APPENDIX - II.

The Thesis of the Congress Socialist Party
(Adopted by the Third Annual Conference of the Party held at Faizpur on December 23, 24 and 25, 1936).

Taken from Congress Socialist, January 9, 1937.

THE MEERUT STATEMENT

The present thesis is an extension of the Meerut Thesis adopted by the Conference of the Party at its last session. While it reiterates the earlier thesis, it seeks to incorporate the experiences of the past year and to take into account the development of the Anti-Imperialist movement that has taken place in the intervening period.

THE UNITED NATIONAL FRONT AGAINST IMPERIALISM

The chief task forcing us and all other anti-imperialists is the creation of a powerful National Front against Imperialism. This is not a task that has to be begun anew. The struggle against Imperialism is on and has been on for many years past. It has now to be widened, integrated and raised to a higher stage of intensity.

While the working class and the peasantry had led and is leading important militant fights against Imperialism, the main organized expression of anti-Imperialist movement has been the Indian National Congress. But as is evident it has not yet become an adequately consistent and effective anti-imperialist
force. It does not yet embrace the broadest possible sector of
the masses, whether organized or unorganized, and still stands
aloof from their day to day struggle for the satisfaction of
their pressing immediate needs.

It is the task of all anti-imperialists in the country
to bring together and unite all anti-imperialist sectors and to
build up a mighty front against Imperialism, including the
broadest possible sector of the masses. It is clear that in
our attempt to do so it is the Congress that we must take as
the basis and starting point, and we must attempt to make it an
all-embracing united front against Imperialism. The Congress
has already succeeded to a large extent in uniting wide forces
of the Indian people for the national struggle and remains to­
day the principal existing mass organization of diverse elements
seeking national liberation. It is for us now to "find means
to assist and extend that unity to a still wide front."

The task though being a single whole can be divided,
for the purpose of elucidation, into three main points: our
work within the Congress; our work among the masses outside the
Congress; the task of integrating the anti-imperialist struggle
outside and inside the Congress and consolidating the leader­
ships of the anti-imperialist and Left forces.

This thesis is mainly concerned with the elaboration
of this triple task.
OUR WORK WITHIN THE CONGRESS

The Congress is organised at present on the basis of individual membership. Its members come mainly from the peasantry and the middle class. Most of these members do not take any active part in the anti-imperialist movement and simply meet once a year to elect their delegates and representatives. The Congress Committees too do not have any day to day programme of work. They have usually no contacts with the organizations of peasant and workers and do not take any appreciable part in the day-to-day struggle of the masses, apart from the fact that it was not calculated to develop mass struggle, was through the "constructive programme". But this programme too is not in the hands of the Congress Committees but of autonomous associations like the A.I.S.A., A.I.V.I.A., etc. The form of open struggle — disobedience of specific laws — that the Congress has so far used does not give the masses wide scope for participation. They are not forms of the mass struggle which can only develop out of the day-to-day struggle against exploitation and oppression.

The reason for this is that while the Congress is a mass organization, its leadership is predominantly bourgeois. This leadership is unable to develop within the framework of its conception and interests the struggle of the masses to a higher level. At the same time it would be kept in view that the Congress leadership is no longer undivided. Recently a conscious Left has been forming within the Congress and this development is reflecting itself in the leadership also in
which a sharp division is taking place. But as yet the Left is largely ineffective and the effective leadership is in the hands of the Right. This should not be understood to mean that the class composition of the Right is itself bourgeois. A part of it is undoubtedly so. But on the whole it is petty-bourgeois, under dominance of bourgeois interests and limited by the limitations of the Indian bourgeoisie.

The analysis of the character of the Congress defines our task within it. In the words of the Meerut thesis it is to "wean the anti-imperialist elements in the Congress away from its present bourgeois leadership and to bring them under the influence of revolutionary socialism." The present thesis must further elucidate this.

