bourgeoisie behave as

a bourgeoisie? Yes. With its usual narrowness? Perhaps. But the bourgeoisie is also cautious.

As a trade union, we do all the tasks relating to defence and production. Impediments to production are on either side—from the working class and the bourgeoisie. From the bourgeoisie, in order to make super-profits. From the working class, in order to defend itself by means of strike. Objective result is impediment to production.

Unconditional Support

So, we as the working class say that for the time being we suspend the question of strike struggles and protect our class interests by that method. In certain cases, if you make it impossible to do so, we give a 14 days' notice. But we don't make it a rule. Voluntarily try to solve the problem by arguing with them.

So we behave in a way in which we unconditionally support the war effort. We as a leading class, along with other sections of the people, undertake the responsibility and the tasks of defence and the logic of defence production as well as so on.

For that we lay no conditions. Do you put down conditions in order to defend your country? My unconditional support to Nehru Government is there in the matter of defence. But I certainly tell them that defence effort can be done better if such and such things are done by the workers. And some of these things, they have accepted, in spite of that blanket ban resolution which they have written.

In this case, we are assuming new obligations in production, the first of which is that we voluntarily agree not to interrupt production. But we want certain safeguards for production which we are laying down.

But shall we, in no condition, resort to a strike? As I said, sometimes things will become so impossible and workers will not listen to you. In that case we will have to argue with the government and the employer, saying that what they are doing is wrong.

Immediately we should see that pending strike notices are suspended. This is our first tender.

So, we do not want to go on strike, we voluntarily agree to suspend pending notices and voluntarily agree to avoid strikes, but if you completely ban the strikes, that will be impracticable. If you want us to be put into a position of opposing our workers, then you are being guided by your private class interests which want to eliminate us. And we cannot agree to do so.

So, the question of the two "pillars" has to be revised.

Two-Pillar Policy and National Defence

The two pillars are no longer of the same value and do not stand on the same footing, though the old formula of defence of the country and class remains in essence in the sense that, today, defence of the class is complementary to the defence of the country.

Formerly, helping the five-year plan was one pillar and defence of the class, another pillar. And defence of the class was a major weapon in building the economy.

That relation has undergone a change. Defence of the class merges with the larger consideration of national defence. And defence of the class is done and looked after in order that production for the defence of the country will continue. So, it is not a question of two pillars having the same or equal importance.

Here, the two are integrated in the same single pillar, that is defence of the country, production, and in order to do that, defence of the class and the people. This becomes a single pillar, integrating the values of both and not running parallel. And it does not mean giving up any one pillar. Both have to be integrated.

Evolve a Balanced Approach

Then, there is the question of how many things to do. In the first rush, what we have been doing is all right. Why? Some of us have a sense of sin. And in order to wipe out

the sin, a man tries to do too many *Gangasnans*. In some cases, that is what is happening.

But that does not matter. But don't do too much *ganga-snans*—working on all Sundays, surrendering all overtime, surrendering all privilege leave, etc. This sort of thing should not be overdone.

Actually, our Girni Kamgar Union in Bombay was the first to say that we will give one Sunday work for the Defence Fund on November 4.

Then, about contribution to defence fund. Yes, workers should contribute. But then there are problems, as was seen in Bombay. They did one Sunday work. Then people started asking for contributions apart from Sunday work. By one day's work, the workers had contributed Rs. 5 per head. Yet people started collecting individual contributions, which is wrong.

So there should be some balance somewhere. Defence Fund should be organised on a proper basis. After the first contributions as Defence Fund, the workers may give further contributions by way of defence bonds.

Investment in bonds means capacity to have a surplus.

The worker has no capacity for a surplus but the worker will invest in bonds and that investment is also a sacrifice. If some people begin to argue that our contributing to bonds will be used to prove that we are not hit by price increases, it would be a wrong argument.

With regard to one day's wage as contribution, there are certain trades where wages are below subsistence level. We must approach such sections of the working class in a realistic manner and not in a mechanical manner. We cannot equate an engineering worker earning Rs. 7 a day with a beedi worker getting one rupee.

So, evolve an approach to bonds and defence funds according to your own industrial area and levels of wages in that area. Patriotism when translated into money terms has to be made on a realistic basis. Otherwise, we shall prove ourselves to be good patriots in words but incapable of acting upto the realities of the situation.

It would be the worst tactic to surrender your holidays in mining particularly. Mining is the worst industry. The miner underground hardly gets a sunshine and you want to put him again into the dark pits on Sundays, too! So you must know and discriminate where to give the Sunday working slogan. Similarly, in transport, if the railway engine driver is put to work on all Sundays, you will get more accidents.

So while accepting a thing in principle, there should be different approaches in its practical application. Otherwise, after one or two Sundays, the worker will revolt. If that is not done, you will be disowned not only by the worker who will resort to strike. When that happens, your critics will say you were secretly conspiring just for that!

So, one straight donation by work or cash to Defence Fund. And go on record that such and such union has given such and such amount. Thenceforward, after giving that, we give to bonds. In order to do that, where possible, I can put in extra work but that not on all Sundays.