The Meerut thesis conceives of the task in too narrow a manner. Our task within the Congress is not only to wean away the anti-imperialist elements from the bourgeois leadership but so to develop and broaden the Congress as to transform it into a powerful anti-imperialist front. The problem is not only one of change of leadership. It required a complete re-organization of the Congress — a building up of the Congress from the bottom upwards. As it has already been pointed out, this cannot be done by confining our activities to the Congress alone. Here, however, let us see what we have to do within the Congress. Taking the organizational aspect first, we should work for the democratization of its constitution so as to give
more initiative and endeavour to enlarge the membership and extend the organizations of the Congress further and make them active and alive. We should further try to bring the masses into the Congress by securing there representation in the Committees of the latter. Till this is done we should build up a close link between such organizations and Congress Committees for the purpose of joint work.

**OUR ALTERNATIVE PROGRAMME**

As for the programme of the Congress, we should so shape it that it comes actively to develop the struggle of the masses taking their immediate demands as a basis. The formation of peasants' and workers' unions and active support to the struggle conducted by them should be kept in the forefront of this programme. In all other possible ways also, working on the principles laid down above, we should endeavour to provide Congress Committees with a programme of day-to-day work among the masses.

We should endeavour to rally the rank and file of the Congress workers around this alternative programme. The political backwardness of the rank and file is due to their lack of contact with the economic struggle of the masses. Propaganda alone will not radicalise them. They must be drawn into the peasant and labour movements so that they may realize that our programme is a more dynamic one and will raise the anti-imperialist struggle to a higher pitch.
The Meerut thesis declared that we have to bring the anti-imperialist movement under the leadership of revolutionary socialism. It is necessary to further elucidate this. The anti-imperialist struggle in India is a multi-class struggle of the peasantry, working class and the middle class. The working class in India though organizationally weak and politically not sufficiently conscious of its role, is nonetheless potentially the most revolutionary class. But the struggle of Indian masses for freedom will not reach its objective unless the working class is in the vanguard of that struggle. Therefore, it is our task as socialists to see that it assumes a historic role in the national movement. The leadership of revolutionary socialism can mean nothing else.

OUR WORK OUTSIDE THE CONGRESS

The anti-imperialist struggle cannot be separated from the day-to-day struggle of the masses. The development of the latter is the basis for a successful fight against Imperialism. Therefore, our foremost task outside the Congress is to develop independent organizations of the peasants and workers, and of other exploited sections of the people.

Besides these class organizations we should also attempt to organize the youth of the country so as to mobilise the most active elements of the lower middle class.

We should not be content with the formation of these separate organizations. We should try to harness them in the
anti-imperialist front. These organization while functioning independently and carrying on their own programme should be linked up with the Congress Committees and there should be joint action as often as possible. This should ultimately lead as already pointed out to the masses mobilised in these organizations entering the Congress through collective representation. Thus will the Congress become a wide national front against Imperialism. This transformation is bound to change the entire structure and leadership of the Congress which will be composed of the strongly welded alliance of the various anti-imperialist classes, organized and unorganized.

CONSOLIDATION OF SOCIALIST FORCES

In the conditions of India the conscious leadership of the anti-imperialist movement falls on the socialist forces. These forces are unfortunately still divided. The Party from the beginning has stood for unity in the socialist ranks.

It is of the utmost importance that in the Congress in the mass movement outside, in all spheres of anti-imperialist activity, a united lead is given. If socialists speak with a divided voice there will be utter confusion that will only retard the national struggle.

Till such unity is arrived at, the minimum that is necessary is agreement on the immediate tasks and line of action. On the basis of this agreement the various socialist
groups should work together till the time we are in a position to form a united Party.

Apart from unity or agreement among socialist ranks, it is necessary that the forces of the Left are also consolidated and an understanding developed within its leadership. The Party should continue its efforts in this direction.

**ORGANIZATION OF THE PARTY**

Our Party has generally grown in the last year. In certain provinces there has been a set back, and the growth has not been uniform everywhere. While there are parties with a membership of hundreds, certain other parties, also quite active, have not enlarged their organization beyond a few scores of members. It is obvious that the line of development and the scope of organization have not clearly been laid down. Without prejudice to the Marxist basis for our Party, it is necessary to enlarge the membership of the Party so as to include a wider section of Congress workers and conscious elements active in the labour, peasant and other movements."