No surrender of holidays as a blanket surrender. No surrender of overtime wages, as a principle. Don't start surrendering too much. What we are doing is to strengthen the defence of the country and give greater production.

But if you overdo it, your human energies will not function properly and neither the government nor the employer will understand what you are doing. So I would urge caution but caution should not be taken to the point of inaction. The question is to have an integrated approach. The INTUC and others will provoke and attack whatever we do. But don't be afraid.

New Prospects for Democratic Unity

This position should function as the biggest fulcrum to build unity of the working class in a new way. This platform has to build two kinds of unity. First, unity of the working class with the other democratic forces of the people, where for so long the working class in the political struggle was giving a slogan of democratic front but was unable to form it.

New opportunities are turning up for building the democratic front in which the working class organisations and parties are a factor. So our standpoint is a new lever to build a democratic front.

Some people may call it as merger of the working class with the bourgeoisie and loss of identity. There are different evaluations. One is that we are surrendering the class and merging with the bourgeoisie and thereby liquidating the positions of the class. Not liquidationism but a United Front is the outcome of our position. That is, however, one accusation.

It is not liquidationism. It is strengthening the class in its future positions on the basis of a united front, which has new opportunities to build itself, because of the national framework of the struggle.

Past Splits and Politics

There is another aspect. Unity of the working class and the trade union movement. All major splits in the Indian trade union movement have taken place on political questions. The first ever split took place on the basis of a political standpoint. Trade unions in India did not divide themselves first on a purely trade union question. Who inspired the split? No doubt, the bourgeoisie inspired it.

First there was a split in Nagpur in 1929 on the point of tactical line of the bourgeoisie and the tactical line of the working class in relation to the movement for national independence. Then another split took place in 1930. The formal reason for the first split was on the question: Shall we have a Royal Commission or no? N. M. Joshi was on one side, the nationalists and we on the other.

Then we had the AITUC and others formed a National Federation. Again there was a split in Calcutta in 1930 on the approach to the national independence movement. There came the Red AITUC and there was the AITUC. The two united in 1936 as AITUC.

In 1938, we decided to amalgamate the National Federation and the AITUC on the formula: Name to be AITUC; and Constitution that of the National Federation; office-

bearers half-half. So there was once again the AITUC as a united organisation of all trade unions on the eve of the second world war.

In 1943, on the question of approach to war, a split was threatened. But the AITUC as such took no political resolution on war and each union was left to decide for itself...

Then the split came in 1947. Congress sections broke away and formed the INTUC. Then that split was followed by the formation of HMS and then the UTUC. So the working class in India got split organisations in various centres due to political differences.

On demands, all were agreed. But the question of strike or no strike, brought in politics. So politics was the major source of disruption in TU organisation.

Trade Union Unity in New Situation

Today, a position has come where politically the trade unions do not differ. On defence, production, etc., the working class and other major sections of the population have a common political stand. Where war once divided us, war of a new type is again uniting us.

But in what position? In an unfortunate position that a socialist country is involved. So a political position that used to divide the workers goes out and because that excuse is going out, our opponents are furious. So, they shout that we have not really changed; that we are hypocrites, etc. And so there is the tremendous attempt to see that our standpoint does not go to the working class.

But now when you go with a platform and say "where are we divided politically", an opportunity for political unity arises in the working class from which a jump towards trade union unity can take place, provided we behave correctly and find a correct tactical approach to the question. So, the new situation gives an opportunity to build trade union unity in a new way.

Thereby, do we accept the politics of the INTUC? What is the politics of the INTUC? We define the INTUC as a projection of the bourgeoisie in the TU movement. But on what issue? Ideological issue. They say the two classes are

harmonised, that class struggle is anti-national, that the economy we are building is not capitalist but is heading towards socialism and they unconditionally support the Congress Government. But now taking things in general, national defence, production etc., the split can be healed.

So, from below, TU unity can be built more quickly because on production tasks we are all of the same mind. Therefore, there should be no differences from below, no disruption from below. So, TU unity from below, in today's condition when a fundamental political cleavage does not exist, becomes easier.

Disruption and disunity attempts will become difficult for the INTUC and the HMS. They will have to do it by hiding behind old phrases, which have no place now. They will be neutralised the faster we move,—on a political position on the basis of the Industrial Truce Resolution, worked out on a realistic basis. So the resolution which we adopt should be the basis for a greater trade union unity on a new level.

Unity among the leadership is not possible today. The other day, they refused to sit with us in the tripartite. But unfortunately for them, the national bourgeoisie is itself divided. Some are for co-operating with us. The Prime Minister says our position is good.

For Socialism!

But these reactionaries in the TUs will go as far as repudiating Nehru even. By his personal position, he has become the symbol of national unity. When you have such a person at the head of the nation, and we take our correct position inside the common front, the front grows into a leading force for future development. What future development? For Socialism!

This is the way in which the whole situation has to be looked at and in the light of this we will carry out our tasks in a balanced way, neither deviating to the right nor to the left.

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